



MONTHLY PROGRESS BRIEF ON THE EUROPEAN INTEGRATION PROCESS OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA FOR MARCH, 2010

I. POLITICAL CRITERIA

Assembly

The National Council on Euro-integration during the course of March held a public debate on the Multi-annual Financial Agreement under IPA for the Vth Component.

The Assembly continued with its activities on the establishment of the Parliamentary Institute. Furthermore, a working group has been established for regular and permanent communication with the European Center for Parliamentary research and documentation.

The Committee on Inter-Ethnic relations continued with its work, and during the course of March held a session on the Information prepared by the Ombudsman on the equitable representation and non-discrimination.

Improvement of the Election process

The Steering Committee of the Working Group for addressing the recommendations in the final report of the OSCE/ODIHR on the Presidential and Local Elections 2009 held its third meeting at the end of March.

A complete review of the work was made and further directions were concluded. Regarding the legislative improvements the working group has managed to review the entire Electoral Code and the recommendations of the OSCE/ODIHR and The Venice Commission were taken into consideration and appropriately implemented. The two-day seminar with experts on out of country voting organised by the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje was very helpful in providing exchange of experiences and good practices. The experiences of the experts from the countries that have conducted out of country voting will contribute to the drafting of the provisions for out of country voting in the Electoral Code.

The capacity of the election administration will be further strengthened with the implementation of the Action Plan drafted by the Working Group. Mandatory training for all stakeholders in the election process is one of the many envisaged active measures to address the shortcomings of the election administration noted so far. The alleged cases of intimidation were also addressed by the Working Group, whereby an



Action Plan with planned actions that include legislative amendments, awareness-raising educational campaigns and trainings for the stakeholders in the election process was developed.

Regarding the revision of the Voter's List, the Ministry of Justice is analysing the results from the two pilot municipalities (Vinica, Gostivar) and on the basis of the founding the Ministry will issue the guidelines for the further revision of the Voter's list,

Government

During the course of March, the Deputy Prime Minister in charge of EU Affairs held the 16th session of the Working Committee on European integration (WCEI), and discussed the status of NPAA implementation. Prior to this session, the State Secretary of the Secretariat for European Affairs chaired the 2nd session of the Subcommittee of the WCEI on the adoption of the envisaged laws and bylaws for the first quarter of 2010. So far, according to the NPAA dynamics, 24 laws have been published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, 21 laws are in parliamentary procedure, whereas 14 are in governmental procedure (including the laws in inter-ministerial consultation).

The Government of the Republic of Macedonia adopted Decision on reference to EU *acquis* in national by-laws transposing EU *acquis* ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No. 38/2010). This Decision introduces a novelty all bylaws that transpose EU *acquis*, to have a reference to the transposed EU *acquis* marked with footnote at their headings. As exception, having in mind the particular nature of chapter 12 of the EU *acquis* (Food Safety, Veterinary and Phytosanitary Policy), the reference will be applied as footnote at the end of each article of the EU *acquis* transposing bylaw.

Decentralisation

On 12 March the WG on decentralisation held its sixth meeting where the AP for implementation of the revised 2010 Program on decentralisation was discussed as well as the planned financial resources having in mind the intentions of the MLSG to organise donors meeting. On the meeting the 2010 Action Plan of the WG for decentralisation was discussed as well. By the end of the month, 72 municipalities entered into the 2nd phase of decentralisation, whereas 12 are using short-term credit lines (without interest rate) to de-blockade the financial accounts and through inter-municipal cooperation to secure administrative capacities for financial work.

Public Administration Reform

In the period January – March 2010, 50 public announcements for 298 civil servants have been published. In the period January – March 2010 22 disciplinary procedures were



initiated (11 procedures in the central government and 11 in the local self-government). As a ground for initiation of disciplinary procedures for establishing disciplinary liability of civil servants, 28 violations of the official duty are pointed out:

- failure to perform or conscienceless, impolite, untimely or negligent performance of official duties (10 violations)
- expressing and advocating personal political beliefs when performing official tasks (1 violation)
- refusing to provide or providing incorrect data to the state bodies, legal entities and to citizens, if the provision of data is prescribed by law (1 violation)
- refusing to perform the official tasks pertaining to the job he/she is assigned to or refusing orders given by the minister, or the head of the body referred in Article 3 paragraph (2), or by a managerial civil servant (8 violations)
- abusing the status, or overstepping the authority when performing official tasks (6 violations)
- putting personal financial interests in conflict with the position and status of a civil servant (1 violation)
- insulting or violent behaviour (1 violation)

In the period January – March 2010, 102 complaints were submitted to the Second Instance Commission of the CSA.

In the period January – March 2010, according to the evidence of the Civil Servants Registry and additional checks performed, there were no cases of unlawful promotions and demotions of civil servants in the state administration bodies.

Ongoing is the procedure for performance assessment of civil servants for the year 2009 which is expected to be completed until 30 April by submitting the performance assessment reports to the CSA.

Upon the entrance into force of the latest amendments of the Law on Internal Affairs, around 1000 police officers who reached 40 years of service, regardless their age were retired on a pension.

On 22nd of March, the amendments to the Civil Service Law entered into force. Prior to this. All institutions subject to the Law made correction to their Acts on Systematisation to fulfil the requirements of the Law.

Human rights and protection of minority rights

Rulebook on how to perform prevention and Methodology for conducting prevention by



the Ombudsman as National preventive mechanism is in the process of preparation. The Ombudsman will continue with the visits of the police station as a part of the working programme for 2010 in order protection of the rights of the arrested and detained persons to be preserved. These visits are projected for May - June.

Information containing general directions for improvement of the implementation of the Strategy and Decade for Roma inclusion was adopted by the Government. In regard with the European Summit on Roma inclusion which will take place in Córdoba (Spain), from 8th - 9th April 2010 inter-governmental meeting was held on 1 April 2010 in Skopje. The aim of the meeting was discussing and coordinating the positions and sending joint message from the Western Balkan governments for the Roma issues.

During March started the implementation of the IPA 2007 Project - Support of the Secretariat for implementation of the Framework Agreement (SOIFA) in the implementation of the Strategy for equal representation. The Project purpose is revising of the Strategy and the Action plan from it. Steering Committee for monitoring the implementation of the Project was formed.

The preparation of the Action Plan for ensuring conditions for usage of the Law for use of Languages spoken by the ethnic groups represented with more then 20% on local and national level is ongoing.

The SIOFA realised one employment (advisor responsible for monitoring the process of integration).

Regional cooperation

The Republic of Macedonia continued with its proactive role in the *regional cooperation initiatives*. Macedonian delegation participated in the SEECP meeting of ministers of transport (Izmir, 11 March 2010), where a Declaration on the development of a new common vision for transport sector within the SEECP region was adopted. Macedonian representatives participated at the Regional Conference for fight against corruption which took place on 16-18 March 2010 in Bulgaria.

High Level Macedonian delegation, headed by the Prime Minister, participated at the Conference "Together for European Union: Contribution of the Western Balkans to the European Future" (Brdo, 20 March 2010), hosted by the Prime Ministers of Slovenia and Croatia. The Balkan state leaders in attendance, in the Joint Declaration, welcomed the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, called on the EU to maintain the enlargement process high on its agenda, reaffirmed the commitment for implementing reforms for EU membership, stressed the importance of continuing the EU visa liberalisation towards all Western Balkan countries, as well as the commitment to the promotion of good neighborly relations and investing best efforts in addressing open bilateral issues in a



European spirit.

Macedonian delegation took part at the 6th Ministerial Conference on border security cooperation in SEE (Belgrade, 5 March 2010). At 7th Ministerial Review Conference on border security and cooperation that took place in Albania, with participation of ministers of interior/security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, the parties committed to hold regular joint meetings, incorporate risk analysis methodology when carrying out border checks, implement anti-corruption programmes in border police services, establish direct telephone lines and radio-communication networks at border crossing points etc.

Concerning the *bilateral relations with the neighbouring countries*, bilateral political contacts with *Greece* continued. The Prime Ministers of Macedonia and Greece met on 25.3.2010 in Brussels, wherein the Macedonian side reaffirmed the commitment to the intensification of the UN mediated talks and to the continuation of its pro-active and constructive approach in this process.

The official visit of the Macedonian Foreign Minister to *Kosovo* on 15.3.2010 reaffirmed the joint commitment to fostering bilateral cooperation that will further contribute to the stability and economic development of the region, pointing out economy and energy as priorities of mutual interest. Macedonia supported the European integration of Kosovo and offered its experiences in the visa liberalization process. The visit was marked with the official opening of the Embassy of the Republic of Macedonia to Kosovo.

Concerning the relations with *Serbia*, the Interior Ministers of Macedonia and Serbia met to discuss the increase of asylum seekers from the two countries in certain EU member states following the establishment of the EU visa free regime and the measures for overcoming this phenomenon.

Concerning the relations with *Albania*, the Police Directors of the Ministries of Interior of the two countries met on 10.3.2010 and agreed the establishment of two joint police operative teams to work on fighting all forms of organized crime.

Macedonian Foreign Minister's visit to *Bosnia and Herzegovina* on 8.3.2010 reaffirmed the Macedonian support to the process of European integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the joint commitment to the promotion of bilateral cooperation, particularly in the field of economy, as well as to regional cooperation.

The visit of the Macedonian Foreign Minister to *Croatia* on 9.3.2010 confirmed the good bilateral relations in different areas.

The Turkish Foreign Minister paid an official visit to Macedonia on 25-26.3.2010. All



aspects of bilateral relations were discussed and views on regional and international issues of common concern, with a particular reference to the developments in the Balkans. The visit was marked with the official opening of the Turkish Consulate in Ohrid and the inauguration ceremony of the Yunus Emre Cultural Centre.

