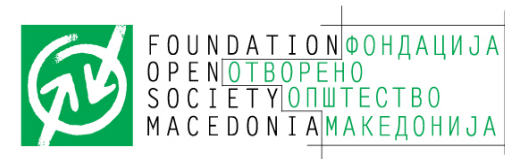




# The Scope and the Meaning of the Term *European Values* as used in Macedonian print media



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*The researchers of the Centre for Culture and Cultural Studies, on basis of the findings of a variety of forums, workshops, gatherings, public opinion polls, on the meanings implied by the the mention of the term European values, reached the conclusion that it is an umbrella term that covers all sorts of notions and that its exact meaning is not really clear. European values are frequently mentioned and discussed in the Republic of Macedonia, especially in the context of the naming-dispute with Greece. After 2008, when Macedonia didn't get the invitation to join NATO, and later didn't get the date for the start of negotiations with EU, the term European values, and especially in the media, was subject to extensive discussion, mostly with negative connotations. That situation inspired the research team of the CCCS to approach USAID and the Foundation Open Society – Macedonia with a project proposal titled **The Scope and Meaning of the Term European Values as Used by Macedonian Print Media**, led by the position that the scope and the meaning of the term are not set in stone and can be negotiated. That view was supported by the analysis that used as the starting point the hypothesis that, after 2008, with the growing disappointment of Macedonian citizens in decisions made by EU and NATO, while Euro-scepticism is on the rise, many different meanings will be tied to the term European values. For that reason, the survey focused on the last five years, i.e. the period 2009-2013. Under the leadership of professor Loreta Georgievska-Jakovleva, Ph.D (she covered "Nova Makedonija" daily and conducted the comparative analysis of the daily newspapers), the research team composed of professor Mišel Pavlovski, Ph.D ("Dnevnik" and "Utrinski vesnik"), Nataša Ilievska-Tanevski, M.A. ("Vest"), Tamara Čausidis ("Fokus") and Aleksandra Jurukovska, M.A. ("Večer") used the Treaty of Lisbon to define a set of attributes of the term European values which were then analyzed in six Macedonian print media: "Nova Makedonija", "Utrinski vesnik", "Dnevnik", "Vest", "Večer" dailies and "Fokus" weekly. This publication presents the results of our research. The project also aims to implement practical activities through organization of workshops for journalism students, with active participation by assistant professor Suzana Džamtoska-Zdravkovska, Ph.D. The project also aims, through wider dissemination of the results, to initiate a debate on the future steps. Dejan Georgievski, representative of the partner organization the Media Development Center, from Skopje, made great contributions to the achievement of that goal.*

From the research team of CCCS

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## **I. Introduction**

### **Starting position and premise:**

The European identity is based on the *European values*, which should be shared by all member-states of the European Union. As a country candidate for EU membership, the Republic of Macedonia should contribute to the creation and adherence to those values.

### **Research Questions**

1. Which are the values, beliefs and images are relevant for the citizens of Europe?
2. What does the term *European values* entail in Macedonia?
3. Are there differences between the understanding of European values in the Republic of Macedonia and those prescribed in the European Union, especially in the Treaty of Lisbon, in view of the journalistic articles published by Macedonian print media?

### Research Subject:

Determination of the scope and the meaning of the term *European values* as used in Macedonian print media: “Nova Makedonija”, “Dnevnik”, “Utrinski vesnik”, “Večer”, “Vest” dailies and “Fokus” weekly.

### Goal of the Research:

To determine what we mean when we talk (or don't talk) about the European values and whether, and in which elements, Macedonia can negotiate the scope and the contents of the term *European values*.



### Certain dilemmas regarding the terms *value* and *European values*

The creation of rules based on a discourse of values is not an easy task. There are differences in opinions on which values should be considered essential or core values that provide the foundations for a system of values. It means that the term *value* is not universal (although there are some basic premises about its contents and meaning that we may consider mandatory).

In order to determine the scope and the meaning of the term *European values*, we need to define its characteristics and attributes: From cultural point of view, the "value is a **designation** that is given to a text, object or person, by the very act of evaluation or appraisal. However, we can't consider any action presenting marks to be an act of evaluation, but only those.... which use conscious criteria. Value, therefore, is a relative quantity dependent on the determinants of the act of **attribution**." (Biti, 2000)

The content of the term *European values* is defined in several documents of the European Union. The EU Constitution states: "The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail." Formulated in such a way, an in view of the adopted Treaty of Lisbon, the *European values* in the system of values in Western Europe acquire features clearly defined as: *Dignity, freedom, equality, solidarity, rights of citizens and justice*.

We are interested in the notions that the term *European values* holds for Macedonian print media and the degree to which they coincide (or not) with the values defined in the Western European system.

