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Councils of the Assembly

Working bodies of the Assembly

Joint Parliamentary Committee EU -RNM

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Culture

### MACEDONIAN LEGISLATION HARMONIZED WITH THE EU ACQUIS IN APRIL - MAY 2021:

- Law Amending the Law on Census of Population, Households and Apartments in the Republic of North Macedonia in 2021.
- Law on International Cooperation in Criminal Matters.
- Law Amending the Law on Customs.
- Law Amending the Law on Energy Efficiency.

## FIRST PHYSICAL MEETING BETWEEN THE TWO JPC CO-CHAIRS

The two JPC EU-North Macedonia Delegation Co-Chair Andreas Schieder and Bilal Kasami met physically for the first time in this mandate in Skopje do exchange views about the current state of play between the Republic of North Macedonia and the European Union, with an accent on the recent developments in the relations with the Republic of Bulgaria. In this context, the support by the European Parliament and Austria is welcome. Despite the complex situation, they both expressed hope that the country will soon start the negotiations for EU membership. The interlocutors also talked about the Jean Monnet dialogue as an important tool in the Parliament, which decreased its dynamic due to the pandemics. The danger in the so-called non-paper for the Western Balkans as a sensitive region with open wounds from the past is yet another proof that the region should move fast in the integration process and become part of the greater European family. The joint conclusion was that the common work and the reforms must continue in the period to come and that after the pandemic is put under control, physical meetings will be increased as well.



## PRESIDENT XHAFERI AT THE VIRTUAL SPEAKERS CONFERENCE IN BERLIN



The President of the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia Talat Xhaferi took part at the virtual Speakers Conference organized by the German Bundestag. Thirty-three parliamentary speakers from EU member states, from the European parliament, three speakers from national parliaments of EU candidate countries and three speakers from non-EU countries took part at the meeting. President Xhaferi emphasized that digitalization is an inevitable process, having in mind the dynamic technological development, globalization and the unlimited research space at the global labor market, education, services and public opinion making, which also represents a fertile ground for spreading hate speech and fake news. The prevention of these negative phenomena is the responsibility of the competent national institutions, of course, in close cooperation with the international authorities. However, it is no less of a duty of all institutions, non-governmental organizations and, ultimately, of every citizen to give their individual valued contribution in this process. He informed his colleagues about the manner of work of the Assembly during the pandemics and the impossibility to function as before, as well as about the positive experiences of part of the parliamentary activities with the use of the online platforms. President Xhaferi concluded that regardless of the way, it is the duty of the MPs to always be an example of conducting a well-argued cultured dialogue, of expressing verified facts and truths that affect our citizens and their perception and trust in the institution.

## NEW MEETING OF THE JEAN MONNET DIALOGUE

A new meeting of the Jean Monnet dialogue was held on 12 May 2021 between the leadership of the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia and the leading MEPS from the European Parliament Ilhan Kyuchyuk (Renew, BG), Andreas Schieder (S&D, AT) and Marion Walsmann (EPP, DE). Both the European Parliament and the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia remain committed partners in this process and all interlocutors underlined the importance of the Jean Monnet Dialogue in building confidence, strengthening democratic culture and enhancing parliamentary capacities. The re-establishment of the Sobranie's Working Group on Amending the Parliamentary Rules of Procedures is a positive step towards reaching consensus among the different political parties in the Parliament. It is essential that all parties set the political differences aside in order to consolidate the work on the Rules of Procedures and to contribute to further strengthening of the institution and the reform process in general. Sobranie confirmed its commitment to the implementation of the Conclusions of the last Jean Monnet Dialogue meeting, held in February 2020.



## MEETING OF THE INTER-COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE WITH NGO NETWORK FOR MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY

The Chair of the Inter-Community Relations Committee Arbana Pasholi and the members of the Committee met informally with the NGO network for multi-cultural society led by Mr. Mirosljub Orlandic. Parliamentarians wanted to continue with the cooperation with representatives of this network and prepare joint activities in the future. The representatives of the network presented their demands and opinions for improvement of the joint cooperation. The Chair of the Committee pointed out that the committee will remain open to work, all with the aim to find the best possible solutions that will address the needs of the network.



