

Newsletter

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Launch of the Ohrid Institute for Economic Strategies and International Affairs

The Ohrid Institute for Economic Strategies and International Affairs was launched on October 12, 2006. The institute was officially launched by the Prime Minister of Macedonia H.E. Nikola Gruevski. The launch event was gathered over 120 people. It was attended by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Finance, the deputy Minister of Agriculture and a number of members of Macedonian parliament. Also present were the British Ambassador, the Ambassador of Norway, the Ambassador of Slovenia and the Acting Head of Mission of OSCE in Macedonia, H.E. Natalya Drozd.

The Prime Minister, in his speech, said that the Government of Macedonia supports the functioning of such institutions, will cooperate with them and will use them for implementation of its program. He said that the Government has a need of intellectual input and expert research, something which NGOs like the Ohrid Institute specialize in. The Prime Minister said that such NGOs are an excellent place for informal dialogue between the Government, the civil society and the private sector.

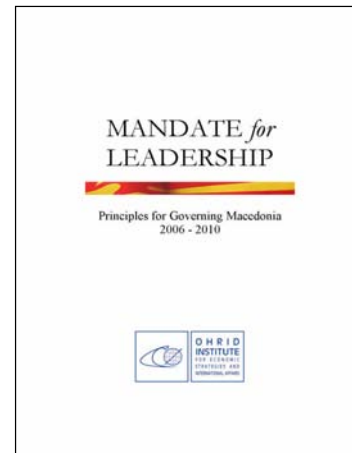
The media reported that “Macedonia received a new independent economic research institute called “Ohrid”, which should promote the universal values of democracy, individual responsibility, free markets and entrepreneurship. Its establishment was assisted by the International Republican Institute and the National Endowment for Democracy”.



Round Table “Mandate for Leadership”

The Launch of the Ohrid Institute was followed by the round table “Mandate for Leadership”. At the round table, prominent members of the Macedonian society were able to discuss the characteristics of the mandate which the new government won on the 2006 parliamentary elections. The Institute published and distributed the background paper “Mandate for Leadership” before the round table.

The outcome was a set of recommendations for the new government covering a wide area of policy issues: economic policy, reform of the public service, Macedonia’s international positioning, the health system, policies for addressing the unemployment etc. The exchange of ideas was evaluated as very useful for the new administration.



The paper “Mandate for Leadership” can be found on Ohrid Institute’s web-site: www.oi.org.mk.

Participation at the 3rd European Resource Bank in Vienna

The Ohrid Institute was presented at the 3rd European Resource Bank, which took place in Vienna from June 29 – July 1, 2006. The European Resource Bank is the largest gathering of libertarian NGOs in Europe. This year it was organized by the Hayek Institute.



The conference has gathered some 250 representatives from various institutes, think tanks and professional organizations, who had hence the opportunity to discuss current policy issues, as well as strategies for pushing forward pro-free market libertarian ideas such as coalition building.

Ohrid Institute, together with USAID and the Ministry of Economy Publishes the Report on Macedonia’s Foreign Trade 2006

During July 2006, The Ohrid Institute published the Report on Foreign Trade of Macedonia 2006. The Report was distributed in August 2006 and is the second such publication. The first one was published by the USAID WTO Compliance Project in 2005 and was received very favorably among the business community, the public service and the academic community.

The report contains materials prepared for the Second Annual Conference on enhancing Macedonia’s exports. It also contains the recommendations put forth by the public sector for the future economic policy of the Government. The Report contains the following materials:

- Analysis of the Macedonia’s Foreign Trade Regime in 2005;
- Analysis of the Export and Import Flows in 2005;
- Analysis of the VI WTO Ministerial Conference held in Hong Kong;
- Possibilities for Incorporating the Macedonian Companies in the Global Supply Chains;
- Public-Private Partnership in the Implementation of the Modern Customs Procedures;
- Recommendations to the Government for Improving Macedonia’s Exports.



Ohrid Institute Establishes Cooperation with Heritage Foundation

The Ohrid Institute, with the help of IRI established cooperation with the Heritage Foundation from Washington, D.C. Ohrid Institute received copyrights to translate in Macedonian and publish a number of Heritage Foundation's publications.

Founded in 1973, Heritage Foundation is a research and educational institute - a think tank - whose mission is to formulate and promote conservative public policies based on the principles of free enterprise, limited government, individual freedom, traditional American values, and a strong national defense. In 2005, Heritage's budget amounted close to 40 million US dollars.