## II. Statistical analysis

The search for instances of use of the term *European values* in the five dailies and "Fokus" weekly, in the period 2009-2013, yielded 225 results. Of that total, 59 articles were identified in "Nova Makedonija" daily that explicitly use the term (26.22% of the total number of mentions); 58 articles in "Utrinski vesnik" daily (25.78%); 63 articles (28.00%) in "Dnevnik"; 16 (7.11%) in "Vest"; 10 articles (4.44%) in "Večer" daily; and 19 articles in "Fokus" weekly, or 8.44% of the total number articles that mention the term *European values*. (Table 1) The resulting data indicates that "Dnevnik" daily published the greatest number of articles that mention that term, while "Večer" daily had the lowest number of articles using the term *European values*.

	"Nova Makedonija"	"Utrinski vesnik"	"Dnevnik"	"Vest"	"Večer"	"Fokus"	Total
<b>Number of textual units</b>	59	58	63	16	10	19	<b>225</b>
<b>Percentage of the total</b>	26,22%	25,78%	28,00%	7,11%	4,44%	8,44%	<b>100,00%</b>

**Table 1. Total number of identified textual units that contain the term European values in absolute numbers and as percentages of the total number of articles in the publications covered by the research**

The results indicate that, based on frequency of appearance of the term, we can divide the media into two groups: In the first group – comprised of "Nova Makedonija", "Utrinski vesnik" and "Dnevnik" – there is very little difference in the numbers of identified textual units that mention the term *European values*, which leads to a conclusion that the three dailies dedicate almost equal attention to this subject

matter. The relative high frequency of use of the term indicates that the three print media outlets demonstrate prominent interest in the subject of *European values*, which they consider to be one of the more important issues of the Macedonian state.

**Graph 1: Graphic presentation of distribution, in percents of the total, of the term European values in “Nova Makedonija”, “Utrinski vesnik”, "Dnevnik”, “Vest”, “Večer” dailies and “Fokus” weekly**

**Graph 2: Graphic presentation of total numbers of the term European values in “Nova Makedonija”, “Utrinski vesnik”, "Dnevnik”, “Vest”, “Večer” dailies and “Fokus” weekly**

In the second group of print media - "Večer" and "Vest" dailies and "Fokus" weekly – the use of the term *European values* is far rarer. However, it doesn't imply that they treat that subject matter only sporadically. The conclusion is that the three outlets use the term European values sporadically, but they tend to focus more on the core values and the rights, freedoms and principles that comprise those core values as subject matters in their own right without explicitly tying them to the term European values.

1. **Thematic Classification**

The structure of core values and attributes listed in the papers, subject to this analysis, is as follows:

<b>Core value/right, principle, freedom</b>	<b>N.M.</b>	<b>U.V.</b>	<b>Dne.</b>	<b>Vest</b>	<b>Več.</b>	<b>Fok.</b>	<b>Total</b>
EUROPEAN VALUES - DEVOID OF MEANING, NO EXPLANATION	3	32	36	4	10	1	<b>56</b>
<b>DIGNITY</b>	6	0	0	1	1	2	<b>10</b>
Human dignity	5	0	0	1	0	3	<b>9</b>
Right to the integrity of the person	0	0	0	1	0	0	<b>1</b>
Human values	0	2	3	0	1	5	<b>11</b>
Principled positions	11	2	3	0		2	<b>18</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>49</b>



<b>FREEDOM</b>	7	5	6	1	0	7	<b>26</b>
Right to liberty and security	1	0	0	0	1	2	<b>4</b>
Right to privacy and family life	0	0	0	1	0	1	<b>2</b>
Freedom of thought, conscience and religion	1	1	4	1	1	12	<b>20</b>
Freedom of expression and information	3	6	6	2	0	11	<b>28</b>
Freedom of assembly and association	0	0	0	1	0	1	<b>2</b>
Freedom to conduct business	0	0	0	0	1	0	<b>1</b>
Freedom of the arts and sciences	1	0	0	1	2	0	<b>4</b>
Right to self-determination and identity	12	5	7	2	3	5	<b>34</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>121</b>
<b>EQUALITY</b>	1	0	0	1	0	3	<b>5</b>
Equality before the law	3	0	2	0	0	1	<b>6</b>
Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of sex	1	0	1	4	0	0	<b>6</b>
Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of race or colour of skin	1	0	0	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of ethnic or social origin	5	2	0	0	1	0	<b>8</b>
Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion or belief	5	0	0	0	0	0	<b>5</b>
Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of political or any other opinion	1	0	0	0	0	3	<b>4</b>
Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of membership of a national minority	0	5	0	0	1	0	<b>6</b>
Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation	2	1	5	0	0	0	<b>8</b>

Cultural, religious and linguistic diversity	4	4	0	2	3	2	<b>15</b>
Equality between women and men	0	0	0	1	0	1	<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>SOLIDARITY</b>	0	3	3	1	0	0	<b>7</b>
Fair and just working conditions	1	0	0	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
Family and professional life	0	0	0	1	0	0	<b>1</b>
Social security and social assistance	8	0	0	0	0	0	<b>8</b>
Environmental protection	0	2	1	0	0	0	<b>3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>CITIZENS' RIGHTS</b>	1	1	0	2	0	5	<b>9</b>
Voting rights	0	1	0	0	1	6	<b>8</b>
Right to good administration	4	6	3	0	1	6	<b>20</b>
Freedom of movement and of residence	0	0	0	0	4	0	<b>4</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>JUSTICE</b>	4	3	3	1	0	5	<b>16</b>
Right to an effective remedy and to a fair trial	0	0	0	0	1	3	<b>4</b>
Presumption of innocence and right of defense	0	0	0	0	0	1	<b>1</b>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>318</b>