II ECONOMIC CRITERIA

Inflation

The inflation rate in March 2010, measured by the Consumer Price Index amounts 0.7% relative to the same month of the previous year, which is a continuation of the trend of increase in consumer prices commenced at the beginning of the year.

Increase of the general price level is mostly due to the rise in prices in the category Housing by 4.5%, arising from the increased prices for heating and lightning. At the same time, relatively high growth in the CPI of 4.2% was registered in the category of Transport and communication services, while in the Hygiene and health and Beverages and tobacco category growth in prices was 1.6% and 0.5%, respectively. The drop in prices in the food category was 3.5%, while the prices in Restaurants and hotels reduced by 0.5%.

On a quarterly level, the CPI increased by 0.5%, which represents a reversal in the falling trend observed in the previous quarters.

Economic activity

GDP in the fourth quarter of 2009 registered growth of 1.2% thus meeting the expectations for recovery of the Macedonian economy from the global crisis. In the last quarter of 2009 positive growth was noted in almost all economic sectors. The largest increase of 7.4% was noted in construction sector and in financial intermediation (5.9%) Growth in agriculture was 3.7%, while industry, public administration and trade noted an increase of 3.5%, 3.3% and 2.4%. Reduction of the activity was registered only in sectors: Hotels and restaurants (-4.1%) and transport and communications (-3.8%). From the expenditure side of GDP in the fourth quarter of 2009 the final consumption registered negative real growth rate of 2.1%. Exports and imports of goods and services realised decline of 3.7% and 7.3%, while only gross investment achieved growth of 0.3%. Net export had a positive contribution to GDP growth, and along with the investment growth prevented GDP to decline severely.



External sector

In the first two months of 2010 the foreign trade (in Euros) decreased by 5.5% compared to the same month last year. In this period, exports registered significant growth of 14.5%, while imports decreased by 14.3%, thus contributing the trade deficit to decline by 118 million euros relative to the same period of the previous year. In relative terms, the trade deficit shrank by 63%, mainly due to the increase of the positive trade balance in the exchange of iron and steel. Import coverage of export in the first months amounts 58.9% which represents a significant positive shift on annual level. Main groups of products with largest share in the export structure are clothing, iron and steel, metal ore and oil, while in import structure these are oil, textile yarn, iron and steel, road vehicles and medical and pharmaceutical products.

Analysed by regions, EU is the most important trade partner of the Republic of Macedonia with 53.5% share in the international trade volume (63.7% in the exports and 47.5% in the imports). Exports to the EU rose by 17.6%, while imports declined by 17.1% relative to the same period of the previous year. The most important export partners of the Republic of Macedonia are Germany, Kosovo, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Serbia, while the most important import partners are Russia, Germany, Serbia, Greece, Italy and China.

Public finances

In February 2010, the total revenues of the consolidated budget added up to Denars 8.904 million (2,1% of the GDP), which represents 4.4% smaller realization relative to the same month last year. Realized tax revenues in this period were in the amount of Denars 4.551 millions, thus representing a smaller realization of 4.3% compared with same period last year.

In February 2010, the total expenditures of the Central budget added up to Denars 10.693 millions (2,5% of the GDP), which is 3% lower relative to the same month in 2009. In the structure of the realised total expenditures, current expenditures participate with 90.1% and are lower by 5.2% relative to the same month last year, while capital expenditures participate with 9.9% and are higher by 21.5%. Hence, in February 2010 a consolidated budget deficit of Denars 1.789 million was realised, representing 0,4% of GDP, while the Central budget deficit is Denars 1.698 millions (0,4% of GDP).

Real estate cadastre developments

By the end of March the percentage of established real estate cadastre is 96.80% of the territory of the Republic of Macedonia. In parallel with the process of establishing the real estate cadastre the number of transactions in the Agency for Real estate cadastre is increasing. POS terminals have been set up at the front desks of all of the real estate



cadastre departments, as well as the real estate cadastre headquarters in Skopje thus enabling cash free payment for the users of the services of the cadastre. This activity is the first step towards achieving availability of all geo-spatial data over the Internet, i.e. selling online.

3.01 FREE MOVEMENT OF GOODS

The Law on market surveillance was adopted on 12th of April, 2010. Part of the Chapter I-definitions, complete Chapter III-framework for market surveillance and products control and Chapter IV-CE marking from the Regulation no. 765/2008 of the European Parliament for accreditation and market surveillance are transposed in the Law. The competences of the inspection bodies from many state institutions and the Customs Administration of the Republic of Macedonia dealing with market surveillance referred to industrial products, as well as the general principles for the CE marking, are defined in this law. The goal of the Law on market surveillance is to establish a framework and coordinative system of the state bodies for market surveillance in line with the Regulation 765/2008/EC. This law is in parliamentary procedure.

3.02 FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT FOR WORKERS

The Law amending the Law on employment and work of foreigners was adopted (Official Gazette of Republic of Macedonia no. 35/10).

An office was equipped for EURES.

The procedure for preparation of the Rulebook on the issuing of electronic health card is ongoing.

3.03 RIGHT OF ESTABLISHMENT AND FREEDOM TO PROVIDE SERVICES

On March 19th 2010, in the premises of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia a workshop on “Harmonisation of national legislation with the Directive 2005/36/EC” took place. During this event, Slovenian experts presented experiences of their country in transposing and implementing the Directive of mutual recognition of professional qualifications as well as Action-plan for National Framework for professional qualifications in Macedonia. Representatives from relevant state institutions, universities and chamber of commerce’s attended this event.

3.05 PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

Public Procurement bureau started to implement the plan on Education of the



contracting authorities and economic operators. During the course of March, first one week trainings took place, attended by 20 representatives of the contracting authorities and economic operators. Within the same time-frame, in cooperation with USAID four trainings for using the electronic system of public procurement took place. Two trainings intended for the representatives of local self-government; including one training for the health institutions and one for economic operators.

3.06 COMPANY LAW

The Law amending the Company Law was adopted and published in Official Gazette (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 42/2010). The main objective of these amendments to the Company law was to accomplish complete harmonization with the Directive 32007L0036 on the exercise of certain rights of shareholders in listed companies i.e. companies with special notification obligations in accordance with *the Law on Securities*. The provisions of this Law related with the Directive will enter into force on January 1st 2011, as companies will need time to acknowledge the new provisions and accordingly adjust to the new legal framework. Other minor amendments were included related to the Transparency Directive and the Second company law Directive. The policy behind these legal amendments was to provide electronic submission of the statement for the activities undertaken in order to legally establish a company before the company is registered in the trade registry. This is in line with the objectives of the Directive 32003L0058 (article 3). The Law was aligned with the 2nd Company Law Directive provisions with respect of the pre-emptive rights, supplementing the previous Company Law amendments of 2008 when these rights were initially introduced in the Company law. Additional intervention was foreseen due to the absence of adequate provisions for the transposition of the Article 29 Paragraph 2 Subparagraph b, in regard to the exercising the right of pre-emption within separate classes of shares.

The analysis of the Eighth Directive on statutory audit of annual accounts and consolidated accounts 32006L0043 was completed, necessary for the planned alignment of the Law on Audit with the Directive.

3.07 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW

The Law on Copyright and Related Rights entered in Governmental procedure.

Information to the Government of the Republic of Macedonia was prepared for the implementation of the measures of the Strategy for Intellectual Property with Proposal for revised text of the Action Plan.

Within the Program for continuous professional training of judges and public prosecutors, organized by the Academy of judges and public prosecutors, in March 2010 one specialized training was realized on "Criminal legal protection of industrial property rights". 20 participants took part in this training, out of which 12 judges acting in criminal



cases and 8 public prosecutors from the area of the Appellate Court in Stip. Within the project for technical assistance from the Customs and Tax Administration of Netherlands and with financial support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Netherlands, a study visit was organized in Amsterdam, Netherlands for representatives of the Coordinative Body for Industrial Property, the Customs Administration of the Republic of Macedonia and the State Office of Industrial Property in the period from 16.03.2010 till 18.03.2010. The purpose of the study visit was to get acquainted with the Netherlands experiences regarding the implementation of the system of protection of intellectual property rights. On first of March representatives from the State Office of Industrial Property took part on a meeting of the Administrative Council of EPO in Munich. From 04-06 March representatives from the State Office of Industrial Property visited the Patent Institute of the Republic of Turkey and attended the event "Turkish Patent Awards".

On 16 and 17 March in Munich, Germany, representatives from the State Office of Industrial Property participated on the 123 session of the Administrative Council of EPO. The Coordinative Body for Intellectual Property in March conducted two coordinated actions on 6 entities (1 natural person and 5 legal persons). In these actions 35 items infringing the rights of industrial property were seized. The State Market Inspectorate imposed one mandatory sentence while the Ministry of Interior submitted one criminal charge. The Public Revenue Office issued one coupon for payment of fine in amount of 1000 euros in denar counter value for the legal entity and 500 euros in denar counter value for the responsible person in the legal entity and one coupon for payment of fine in amount of 200 euros for the performer of the activity. The coordinated actions were conducted in Skopje.

3.09 FINANCIAL SERVICES

The project for creation of centralised electronic data base has been realised. With this system the efficiency of supervisory and regulatory function of the National bank has been increased, allowing easier data access and adequate recording.

The Securities and Exchange Commission this month revoked the licenses of three brokerage houses, and of one fund Management Company. As well, it issued a license to one bank as authorised securities market's participant, to two investment advisors, to one broker and issued an approval for a procedure for taking over of ordinary shares issued by one domestic bank to a foreign bank.

