

Your contacts:

Chairman of the EU-MK JPC: k.hasipi@sobranie.mk

Members: jpc@sobranie.mk

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Republic of Macedonia on the way to the EU

Joint Parliamentary Committee EU-RM

The Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia and the EU

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Culture

Macedonian legislation harmonized with the EU acquis in October 2011:

- Law on Ratification of the Revised European Social Charter
- Law on Ratification of Amendments of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
- Law amending the Law on Reproductive Material from Forest Trees
- Law amending the Law on Railway Transport Agreements
- Law amending the Law on Air Traffic Debuture and Proprietary Right

On the occasion of 70 anniversary of Anti-Fascist Uprising, award for outstanding achievements in the fields of science, art, economy and other areas of public interest were presented at the Macedonian Parliament



On 3 and 4 November 2011, in the Crystal Hall of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, the 9th Meeting of the Joint Parliamentary Committee - Republic of Macedonia and the European Union took place. The meeting was co-chaired by the two Co-Chairs Mr. Kenan Hasipi and Mr. Jorgo Chatzimarkakis. MPs and MEPs from both Delegations of

9TH MEETING OF JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

the two parliaments took part at the meeting.

Mrs. Teuta Arifi, Vice-President of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia in charge for EU Affairs, Mr. Nikola Popovski, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia, Mr. Robert Liddell, Acting Head of the Delegation of the European Union in the Republic of Macedonia, as well as Mr. Richard Howitt, MEP Rapporteur for the Republic of Macedonia from the Foreign Affairs Committee in the European Parliament, addressed the gathering on the first day of the meeting.

Several topics were discussed at the meeting on the relations between the European Union and the Republic of Macedonia, marking the 10th Anniversary of the Ohrid Framework Agreement in the context of the cultural diversity in the state, reforms of the public administration, judiciary, the fight against corruption and organized crime, and the current visa liberalisation developments, civil society and citizens' participation in decision-making process, the

freedom of expression and media, the economic situation, crisis in the Eurozone and the effects on the Republic of Macedonia, as well as on transport corridors in the state and the use of European funds for their implementation.

After the constructive and fruitful debate at this meeting, **Joint Recommendations** were adopted.



ADDRESS OF VELJANOSKI AT THE FIFTH CONFERENCE OF SPEAKERS FROM WESTERN BALKAN PARLIAMENTS IN BUDAPEST

President Veljanoski addressed the conference, speaking on "Security dimensions of the Western Balkan Cooperation." He underlined that the Republic of Macedonia is an active supporter of the regional initiatives and processes, through which it manifests its political commitment for strong regional cooperation. By using its basic foreign policy postulates - solutions for open issues through dialogue and preparedness for cooperation, Macedonia contributes to the stability in the region, in Europe and in the world in general. The Republic of Macedonia, since its independence, determined the membership in NATO and EU as a state priority, as a result of the support by the society, where over 85% of the citizens support NATO membership. Unfortunately, the Republic of Macedonia did not receive an invitation for NATO membership at the Bucharest Summit, because of the well known reason - the absurd and imposed issue by the Republic of Greece regarding our constitutional name, but is still continuing with its constructive role participating in international missions and operations led by NATO, as an equal partner of the

Alliance, like in NATO ISAF Mission in Afghanistan, as well as in the Common Foreign and Security Policy of EU, on the basis of its political determination to share the priorities of this important policy prior the membership in the Union EU "ALTEA" Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the logistics of the "KFOR" Forces in Kosovo, through the coordinative Centre for Support of the host country in the Republic of Macedonia and in the "UNIFIL" Mission in Lebanon.

Regarding the participation in the EU Operations for crisis management, President Veljanoski underlined that the EU Foreign Relations Council adopted a decision for opening negotiations with the Republic of Macedonia for conclusion of a Framework Agreement, which will regulate future participation of the Republic of Macedonia in crisis operations. The negotiations are in an advance phase, and the Agreement is expected to be ratified by the end of this year. In the framework of the cooperation in the Common Foreign and Security Policy, the Republic of Macedonia continues to align itself with the EU common

declarations, statements and positions.

Republic of Macedonia is providing concrete proposals to implement the priorities of regional initiatives, by presenting a new concept of regional cooperation. The new phase will mean more active role and greater responsibility of the region itself, as well as responsibility of each country, especially in the functionally connected initiatives such as MARRI Center and RACVIAC. By the middle of 2012, the Republic of Macedonia will start the chairmanship of the SEECF thus coordinating the activities aimed at regional cooperation in the spirit of the Charter adopted by the Member States of this wide initiative in the region.

At the end, President Veljanoski expressed confidence that Balkan countries have capacity to build a new Balkans, liberated from the remains of the past, having one goal, similar interests, common future. Additional efforts needed to secure the progress that has been made and to guarantee it for the future. "Our policy must remain proactive, followed by integration of the region in the Euro-Atlantic structure as soon as possible" said President Veljanoski.

“Energy- Development- Democracy: Modelling the New Energy Future of S.E.E.”



Delegation of Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia comprised of: attended the Conference on “Energy-Development- Democracy: Modelling the Future of SEE”, held in Belgrade, Republic of Serbia. This Conference was held in the framework of the Chairmanship of Serbia with the SEECF, and Delegations of the SEE national parliaments, European Parliaments and Representatives from the Council of Europe participate in the Conference.