**Table 2: Numbers of mentions of core values, principles, rights and freedoms in “Nova Makedonija”, “Utrinski vesnik”, “Dnevnik”, “Vest”, “Vecer” dailies and “Fokus” weekly**

The data in Table 2 indicates that the term *European values* is used, in greatest number of cases – 56 times – as a term devoid of meaning, i.e. without explanation of its contents or meaning. Based on the discussed attributes of the term *European values*, it is mostly brought in relation to the *right to self-*

*determination and identity* of the core value of *Freedom*, which is mentioned 39 times. The second place is held by the principle of *freedom of expression and information* which falls in the core value of *freedom* with 29 mentions, and third is the principle of *freedom* as a general term with 25 mentions. It leads to the conclusion that the values related to different attributes of the core value *Freedom* are the most debated values.

The rights, principles and freedoms not discussed by the print media included in this project are listed in Table 3.

<b>Core value</b>	Total components	Non-represented
Non-represented components of the core-values		
<b>DIGNITY</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>
Prohibition of slavery or forced labour		
<b>FREEDOM</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>
Protection of personal data		
Right to marry and right to found a family		
Right to asylum		
Protection in the event of removal, expulsion or extradition		
<b>EQUALITY</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>
Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of race or colour of skin		
Prohibition of discrimination on		

grounds of language		
Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of political or any other opinion		
Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of disability		
Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of age		
Rights of the elderly, children and persons with disabilities		
<b>SOLIDARITY</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>
Workers' right to information and consultation within the undertaking		
Right to collective bargaining and action		
Right to access to placement services		
Protection in the event of unjustified dismissal		
Prohibition of child labour and protection of young people at work		
Family and professional life		
Health Care		

Access to services of general economic interest		
Consumer protection		
<b>CITIZENS' RIGHTS</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>
Right of access to documents		
European Ombudsman		
Right to petition		
Diplomatic and Consular protection		
<b>JUSTICE</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>
Principles of legality and proportionality of criminal offences and penalties		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>26</b>

**Table 3: Numbers of represented and non-represented components of the core values in “Nova Makedonija”, “Utrinski vesnik”, “Dnevnik”, “Vest”, “Večer” dailies and “Fokus” weekly**

Macedonian print media didn't discuss or mentioned just once the following components of the core values:

- Of the seven components of the core value *Dignity*, Macedonian media didn't discuss one: *Prohibition of slavery or forced labour*, and mentioned on a single occasion the *right to the integrity of the person* and the *prohibition of torture, inhumane or humiliating treatment or punishment*.
- Of the 13 components of the core value *Freedom*, Macedonian media didn't discuss three components: *Protection of personal data*, *the right to asylum* and *protection in cases of removal*,

*expulsion or extradition*, while following components were mentioned only once each: *Freedom conduct business* and *right to property*.

- Of the 14 components of the core value *Equality*, Macedonian media didn't discuss almost a half of them: *Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of race or colour of skin, prohibition of discrimination on grounds of political or any other opinion, prohibition of discrimination on grounds of belonging to a national minority, prohibition of discrimination on grounds of disability, prohibition of discrimination on grounds of age and equality for the elderly, children and the disabled*.
- For the core value of *solidarity*, 13 components were identified, but a large majority of them, nine in total, were not discussed at all by Macedonian print media: *Worker's right to information and consultation within the undertaking, the right to collective bargaining and action, the right to access to placement services, protection in the event of unjustified dismissal, prohibition of child labour and protection of young people at work, family and professional life, health care, access to services of general economic interest and consumer protection*, while environmental protection component got only one mention.
- The core value of *citizens' rights* is identified with seven components, three of which are not discussed: *The right of access to documents, the right to European Ombudsman and the right to petition*.
- The core value of *justice* is defined with four components. One of them, the *principles of legality and proportionality of criminal offenses and penalties*, is not discussed at all, while the following components are mentioned only once: *Presumption of innocence and right of defence*, and *"double jeopardy" right*.

Out of 57 identified rights, principles and freedoms that are part of the said core values, 26 (45.61%) have not been discussed at all, while 6 (10.53%) were mentioned on only one occasion.