3.10 INFORMATION SOCIETY AND MEDIA

The Ministry of Transport and Communications drafted a document on establishing a



public national Macedonian point for internet exchange. A wide working group was established for this purpose and the consultation process is instigated.

Also, a working group was established on horizontal and vertical alignment of legislation related to construction, spatial and physical planning and electronic communications infrastructure.

The Agency for Electronic Communications amended the Rulebook on bitstream access (price wise, implementation deadlines and quality level of delivered service) and at the end of March it was published for public consultation.

Based to its annual working programme, AEC conducted the relevant market analysis (markets 1-6, 7-13-14, 11, 12, 16 и 17). The final documents were prepared and published on the website. They are conducted in correlation to the EC recommendation on relevant markets 2007 (2002/21/EC). Based on the findings of the market analysis, the Agency shall issue Decisions to the significant market power operators and the Decision on market analysis will suitably be amended defining which markets will be submitted to ex-ante regulation. For the markets 11 and 12 the findings were sent to the Competition Authority and will afterwards be open for public consultation. As for the markets 7, 13 and 14 on 26.03.2010 the analysis was published on the Agency website.

The cost model of the relevant wholesale prices based on the bottom-up LRIC methodology is in final stage. Memorandum for cooperation was signed with the regulatory bodies of Kosovo and Bulgaria, and the one with Croatia is on the way.

Information on the final report of the supervisory board for monitoring of the feasibility study for the E-112 emergency call system of Republic of Macedonia defining the future installation of the system on early warning and larting the citizens of RM is in government procedure. Preparatory activities for financing of the project are instigated.

Upon the adoption of e-Government straggly, activities for creation of an Action plan to it are underway. Ongoing is upgrading of several e-Gov services for the citizens and the companies.

Ongoing is implementation of e-Gov system for document management in the state institutions. Trainings have been finalized for the following institutions: Service for general and common issues, Secretariat for European Affairs, General Secretariat, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, Legislative Secretariat and Ministry of Information Society, whereas ongoing are the trainings for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Also, ongoing are trainings on archiving in the Ministry of Information Society.

The process of developing e-forms for the services offered by state intuitions is ongoing. The purpose of this project is enabling the citizens of obtaining governmental services through web. The institutions involved are: State statistics Office, Health Insurance Fund, Employment Service Agency, Public Revenue Office, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy,



Ministry of Justice, and Ministry of Interior.

LAN networks have been installed and free internet access to 11 student dormitories in Macedonia is provided.

Within the project *Computer for every pupil* currently ongoing are activities on procurement, localization and expert control over the electronic content in education.

The Broadcasting Council is conducting regular monitoring on the public service broadcaster's programme services, as well as on the programmes of the commercial broadcasters. Based on the irregularities found, the BC sentenced appropriate measures.

The Broadcasting Council issued adopted a decision for issuing;

- 3 licenses for broadcasting on local level (general format through cable network) for the area of Debar in Albanian language, Prilep and Struga in Macedonian language,
- one license for broadcasting (general format) through satellite;
- 6 licenses for broadcasting of radio programme services, on local level through terrestrial transmitter for the area of Kumanovo, in Albanian language, Kicevo in Macedonian language, Kicevo in Albanian language, Kocani in Macedonian language, Struga in Macedonian language, and Gostvar in Albanian language.
- one licence for non-profit broadcasting institution on local level in the area of Bitola.

3.11 AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

In respect to the Horizontal Issues, the technical equipment for the Paying Agency (Agency for Financial Support on Agriculture and Rural Development) for field control is in the final stage of procurement).

Furthermore, an informational media campaign for farms about registration in the Farm Register has been concluded. In cooperation with the State Statistical Office, for the purpose of FADN, the Farm Register Typology has been completed.

The Law on Agriculture and Rural Development has passed the first reading in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia.

Also, in regards to the Common Market Organization, the Law on Wine is in the second reading in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia

In accordance with the Rural Development Policy, the Multi Annual Financial Agreement 2007-2010 for the IPA component V – Rural Development has been signed.

Finally, in respect to the Quality Policy, the text of the Draft Law on Quality on Agricultural Products has been finalized and the Draft is in the inter-service consultation.



3.12 FOOD SAFETY, VETERINARY AND PHITOSANITARY POLICY

In respect to the General Issues, the new Law on Food Safety was withdrawn from the Assembly procedure, due to the need of further improvement of the text, regarding the repetition of competences and further approximation of the Hygiene Package from the acquis.

In regards to the Veterinary Policy and Control on Border Inspection Posts - BIPs, the Rulebook on establishments, equipment and staff on the veterinary Border Inspection Post has been adopted and published in the Official Gazette no. 40/2010. Also, the Law on Veterinary Medicine Products has been adopted and published in the Official Gazette no. 42/2010.

Furthermore, regarding Placing on the Market of Food and Feed, the secondary legislation determining certain animal by-products as specific risky material in relation to TCE was published in the Official Gazette no. 26/2010.

In addition, the Monitoring Program for Food Safety has been adopted and published in the Official Gazette no. 44/2010.

Also, the Law on Animal Feeding Food Safety was withdrawn from Assembly procedure, due to the need of further improvement of the text, regarding the repetition of competences and further approximation of the Hygiene Package from the acquis.

In respect to the Phytosanitary Policy, the Rulebook on the necessary documentation for assessment of the active substance has been adopted and published in the Official Gazette no. 28/2010.

3.13 FISHERIES

The Law Amending the Law on Fisheries and Aquaculture has passed the first reading in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia.

3.14 TRANSPORT POLICY

In the area of hazardous material transport safety and strengthening of the administrative capacity, exams for “Councilors for hazardous material transport safety” are conducted regularly and 20 applicants have passed the exams.

In the area of digital tachographs implementation, the Government adopted National policy for implementation of digital tachographs and it has been communicated with the European Commission.

The agreement for international road transport of passengers and goods between Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro has been signed by the transport Ministries of both countries on 31st of March 2010. The agreement provides framework to regulate the



access on the joint road transport market by regulating the transport of passengers and goods between the countries concerned.

The Law on Railway system and the Law on Railway safety have been approved by the Government and they are currently in Parliamentary procedure. The laws aim at further alignment with the railway acquis and incorporate the latest recommendations from the assessment mission on railway held in November 2009. Annual working plan for 2010 of Macedonian railways has been adopted and published in Official Gazette 08/10.

The Law amending the Law on Aviation has been submitted in parliamentary procedure. The amendments will address the remaining issues related to the obligations deriving from the first phase of implementation of the European Common Aviation Agreement (ECAA) and the Civil Aviation Agency shall be fully functionally and financially independent regulatory body.

The Regulation on training, examination, licenses and authorizations for Air Traffic Controllers has been drafted by the Agency for Civil Aviation and submitted in inter institutional consultation.

The Rulebook on number and composition of ships crew members, according to type and characteristics, purpose, type and the area for water navigation”, has been prepared and submitted to inter institutional consultation.

The Government of the Republic of Macedonia on its session held on 30.03.2010 adopted the proposal for Initiating negotiations for Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Macedonia and Qatar, with proposals on negotiations basis and preliminary positions and delegation composition for establishment of regular air traffic.

Turkish company “TAV”, on 01.03.2010 has officially undertake concession management with “Alexander the Great” and “St. Apostol Pavle” airports in Skopje and Ohrid and new cargo-airport construction in Stip, in accordance with Concession Agreement signed on 24.09.2008. On 10.03.2010 the Civil Aviation Agency issued Licence for air-navigation services provider No. MK-01/2010ANSP to M-NAV, state owned joint stock Company for providing air-navigation services.

3.15 ENERGY

In order to enhance the security of supply in the field of oil stocks, the Mid-term Programme for establishment of compulsory reserves of oil and oil derivatives, construction, maintenance and buying of storage capacities 2010-2015 has been adopted by the Government. According to the article 4 of the Law on compulsory reserves of oil and oil derivatives (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 84/08), the



Directorate for compulsory reserves of oil and oil derivatives prepared the programme. The global aim of the program is supply of oil derivatives, where the total quantities of mandatory reserves for each type of oil derivative should reach coverage of realized average daily consumption of that oil derivative for a period of 90 days in the previous calendar year (or 25% of the total realized consumption of the relevant type of oil derivative in the previous calendar year). The indicators for the realized average daily consumption of oil derivatives in 2009, for each derivative separately are applied for programme preparation. According to the Mid-term Programme, in the 5 year period, the following will be settled:

- The type, quantity and value of oil derivatives;
- The manner of storage and renewal and costs for storage and renewal of compulsory oil and oil derivatives reserves;
- The amount of funds for financing the mid-term program.

In March 2010, the Energy Regulatory Commission has brought the following decisions:

1. Three Decisions for highest selling prices for different oil derivatives on every fourteen-days period in accordance with the Methodology for establishment of the prices for different oil derivatives as prescribed by the Annex D of the Agreement for purchase and sale of shares and for concession of the Oil Refinery AD “OKTA” – Skopje, signed between the Government of the Republic of Macedonia and the share hold company “EL.P.E.T. - Balkanike” as a strategic investor;
2. Decision for approval the price for performing the energy activities transmission of natural gas and operation with the natural gas transmission system for regulated period 2010-2012 to the company AD GAMA-Skopje;
3. Decision for approval the price for performing the energy activity supply with natural gas to the tariff customers connected to the natural gas transmission system for the regulated period 2010 -2012 to the company AD MAKPETROL Skopje ;
4. Decision for approval the price for regulated period for performing energy activity distribution of the natural gas, operation with the natural gas distribution system and supply with natural gas to the tariff consumers connected to the natural gas distribution system to the Directorate for Technological Industrial Development Zones – Skopje;
5. Decision for issuing the license for performing the energy activity production of electricity to the company DIKOM DOOEL – Dabniste; and
6. Decision for issuing the license for performing the energy activity trade with electricity to ELEM TREJD DOOEL Skopje.