Our representatives elaborated on the progress made by the Republic of Macedonia and the future government priorities in the energy sector. The New Law on Energy has been drafted in accordance with the obligations from the Stabilization and Association Agreement, as well as the Agreement Establishing the Energy Community, aiming to liberalize the energy markets and create conditions for stable and sustainable energy sector. There is an independent Regulatory Committee on Energy. The Budget of the Republic of Macedonia, every year allocates funds for the special program called Energy Development. The Government adopted a Strategy on the Use of Renewable Resources of Energy in the Republic of Macedonia until 2020. The fact is that Macedonia should work on efficient functioning of the energy market and provide competitive conditions. The potential of energy efficiency in the country and the renewable resources of energy are not properly used and this is the aim of the adopted Strategy.

Membership in the EU Is the Only Alternative for the Republic of Macedonia

The Chairman of the Committee on European Issues of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia Mr. Hajrula Misini, participated at the COSAC Meeting, from 2 to 4 October in Warsaw. The Speakers of the Senate and the Seim of Poland opened the 46th Session of COSAC and addressed

the priorities of the Polish Presidency with the EU, the economic crisis in the EU and the measures needed to be taken to surpass this crisis. During the Meeting, the MP Mesini had informal meetings with the Chairmen and the Members of the Committees on European Issues from the Turkish, Croatian, Slovakian, Montenegrin and Bulgarian Parliament. They have all underlined the need for stronger regional cooperation.

The Chairman Misini had a meeting with his colleague from the Greek Parliament Mrs. Rodula Zisi. The topic of the discussion was the European Integration of the Republic of Macedonia. Both have agreed that the Committees of the both parliaments should cooperate closely in direction of sharing the Greek experience for accession of the Republic of Macedonia to the European Union. Mr. Misini stated that the Membership in the EU is the only alternative for the Republic of Macedonia. The neighbours and friends know each other well and they can assist each other in particular moments. Referring to the Macedonian- Greek relations, both have agreed that they cannot pass by the bilateral issue with our constitutional name, but that the communication should have another dimension and that they need to debate on issues as friends and as neighbours thus raising the level of parliamentary cooperation between the two states.

Pubic Debate on the Draft-Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men



The Women Parliamentarians' Club of the Republic of Macedonia, in cooperation with the National Democratic Institute (NDI), organized a public debate on the topic: “the Draft-law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men”. Representatives from the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the Non-Governmental sector working in the field of gender issues took part in the debate. Positive conclusions came out of the debate to the Draft-Law, proposing provisions to be included on the basis of the Council of Europe Convention, where gender-based violence

is treated, as well as to define gender, with clear distinction in the Law, and to consider the possibility and changes the title of the Law, as Law on Gender Equality. Participants in the debate also called for preparation of acts by the political parties that will include gender sensitive policies for local elections and that all Budgets should be also considered from gender aspect as well. They also called for clear distinction in the law of gender -based discrimination, as well as the indirect discrimination. At the end, they expressed confidence that the Law that will be adopted in the Parliament will take into consideration the conclusions from this public debate.

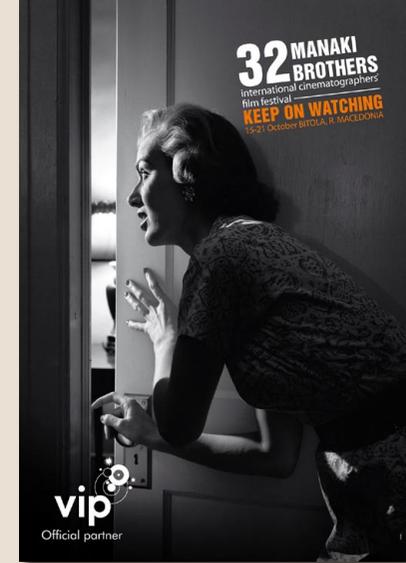
First Workshop from the IPA Project on the Role of National Parliaments in the EU



MPs from various political groups participated in the first IPA-TAP Project (Technical Assistance to Parliament) workshop about the Parliament and EU-related topics. The focus of this workshop was to provide the MPs with a general understanding of the role of national parliaments in the European Union, with special emphasis on the new elements introduced by the Lisbon Treaty. This workshop, held in Boris Trajkovski Hall, was especially aimed at the MPs who are members of the European Affairs Committee, the Foreign Affairs Committee, the National Council for European Integration, and the Joint Parliamentary Committee (European Union-Republic of Macedonia).

Dr. Zoltan Horvath (Project Training Director) and Ms. Inese Birzniece (Project Team Leader) presented short overviews of these topics together with practical examples from their extensive experience in EU affairs working at the Hungarian and Latvian parliaments, respectively, both before and after Hungary and Latvia joined the EU in 2004. The workshop included an exchange of views between the participating MPs and the presenters, especially regarding the current status of Macedonia's preparations for EU accession negotiations and EU membership.

INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL MANAKI BROTHERS - BITOLA



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Editorial Board: Kenan Hasipi, Susannah Gjorceva, Marijana Opašinova Šundovska and Dragan Antonov.

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