Total components of core values	Mentioned components of core values	Mentioned only once	not mentioned
57/100%	26/43.85%	6/10.53%	25/45.61%

Table 4: Treatment of components of the core values in “Nova Makedonija”, “Utrinski vesnik”, “Dnevnik”, “Vest”, “Večer” dailies and “Fokus” weekly

Graph 3: Breakdown of processed and non-processed components of the core values that make up the term *European values*, in percentages

Graph 4: Breakdown of processed and non-processed components of the core values that make up the term *European values*, in total numbers

## 2. Classification by Author

An analysis of the shares of articles signed by the author, those signed with initials and those not signed (editorial) articles that mention the term *European values*, presents the following structure:

Publication	Number of articles signed by the author	Number of articles signed with initials	Number of textual units without signature
“Nova Makedonija”	37	2	20
“Utrinski vesnik”	32	12	14
“Dnevnik”	36	6	21
“Vest”	6	3	5

"Večer"	1	4	5
"Fokus"	19	0	0
<b>Total/100%</b>	<b>109/62.28%</b>	<b>15/8.51%</b>	<b>51/29.14%</b>

**Table 5: Comparative classification of articles published by "Nova Makedonija", "Utrinski vesnik", "Dnevnik", "Vest", "Večer" dailies and "Fokus" weekly**

Table 5 and Graph 5 indicate that the majority of articles that mention the term *European values*, 109 articles, were signed by the author. More than a third of the articles were either signed by the initials (15 articles), were signed as works of the editorial office or were not signed (51).

**Graph 5: Graphical presentation of the classification of articles in "Nova Makedonija", "Utrinski vesnik", "Dnevnik", "Vest", "Večer" dailies and "Fokus" weekly by author**

Therefore, we could conclude that almost two thirds of the articles were signed by the respective authors, indicating that those who debate and discuss the term *European values* want to present their own personal views on the matter. The remaining one third of the articles mostly include short news or information on individual events, pure reporting articles that don't present personal views and positions, so that the journalist didn't feel there was need to sign them with his or her full name.

### 3. Classification by Year

Regarding the interest to public articles dedicated to the term *European values* per individual year, it is evident that it maintains a constant intensity in the years from 2009 to 2013. The greatest number of articles were published in 2012 (48 textual units), and the lowest number of textual units, 37 in total, were published in 2010. 47 textual units were published in the first and the last year of the observed period, 2009 and 2013, while in 2011, a total of 46 textual units were published.



Publication	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
“Nova Makedonija”	8	6	10	13	22	59
“Utrinski vesnik”	11	9	15	13	10	58
“Dnevnik”	15	15	16	9	8	63
“Vest”	8	4	1	2	1	16
“Večer”	1	1	2	1	5	10
“Fokus”	4	2	2	10	1	19
<b>Total:</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>225</b>

**Table 6: Classification of articles per year of publication per publication**

**Graph 6: Numbers of published textual units per year**

The comparative presentations in Table 6 and Graph 6, presenting the cumulative data on all six dailies covered by the analysis, indicates that the interest in publication of textual units on the term *European values* remains constant in the period 2009-2013.

#### 4. Classification by Genre

The analysis of used genres presents the following structure:

Genre	“Nova Makedonija”	“Utrinski vesnik	“Dnevnik”	“Vest”	“Večer”	“Fokus”	Total
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<b>News/information</b>	21	20	19	4	5	0	<b>69</b>
<b>Statement</b>	0	3	6	2	0	0	<b>11</b>
<b>Report</b>	0	12	7	2	3	1	<b>25</b>
<b>Interview</b>	1	4	6	1	1	5	<b>18</b>
<b>Essay (column)</b>	15	8	19	5	0	10	<b>57</b>
<b>Commentary/editorial</b>	11	4	5	0	0	3	<b>23</b>
<b>Feuilleton</b>	1	0	0	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
<b>Analysis/Feature article</b>	9	5	1	0	1	0	<b>16</b>
<b>Poll</b>	1	0	0	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
<b>Photo-news/Photo-report</b>	0	2	0	0	0	0	<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>223</b>

**Table 7: Classification of articles by genre in “Nova Makedonija”, “Utrinski vesnik”, “Dnevnik”, “Vest”, “Večer” dailies and “Fokus” weekly**

The data listed in Table 7 indicates that the authors use a variety of genres, depending on the type of information they want to share with their readers, in the reporting on the term *European values*.

**Graph 7: Graphic presentation of genre classification in “Nova Makedonija”, “Utrinski vesnik”, “Dnevnik”, “Vest”, “Večer” dailies and “Fokus” weekly**

### Conclusions of the Statistical Analysis

The thematic classification (classification according to the core values and components) of the textual units published by newspapers covered by this analysis leads to the conclusion that "Nova Makedonija", "Utrinski vesnik" and "Dnevnik" and "Vest" covered all core values listed in the Treaty of Lisbon, while "Večer" and "Fokus" don't engage in discussion of the core value of *citizens' rights*. Therefore, we could conclude that, in majority of cases, the publications covered by this analysis treat all core values that make up the term *European values*. That, however, is not the case with the components of those core values. The overview above clearly indicates that certain components of the core values *dignity, freedom, equality, solidarity, citizens' rights* and *justice* are not discussed in relation with the term *European values*. There are several reasons for that:

- The print media focus on those components of the core values that make up the term *European values* considered to be crucial for the Republic of Macedonia in the process of meeting the conditions and requirements for the country's membership in the European Union and NATO;
- Print media focus on those issues that are considered to be fundamental and have priority in the hierarchy of values;
- Certain components are not explicitly related to the term *European values* (although they are being discussed and covered), having been seen as general values or values that arise from the Macedonian value system;
- There is probably a view that certain components have not yet made the agenda (for example, the components of the core value of *solidarity*), seen as values that may apply only after other, more fundamental are realized, although they belong to the group of so-called fundamental rights themselves.