In the framework of the IPA Twinning Project for institutional strengthening of the Energy Regulatory Commission, the external kick –off workshop has been organized on 25 March 2010 on which the interested stakeholders took part. Also, the representatives of the ERC took part on the 2nd Steering Committee of the project.

In the field of renewables, the Directive 2001/77/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 September 2001 on the promotion of electricity produced from renewable energy sources in the internal electricity market has been transposed into the following by-laws:

1. Rulebook on the manner and procedure for setting and approving the using of feed-in tariff for the buying and selling of electricity produced from power plants using biomass (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 44/2010);
2. Rulebook amending the Rulebook on the manner and procedure for setting and approving the using of feed-in tariff for the buying and selling of electricity produced from power plants using biogas got form biomas(Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 44/2010);
3. Rulebook amending the Rulebook on the manner and procedure for establishing and approving feed-in tariff for the purchase and sale of electricity produced from photovoltaic systems (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 44/2010);

On 26th of March 2010, the Energy Regulatory Commission has brought the “Tariff system for amending the Tariff system for sale of natural gas to tariff customers” (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia”, no.43/2010).

Also, the Energy Regulatory Commission has brought the following decisions:

1. Decision for approval the using of feed-in tariffs for sale of electricity produced from power plants using biomass;
2. Decision for approval the using of feed-in tariffs for sale of electricity produced from power plants using biogas from biomass;
3. Decision for approval the using of feed-in tariffs for sale of electricity produced form photovoltaic systems.



In the field of energy efficiency, the Rulebook describing the manner of acquiring the status of preferential producer of electricity produced by highly efficient combined plants and the content and form and the manner of keeping a register of preferential producers of electricity produced by highly efficient combined plants has been adopted and published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 40/2010.

In order to strengthen the activities for climate changes mitigation, under the UNDP Project: Mitigation Climate Change through improving energy efficiency in public, the following activities have been realized:

- Workshop for the local self governments (124 participants and 13 mayors)
- Signed Memorandum of Undersigning between the Distribution system operator, EVN Makedonija and UNDP, for exchange of electricity consumption data in the public sector and raising of the public awareness.
- Collected the basic data for energy consumption of the public building form 59 municipalities.
- Established Teams for cooperation form 59 municipalities.
- Distributed Short Brief of the Directive 2002/91/EC on Energy performance of buildings.

Also, the needs of the local self governments for the income parameters of the National registry for consumed energy into the public sector have been identified.

In the field of radiation safety, the Euratom Directive 31996L0029 and 31990L0641 have been transposed into several bylaws, as following:

1. Rulebook on the health conditions for the work with ionizing radiation sources, as well as the measures, the content and the manner of health surveillance of persons working with ionizing radiation sources (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 28/2010)
2. Rulebook on the limits of radiation exposure and the conditions of exposure in special circumstances and in case of emergency (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 29/2010)
3. Rulebook on the manner and the measurement of the occupational exposure, maintaining records and reporting emergency (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 29/2010).

During the reporting period, the Radiation Safety Directorate issued 14 licences for practices with ionizing radiation and realized 18 inspections.

3.16 TAXATION

Law amending the Law on excises was adopted (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 134 of March 11, 2010). The Law provides modification on the manner of calculation of the excise duty on passenger cars. The calculation of the excise duties is



now performed on the basis of value of the vehicle, rather than by volume of the engine (as it was performed until now).

3.17 ECONOMIC AND MONETARY UNION

The National Bank lifted the discount rate - The decision amending the decision on interest rates of the National Bank of the Republic of Macedonia (Official Gazette of RM no. 13/10), which was the basis for calculating the legal penalty interest in the Republic of Macedonia. As of February 2010, the penalty interest shall be calculated based on the reference rate, which the National Bank publishes on its web site. This way of calculating the interest penalty is in accordance with EU directive 2000/35/EC to prevent late payment in commercial transactions.

As one of the activities aimed at further development of the foreign exchange market new methodology was adopted, under which the average rate for the Euro are calculated as the average value of the listed purchase and sales rates between banks supporters of the foreign exchange market. This will provide the average rate adjustment depending on changes in supply and demand for foreign exchange during the day.

3.18 STATISTICS

The second self-assessment according to CAF (Common Assessment Framework) was conducted and the results were analysed. The new Strategy for data dissemination of the State Statistical Office, 2010-2012 was adopted. The revised document for conceptual, design and technical change of the web page was adopted. The following trainings, according to the NPAA, were conducted for SSO employees:

- Metadata, Sida,
- Methodology for strategic planning, preparation of annual working programme of the
- Government of the RM and preparation of strategic plan,
- Legal bases of the state statistics,
- Course in quality management.

A training on Data transmission to Eurostat through eDamis was conducted for NBRM employees by the SSO.

The SSO implemented the regulation 448/98 on allocation of financial services indirectly measured for the data series 2006-2008.

A plan for selection of representative agricultural holdings was prepared in order to collect accounting data from the agricultural holdings.

The NBRM prepared data and methodological notes on foreign reserves according to the



international standards DTIR/FCL.

3.19 SOCIAL POLICY AND EMPLOYMENT

The Draft Law amending the Law on foreigners was adopted by the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia and was published in “Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia” no. 35/2010.

The final version of the Rulebook for minimum requirements on protection of safety and health at work of workers from the risks related to exposure to chemical substances, is prepared.

Members of the State Labour Inspectorate attended a regional conference “Labour Inspectorate in legislation and in practice” which was held in Sarajevo in organization of the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection of Austria (BMASK) in cooperation with the International Labour Organization (ILO).

According the Law amending the Law on working relations (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia” no. 130/09), procedure for registration of trade unions and employers associations, is completed.

- total trade unions listed in the register of MLSP: 33;
- total employers associations listed in the register of MLSP: 6;
- new trade union was registered, “Trade Union of Defence and Security”.

UNDP organized a training, in the period of 08-11.03.2010, in Ohrid, for employees from the Ministry of Labour and social policy and Employment Service Agency of the Republic of Macedonia involved in the implementation of Operative plan for active measures for employment 2010. Within the project BEA of USAID, in the period of 18-20.03.2010, trainings took place for employees from Service Agency of Republic of Macedonia for project management and active employment policies. Workshop was organized by USAID in Skopje, 18.03.2010, for the employees from Employment Centers for active programs “Self-employment and formalization of regular business” as well as for active measure “Training for certain occupations that are deficient in the labour market”.

The Centre for employment in Skopje introduced the service “Open office for unemployed and employers” as part of a new model of services.

Three-day education was held by experts from Romania and Bulgaria, in order to implement the Program for health mediators (Roma).

As a result of the implementation of the Programme of Cooperation, between the



Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of the Republic of Macedonia and the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia for the period of 2010-2011, training is realized for civil servants of the ministries for making Joint Inclusion Memorandum the of RM (JIM), transferred through experience and practice in this process by experts from the Republic of Slovenia.

The Public Institution – Institute for social services conducted professional supervision in the Centres for social work Negotino, Radovish and Skopje. Within the activities to enhance the professional work coordinative meetings were held with professional teams in the Center for social work, Berovo and the Unit for marriage and family in the Inter-Municipal center for social work of Skopje.

In cooperation with the Red Cross of The Republic of Macedonia, The Public Institution – Institute for social services held two workshops for evaluation of the activities in 2009, within the Action Plans for participation of volunteers of Red Cross of the Republic of Macedonia, as a support of the activities of day centres.

The Report on implementation of the Law on Juvenile Justice is prepared, regarding the implementation of the measures in the system of social protections and collaboration with relevant institutions when dealing with risk children.

The law on prevention and protection against discrimination passed the second phase of Parliamentary procedure.

Under the project of “Gender Budgeting” the International Conference was held, on the topic of “Gender budgeting as a tool for promoting gender equality”. Good practises and positive examples of national and local level were also shared between representatives of the countries of the region Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania, and the best practise from countries of the European Union, Austria and Spain.

In relation to strengthening the capacity of mechanisms for gender equality at local level, two panel discussions were held, in March. – a panel discussion was organized in Resen on “The role of local mechanisms for gender equality to promote the status of women”.

Panel discussion was organized by the municipality of Shtip, within the implementation of the Law on equal opportunities and promotion of the legal representative for equal opportunities for women and men.

The Government in March issued an ordinance that every first Saturday of the month is a working day for part of the institutions dealing with citizen’s claims.

3.21 TRANS-EUROPEAN NETWORKS

Concerning the Draft Transport Treaty, in order to improve the overall quality of the Treaty, the Negotiation team sent the comments on the latest version to the Working



group.

During the meeting of the Steering Committee for development of the Core network held in March 2010, in Brussels, the Action Plan of SEETO and the Budget for 2010 were discussed. The Multi Annual Plan (MAP) of SEETO 2011-2015 with focus on implementation of the projects for development of the Core network in the last five years and the invested funds, was considered. Additional focus of the MAP will be on clear prioritization of the investment projects for the period from 2011 to 2015 has been. Also, the ongoing projects for transport infrastructure in the Republic of Macedonia were presented on the meeting.