## FIRST OVERSIGHT VISIT TO THE SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES

The Committee for Supervising the National Security Agency and the Intelligence Agency conducted an oversight visit to these two institutions, meeting with relevant authorities who briefed them on the current activities. The director of NSA Viktor Dimovski presented the plan for national security of the Agency and the activities for its implementation, with a focus on counterintelligence, fight against terrorism

and violent extremism, as well as on sensitive information related to the pandemic. Members of the Parliament were interested to obtain ore insight on the security check procedures, polygraphic tests, integrity tests and other issues related to the implementation of the legal provisions for staff selection.

## MEETING OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS' CLUB

The Presidency of the Women Parliamentarians' Club met to discuss about the analysis of the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament seen from a gender balance perspective, as well as on meetings with MEPS and ongoing projects in the previous months. Some of the members shared positive experiences from the meeting with the Network of Women Farmers and the Association of Human Reproduction and Bio-Assisted Fertilization -The IVF Road to a Baby, and that they will proceed their demands to experts and relevant institutions. They also agreed to support the initiative of the Association for Gender Balance-One Can! To establish a group of women MPs and lobby for single-parent families in the relevant parliamentary committee. At the end of the meeting, they called for increased engagement on the Draft-Law on Budget in the part of responsible gender-budgeting.





## CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

The Conference was held to mark the Europe Day by the European Movement of North Macedonia. Ms. Arta Billali Zendeli- Deputy-Chair of the European Affairs Committee pointed out that we live in times of economic, social, political and institutional changes and that both EU member states and candidate countries considers should decide how to cope with the incoming changes, based on lessons from the past. In this context, she emphasized that North Macedonia deserved to move forward in the integration process and that the European Council should materialize the decision for start of negotiations with start of the negotiation process. Mr. Aleksandar Nikoloski, Chair of the National European Integration Council considered that in order to enter the EU, serious efforts are needed for implementation of the EU reforms, with special emphasis on the reforms in the judiciary and fight against corruption. In relation to the bilateral dispute with neighboring Bulgaria, Mr. Nikoloski considered the two countries need good bilateral relations and efforts should be taken to improve the current situation. The German Ambassador Holstein, underlined that both Albania and North Macedonia should be provided with the negotiation framework during the Portuguese Presidency. Participants welcomed the strategic discussion on the Western Balkan held on 10 May in Brussels, for the European perspective of the countries in the region and expressed confidence for a positive impact of the Council meetings this June.



## THIRD WORKSHOP ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT

Members and Deputy-Members of the Committee on Rules of Procedure and Mandatory-Immunity Issues held its third workshop in the implementation of the Code of Ethical Conduct for Members of Parliament. The topic of the workshop was the Draft-Code of Ethical Conduct for the MPs, the Draft-Guidelines for implementation of the Code. Opinions were exchanged for further improvement, and the necessary mechanism for monitoring of the implementation of the Code.