The classification of individual authors of textual units leads to the conclusion that many authors feel the need to express their views on the term *European values*. However, a few of them return to the subject more than once with the aim to elaborate on it further. "Nova Makedonija" and "Vest" dailies could be considered a sort of exemption of that rule, with a number of authors, in their regular columns, cover

the topic on several different occasions. On the other hand, judging from the number of authors that wrote on the subject matter, we could conclude that the term *European values* is considered to be a provocative subject and many of them touch on it in one way or the other.

The classification by number of published textual units on the topic of European values per year indicates that the topic has maintained a constant presence in Macedonian media over the last five years.

The genre classification leads to the conclusion that the diversity of genres used to treat the term *European values* was at satisfactory levels. The ratio between news items and columns is well balanced, which means that one can find both short information and in-depth considerations and positions.

The statistics presented above also lead to the conclusion that it is the basic collective rights that are most often discussed in the Republic of Macedonia. The great frequency of use of components *right to self-determination and identity, freedom of expression and information* and mention of core value *freedom* as a general term, leads to the conclusion that the print media in the Republic of Macedonia put the priority on collective rights in relation to international positioning of the Republic of Macedonia, while in internal relations, emphasis is put on individual rights and freedoms, at far lower presence of such textual units in the coverage.

### III. Analysis of the Discourse on the Term *European Values* in Macedonian Print Media

#### Context

Unlike the EU of the 1950s, which rested on the “European dream” of competitive economic power, the EU today has much greater scope of ambitions. The European Union is viewed today as a community of nations the cultural specifics of which provide the building blocks for the diverse unity of the continent,

based on the values such as dignity, freedom, equality, solidarity, citizens' rights, justice, etc., that are the source of EU's power. Therefore, we have the declared position of the EU that every part of Europe is important for the welfare and the peace on the continent. As Robert Schuman pointed out: "It is necessary for everyone to share this conviction of needing one another, regardless of the status and power we possess" (Schuman, 2004). Starting from the premise listed above, it is of special importance to determine the following:

- Which are the values, beliefs and images that are perceived as the European values in the Republic of Macedonia today?
- Are there differences between the European values that are listed in the Treaty of Lisbon and the accepted values in Macedonia?
- Whether the differences of various national value systems indicate a possibility for their unification into a common system of European values that would reflect that common European identity?

It is good to point out that the process of European unification is tied to the following fundamental questions:

- What are the goals of the unification?
- Why are the nation states prepared to yield parts of their sovereignty?
- What are the benefits for the security and welfare for the states that choose to unite with other states?

The analysis relates the term *European values* to the fundamental principles mentioned in the Preamble of the Treaty of Lisbon, but also in other acts of the EU.

In that context, the principle of *democracy* is often discussed in relation to *European values* with a meaning of a core value. Further, we can conclude that, in the analyzed Macedonian print media, the term

*European values* relates to the *rule of law, good neighbourly relations, integration and pluralism*. In the context of their understanding of the European values, Macedonian media offer at least two new values that are not typical for the EU's normative acts: *the right to self-identification and accession to EU and "to European values through culture"*, which could be treated as terms derived from EU's objectives to ensure *the respect for national identity and preserve cultural diversity*. Having in mind the specific position of the Republic of Macedonia, i.e. the prolonged status of candidate-country which has identity-related problems with the neighbouring states, these two features emerge as a result of the need for more concrete objectives in the context of the situation of Macedonia.

The analyzed materials lead to the conclusion that the most commonly mentioned core values, in relation to the term European values, were those related in some form of fashion to the fundamental rights. Therefore, if we accept the position that the print media report on and analyse topics and issues of importance for the current situations, we could conclude that the print media believe that fundamental rights remain in the Republic of Macedonia remain a subject of debate, negotiation and definition of its contents.

Therefore, the question is: what is it that gives currency to the issues related to fundamental rights in the Republic of Macedonia. There seem to be two main reasons.

On one hand, the fundamental rights are mentioned in the context of the additional requirement, related to the name-dispute, which Macedonia has to meet in order to start the accession negotiations with EU. That is an extremely delicate matter which, for the time being, seems far from solution. The Republic of Greece considers itself the sole heir to Alexander the Great's empire, therefore, it doesn't recognize the official name of its neighbour to the north and prevents its neighbours accession to the EU. On the other hand, the Republic of Macedonia puts emphasis on the right to self-determination and, by extension, the right to self-identification. The country notes the long tradition of calling itself Macedonia and insists on its constitutional name while pointing out to the world that no other modern country uses that name. The inability to find a compromise on the name-dispute (issue that extends the scope of what is non-

negotiable), the fact that the accession to EU is strategic goal and priority issue of the Macedonian citizens, logically lead to a situation in which Macedonian media write about that issue, report about it and analyse it. And, of course, it is brought up in the context of the term European values.