The reports of the Railway Working Group and Road Safety Working Group under the SEETO have been adopted. As well as the support for their further functioning in the direction of implementation of the soft measures from the Multi Annual Plan has been given. According to the Plan for supply for IPA, component 3 – regional development the following activities have been realized:

- Concerning Priority axis 2 - Upgrading and modernization of the transport infrastructure Project: Rehabilitation and upgrading of the railway station Skopje according to the EU technical standards, identifications sheet for the project has been completed.
- The consultant who will make an assessment of the actual situation and propose the reconstruction measures for railway station, will be hired by the PPF – instrument. (Project preparation facilities)

In accordance to the preparation of the project studies and the project documentation for the railway sections along the corridor X and corridor Xd, the identification sheet with additional explanations are sent for approval by the Delegation of the EU. Also, the identification sheet for OIS “Preparation of studies for development of strategic multi-modal transport nodes” has been approved by the DG REGIO. The tender documentation for the Project “Preparation of studies for development of strategic multi-modal transport nodes” has been sent to the Delegation of the EU in March 2010.

3.22 REGIONAL POLICY AND COORDINATION OF STRUCTURAL INSTRUMENTS

During March Final version of Operational programme for Human Resources Development has been finalized and approved by Sectoral Monitoring Committee held on 24th of March 2010. Final comments on the text are expected up to 16th of April, and then officially to be submitted to the European Commission. The revision of the OPHRD is a regular one, aiming to include financial allocation for 2010 and 2011.

Second official meeting of Sectoral Monitoring Committee for Operational Programme



for Human Resources Development has been held on 24th of March 2010.

Realization of activities in the framework of OPHRD and revised Procurement Plan has been discussed. Representatives from the Non governmental sector have been included in the Committee. This would provide transparent procedure for the revision process and also opportunity for the Civil society organizations to contribute in a constructive manner to the OPHRD programming process. Following documents have been discussed and approved at the SMC: revised proposal of Operational programme for Human Resources Development 2010-2011, Evaluation plan of the programme, Information for establishing Steering Committee for monitoring of the programme and Communication Action Plan.

In the framework of Financial Management and Control, **the Law on Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance Audit** is in parliamentary procedure. The law provides that the Audit Authority is established as independent, separate body from State Audit Office, regulates the legal framework for audit control and provides transparency for implementation of IPA funds.

In the area of Cross Border Cooperation, IPA component II, on 4th of March 2010 technical meeting between on IPA CBC programme with Greece has been held.

On the meeting, the First Call for Project Proposals has been agreed, and also the Managing Authority of the program launched a written procedure for Operational programme modification to Joint Monitoring Committee.

In regard of administrative capacities strengthening, the Ministry for Local Self Government announced procedure for recruitment of Head of department for coordination, programming monitoring and evaluation of IPA. The administrative procedure for selection of best candidate is underway.

3.23 COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF JUDICIARY AND FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

Judiciary

Judicial Council on its session held on 25.03.2010 adopted the 2009 Annual Report. The Council of Public Prosecutors adopted its Annual Report for 2009. The Administrative Court prepared its Annual 2009 Report and submitted it to the Ministry of Justice. Analysis on the implementation of the Law on Misdemeanours was adopted by the Government.

Until March 2010, 183 judges have been elected of which 14 were first generation candidates from the Academy for education of judges and prosecutor, and on the 86th session of the Judicial Council on 25.03.2010 one candidate from the second generation has been elected (in the Basic Court in Veles), meaning that 658 judges vacancies were



filled.

Furthermore 31 presidents of courts have been elected. 64 procedures have been initiated of which 55 for unprofessional behaviour and 7 disciplinary measures which ended with 28 dismissed judges. Six judges resigned on their initiative, and for 40 judges were retired. From the total of 44 initiated procedures 16 have been cancelled. Two disciplinary measures have been pronounced and two judges dismissed because permanent inability to perform judicial function.

Judicial Council adopted Plan for selection of judges from among the candidates of the second generation, according to which, in the first half of 2010, 40% of vacant judicial seats in the Basic courts will be filled from among candidates from the Academy, while 60% of free places in the Basic courts in the second half of 2010 is expected to be filled from among candidates of the second generation.

Council of Public Prosecutors, takes into the consideration the Plan for selection of public prosecutors from among the candidates of the second generation, in September 2009 year, that the Council will make selection of 12 candidates from II generation and that in July 2010 will be selected six candidates and the remaining six to December 2010. As for the III-th generation of graduate applicants, 7 candidates are planned to be selected by the end of 2011.

According to the Judicial Budgetary Council in the first quarter of 2010 the percentage of realisation of the Program for investment in the judiciary is 12, 65%.

Draft analysis is prepared to establish a fixed percentage of GDP to fund the judiciary. Also, by USAID DPK was chosen consultant who participated in making this analysis. Draft Law on the Academy of Judges and Prosecutors is in parliamentary procedure (II reading).

The Academy continued to implement the Programs for initial and continuing training. Regarding the continued training detailed training calendar for the period January to March 2010 was prepared. From 1 January 2010 to the end of February, 27 trainings with 854 participants were held. In the period from January to February, a total of 6 study tours were organized. In the period from February 27 to March 19, 2010 20 training sessions with a total of 618 were held. A detailed calendar of trainings for the period April to June 2010 was also prepared and submitted to the judges and public prosecutors.

At the end of February 2010 a ceremony was held at which the candidates completed the second generation were awarded with certificates. Also at the end of February ended theoretical instruction for third-generation candidates from the initial training, and on 01 of March 2010 candidates began to follow the practical training.

Within the IPA 2008 project "Further strengthening the institutional capacity of the Academy, a tender procedure for selecting a consulting company that will implement the



project was completed.

The Agency for management of seized property, adopted the Rulebook for keeping records of data on seized property, Rulebook on the format and content of the form of official identification, the manner of its issuance and revocation and Rulebook deviation of the seized property of the state authorities, NGOs and Foundations.

Anti-corruption policy

In March 2010 the Program for training of trainers from the public (and state) administration in the area of conflict of interest was prepared by the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption.

The SCPC according to the Art.48 par.2 of the Law for Prevention of Corruption 25.03.2010 elected its new president.

The State Commission for Prevention of Corruption, at the session held on 05 March 2010 adopted the Annual Report 2009. In accordance with the article 49 of the Law on Prevention of Corruption and article 21 of the Law on Prevention of Conflict of Interests, the Annual Report was submitted to the Parliament, as well as to the President and the Government.

The draft Law on Public Servants is in parliamentary procedure for adoption. Regarding the status of the submitted statements of interest in the period January - March 2010, the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption received a total of 2099 statements of interest.

Regarding the monitoring of the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Public Relations, State Commission for Prevention of Corruption, prepared a Report on the extent of implementation of the Strategic Plan for the advancement of public relations (2009-2012) for the period from February 2009 to February 2010 year. The report was adopted at the 229 th session of the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption.

The Ministry of Justice prepared Annual Information on the status of implementation of the Action Plan of the Government for fight against corruption (2007-2011) in 2009. The information was reviewed on the session of the Government Council for monitoring the implementation of the Action Plan and it is submitted for adoption to the Government.

Fundamental rights

Information containing initial observation of the use of the Law on juvenile justice was prepared and brought on Government agenda on 16.03.2010. With this Information observation is given on the realised activities for accomplishing effective use of the Law and suggestions for overcoming the difficulties. Working group was formed and started working on the text for the Law amending the Law on juvenile justice. The adoption of Law depends on the new Law on Criminal Procedure. At the same time UNICEF Agreements for cooperation with the competent ministries (MJ, MI, MLSP) are being



signed for realization of activities from the AP 2010-2011.

Suitable facility for the establishment of the Disciplinary center for juveniles has been provided– Public institution for care of juveniles with social and educational problems - Skopje. Initial training for professional staff was already conducted by the Institute for social care. The Program for the work of the Disciplinary Centre was prepared and will start to be applied.

The activities for providing deinstitutionalised forms for protection of children from the street are ongoing. Preparations for opening a day center in Prilep are initiated. Activities associated with the opening of the 24 hours transit centre for accommodation of street children in Skopje are also ongoing (premises are provided)

Analysis of the compatibility of the national legislation with the European Convention of children rights was prepared. The analysis will identify the further legislative action that are needed to be taken in order to improve the implementation of the Convention.

The Directorate for execution of sanctions started the first cycles of training within the Project “Straightening the national penitentiary system according international and EU standards” through MATRA Programme, financially supported by the Netherlands. The aim of the trainings is stimulating cooperation between the employees in the Sector for resocialisation and sectors for treatment. This first training lasted from 3rd till 5th of March and included 12 employees from Prison Idrizovo. The second training lasted from 8th till 10th of March and included also 12 employees from prison Step.

Curriculum for basic training of trainers, members of the security sector was adopted at the end of February, 25.02.2010.

In the period from 24-25.03 TAIEX work-shop was organised for Prevention of torture and protection of human rights of the prisoners.

Draft Strategy for resocialisation and social adaptation of prisoners who are paying sentence is prepared.

Draft version of the Rulebook for protection of justice associate serving a sentence is being prepared. Expert from Republic of Slovakia participated in the preparation of the Rulebook. The adoption is foreseen in NPAA as legal framework for full implementation of the Law on execution of Sanctions to be completed.

3.24 JUSTICE, FREEDOM AND SECURITY

Asylum and migration

The text of the Agreement for mutual presiding of persons with illegal stay between the Republic of Macedonia and Switzerland, the Protocol for implementation of this Agreement and the Protocol for implementation of the Agreement between the Republic of Macedonia and Germany have been agreed.

In the period between 10-17 March 2010 in total 12 persons were trained to be future



trainers in the Regional Centre North (Police Station for border control Aerodrom, Blace, Yazince, Pelince, Tabanovce: road and railway border crossings and Volkovo: railway crossing point). On 29 March 25 employees from Border crossing points Blato and Strezimir and from Regional Centre West-Ohrid were trained on topic reception and hearing of asylum seekers .

