

Your contacts:

Chairman of the EU-MK JPC: G.Milevski@sobranie.mk

Members: jpc@sobranie.mk

Your links:

Members of the Assembly

Councils of the Assembly

Working bodies of the Assembly

Joint Parliamentary Committee EU-RM

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Culture

MACEDONIAN LEGISLATION HARMONIZED WITH THE EU ACQUIS IN MAY-JUNE 2018:

- Law on the Higher Education
- Law Amending the Law on Weaponry
- Law on Foreigners
- Law on Energy
- Law on Prevention of Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism



MACEDONIA AND SERBIA TO SHARE EXPERIENCES AT ALL PARLIAMENTARY LEVELS

The President of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, Mr. Talat Xhaferi, during his official visit to the Republic of Serbia met with Ms. Maja Gojkovic, President of the National Assembly. At the meeting, President Xhaferi emphasized the recent positive and unconditional recommendation by the European Commission to open the negotiations with the Republic of Macedonia that additionally motivated all the stakeholders in the public life to implement the necessary reforms as necessary prerequisites for full membership in the EU and NATO as strategic priorities of the country. Speaking about the efforts of the Government to improve the good neighborly relations, Mr. Xhaferi re-

called the signed agreement with the Republic of Bulgaria, which began to give concrete results and the intensive communication with the Republic of Greece, in the direction of finding a mutually acceptable decision on the years' long dispute over the name issue. For Ms. Gojkovic, the visit of President Xhaferi sent a clear message to the region and the EU that the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Macedonia are cooperating and expressing readiness to share experiences at all parliamentary levels. She pointed out that the Berlin Process is an important format for the cooperation of the EU and the Western Balkans; however, it should not be a substitute for a true European integration process.



POLITICAL LEADERS UNITE TO SUPPORT THE ROLE OF THE ASSEMBLY AS A GUIDE IN THE EURO-ATLANTIC INTEGRATIONS

The first Jean Monnet dialogue with the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia was held in Ohrid on 17 and 18 May 2018. The political parties have once again confirmed their commitment to work together for the country to move towards membership in the EU and to integrate into the Euro-Atlantic structures. In order to speed up this process, the political parties agreed that the Parliament should have the leading role by using its democratic legitimacy, oversight and legislative power and by launching a series of reforms, beginning with an adoption of a new Code of Ethics and amendments of the Rules of Procedure. It was agreed that a more extensive review of the Rules of Procedure should be made in order to ensure that the Parliament

was more efficient, transparent and effective in meeting the expectations of the citizens from EU membership. Members of the European Parliament, Mr. Vajgl, Mr. Kukan and Mr. Fleckenstein, with the mandate of the European Parliament President, welcomed the involvement of all political partners in the dialogue, stressing that this is the essence of every democratic process.

In order to maintain the momentum of the debated key reforms, President Xhaferi announced the establishment of a Working Group in the Parliament, composed of representatives of the main political parties, in order to support the implementation of the reform agenda and the follow-up of the Jean Monnet process.



WORKING VISIT TO THE OFFICE OF SECURITY AND COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE



The Committee on Oversight of the Implementation of the Special Investigation Measure-Interception

of Communications by the Ministry of Interior, the Financial Police Directorate, the Customs Administration and the Ministry of Defense, conducted a working visit to the headquarters of the Security and Counter-Intelligence Office. At the meeting, the competences of the Office were presented and its position in the security system of the Republic of Macedonia, as well as the overall process and procedures for the implementation of the special investigation measure for interception of communications in criminal investigations and for security and defense needs. Emphasis was also given on the competences of the Operational Technical Department, especially in the part relating to the technical facilities for interception of communications and internal procedures for acting upon a court order. Ad-

ditionally explained were the measures and activities that were undertaken by the Office since July 2017, in order to strengthen the internal control over the system for interception of communications and to establish additional mechanisms to prevent abuse. Interactive discussions and the constructive atmosphere during the meeting showed that it is of common interest to increase the dynamics of visits by the Committee, in order to control more effectively the legal implementation of the special investigative measure for interception of communications. It was concluded that within the framework of the upcoming reforms in both institutions, it would be necessary to regulate certain identified deficiencies that made the process of control and enforcement difficult.

