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MACEDONIAN LEGISLATION HARMONIZED WITH THE EU ACQUIS IN OCTOBER 2024:

- Law Amending the Law on Combat of Money Laundering and of Terrorism Financing



GERMAN SUPPORT ON THE ROAD TO EU ACCESSION



The President of the Assembly Afrim Gashi, during his working visit to Berlin, met with his counterpart, President Barbel Bas, the Minister for Europe and Climate Ana Lührmann, as well as with MPs Michael Roth, Anton Hofreiter and Dirk Voppel. In the month of the 10th jubilee of the Berlin Process, we remain committed to fulfill our obligations towards fully-ledged membership in the Union, but we need predictability and clearer trajectory of movement during negotiations. Germany has remained one of our strongest partner and supporter on all levels, for which we are deeply grateful, stated Gashi. Particular gratitude was expressed for the Resolution of the German Bundestag, which recognizes Macedonian uniqueness, language and identity. President Bass expressed her personal commitment, as well as the commitment of the deputies in the Bundestag to invest in the progress of our country on the way to the European Union. She also expressed respect and praise for the past successes and steps taken by the Republic of North Macedonia on this path. Your country is an example of a successful multi-ethnic society in the entire region, something that is especially valued by Germany, emphasized Bas. Minister Lührmann clearly voiced her full support to the EU membership, noting that adoption of constitutional changes and reforms in the fundamentals is crucial in this process. She praised the country as an

example with the approach towards tackling bilateral issues with the neighbours.

The Foreign Policy Chair Roth expressed his great disappointment about the current standstill, considering that the Republic of North Macedonia made many concessions and has long since fulfilled the criteria for starting negotiations. However, he requested the adoption of constitutional amendments and the implementation of reforms, all with the aim of improving the lives of citizens in our country and preventing the outflow of highly qualified staff, which has been gaining momentum in the last decade. EU Affairs Chair Hofreiter spoke about the benefits of the Berlin process, welcoming its parliamentary dimension, as a unique opportunity for the direct involvement of the parliamentarians in the adoption of better legal solutions resulting from the decisions made within its framework. The Friendship Group Chair Voppel expressed his support to the process and asked for a balanced approach to all remaining issues.





INAUGURATIVE MEETING OF THE IPPG FOR THE CRIMEA PLATFORM

The Inter-Party Parliamentary Group (IPPG) in support of the Crimean Platform was re-established in this parliamentary mandate. Headed by President Gashi as its Chair. The aim is to continue with the message that human freedoms and rights, the rule of law, internationally recognized borders and territorial integrity must be respected and protected. The Ukrainian Ambassador Larisa Dri also attended the meeting, who expressed gratitude for the support of the country, but also of this group as an added value to the continuous assistance for Ukraine. Members agreed that this IPPG should focus on several main points in its work and action: consolidation of the policy of non-recognition of the attempted annexation of Crimea; condemnation of the violation of human rights, international humanitarian law, threats to the environment, intensified monitoring of the implementation of restrictive measures and their consistent implementation; then surveillance and vigilance for the daily increase in security and hybrid threats; as well as a policy for ensuring freedom of navigation and preventing the blockage of transport corridors.

PARLIAMENTARY DIMENSION OF THE BERLIN PROCESS

A delegation led by the European Affairs Chair Antonio Miloshoski took part in the Parliamentary Dimension of the Berlin Process in the German Bundestag. The aim of this event was to strengthen the parliamentary dialogue and regional cooperation, with emphasis on the implementation of the Action Plan for the Common Regional Market, Green Agenda, green transition for the Western Balkans, enlargement and reform of the EU, the future of regional cooperation and connectivity in the Western Balkans. Dr. Anton Hofreiter, President of the Committee for EU Affairs of the German Bundestag, stressed the role of parliaments in promoting democratic values and advancing political and economic reforms in the region. Balkans. He underlined that the joint work of the countries of the Region within this initiative will not only accelerate the European integration process, but will also create conditions for closer economic and political cooperation, which is in the interest of all parties. At these meetings, the participants agreed that increased economic cooperation will contribute to the economic growth and development of the region, and that it is crucial to improve the connection between the countries of the Western Balkans and to eliminate trade and transport barriers. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase the use of renewable energy sources was also stated in the key future priorities of work at this panel.