In the reporting period: 12 new asylum applications accepted and procedures undertaken; 6 documents for identification issued; 1 application for travel document for recognized refugee accepted; procedures for issuing 19 personal identifications cards to persons under subsidiary protection concluded; 27 decisions for extension of the subsidiary protection brought, 20 conclusions for stopping the procedure and 7 decisions for termination of subsidiary protection.

The Administrative Court has received 13 appeals and the Supreme Court has received 4 complaints against a decision of the Administrative Court.

Visa policy

So far all 44 DCP's have been connected with the Visa Centre in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, except the Embassy in Doha, Catar which will be connected as soon as the relevant technical preconditions are provided.

The Status of the Visa Centre in MFA was upgraded from Unit to Sector and activities towards establishment of 4 Units within the Sector are being undertaken.

External borders and Schengen

In the first quarter of 2010 total 28 trainings have been conducted and 1676 members of the Border Police have participated.

A donation from the US Embassy in Skopje have been received regarding the technical equipping of the Border Police.

Police cooperation and fight against organized crime

In scope of the German donation to the Unit of the Sector for Special Investigative Techniques a technical equipment for undercover operations has been provided. One person has been employed in the Office of the National Coordinator for fight against trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants.

4 employees have participated in the training organized by ILEA-International Law Enforcement Academy in Budapest in the period 10.01.2010-07.03.2010.

The Directorate for Anti-Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism organized a training for employees in Exchange Offices and Savings-Banks.

The National Commission for small arms and light weapon established a cooperation with SEESAC (South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms



and Light Weapons). In this direction, activities for ensuring a software on weapon which will be an update of the existing software and activities towards establishment of data base on export of weapons, are ongoing.

Fight against terrorism

The Law on security-intelligence services was prepared and the same is in inter-institutional consultations.

On 17 March 2010 representatives from the Directorate for Counterintelligence participated on expert meeting of SEEIC.

Fight against drugs

In cooperation with the German police services, a mutual operation on controlled delivery of narcotic drug cocaine –pasta from Germany to Republic of Macedonia was undertaken. In this operation 2 kg of cocaine has been seized.

An international channel on narcotic trade with Marihuana from Albania via Republic of Macedonia to Greece was sawn-off and 70 packages of narcotic drug Marihuana (139 kg 185 gr) were seized.

3.25 SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

Science and research

Research policy

In the reported period the Ministry of Education and Science continued with regular activities aimed at supporting the research development:

- selection of the applications for scientific research projects of the State universities and faculties, public and private scientific institutes, independent researchers and centers of excellence, that will be financially supported. 386 project proposals were submitted. At this call for applications 40 proposals will be selected for financing.
- selection process for the annual programs of the public scientific institutions is in progress. At the call for proposals a total of 39 programs were submitted.
- selection of candidates that will be granted a total of 150 scholarships for the academic year 2010/2011, for undergraduate studies is underway. 605 students applied. 80 scholarships will be granted for mathematics, technical and technological sciences, 40 for biotechnological sciences, medicine and health, 30 for social and humanitarian sciences.
- Call for granting scholarships to undergraduate students enrolled at the one of the first 50 ranked universities according to the latest ranking list of Shanghai Jiao Tong University and Times Higher Education Supplement opened. The following scientific



areas: technical sciences, information technologies, medical sciences, agriculture and food will be supported through this call.

Framework programmes

The National coordinator for FP 7 presented the latest developments in this area, at a Conference held on the topic Western Balkan countries and their participation in FP 7 and European Research Area.

In regards to participation in projects of FP 7, in course of March, 3 project proposals from the Marie Curie programme were submitted. 2 of them are based on cooperation between the industry and academia. The projects are now in the evaluation phase.

10 researchers were nominated to participate in the workshops organized by the Joint Research Council. It will enable Macedonian researchers to get acquainted to the opportunities offered by the institutes of JRC and further promote and present them to the Macedonian research community.

ERA

RM nominated external participants for nine domains of the COST program in the COST coordinating body.

In the reported period RM continued to participate in the work of the ERA bodies and programming committees.

SEE ERA NET PLUS project

In regards to participation in the project, after the second phase of evaluation of project proposals, 29 projects that RM participates in, were selected. The projects are now being reviewed.

3.26 EDUCATION AND CULTURE

Education and culture

Primary and secondary education

Amendments to the Law on Primary and Secondary Education were adopted regulating external evaluation (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 33/10). The reforms in this area continue and in the reported period calls for selection of textbooks for general and vocational subjects in the secondary vocational education were realized.

The State Examination Centre prepared a Programme on training of candidates preparing for the for principal's exam in primary and secondary schools.

The Bureau for Development of Education continued with organisation of trainings for



teachers on: descriptive, combined and numeric evaluation, teaching the new curricula in primary and secondary education of pupils with special needs, the new curricula in primary music and art education, teaching elective subjects in the primary education. Visits and trainings were realised in 24 primary and 12 secondary schools.

In view of improving the evaluation process in the education system, the State Educational Inspectorate organised and delivered trainings on conducting integral evaluation in the primary and secondary schools in cooperation with USAID and by the end of March 26 integral evaluations were realised.

Also, a total of 119 inspections were realised in primary and secondary schools and higher educational institutions.

Vocational education and training

Activities from the Project supported by ETF on evaluation of four year vocational education were implemented. In course of March, a Research team was preparing a Report on the influence of the reformed four year vocational education. The results of this report will be used of defining the future priorities in the programming documents in the technical vocational education. Also, the priorities for the second faze of the project were defined in consultation with the representatives from ETF.

Activities aimed at strengthening the capacities of the Centre continued.

Representatives of CVET participated at the Conference for post secondary education organised by ETF and at a Conference on Entrepreneurship Education in Croatia.

Adult education

The following bylaws deriving from the Law on Adult Education were adopted:

1. Rulebook on the norms for equipment and premises standards for providers of adult education (internal rulebook, not being published in the Official Gazette)
2. Rulebook on the content, form and procedure for signing the contract for inclusion in adult education (internal rulebook, not being published in the Official Gazette)
3. Rulebook on the title, content and form of certificates on the knowledge, skills and competencies acquired through the special programs for adult education (Official Gazette of the republic of Macedonia no. 37/10)
4. Rulebook on the form, content and the manner of keeping the central and municipal register of organizations and institutions that implement publicly recognized programs (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 37/10)
5. Rulebook on the content and form of the documentation and records maintained by the organizations and institutions for adult education (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 37/10)



Activities for preparation and implementation of literacy programs and programs for finalizing compulsory education for the needs of the Municipality of Aracinovo are underway. Call for selection of institutions for implementing the abovementioned publicly recognized educational programs was realized.

Representatives from the Centre of adult education, along with colleges from the Centre for vocational education and training participated in two study visits organised by the Life Long learning project – technical support of the MoES, on preparation of National Qualification Framework (Hungary) and preparation of Strategic documents in the area of adult education (Lithuania).

COMMUNITY PROGRAMMES:

- Lifelong learning and Youth in action programmes

The results of the internal audit conducted by the Ministry of Education and Science on the work of the National Agency for European educational programmes and mobility, as well as the results of the external independent audit are expected to be ready in the following period.

The public call for election of a new Director of the National Agency was published on the 4th of March.

-Regional cooperation of the countries for integration in EHEA

On the 25th of March, at the 16th ministerial meeting held in Budva, Montenegro the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Macedonia signed the IIIrd CEEPUS agreement.

-Youth

In course of March, activities were implemented in frames of the priority Local youth work from the National strategy for youth and the action plan. Trainings were delivered to representatives from ten municipalities on preparation of local youth strategies. The trainings were organized by the Coalition of Youth Organizations SEGA.

In frames of the Quality of life priority area, activities for improvement of sport infrastructure were undertaken. One gym hall was opened, the construction of 4 football fields started and also of 21 tennis courts.

-Culture

RM continued the activities for participation in the Ljubljana process, component B - Rehabilitation of archeological and architectural heritage. An action plan has been prepared for realization of the project in RM for the year 2010.



Activities for revision of the list of priority interventions of monuments have started. According to the suggestions of the Council of Europe each country should narrow down the intervention list to maximum of 10 monuments.

RM National coordinators participated at the 15th regular meeting of project coordinators which took place in Sarajevo, 15-17th of March.

-Culture Programme

On the 3rd of March, a seminar was organized by CCP Macedonia and the Secretariat for European Affairs in cooperation with CCP Norway, on “How to prepare project in the area of intercultural cooperation funded by the EU”.

3.27 ENVIRONMENT

In the area of **horizontal legislation**, exams for awarding status of experts for EIA and SEA took place on 12.03.2010 and 15.03.2010 and the results are the following: 11 people were awarded with status of EIA experts (total number so far - 38) and 6 people were awarded with status of SEA experts (total number so far - 11).

The public was consulted on the EIA Study for the project Rope railway SkopjeVodno via public debate on 23.03.2010.

The national Parliament adopted Resolution on Climate Change Impacts in the Republic of Macedonia on 1.03.2010 (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia” No. 31/2010).

Macedonian civil servants participated on “Adaptation and Vulnerability” workshop in Brussels and they will be involved in the work of 4 working groups of the Committee on Climate Change, established in line with the Decision 280/2004/EC on Monitoring Mechanism, where Macedonia as candidate country for EU membership has observer status.

The capacities of the Hydro-meteorological Directorate were strengthened with purchased HTZ equipment and trainings of 5 employees.

1 airplane specialized for fire extinguishing on open space, model Er tractor AT 802, arrived in Macedonia in March, so the total number of these airplanes is 3. In the Protection and rescue Directorate, new unit was formed and staffed with personal for flying and maintenance of these airplanes thus the total number of employees in the Directorate is 273.