The Republic of Macedonia is a young democracy which still harbours old thinking matrixes and traditional values remain the decisive factor. The Church is very influential and, as a result, we have a series of legislative acts of relevance to marginalized groups which are, at best, ambiguous, while individual rights are suppressed for the benefit of collective and traditional thinking matrixes. It contributes to the feeling in certain social groups that their individual rights are under threat, which further contributes to the urgency and currency of the subject-matter in daily print media.

On the third side, the institutions of the Republic of Macedonia are often accused of being under political influence and not acting in line with prescribed European standards and values, and of disregarding the component of *rule of law*. All of the above demonstrate the need to give currency to the term *European values*.

In view of what was said above and the materials included in this analysis, the discourse (qualitative) analysis can make a distinction between four different groups of texts:

- Texts that hold the position that it is, in fact, the EU that engages in unprincipled implementation of the declared European values;
- Texts that aim to present the European normative acts in relation to European values in order to inform the public about the contents of the term, as defined in the normative acts of the EU;
- Texts in which the European values, declared and defined by the European Union, are reinvented and redefined in accordance with the concepts and the views of the author;
- Texts that criticise the Republic of Macedonia for the failure to implement the accepted European values.

Starting from the premise that approach to determine what is the meaning of the term *European values* in one national environment is to conduct analysis of media reporting, we conducted a statistical analysis of the representation of the term in Macedonian print media. However, statistical analysis is not enough to reach some conclusions, we moved to discourse analysis.

In most general terms, the analyzed Macedonian media offer a double picture of what is understood when we mention the term *European values*. *European values* are perceived as:

1. introduction of standards that offer an opportunity to solve the problems and improve the life and living standards in the Republic of Macedonia, but also as
2. a set of rules of conduct and decision-making that are implemented selectively, i.e. the ethical element in the decision-making processes in the European Union itself.

Speaking of criticism of official policies of the EU, there are, in general, objections to its unfair, unjust, "uncivilized" treatment of certain states which reduces the declared rights into "empty words on paper".

Thus, the perceptions of components of European core values seen in the media covered by this survey lead to conclusion that, for the majority of the media, the desired and prescribed components of the core value are transformed, in practice, into their negative, opposite values. Such values are attributed not only to the candidate-countries, but also to the member-states and the EU in general. It is about applied practices, not the normative standards that cover the contents of the term *European values*. Most objections to the unprincipled approach to the implementation of standards by the EU are in the context of the Macedonian question related to the naming-dispute, referring primarily to the component *right to self-identification and name* of the core value *freedom*, in the context of the start of negotiations for Macedonia's full membership of the European Union.

As far as the Republic of Macedonia is concerned, most objections refer to the fact that it has not aligned its procedures with the system of European values.



1. [Analysis of the discourse on European values in "Nova Makedonija" daily](#)

A general conclusion is that "Nova Makedonija" daily primarily discusses the unfair treatment of the Republic of Macedonia by the EU which, according to the authors of the majority of articles, undermines the European values, i.e. they are questioned by the decision-makers - EU itself. The newspaper, primarily in the articles of its regular columnists, seems to have adopted the role of guardian of European values, pointing out at inconsistencies. However, the few articles on the omissions and inconsistencies of action of RM institutions don't give us the right to conclude that the daily truly realizes such a role. That is more true from the viewpoint of the extent to which the daily goes into detailed explanation and elaboration intended to inform the readers - quite to the contrary, the impression that it doesn't really act as the self-styled guardian is only enhanced. The recommendation to engage in a more balanced reporting, with emphasis on the measures implemented by EU to ensure the implementation of European values on the whole territory of Europe has the same aim.

2. [Analysis of the discourse on European values in "Dnevnik" daily](#)

In summary, we could make several general conclusions on the treatment of the term *European values* in "Dnevnik" daily. The first impression is that the term is used by authors that hold diverse political, ideological and ethical viewpoints, by "Euro-sceptics" and "pro-EU authors" alike. Such diversity often "blurs" its meaning and, in a series of articles, turns it into a phrase that covers everything and nothing at the same time. Furthermore, the term is used as an argument that augments the critical discourse on the European Union, but also on the Government of Macedonia; Some articles make the distinction between European values and Macedonian values, with the authors commonly proposing that those values should be unified and act hand-in-hand; European documents on that subject-matter are almost never mentioned.