Ohrid Institute Receives a Grant from International Policy Network

As a result of the contacts established with a number of international think tanks at the 3rd European Resource Bank, the Ohrid Institute received its second grant. The small grant was donated by the International Policy Network (IPN) from London, U.K. This grant is the beginning of the cooperation between the Ohrid Institute and IPN.



IPN is a non-governmental, educational and non-partisan organization. Its goal is to encourage better public understanding of the role of the institutions of the free society in social and economic development. IPN achieves this goal by interacting with thinkers and commentators in many countries and across many disciplines. IPN conducts, commissions and disseminates research, directly and indirectly with partner organizations, in the realms of health, environment, trade and development.

Björn Tarras-Wahlberg, Secretary General of the World Taxpayers' Association, to visit Macedonia and Hold Lectures

Björn Tarras-Wahlberg, Secretary General of the World Taxpayers' Association, will visit Macedonia from October 27 until November 1. Mr. Wahlberg will participate in round tables and hold lectures organized by the Ohrid Institute. Prior to becoming Secretary General of the World Taxpayers' Association, he served as a president and founder of the Swedish Taxpayers Association and vice-president of Ericsson Telecom Group. He is author of a number of articles and books.



Macedonia in the "Flat World"

Zoran Jolevski, Ph.D., President of Ohrid Institute

Dick Goldman, until recently, Mission Director of USAID Macedonia, gave me the book "The world is flat: a brief history of the twenty first century" by Tomas Fridman. The leitmotifs of this book are the digital revolution, the contemporary telecommunication corridors connecting personal computers as drivers toward qualitative changes into the competitiveness of national economies, companies and individuals. The author of this book through illustrative examples wants to show how "new" economy is functioning in the space where the arena for competition between individuals, companies and national economies is flat i.e. without barriers. Dick Goldman in his cover letter is emphasizing that "the arena for competing is flat...the whole world is flat...and there are numerous possibilities available for those one ready to be adjusted to the implications rising within the new economy".

The new economy, characterized by the domination of the third sector, is called economy of knowledge. At the time of the industrial revolution, the railway was one of the essential infrastructure pre-conditions for economic growth. Today, high quality communicational infrastructure is the main pre-condition for economic growth.

Information and communication technologies are responsible for the changes in working methods, but also for going beyond the physical barriers. Today it is not necessary that the provider and the user of a certain service are located at the same place. The digital revolution enables them to be on two different sides in the world, but to be able to communicate. Smaller hospitals in the US came up with an idea for reducing the night shift costs by having snapshots of x-rays read by specialists having American licenses, but living in India.

The President Boris Trajkovski realizing the immense advantages that can rise from living in an economy of knowledge and started negotiations with the two largest world economies to help Macedonia become integrated in these processes. China donated over 500 computers, firstly used for equipping computer labs in high schools and afterwards in primary schools. USA, through the USAID mission, implemented a couple of projects in order for these computers to be used most effectively. Some of the projects are: E-schools; E-government, Macedonia connects etc. They worked intensively enacting the Law on Electronic Communications. By realizing the USAID's vision, with Dick Goldman as a head of mission, Macedonia was recognized as the first wireless country in the world. This was announced on BBC and CNN.



Dick Goldman, former USAID
Mission Director

As Tomas Fridman is stating in "The world is flat", leaders in each country should asked themselves "is my country using all the available possibilities, whether is adaptable in a sufficient measure and whether is able to use all the new platforms for competition and cooperation"?

The world is becoming flatter day by day. President Trajkovski is not among us any more and our friend Dick Goldman is retiring from his function in USAID. Macedonia has to be prepared to become a part from this flat world. This country shouldn't stay in the deep hole because of the interests of certain companies or because of lack of vision for further growth. Macedonian citizens, as individuals, are responsible, as well. The new world economy of knowledge allows each and every individual to easily find its own place in the global labor market. Whether we will be competitive greatly depends on our investment in skills and knowledge needed in this market.

The new environment offers many possibilities for Macedonia. It's up to us whether we will use them. The world is changing quickly. We are supposed to follow it and change, as well. Leadership, investments in knowledge, ability to implement the governmental program in the sphere of information and communication technologies are the crucial steps toward the economic growth of the Republic of Macedonia.

IMPRESSUM:

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