The Crisis Management Centre organized the international NATO exercise for crisis management “CMX 09” from 4-10.03.2010 in Skopje. In addition, its employees participated on several international exercises, courses and conferences in the area of crisis management. The Employees’ Training Programme is being implemented continuously, this month by several thematic trainings held in Skopje.



In the area of **forestry**, the statistics of the State Forestry and Hunting Inspectorate for February 2010 is the following: 165 controls, 172 minutes, 34 decisions, 8 misdemeanour charges and 2 implemented decisions. Within the action “Tree day-plant your future”, that took place on 30.03.2010, around 7,5 million seedlings were planned to be planted on several locations across the country.

Regarding **air quality**, the Law Amending the Law on Ambient Air Quality has been adopted (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia” No. 35/2010). This Law transposes the following EU measures: 32008L0050, 32001L0081, 32000L0069 and 32001L0080 and provides legal basis for reporting to the European Environment Agency, the executive body of UNECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (LRTAP Convention) and other relevant international organisations. In addition, an Information Report on Inventarization was prepared and submitted to EEA and UNECE/CLRTAP on 12.03.2010.

In the area of **waste management**, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia commenced procedure for awarding concessions for establishing integrated waste management systems. A Study for awarding concession for regional integrated waste management for the South-East region was finalised in March 2010 and this planning region is consisted of the following municipalities: Valandovo, Bosilevo, Radovis, Konce, Gevgelija, Dojran, Vasilevo, Novo Selo, Strumica and Bogdanci. Further more, the Government adopted Decisions for initiating procedure for awarding concession for financing, designing, constructing and managing regional landfills for communal solid waste for the South - West and Polog Region (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia” No.44/2010). The South-West Region encompasses the following municipalities: Ohrid, Struga, Vevcani, Zupa Centre, Debar, Debarca, Kicevo, Makedonski Brod, Oslomej, Zajas, Plasnica, Vranesnica and Drugovo, while the Polog Region is consisted of the subsequent municipalities: Tetovo, Gostivar, Jegunovce, Mavrovo i Rostuse, Vrapciste, Bogovinje, Brvenica, Tearce and Zelino.

Selection Commission headed by the Minister for Environment and Physical Planning and consisted of 5 representatives of relevant Ministries and 5 representatives of the municipalities will perform the selection of candidates. All activities for the establishment of integrated waste management system in the country will be performed in several phases, out of which, the first one is estimated to cost 50.000 EUR that will be financed by the Government of Italy and implemented by REC.

The Rulebook on the format and contents of the form for keeping records of legal persons that handle packaging waste, producers and independent handlers with packaging waste, manner of records keeping as well as the format and contents of the certificate for



registration of independent handler of packaging waste (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia” No. 41-2005) has been adopted. This bylaw elaborates the technical issues related to waste packaging handling defined in the Law on packaging and waste packaging management (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia” No. 161/2009) that is in line with the relevant EU *acquis*.

In respect of **water quality**, final workshop of the Project “River Basin Strumica Management Plan”, financed by the Flemish Government and implemented by ARCADIS-Belgium took place on 23.03.2010 in Skopje. Main outputs of this project are 2 prepared documents: Methodology for preparation of Management Plan for river Strumica and Characterization of the Strumica River Basin. The workshop were the ARCADIS experts elaborated the outputs of the project was attended by employees of the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (MEPP).

Regarding **nature protection**, the Law amending the Law on Nature Protection has been adopted (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia” No. 35/2010). These amendments will enable adoption of bylaws related to nature monitoring in accordance with EU Directives 31979L0409 and 31992L0043.

Workshop on Assessment mission for new Nature Protection Programme in organisation of the Switzerland Agency for development and cooperation took place in Skopje on 4.03.2010. Representatives of 14 institutions took part and debated the recommendations of international expert mission of Macedonia regarding possibilities for financing nature protection projects within the new nature protection programme that is part of the Bilateral Agreement for Cooperation of Macedonia and Switzerland.

As regards **integrated pollution and prevention control**, long list of installations applying dangerous chemicals has been finalized and questionnaires/control list of dangerous substances has been prepared.

On 23-24.03.2010 MEPP organized National training for identification of dangerous activities, on which 33 civil servants from MEPP participated, as well representatives of the industry. On 15.03.2010 a workshop for journalist has been held on environmental questions.

Work Programme of the Scientific – technical Commission on best available techniques (BAT) has been prepared in line with the Law on Environment. This Programme defines adoption of national reference documents for BATs that represent guidelines for BATs’ application for A-integrated environmental permits preparation per industrial sector.

The following bylaws on eco-criteria have been adopted: Rulebook on the criteria to be



fulfilled for obtaining environmental criteria for furniture ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No. 44/2010), Rulebook on the criteria to be fulfilled for obtaining environmental criteria for textile products ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No. 44/2010) transposing EU measure 32009D0567 and Rulebook on the criteria to be fulfilled for obtaining environmental criteria for introduction of environmental criteria for dyes and lacquers used indoors ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No. 46/2010), transposing EU measure 32009D0544.

The following 2 A-integrated environmental permit have been issued: Makpetrol JSC Skopje for Biodiesel production Installation – FAME and VESNA SAP, Probistip. The request for issuing A-permit for adjusting with operational plan for Vardar Dolomit, Gostivar has been published.

In the area of **chemicals**, within the frames of the project "Introducing safe chemicals management in the national development planning in accordance with the Millennium Development Goals", the final list of priorities for chemicals management on national level has been defined, by which the basis has been set for defining and developing action plans for implementation of strategic chemicals management. In addition, methodology for preparation of "cost-benefit analysis of selected priority (waste elimination and remediation of HCH contaminated soil in OHIS) has been prepared and workshop chemicals management took place in Skopje on 18-19.03.2010 when 30 people participated (representatives of state institutions and NGOs).

Regarding **GMO**, the UNDP/GEF Project "Strengthening the capacities for efficient participation in the Bio-safety Clearing House" finished. On the official promotion of the Macedonian Bio-safety Clearing House on 24.03.2010 in Skopje, representatives of the relevant ministries, MANU, faculties, media and the general public took part. The web portal (www.biosafety.gov.mk) and the brochure on the Bio-safety Clearing House, developed within this project, were also promoted on this final workshop.

3.28 CONSUMER AND HEALTH PROTECTION

On March 15th, on the occasion of World Consumer Day, press conference and a round table were held under the motto "Our money our rights - fair financial services".

- on March 31st, the Food Directorate, under the framework of the Programme for Consumer Protection, organised and held a tribune in Strumica on the topic "Animation of the activities of the Unit for consumer protection and the organisational system for consumer protection of the Republic of Macedonia". Representatives from the central government, local government, business sector and civil associations attended the tribune.



The activities planned under the Action Plan for screening of breast cancer are incorporated in the Programme for early detection of malignant neoplasms in the Republic of Macedonia for 2010 (Official Gazette no. 20/10).Therefore, there will be no separate Action Plan on screening of breast cancer.

3.29 CUSTOMS UNION

The amendments to the Law on Customs Tariff (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 35 of 12th March 2010) created the legal grounds for establishment of Integrated Customs Tariff – TARIM (a kind of a national TARIC), which shall integrate all tariff and non-tariff measures, in accordance with the regulations in force in the Republic of Macedonia. The Customs Administration has been appointed administrator of TARIM. Furthermore, the amendments to this Law stipulate abolishment of the customs duties of two tariff codes covering raw materials – products from ceramics for technical purposes, as well as levelling/equalization of the customs duties for new and second-hand passenger cars.

Law amending the Law on Customs Administration was adopted (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 48/2010). The amendments define the conditions for appointment of Director General and Deputy Director General of the Customs Administration and regulate the terms under which their mandate may be terminated (provisions which do not exist in the existing Law on the Customs Administration). The proposed amendments provide for selection of professionals for these two job posts/functions, while the regulation of the terms for termination of their mandate ensures greater apprehension and accountability.

Law amending the Customs Law was adopted (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 48/2010), stipulating harmonization with the EU Customs Code, EU Council Regulation no. 2913/1992 and the amendments to the Regulations 82/97, 955/1999, 2700/2000, 648/2005 and 1791/2006, thus establishing legal grounds for implementation of the new electronic Customs Declaration Processing System (CDPS) in the Customs Administration. Binding electronic customs declaration and summary import and summary export declarations are introduced. There are ongoing preparations of accountancy rules related to the import duties, in conformity with the EU legislation. Besides the above-mentioned, the amendments to the Customs Law envisage abolition of the authorizations granted by the Customs Administration to legal entities for carrying out representation activities in customs procedures, elimination of the concept – high-risk person, which used to apply for withdrawal of the authorisations for representation in customs procedures from legal entities, as well as transfer of the



provisions related to a single customs duty rate of customs duty to the Law on Customs Tariff.

Although with slight delays by the contractor in terms of the agreed time schedule for delivery of the phases, the development of the new **CDPS** is ongoing. Testing of the first two modules for transit and import is under way. A so-called “Virtual Customs Office” has been created, where testing is performed and the functionalities of the software are checked for their compliance with the technical specifications. Most of the hardware and system software has been procured and installed. Digital certificates for the customs officials have also been procured. The new CDPS should be put in function by June 2010. The business community is constantly informed about the features of the new CDPS through presentations and conferences, through the media and the Advisory Council - association with the business community. Analyses are underway for provision of access to the border inspection authorities to the risk-analysis criteria in the CDPS, which should ensure more efficient and effective risk-analysis-based inspections at entry into the Republic of Macedonia. It is also considered to provide 24/7 support of this kind of risk-analysis-based inspections, so that occasionally they can be carried by the Customs Administration.

