



## COUNTRY PROFILE

MAY 2009



*Macedonian students from the opposite sides of the country chat online using USAID-provided computer labs and internet access. USAID helped Macedonia become the first wireless country of its size in the world.*

### OVERVIEW

The Republic of Macedonia is an important strategic partner to the United States. Macedonia is a moderating voice in the Balkans region due to its steady economic progress and relative political stability. Since 1993, USAID has worked side-by-side with the Government of Macedonia, the private sector, and educational institutions to further Macedonia's transition to a stable and prosperous democracy. Through USAID, the US has invested nearly \$500 million in programs that have reduced corruption, created new jobs, and improved the quality of education.



**Skopje**

In December 2005, the European Council granted Macedonia European Union (EU) candidate status, but did not set a date for the start of negotiations. Much remains to be done, not only to prepare Macedonia for EU membership but to ensure its capacity to cope with the competitive pressure and market forces within the EU.

### PROGRAMS

#### ACCELERATING ECONOMIC GROWTH

Since independence, the Macedonian economy has moved steadily forward, but serious challenges remain. Corruption, lagging investment, and a low-skilled workforce hinder economic growth. Official unemployment remained high at 35 percent in June 2008, while GDP growth in 2007 was 3.5 percent. To address these challenges, USAID works to improve Macedonia's business environment and stimulate foreign investment, while simultaneously assisting individual industry sectors to become more productive and competitive in global markets.

Key USAID accomplishments in Macedonia have included helping the country gain World Trade Organization membership in 2003 and establishing simplified import and export processes. New laws on public procurement and the introduction of corporate governance standards have made Macedonian businesses more attractive to investors. To facilitate expanded access to financing, USAID established a Development Credit Authority Loan Guarantee Facility worth nearly \$20 million, which will mobilize private capital for businesses and municipalities.

#### MACEDONIA SNAPSHOT

Date of independence:  
September 8, 1991  
Capital: Skopje  
Population: 2 million  
GDP per person: \$3,042

**For more information,  
see [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov)  
Keyword: Macedonia**

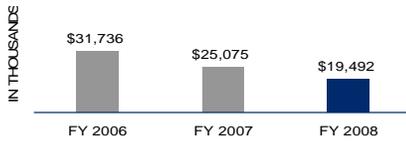


**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

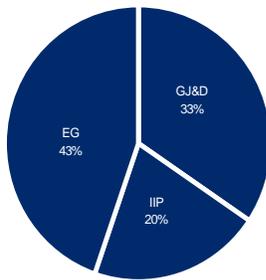
# MACEDONIA

## COUNTRY PROFILE CONTINUED

### USAID ASSISTANCE TO MACEDONIA



### FY 2008 Budget Allocation by Objective



Governing Justly & Democratically: \$6,445,000  
 Investing In People: \$3,950,000  
 Economic Growth: \$8,409,000

Based on FY 2008 Assistance for Eastern Europe and the Baltic States funding.

### PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE

A 2007 public opinion survey found that government corruption is one of the top concerns for Macedonians. To promote better governance, USAID works to increase citizen participation at all levels of decision-making, while helping Macedonian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) become more effective in representing citizens' interests. USAID collaborates with the Parliament to support its development as an independent branch of government, and with political parties to ensure meaningful dialogue with their constituencies. USAID helps Macedonia strengthen the rule of law by improving court functioning through the introduction of modern administrative practices and procedures, and by bolstering the judiciary's capacity to operate in a more transparent, accountable manner.

USAID has played a key role in Macedonia's democratization by helping to enact the legal framework for decentralization and supporting peaceful and fair parliamentary elections. USAID was instrumental in the development and implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy, which led to improved scores on international measures of corruption. USAID assists key ministries to improve their effectiveness and to gain the skills necessary to continue democratic reforms.

### PROVIDING QUALITY EDUCATION TO ALL CITIZENS

Since 2002, USAID has promoted the implementation of modern interactive teaching methodologies and use of information and computer technology (ICT) in the classroom by training teachers, providing digital content, developing maintenance solutions, and introducing innovative uses of ICT. USAID has also helped Macedonia become the first wireless country of its size in the world by providing nationwide internet access, which helped reduce internet pricing by 75 percent.

A brighter future is within reach for disadvantaged Roma students who are now able to access quality education from preschool through university with USAID support for scholarships, tutoring, and mentoring.

To improve the educational environment for teachers and students, and to increase energy efficiency, USAID is investing \$3 million to renovate 120 primary schools in Macedonia by 2011. To date, facilities at 50 schools have been upgraded.

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On behalf of the American people, the U.S. government has provided humanitarian assistance and economic development to those in need around the world since the Marshall Plan.