THE FRENCH PERSPECTIVE ON THE FUTURE OF THE EU

The Committee on European Affairs of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia dedicated its 16th session to the topic "The French perspective on the future of the EU", with introductory remarks by the President of the Committee Mr. Artan Grubi, the Ambassador of France in Macedonia, Mr. Christian Thimonier and President of the European Movement of France and Vice-President of the International European Movement, Mr. Yves Bertoncini. Mr. Grubi, referring to the current situation in the Union, stressed the importance of the French support for further EU enlargement with the Western Balkan countries, and in this context, France's geopolitical and economic perspectives on the future of the European Union, crucial for the Republic of Macedonia as a future member state. He assured that the country remains committed to delivering results of the EU reforms regarding the rule of law, with particular emphasis on reforms of the judiciary and public administration. Ambassador Thimonier stressed that EU member states and France have faced a series of serious challenges over the past decade and Brexit called for European mobilization. It led to increased Euroscepticism, however, the European leaders united and accelerated the necessary reforms for a more efficient and stronger Union. It was indisputable that Macedonia needed to work on the necessary EU reforms, and to resolve all open issues with its neigh-



bors, because the sooner these issues are solved, the sooner the country will join the EU.

Mr Bertoncini, professor and president of the European Movement of France, clarifying France's views on the EU's further enlargement, said that, among other things, the reason for Euroscepticism in his country was largely due to negative experiences with certain mem-

ber states, which entered the Union unprepared. He also mentioned the current problems with migrants, as well as the radical terrorism facing French society as reasons for France's reluctance to the EU enlargement. Mr. Bertoncini pointed to the need for Macedonia to be proactive in resolving these global European and world problems, thus, also winning the sympathies of French citizens.

MONITORING VISIT OF THE WORK OF THE OFFICE FOR SECURITY AND COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE AND THE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

The President and the Members of the Committee for Supervising the Work of the Security and Counterintelligence Office and the Intelligence Agency conducted a monitoring visit to the Security and Counter-Intelligence Office at the Ministry of Interior. According to the jointly agreed format of the monitoring visit, the position of the Office in the security system of the Republic of Macedonia, its organizational structure, its competences and the security priorities of the Office were presented, as well as a detailed overview of the financial expenses since January 2018 within the yearly fixed budget. The general conclusion was that it was necessary to increase the budget of the Office, and the President of the Committee promised a full support in that direction. The members of the Committee also visited the premises of the Operational Technical Department. The representatives of the Office welcomed this monitoring visit and stated that it would be of mutual interest to increase the dynamics of such visits in future in order to increase mutual trust. The visits would also enable the members of the Committee to effectively fulfill their function as supervisory body for the legal implementation and application of the competences of the Security and Counterintelligence Office.



INTER-PARTY GROUP ON THE RIGHTS OF ROMA IN MACEDONIA SET IN THE ASSEMBLY

At the meeting, President Xhaferi addressed the participants, emphasizing that such Inter-Party Groups are not new in the Assembly, and they serve as a proof that MPs are mature and rise above party interests to work together, cooperate and do things for general good, and in this case, for the benefit of our citizens from the Roma ethnic community. "We are all well aware of the general situation of our fellow citizens, that is, the fact that they are marginalized, insufficiently integrated in the society, with a low level of involvement in the educational process, with insufficient coverage by the health sector and a number of other disadvantages that adversely affect their economic and general well-being", said President Xhaferi. He pointed out that efforts are being made for the improvement of the situation. However, parliamentarians must not remain on the adoption of quality laws only; they need to engage in overseeing the implementation of those laws, concluded President Xhaferi.



GALICNIK WEDDING 2018



PUBLIC DEBATE ON THE LABOUR LAW

The Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, held a Public Debate on the topic: Amending and Supplementing the Law on Labour.

The public hearing was held at the initiative of the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights of the Republic of Macedonia. At the end of the debate, the participants adopted conclusions to support the amendments to the law, in order to promote the position and protection of women workers and achieve gender equality, to start an inclusive process with citizen associations for amending and supplementing this law and it is up to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy to open the process for amendments and to include all social actors. These amendments should guarantee the protection of workers who have concluded a fixed-term contract in cases of pregnancy and maternity and parental leave, and should ensure the unconditional and guaranteed parental leave by the mother and the father, as well as greater involvement of men in the care of their children by means of a mandatory parental leave of at least 3 months. The conclusions were published on the assembly website and submitted to the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy.



JPCCommittee - News from the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, No. 56, May-June 2018

Editorial Board: Marijana Opashinova Shundovska, Goran Milevski, Marija Stefanova and Dragan Antonov

The contents of this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of the publisher.