In order to ensure coordinated and timely development of its ICT systems, in cooperation with experts engaged under the IPA 2007 programme, a new **ICT Development Strategy** has been drawn up, its essential objective being development of an ICT service and an integrated IT system environment, in conformity with EU and other international standards, which will entirely support the business strategy of the Customs Administration, facilitate trade and transport and ensure risk-management, and make sure that the work, in terms of investments is performed with highest efficiency. The objectives of the ICT Strategy derive from the business strategy, established in the Strategic Plan of the Customs Administration and its Action Plans, the National Plan for the Adoption of the Acquis (multi-annual indicative planning document for development of e-customs projects, modernized EU Customs Code and its Implementing Regulation), as well as the recommendations of the DG TAXUD Monitoring Mission on IT awareness. The ICT Strategy covers all aspects for project planning, laid down by the European Commission in the area of interoperability of the customs systems it exhaustively elaborates the Interoperability Implementation Strategy. On grounds of the business objectives and the current status of the ICT systems, the needs for further development of the ICT systems have been identified. Apart from the needs for technological development, the necessary organisational, human and financial resources have also been identified. Methodologies to ensure the projects and their quality, as well as the technical policies and the operational environment have been determined.



In cooperation with the consultants engaged under the IPA 2007 programme, an **Interoperability Implementation Strategy** has been drawn up, being an integral part of the ICT Strategy of the Customs Administration. This document includes plans for the forthcoming projects:

- New Computerised Transit System;
- Integrated Tariff Environment, including: Combined Nomenclature, TARIC, electronic Binding Tariff Information, Tariff Quota and Surveillance, European Customs Inventory of Chemical Substances, Suspensions, Specimen Management System, Data Dissemination System;
- Excise management and control system;
- Automated export system;
- Automated import system;
- Customs portal, and other systems.

The plans have been prepared on grounds of the existing Project Fiches under the IPA programmes, other relevant plans, European Commission Regulations (multi-annual indicative planning document), Modernised Customs Code and its Implementing Regulations, as well as the recommendations of the DG TAXUD Monitoring Mission on IT awareness.

Draft versions of the project objectives, detailed organization plans, project methodologies including plans for the necessary resources have been prepared.

With regard to the EXIM system, there are ongoing interventions in the software - addition of new functionalities (electronic request and issuance of transport licenses in the bilateral road transport, its connection with the new ICT system of the Veterinary Inspectorate, introduction of new types of reports) the funding has also been provided under the eGov Project, financed by the USAID.

Analyses have been started for introduction of licenses and for release of goods for free circulation (not only import and export licenses).

3.31 FOREIGN, SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

The participation in ALTHEA, B&H is ongoing and the procedure for the eight rotation of the medical team has started.

Regarding the EU BG 02/2012, the Letter on Intentions was signed by the Czech Republic



and it is expected Republic of Macedonia to sign the Letter. The Memorandum on understanding has been agreed and is expected to be signed.

The first meeting of the working group tasked to draft the amendments to the Law on International Restrictive measures took place on 31.03.2010.

The process of drafting the amendments to the Law on manufacturing and trade of armament and munitions are ongoing.

The drafting of the Information on the need for acceptance of the Common Position 2008/944/CFSP which will be submitted to the Government is in final phase.

3.32. FINANCIAL CONTROL

Persons responsible for reporting irregularities and suspicion of fraud or corruption have been assigned in the following institutions on central level: Ministry of labour and social policy, Health Insurance Fund of the Republic of Macedonia, Agency for civil aviation, as well as in the municipalities: Kavadarci, Centre and Vasilevo.

According to Article 50 of the Law on Public Internal Financial Control, in the course of March, a notice has been sent to all public companies with dominant state ownership in order to assign a person responsible for reporting irregularities and suspicion of fraud or corruption:

- 14 public companies have assigned a person responsible for reporting irregularities and suspicion of fraud or corruption;
- Guidelines for establishment of financial control are prepared and published on the web page;

The preparations for the realization of the training “Reporting and communication skills”, intended for 69 internal auditors from the public sector entities on a central level, have been completed.

Guidelines for the preparation of strategic annual plans for internal audit are prepared.

Written comments on the strategic and annual plans are submitted to the internal audit units within the public sector entities on central and local level.

IPA AND BILATERAL ASSISTANCE RELATED ISSUES

In the reporting period, the Secretariat for European Affairs initiated preparatory activities for Operational Programme for Component 1- **Transition Assistance and Institution Building 2011.**



The activities within the **CBC component** likewise advanced in the course of March, with initial activities (bilateral talks) taking place on CBC Programme with Kosovo. Consultations on the technical documentation for the open call on CBC with Greece were also held.

With regards to the component of **Regional Development** (RD), the Strategic Coordinator submitted to EC the proposal for revision of the Operational programme RD 2007 – 2009, reflecting financial allocations for 2010 and 2011. The total amount of IPA funds for this purpose is EUR 69 mil. The activities on preparation of Main Design and Tendering dossier on the two major projects are at final stage.

The Sectoral Monitoring Committee of **Human Resource Development** was held on 24th March in Skopje, followed by training of transfer of experience on drafting of Memorandum of Inclusion.

The National IPA Coordinator and the Head of Delegation of the EU in Skopje signed the Multi-annual financial agreement for **Rural Development** for the years 2007-2010. The total amount of funds allocated for this period is 31, 5 million euros. The first public open call for projects was closed on 17th March.

Activities with bilateral cooperation partners have continued in the reporting period. The internal consultations and evaluation of project ideas for bilateral cooperation with Slovenia were completed. On 16th March the Secretariat for European Affairs held talks with Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and SIDA on Phase-out Strategy. The Programming meeting with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was organized on 18th March, following preparation and submission of the Programming document 2010.

Activities on introduction of Programme Based Approach continued in March, with meetings of working groups on Environment and Agriculture taking place. In addition, a workshop on introduction of PBA in IPA programming was held in Skopje. Delegation from the Secretariat for European Affairs attended the Donor Coordination meeting in Sarajevo, presenting Republic of Macedonia experiences and achievements in this process.

PREPARATION OF THE NATIONAL VERSION OF ACQUIS COMMUNAUTAIRE

On 10-11th of March 2010 representatives from the Sector for Preparation of the National Version of Acquis Communautaire-Secretariat for European Affairs carried out a study visit of the Directorate General for Translation in Brussels. The purpose of the visit was to gain first hand experience of the process of translation of documents in the EU.



The study visit was organised in order to strengthen the capacity of the Sector for Preparation of the National Version of Acquis Communautaire, and to improve the ability of the employees to manage the everyday workload.

TRAINING IN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS ACTIVITIES

Within the longstanding cooperation with the Norwegian Government, and in cooperation with *The Brussels Office*, we continue to undertake activities addressing direct capacity building of the Macedonian administration.

Namely, in the period 23-25.03.2010 in Brussels training / study trip took place on the topic of "EU Energy policy". 10 members of the Working Group of Chapter 15 - Energy, within the National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis Communautaire, who will also be a vital participants in the negotiation process and creation of positions of the Republic of Macedonia, partook in this training. They had the exceptional opportunity to visit a number of EU institutions and offices, as well as to meet the relevant persons and homologues within those institutions.

This is the third conducted training in 2010 within the stated cooperation and the project entitled "*The Republic of Macedonia and the EU – Preparation for Negotiations with the EU*".

The Civil Service Agency during the course of March conducted the following trainings:

1. Enhancing management skills of managerial civil servants - The first module took place 1-5th March in Skopje with the participation of 24 civil servants from 17 state administrative bodies of the central level
2. Project cycle management – The first module took place 15-17th March in Skopje with the participation of 25 civil servants from 16 state administrative bodies of the central level
3. Public administration and civil service system – Six two-days trainings were provided in the period January-March in Skopje, attended by 101 civil servants/junior associates (97 civil servants from 26 state administrative bodies of the central level and 4 civil servants from 2 local-self government units)
4. Civil servants registry – Five one day trainings were organised of which 4 in Skopje and 1 in the Unit for training support in Bitola) attended by 78 civil servants (30 civil servants from 19 state administrative bodies of the central level and 48 civil servants from 33 local-self government units).
5. Introduction to E-Government – 2 workshops were held in Skopje attended by 42 civil servants (29 civil servants from 15 state administrative bodies of the central level and 13 civil servants from 8 local-self government units).
6. Consistent implementation of the Law on Public Procurement – Four one day workshops were organised in Skopje attended by 71 civil servants (54 civil



servants from the state administrative bodies of the central level и 17 civil servants from the local-self government).

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

The SEA website was regularly updated with EU-related news and 4902 hits were registered. Within the campaign “Learning about the EU” 6 primary schools, 3 high schools and the Faculty of Business Administration at the South-East Europe University were visited. The municipalities of Novo Selo and Lipkovo were visited within the campaign “Going Local”. The SEA newsletter is published on the following link <http://www.sep.gov.mk/Default.aspx?ControlID=Bilteni.ascx&godina=2009>.

These two information campaigns will continue to be implemented.

Two new publications on EU related topics are being prepared. The one entitled as Getting to know Europe is intended for children and while the other addresses the changes under the Lisbon Treaty. The first publication is prepared for printing, while the second is in process of proof reading.

The SEA is in the process of drafting new Public Information and Communication Strategy 2011-2013 which will be adopted by the Government.

On 31 March 2010 the book “The Accession Story – The EU from Fifteen to Twenty- five countries” by George Vassiliou was promoted. The translation and printing of the book were supported by the Ramkovski Foundation.

The MK-EU Info Centre continued with its regular activities.