3. [Analysis of the discourse on European values in "Utrinski vesnik" daily](#)

One characteristic of the reporting in “*Utrinski vesnik*” is that a series of articles offer a equal criticism of the European Union and the Republic of Macedonia. Macedonia is criticized over her failure to adhere to the European values and/or different interpretation of those values, while Brussels is being criticized for not intervening in that area. The authors of the articles in “*Utrinski vesnik*” place the responsibility for (in their view) negative situation in Macedonia in terms of the European values on both Skopje and Brussels. That transforms the EU in a tutor, “governor” if you like, which (whether Brussels likes it or not) takes the responsibility, or a share of responsibility, for the situation.

#### 4. [Analysis of the discourse on European values in "Vest" daily](#)

The discourse-analysis of the reporting of “Vest” daily leads to the conclusion that, in general, the views and position of journalists writing for the daily (in the columns, editorials, reports, interviews) follow the line of promotion of the term European values as defined in the Treaty of Lisbon. They are focused predominantly on the prohibition of discrimination on grounds of sex, sexual orientation, freedom and human integrity, the right to expression and information, gender equality.

In some information/statements issued by relevant government entities, the term European values is used a term devoid of meaning. In other information/statements issued by relevant government representatives, the term European values is related primarily to the component of *right to self-determination and identity, and cultural, religious and linguistic diversity*. Those statements refer to the disrespect for European values by an EU member-state, but also to the double standards applied by EU. That, at the same time, is the most debated topic in the daily. “Vest” daily offers articles that criticize Macedonia over its disrespect and failure to implement the European values in the areas of prohibition of discrimination on grounds of sex and sexual orientation, but also in the area of freedom of expression and information, freedom of thought, freedom of association, the right to psychological and physical integrity of the person and human dignity.

5. [Analysis of the discourse on European values in "Večer" daily](#)

In summary of the discourse in the articles published by "Večer" daily covered by this analysis, we could say that they are primarily informative in nature, without significant effort to explain the term. Some articles point out at certain inconsistencies in the adherence to European standards by EU itself of its member-states. On the other hand, we didn't identify any articles that reconsider the European values in line with the views and positions held by the respective authors, or articles that would offer criticism against the Republic of Macedonia for the failure to implement the European values. The daily commonly uses the term European values as an empty term, leading to the conclusion that the daily expect that its readers already know the meaning of the term and feels no need to offer further explanation of its contents and meaning.

6. [Analysis of the discourse on European values in "Fokus" weekly](#)

The impression arising from this analysis is the "Fokus" doesn't use the term *European values* as a phrase that illustrates some external criteria, imposed by the EU, or as an "unknown" that needs to be cleared or on which the readers need to be educated further. Quite to the contrary, "Fokus" speaks to readers who, it assumes, know the common values of Europe and the democratic countries well and it analyzes, criticises and questions the current situation from the view point of how close or how distant they are from the set ideal of a society governed by principles of freedom, democracy and rule of law. That may be, conditionally speaking, the biggest "defect" of the journalistic discourse used by "Fokus" – the assumption that the reader knows and recognizes the fundamental values of Europe as his or her own. The absence of elaboration can, sometimes, diminish the understanding of the message of the given journalistic article. Therefore, the key recommendation would be to strengthen the mutual dependence, but also to elaborate on the contents of terms in relation to European values.

#### IV. [\*\*Conclusions and Recommendations\*\*](#)

The awareness that values are not universal and that they are constantly negotiated by one side indicates a lack of empirical study of value systems in national cultures in the countries candidates for EU membership. On the other hand, the need has emerged to reconsider the compatibility of value systems in those countries (including Macedonia in that context) with the European values, in order to determine whether, and in which areas, Macedonia can engage in negotiations.

Starting from the premise the media simultaneously create and present the public opinion, the research aimed to answer the question what is it that Macedonian print media recognize and understand when discussing the term *European values*.

The analyzed materials lead to the following conclusions:

- During the period covered by this survey (2008-2013), the term European values was identified in a relatively large total number of textual units. However, in a great number of those textual units, the term European values is used as empty term, devoid of concrete contents, i.e. as a purely decorative term. The number of textual units dedicated to the subject matter in the analyzed print media varies.
- The dominant position of almost all print media covered by the analysis is that identity issues cannot be negotiated.
- The components of the term European values, as defined by the Treaty of Lisbon and the other European normative acts, coincide with the local and national values. Those are accepted by the Republic of Macedonia as its own and non-negotiable. One exception is the *prohibition of discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation* which is a part of the core value of *equality*. On that core-value, re-appraisal of positions is necessary.
- The critical discourse towards both the EU and the Republic of Macedonia in the context of the term European values indicates that it is not directed at the core values, principles, rights and freedoms prescribed in the acts of the European Union. Quite the opposite, it could be concluded that the criticism is used as the approach that would allow for

reconsideration of those, commonly called "lost values", which legitimise the EU and produce effects on the real lives of its citizens. The criticism is primarily aimed at those with decision-making power in EU, having in mind that they set "the rules of the game". It is those rules, the rules that are applied in concrete practices, that are seen as being opposed to the declared and formally prescribed rules. According to the authors, the values implemented in practice are not, in fact, European values.

