Macedonia
Rice

Macedonia was the only country to secede from Yugoslavia upon the end of the Soviet Union in 1991 without ethnic or armed conflict (United States Department of State 2010). The new Macedonian democratic constitution went into effect on November 20, 1991, and created a parliamentary democracy, with both a President and a Prime Minister. The Prime Minister serves as the head of government.

The first elected government was led by Branko Crvenkovski, a member of the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia (SDSM). He ruled in a coalition with the Albanian Party for Democratic Prosperity (PDP), the Liberal Party of Macedonia, and the Socialist Party of Macedonia (SPM). In 1996, the coalition changed to no longer include the LP. This is a minor SOLS change. Crvenkovski was in office until 1998, when the SDSM lost its majority after legislative elections. A new coalition was formed under Ljubco Georgievski, a member of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization-Democratic Party of Macedonian National Unity (VMRO-DPMNE). The entry of Georgievski government in coalition with the Democratic Party of Albanians (DPA) and Democratic Alternative (DA) (International Parliamentary Union 2010) is coded as a SOLS change. In December 2000, Democratic Alternative leaves the coalition, after which The Liberal Party (LP) joined the coalition. We consequently code a minor SOLS change on December 2, 2000 ("Former Opposition" 2000).

Ethnic tensions between Albanians and Macedonians escalated into violence in 2001. A cease- fire was negotiated and the government coalition was expanded to include the major opposition parties—forming a "grand coalition" which would help to end the fighting permanently. The coalition consisted of the Democratic Party of Albanians (DPA), the Liberal Party (LDP), the Party for Democratic Prosperity (PDP), the VMRO, and Social Democratic Union of Macedonia (SDSM). This was coded as a minor SOLS change dated May 13 (Wood and Steele 2001). In November the coalition disbanded again and "a coalition, including DPA, the PDP and several smaller parties, completed its parliamentary term. (Wood and Steele 2001). Georgievski remained Prime Minister throughout this period, and continued in office until the end of his term in September 2002. In those elections, a coalition of the SDSM, the Albanian Democratic Union for Integration (DUI) and the Liberal-Democratic Party (LDP) won the majority and Crvenkovski became Prime Minister once again (SOLS change). This coalition was known collectively as Together for Macedonia (ZMZ).

In 2004, President Trajkovski died in a plane crash and Crvenkovski decided to run in the elections for a new President. When he won the elections, he stepped down from office and was temporarily replaced by his Deputy, Radmila Sekerinska. Sekerinska served in office from May 12 until June 2, 2004, until Parliament confirmed the former Interior Minister, Hari Kostov, as Prime Minister. This is not a SOLS change. Kostov resigned from office in November, and was again replaced by Sekerinska (who was his Deputy as well) between November 18 and December 17. Parliament then confirmed the former Defense Minister, Vlado Buckovski as the new Prime Minister. All of these individuals were members of SDSM, and ruled over the same coalition that Crvenkovski was elected with. Therefore, there were no SOLS changes during this period.

Elections were held in 2006, and a coalition led by VMRO-DPMNE. The coalition included the DPA and the New Social Democratic Party (NSDP), along with some smaller parties.

In January 2016, Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski of the VMRO-DPMNE party resigned following allegations that the government had illegally wire-tapped 20,000 people (Marusic 2016; Associated Press 2016). Emil Dimitriev was nominated to serve as interim prime minister until elections in April (Associated Press 2016). The elections planned for April were postponed and finally took place in December 2016. It took 6 months to form a government, and in May 2015, Zoran Zaev from the SDSM party became prime minister (Marusic 2017). Macedonia is considered a democracy during this period, so we use the political affiliation of leaders to determine whether a SOLS change occurred. Dimitriev is considered an interim leader, so there is no SOLS change from Gruevski and Dimitriev, regardless of their political coalitions. The transition from Dimitriev to Zaev is coded as a SOLS change because Zaev and Gruevski, the leader prior to the interim leader Dimitriev, are from two different parties.

Sources

"Former Opposition Party Joins Macedonian Coalition in Power." 2000. Xinhua General News Service: December 1, 2000.

Associated Press. 2016. "Macedonia Names Caretaker PM Ahead of Early Poll." Oklahoman.com. https://oklahoman.com/article/feed/951990/macedonia-names-caretaker-pm-ahead-of-early-poll (December 17, 2019).

International Parliamentary Union. The Former Republic of Yugoslavia Macedonia. Available at http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/arc/2313_98.htm. Accessed September 26, 2010.

Marusic, Sinisa Jakov. 2016. "Macedonian Prime Minister Confirms His Resignation." Balkan Insight. https://balkaninsight.com/2016/01/14/macedonian-prime-minister-resigns-01-14-2016/ (December 17, 2019).

Marusic, Sinisa Jakov. 2017. "Macedonia Parliament Approves New Gov't after Prolonged Stalemate." Balkan Insight. https://balkaninsight.com/2017/05/31/macedonia-parliament-approves-zaev-s-new-govt-05-31-2017/ (December 17, 2019).

US Department of State. "Country Background Note: Macedonia". Last edited 17 March 2010. http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/26759.htm

Wood, Nicholas, and Jonathan Steele. 2001. "Macedonia rivals join coalition to avert war." The Guardian.

Coded by Meera Krishnan July 6, 2010
Revised by Eelco van der Maat 9/15/2011
Revised by Bryan Rooney 10/17/2012
Edited by Andrew Wood (Rice) 05/23/2014
Edited by Kristin Bryant to include information about 2009-2018 period coded by Alex Pugh on 08/08/2020