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MEETING WITH THE GERMAN MP PETER BEYER

The Vice-President of the Assembly and President of the Committee on European Issues, Antonijo Miloshoski and MPs Marija Miteva, Mile Lefkov and Ivanka Vasilevska, held a meeting with the German MP Peter Beyer. Current challenges and opportunities in the process of integration, with a special focus on regional cooperation in the Western Balkans, were discussed at the meeting. The role of Germany as a key partner in supporting European integration and the importance of cooperation with the EU institutions for the successful completion of reform processes was particularly highlighted. Special attention was paid to bilateral relations with Bulgaria, which continue to represent a serious challenge for the country's European integration. It was emphasized that dialogue and mutual respect remain key factors in solving open issues, which should lead to concrete results for improving relations and unblocking the European path.



IPPG TO COMBAT CORRUPTION ESTABLISHED IN THE ASSEMBLY

The Inter-Party Group to Combat Corruption was re-established in this parliamentary mandate, with unanimously elected Co-Chairs Ljupco Prendzov from the ruling coalition, and Sonja Mirakovska, from the opposition. 53 MPs joined this Group, with its main focus on improving legal solutions in areas where there is a risk of corruption, will monitor the efficiency of the institutions in charge of fighting corruption. They will also supervise institutions in order to increase their transparency and accountability. Involvement and support from the civil society sector and the institutions responsible for the fight against corruption is expected, in order to realize this process jointly.

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PUBLIC DEBATE ON LAWS RELATED TO PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The Committee on Political System and Inter-Community Relations held a public debate on the Draft Law for Administrative Officers, the Draft Law for Public Sector Employees and the Draft Law for Professional Development and Training of Administrative Officers. The aim was to obtain opinions of experts and improve the quality of the proposed legal solutions. The Minister of Public Administration, Goran Minchev, explained that the final goal is to create systemic high-quality and long-term solutions for the creation of professional and high-quality public administration in the service of citizens. Professors, representatives of trade unions, state commissions, centers, public enterprises, agencies, the state auditors, presented their opinions, specific proposals, suggestions and remarks regarding these drafts.

MEDIA LITERACY - CENTER OF GRAVITY IN THE FIGHT AGAINST DISINFORMATION

On the occasion of Media Literacy Day, a public debate was jointly organized in Parliament with the Youth Education Forum. The purpose of the public discussion is to hear the opinions of different parties about media literacy and how young people see it. The importance of media literacy for forming public awareness and developing critical thinking in consuming and disseminating news was underlined. The exposure of accurate information is crucial, since it properly informs participants in the democratic process how to analyze obtained data. The event focused on people with disabilities, for whom media literacy is particularly important, as it affects their ability to access correct information, analyze it and fully participate in society. In that direction, the importance of tools that can facilitate their access to the media, which are not easily available for them, was emphasized.



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IPPG GROUP FOR PEOPLE WITH DIABILITIES

The Inter-Party Parliamentary Group on the rights of persons with disabilities was re-established in the Parliament, with MP Nikola Micevski elected as chair, and Vice-Presidents of the Parliament Vesna Bendevska and Jovan Mitreski, elected as co-chairs of this group. Representatives of the associations of persons with disabilities also addressed the attendees. They asked for accessibility and their involvement in the passing of laws. They sent a message that disability knows no religion, nation, gender, and therefore they should be enabled for political participation, as a significant link in the creation of new policies. The IPPG will continue to raise public awareness and help the needs of these persons to be embodied in specific legal provisions that will guarantee the realization of rights and create conditions for equal opportunities. In the past 20 years, the Group has contributed to the adoption of the Declaration on Political Participation and the Law on Prevention and Protection from Discrimination.



DIGITAL BRIDGE: ASSEMBLY HACKATHON

As part of the Program for Parliamentary Support, a Hackathon was organized, connecting young developers for innovative software solutions, using datasets from the Parliament's Open Data Portal, the National Open Data Portal and the Open Finance Portal. The event motivated participants to use open data to develop software solutions that would be used to address various societal challenges. Digitization is particularly significant for the Parliament as an institution that constantly strives to keep pace with the new age of rapid technological changes and global challenges.

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