

Transcript of the original speeches of evaluators and consultants

Consultant for Diplomacy: An expert analysis on the workshop was presented by a consultant for Diplomacy, which contributed for the understanding of the effects of presenting the survey results aimed for the diplomatic corps, which occurred in July. She emphasized that on the survey presentation before the foreign Ambassadors in Macedonia, Mr. Cvetkoski thrilled them with the different approach that ACTAC had on the survey, with another perspective with which new analysis can be set. As a result of the good reception by the ambassadors, The German embassy in Macedonia had organized a meeting on which the NGO's were supposed to meet the political parties, which was a novelty in the work of the diplomatic corps. A great number of NGO's and all political parties were invited on the meeting, 27 NGO's were present, and almost all parties except of VMRO-DPMNE and DUI. The project presentation was encountered with great interest by the attendees, they were kind of amazed of the concept, because they are not used to the fact that the political parties should listen to the NGO's and their opinion, but on the contrary, the parties are not at all interested and consider the NGO's as unimportant (so this meeting gave another view).

SASO ORDANOSKI added that he was present on that event and that a thorough discussion was opened, he also emphasized that this ACTAC's approach is a very good, because the Diplomats are hungry for these types of analysis, especially when they are not bothered with strictly partisan views and recommended to practice this same approach on the future projects.

PETAR ARSOVSKI stated that the cognitive matrix and the traditional way of thinking that this project is trying to demystify and change is the most important, BUT the hardest thing to do, and it needed to have the greatest volume it could and to last as long as it can, because this society is devastated which is greatly assembled in the project name "The facade holds, the foundation sank". Macedonian citizens have "a facade" and superficial view of the things that escalated here, which displays in their reaction on the "bombs" that Zoran Zaev disseminated publicly, (which is not only Macedonian problem, but globalized).

He highlighted that the messages that the project sent (in their reach) – were very efficient and created a great situation, opposite of a great number of other project mechanisms that aren't efficient at all. The most important thing is that the messages of this project are functioning, and the only thing that needs **to be improved is the dissemination**, but that he doesn't know the volume of the project. He also stated that the projects need to target the opinion leaders, centers that can further disseminate the perception for true critical attitude towards the political and social narrative which appears. In the next phase, the project should include the media more, exactly on this issue that the media must have such critical position based on empirical values, also with the international community, political parties and other people that can further disseminate the project, and once again highlighted that the capacity and volume of the project needs to expand!

He sees the greatest problem in the size of the political crisis in Macedonia, i.e. that it is not big enough, and that it always ends with some infusion that is smearing the façade and we will stay a society that is "an empty glass", that the outside of the glass will be ok, but the inside values will be squeezed out, anaesthetized and passive citizens, completely destroyed society, etc. It is shown throughout the years that the Macedonian citizens will only stand up, and get back to the normal situation of living, when we are on the edge of the abyss, which last time happened in 2001.

SASO ORDANOSKI: "with other words, here raises the question, can one project replace a whole media system, educational system, etc. because the ambition of this project is poetic, and my opinion is that this project, which came from provincial NGO unlike MCMS and SOROS, has overcome its anticipated results and impacts, and to the channels that it

touched, I haven't seen better maximizing of the funds and capacities that it had. Also I would like to state that the terminology that ACTAC provided with this project, is highly used by the opinion leaders, members of political parties, even leaders of political parties on their campaign, the journalists, especially the terms "Socially Structured Defect", "the cognitive dissonance" - demystifying the citizen's justification of the actions of the governmental structure and addressing to it as "coping" instead of stealing, as it is actually. The terminology has entered all channels of the society, but the science needs time to infiltrate and hold its position. There are also entire TV shows about public morality, citizen's trust in the institutions, public discourse of the political parties, etc. "

PETAR ARSOVSKI: maybe we are destroyed as a democratic tissue, are our value system is truly ruined that our country doesn't have any democratic values. In the previous negotiations for a government, publicly already accepted narrative is that the parties already know which of them are going to win concrete polling station and know which people are going to take the high position places, but no one is saying that high quality, educated and skilled people should take those places. And such naked battle for daily points in the politics, normally repercussions upon the people. And he later made a comparison with a situation in Greece, where the citizens have burned the Assembly because of the abolition of the 13th salary, and the government made some instant changes to correspond on that, and not to allow the situation to escalate in even worse. That indicates to the fact that in normal democratic country, the government is the one that should be afraid of the citizens, counter our situation in Macedonia, where the citizens are blind servants of the government.

Then a debate opened concerning which is "the spark" that will revolt the people to the level to come on the streets and really make a change that'll matter.

SASO ORDANOSKI said that it must be on ethnic level, but MISKO IVANOV counter him with arguments that the Macedonian people are ethnic base – tolerant and explained it with the situations in Divo Naselje, Kale, and the last event where Artan Grubi was yelling UCK, UCK on the DUI rally, and no one reacted on that. As a conclusion, he said that the thing that will make Macedonian citizens furious is "picking in their pocket" like raising the taxes, broadcasting fee, ombudsmen to block their bank accounts and so.

Great reaction provoked the question from ALEKSANDAR CVETKOSKI: "How the humor does affects this kind of situation in Macedonia?" – on which they jointly agreed that it makes a great effect and that is very useful.

PETAR ARSOVSKI stated that it is excellent for dismantling an authoritarian structure.

ALEKSANDAR CVETKOSKI then explained what was behind the decision to work with Zevzekmanija and to use our creativity and their talent to humor the government on their TV channel – Kanal 5, to target bigger number of VMRO DPMNE audience, on which everyone agreed that it surely made an impact. He also stated that there are lot of people (by the numbers from the TV) that are changing the channel to Kanal 5 only to see Zevzekmanija's performances, which highly increases the number of people that is reached with the show.