- The thematic classification (by core values and their components) indicates that, in the Macedonian context, the term *European values* is added some new components. Those arise from the need to situate certain dilemmas related to the values within the contemporary situation in Macedonia. It primarily refers to the core value *freedom* and its component *the right to self-determination and identity*, which, in Macedonian media, is renamed/equalized with the *right to access EU*, and the core value *equality*, i.e. its component *cultural, religious and linguistic diversity*, which is restyles as *how to achieve the European values through culture*.
- The qualitative analysis, on the other hand, showed that only a fraction of the articles aim to inform or educate the readers. Therefore, there is general lack of efforts to explain the scope and the contents of the term as agreed and defined in the European documents.
- The articles critical of the Republic of Macedonia refer to the component *right to good governance* of the core value *citizens' rights*. In general, with the exception of "Fokus" weekly, such articles are far fewer in number.
- The analysis noted that, for several components of the core values (such as the component *prohibition of discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation* of the core value *equality* and the principle of separation of church and state), some of the Macedonian media included in the analysis present radically different views than those prescribed in the Treaty of Lisbon.

- This report notes the components that are not discussed at all. Most of them belong to the core values *citizens' rights*. There were no articles dedicated to the values prescribed by EU referring to its components.
- None of the print media included in the research relates the term *European values* to the efforts invested by EU to achieve the prescribed ideals. Therefore, the newspapers don't report on European funds which are established, in most general terms, with the aim to bring all countries of Europe as close as possible to the ideal of the declared European values.
- Holding such positions, it is obvious that Macedonian media raise the importance of the need to open the process of negotiation of the scope of European values, the contents of which is, to a greater or lesser extent, subject to consensus. When discussing the scope we mean the procedures and conventions and their implementation (or the lack thereof).

Therefore, we could conclude that, in general, Macedonian print media don't aim to bring closer and explain the provisions of the Treaty of Lisbon and other acts of the EU to their readers, and by that to specify and clarify what is it that the European Union itself understands to be the contents of the term *European values*.

We would recommend:

- To venture into a more comprehensive presentation of the term *European values*, providing information on all components of individual core values;
- To pay greater attention to the components of core values that have been discussed to a lesser extent or weren't discussed at all;
- The term *European values* should be related to the pre-accession funds of the EU that assist the development of member-states and candidate countries, and which are result of the efforts to realize the prescribed values;

- To launch a public debate on those core values and their components which are seen by the Macedonian public as being opposed to the traditional values in Macedonia. That would be an important contribution to the negotiations of the contents of the term *European values*.

We would also like to point out to several more general opportunities:

1. Under the influence of the naming dispute, the media in the Republic of Macedonia report on the European values primarily from the point of view of betrayed ideals and neglect the majority of the core values and their components. The emphasis is placed on the collective rights, at the expense of individual rights which are pushed to the sidelines. In view of the conviction that all core values and components of the term *European values*, prescribed by the Treaty of Lisbon and other normative acts of the EU, viewed and applied as a whole, can contribute to the democratic development of societies and the welfare of the citizens, emphasis needs to be placed on the neglected core values and their components.
2. In view of the realisation that values are always negotiable, it is necessary to direct the media towards promotion of the two-way negotiation process: the values are not created only in the relation EU - nation states but also in the other direction, in the relation nation states - EU. Therefore, the Republic of Macedonia can contribute to raise the prominence of the values it stands for. For that purpose, we need implementation of media policies that would conceive the term *European values* as a two-way process: European values are not set in stone as eternal and universal rules, they are constantly built up and constructed. They are not a one-way relation in which the transfer always goes from EU to RM. RM, as a part of the European cultural space, is equally responsible for the contents and meaning of the term *European values*.
3. The move towards media policy of "accommodating" the experts and informed practitioners to the critical discourse on the term *European values*, through emphasis on the importance of a more balanced strategy in the reporting is necessary.

4. The media need to act from the point of view that:

a) the European values are an important segment of the process of democratisation of society and welfare of the citizens;

b) the European values are also Macedonia values, connected to the traditions, convictions and beliefs of the citizens of Macedonia;

c) the betrayed ideals that are, rightfully, pointed out by the media are yet another reason why we need greater effort to ensure their implementation in the practice of both EU and RM.

Consequently, it is of great importance to adopt the view that we need to move from:

a) the dominant critical discourse on the implementation of the European values to a more balanced approach and comprehensive information on the contents and meaning of the term *European values*. The critical discourse arising from the "betrayal" of ideals is necessary. Without it, there would be no strife for the better. However, the dominant or exclusively critical discourse creates frustration with the citizens, undermines the motivation, leads to apathy, feeling of powerlessness and concern. Instead, we need to build the awareness that the media policies leading to a more balanced approach to this subject-matter will transform the feeling of powerlessness into active citizenship practiced by citizens who demand, from international and national authorities, implementation of declared European values.

b) the discourse that views Macedonia as a victim with discourse that would indicate the possibilities for Macedonia, through policies of its own, to contribute to the process of consistent implementation of the prescribed European values it stands for.





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