## FRANCE HAS THE MOST AMBITIOUS EU AGENDA

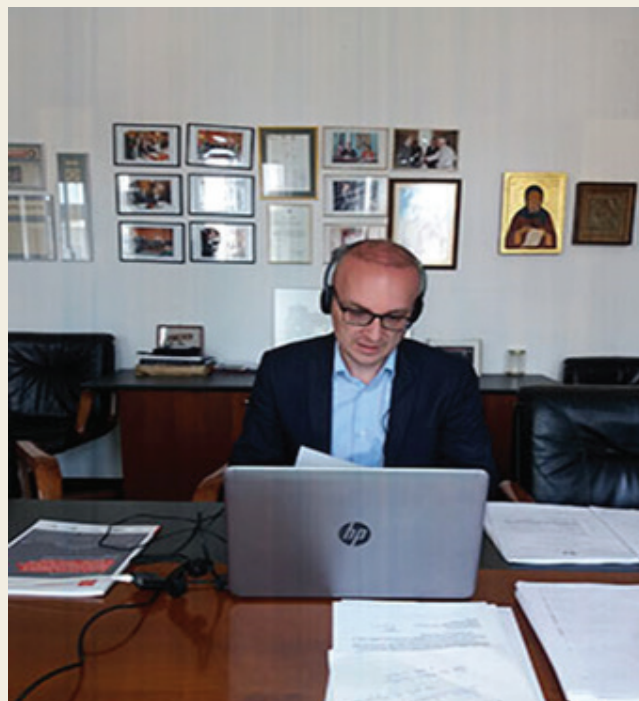
The Section of the Assembly in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Francophonie held a meeting with H.E. Cyrille Baumgartner, Ambassador of the French Republic in North Macedonia to discuss the bilateral relations and the promotion of the French values in the state. The Section President Abdula Saliu expressed gratitude for the support provided to the Parliament in the past, with a hope that such support will continue in future. Regarding the EU membership, he pointed out that the country has fulfilled the criteria and negotiations should start soon. Ambassador Baumgartner called for increased cooperation on bilateral level through the strategy for French presence in the region and promotion of the French film, language and culture. He emphasized that the French Republic has the most ambition agenda for the future of the European Union and due to these reasons, the new methodology was introduced for future enlargements. After 70 years, the Union has completed one phase of its existence, and the second phase will require deeper institutional and organizational reforms that will make the Union competitive in the world. The Ambassador agreed with the MPs that there is a need to continue with the cooperation on the reform of the public administration that is closely connected with the country's EU integration process.





## START OF NEGOTIATIONS WILL BRING GREATER CREDIBILITY FOR THE EU

The Chair of the Foreign Policy Committee Antonijo Miloshoski took part at the online workshop organized by the Parliament of the Republic of Italy titled: Western Balkans: Between Multipolarism and the EU integration process. In his address, he underlined that inter-parliamentary cooperation should represent a vital part of the EU integration process and that inclusion of national parliaments is an expression of democracy. The greatest pressure for continuation of the enlargement should come from the EU institutions, but also from influential Member States, as traditional supporters of this process. Consequently, organization of the first Inter-Governmental Conference this year will bring greater credibility for the Union. The Italian hosts have always perceived the enlargement process as inevitable and they remain confident in the rightness of this policy that should integrate WB countries in the Union. They also outlined that the Balkans is part of Europe and membership is not one-sided decision by aspirant countries, but a double benefit for the EU, its stability and security. The EU Commissioner Varhelyi presented the main challenges the Union is facing at the moment, and the key role national parliaments have in this regard. He expressed support for the development and integration processes of Western Balkan countries, the strengthening of the European social model as an answer to the crisis and motor of growth, as well as the adoption of the financial package to help alleviate the consequences from the pandemic and demographic changes. The EEAS Secretary General Sannino emphasized that WB will remain high on the EU agenda and the EU will remain committed in the region.



## TRADITIONAL MACEDONIAN FOOD AND WINE



## THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC-GREAT SUPPORTER OF OUR COUNTRY

The Slovak Deputy-MFA Martin Klus met with the Group for Cooperation and the Committee on European Affairs during his visit to the Republic of North Macedonia. Ms. Slavjanka Petrovska, Chair of the Group expressed gratitude for the cooperation and assistance provided by the Slovak Republic for our European integration process, the management of the migration process, the common fight against crime and corruption. Mr. Klus showed readiness to share the experiences from the integration process and emphasized the importance for a sooner integration of the Western Balkan countries. He welcomed the close relations between universities and the importance of Ss Cyril and Methodius.

At the meeting with the European Affairs Committee, Mr. Klus repeated the support of his country for accession of North Macedonia and Albania in the EU and the opening of negotiation chapters as soon as possible, as a process of regional stability and security. He called for priority point of inclusion of the Western Balkans countries on the Conference for the Future of Europe agenda. The EAC Chair Arber Ademi expressed gratitude for the unconditional support and the recent joint initiative of the MFA Korcok and 8 other ministers to send a letter to the HR/VP Borell, calling for inclusion of Western Balkans on the Council agenda. According to his opinion, the adoption of the negotiation framework and holding the First Inter-Governmental Conference is our key priority and the overcoming of open issues with Bulgaria.



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