PETAR ARSOVSKI gave the exact number of the citizens that primarily inform about the politics from the social media is only 20 %, so that in Macedonia, the TV is still main provider of political information (Which makes Zevzekmanija's performances a good strategy, along with the sharing of the videos on the social media and on the website too)

PETAR ARSOVSKI: "As some overall recommendations that I would give to you are:

1st To alter the research in order to measure the moral capacity of the society. For example, we see that people now don't have a critical differentiation, but I would have checked whether they accept it as normal. For example: Do you think that it's OK to reject a job if you

got it through connections? - To see whether the people are stimulating that kind of behavior, and

2nd The focus on the targeting of the project should be towards some centers that would disseminate the message, more concrete – the media, political parties, international community, donators, etc.. to invest a bit more in the critical attitude.”

ZORANA GADZOVSKA stated that on the social media, the most effective are short, at most 90 seconds videos, that are sending a concrete and concise message. And a much cheaper version is “Meme”, which has a lot of sarcasm in it, and that they are shared the most on twitter and facebook, and re-tweets, and is also lot easier to measure, because you have concrete numbers of views, shares, comments and feedback, which is a great proposition for our next projects social media strategy.

Afterwards, the topic of discussion was the ratings of each medium, the quality of the ratings (one thing is to watch a TV show, and another is to watch Turkish series on which “Banner news” appears on the screen, with some short political message) and segmentation of target groups.

BOZIDAR: Media interest for the products of the NGO – s is decreased during the campaign period as due to the high cost of political advertising, also for the fact that there were several mega TV projects funded by foreign embassies and major donors, so the access to the TV houses is even more restrictive. You really need to have a strong project product in order to cause media interest. The method of headline and the shock - actions of ACTAC provides a really high score. He counted 55 to 60 ACTAC references in the name of “The facade holds, the foundations sank" by completely different actors, who were not related to the project. It was used by the politicians in the campaign. The term "The sinking of the institutional foundations" he read in social media dozens of times, too. He thinks that it is probably the influence of ACTAC, but he’s not sure of it.

The link to the survey and the measurement of the citizens’ mood for voting was a collateral topic, which poses in the talks, given the nearby parliament elections.

BOZIDAR: In the results of the ACTAC’s survey you can see and citizen’s mood on the issues of morality in the politics and there it is shown that there is (still) quite high percentage of interlocutors, on whom the morality means nothing. Thus, a survey of ACTAC "measured" about 60% "healthy civil tissue." Out of these, about 27% are undecided voters. There have been (as he counted) over 4 TV shows in which politics and morality were treated together. Such thing didn’t happen in the last 5 years, to talk about policy in that context. Probably there is a connection with the project of ACTAC too.

The methodology of the survey wasn’t interesting for the public, but it was widely talked about its methodological quality. Saso Ordanovski considers that it has deterred the parties to emerge with opposing views and that it is better to ignore, than to popularize the survey.

Alexander Cvetkoski gave some data from the University of Bitola and 2 universities in Skopje (University of Southeastern Europe and UTMS, where the methodology is used in the sociometry subjects) and that we have a feedback that the survey was evaluated as very interesting for the media, quite wide, with a strong methodology, which has already made an impact in the university circles.

Zorana Gadzovska: ACTAC should focus more in the future on the Twitter communities and to use the tools for achieving viewership and impact.

Goran Velickovski (Zevzek) was talking about the process of creating videos for the show Zevzekmanija, the problems with the editing, the compromises that must sometimes be made, given that TV Kanal 5 is under a direct control of the ruling party and for the effects it has on specific target groups, traditionally voters of VMRO - DPMNE (measured through a standard panel of TV Kanal 5, TV Alfa and TV Sitel).

On the workshop, it was also discussed for the measuring of the public opinion in Macedonia by the political parties and for those measurements - which are intended for propaganda (via the media) and for the secret ones that serve the parties. In that context, it was noted that the authorities never once seriously confronted with the project findings, but in the TV Shows that followed after the results were announced, pro-government media have organized several TV shows, on which they discussed the effectiveness of institutions, how they are independent (especially the judicial institutions), then the success of the governmental projects and the state borrowings. It (general conclusion) was an "own goal" for the authorities, because they reported a data, which were easily ridiculed, denied, and a series of numbers were countered, the reports of Priebe, the European Commission, the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights and others. Only TV shows that were on TV Sitel and had no opposing opinions weren't ridiculed. Even on the "Sunday's sabotage " on 24 News, the efficiency and independence of the institutions was mocked with comical performance.

As future needs for logical extension of such activities, to our consternation, Peter Arsovski recount the proposal "Waiting for the new dictator" as recommended actions for the future. His implication matched with at least 80% of the activities of this proposal. Afterwards we presented this project and received a promise from everyone that we will have their support if it happens, and Misko Ivanov (Editor of 24 News) agreed on our future appearances of the scope of our work, as well as a room for placing comic performance in the show "Open"(prime time on TV News 24).

Also, we received suggestions and contacts where and how can be placed the comic contents on TV, Twitter, Facebook, and it would be interesting to create a radio dramatizations and sketches in the form of funny TV commercials.

Petar Arsovski suggested to have cooperation with a foreign think – tank, for the sharing of expert views and methodologies. Thus we could be more effective to disseminate the professional information.

Using the well-known media personalities for our projects was assessed as an effective way of working (Saso Ordanoski) but only in the short term, and that if we want a real impact, we must develop our own spokesman service, with at least one public figure.