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THE STATE ARCHIVES CELEBRATED 70 YEARS OF ITS EXISTENCE



ENLARGEMENT POLICY MUST BE DRIVEN BY OBJECTIVE CRITERIA

The 18th Meeting of the Joint Parliamentary Committee – EU and North Macedonia held in a virtual format enabled Members of the European Parliament and the Members of the Assembly to exchange opinions on the current state of relations between the Republic of North Macedonia and the European Union with EU and Government representatives. MEPs reiterated that the EU remains committed to the integration path of the country based on the rule of law, open democratic dialogue, multi-ethnic harmony and good neighborly relations.

Members of the Assembly called for start of negotiations without further delay since country has been an example in its approach towards resolving the bilateral issues and further promoting regional cooperation, and that negation of European values of language diversity, culture and traditions should not be tolerated. The two Co-Chairs Andreas Schieder MEP and Billal Kasami, MP issued a **Joint statement**, in which they expressed their regret for the EU Council's failure to approve the negotiation framework for North Macedonia thus undermining the Union's credibility and reducing the EU's transformative power in the Western Balkans, and called for the swift adoption of the negotiation framework and start of the accession talks during the Portuguese Presidency.



MEETING OF PRESIDENT XHAFERI WITH MEP KYUCHYUK

President of the Assembly Talat Xhaferi during his meeting with the Rapporteur for the Republic of North Macedonia in the European Parliament, MEP Ilhan Kyuchyuk expressed gratitude for his engagement and underlined the country remains committed to the implementation of the 2017 Agreement with Bulgaria. He concluded that the Jean Monnet Dialogue with the EP will resume once the conditions will allow physical presence of all participants. Rapporteur Kyuchyuk underlined that the EP Resolution will provide a real reflection of the situation and a strong message that the EU remains a committed partner for our membership. Regarding the relations with Bulgaria, he expressed hope that after the parliamentary elections, the contacts will intensify and emphasized. He reflected on the cooperation between the news agencies MIA and BTA as a good example of cooperation, noting that there are opportunities for mutual projects and cooperation between the universities of both countries and in many other fields. In terms of the Jean Monnet Dialogue, the Rapporteur Kyuchyuk expressed willingness for holding video-meeting with the purpose of sharing information on the progress of the process in the Assembly.



INTERNAL MEETING ON THE JEAN MONNET DIALOGUE

The first internal working meeting on the Jean Monnet Dialogue in the new parliamentary mandate with representatives of parliamentary groups and representatives of smaller parties was held in the Assembly, intended to determine the working methodology that will be useful for efficiency in its work in the upcoming period and to reflect on the achievements from the previous mandate. They also considered the possibility due to the COVID 19 pandemic which disables physical meetings with MEPs, to meet them instead via video call at the time being.

Participants gave their opinions and suggestions on the relevant documents, after which they adopted the methods of their future work and set the initial dynamics of the incoming meetings.

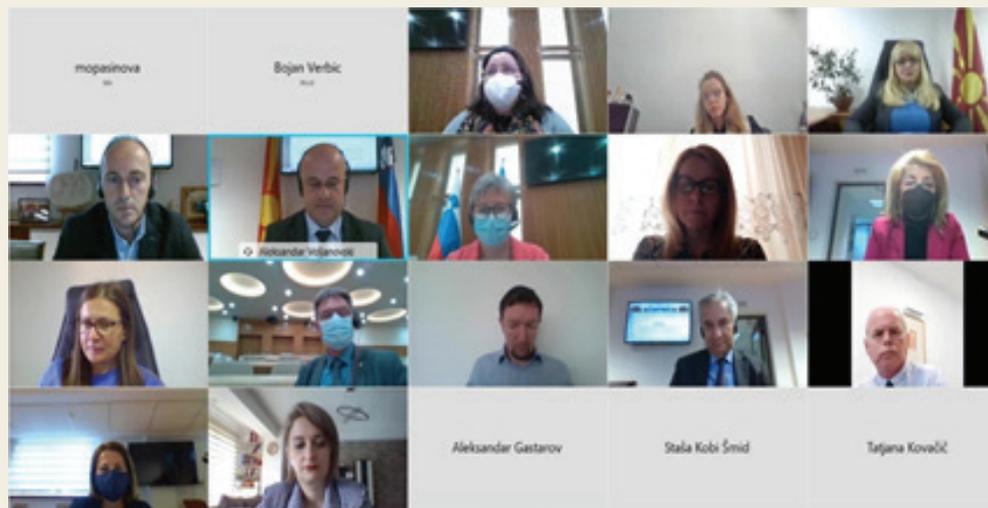


PRESIDENT XHAFERI ADDRESSES THE CHILDREN'S PARLIAMENT

President Talat Xhaferi addressed virtually to the participants of the Children's Parliament that is regularly held as a proactive approach to connect young children with the parliamentary work, where children, via simulation of a legislative procedure, develop different arguments and vote on a piece of legislation. He stated that as the primus inter pares, has the responsibility of the smooth functioning of the Parliament, and regardless of the political orientation, MPs roadmap should always be the welfare and equality of all our citizens, unity and common struggle for a better tomorrow, for democracy and justice, for a country that is an example of good neighborliness and strong contributor to regional and world peace. At the end, he expressed belief that with this event they will succeed to understand the power of the word and the law and encouraged by today's workshop, some of them will decide to be part of the legislature in the future and give maximum for the best of the country and its citizens.

MACEDONIAN AND SLOVENIAN FRIENDSHIP GROUPS VIRTUAL MEETING

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METTING WITH ENERGY COMMUNITY SECRETARIAT DIRECTOR KOPACH

The Economic Issues Committee Members met with Mr. Janez Kopach, Energy Community Secretariat Director to discuss EU integration energy challenges. Parliamentarians elaborated on the reforms made for implementation of the Third Economic Package, enabling start of the gas market liberalization process. They praised the important role of the Parliamentary Plenum of the Energy Community where parliamentarians share their experiences in this domain. The country is the first in the region drafting a National Energy and Climate Plan to be adopted by the Government. Director Kopach stated their support and commended on the positive country

developments, especially on the measures for liberalization of the electricity market and energy efficiency. He called for further actions regarding the gas market competition and the gas interconnection infrastructure with the Republic of Greece, and strengthening of institutional capacities to fulfill these objectives. He emphasized that increased efforts are needed to the envisaged target of 23% of use of renewables and for air pollution factory filters investments; in this regard, he informed the members of the possibilities for use of credits from the European Investment Bank and the EU Western Balkans fund.

VIDEO MEETING OF THE MACEDONIAN - AUSTRIAN GROUPS FOR COOPERATION

The groups for cooperation in the two parliaments met via video platform to discuss issues of common interest. Ambassadors of both countries were also attending the meeting. MPs from the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia expressed appreciation for the continuous support regarding the integration of the WB countries, in times when the Union is facing many challenges. In this context, they expressed gratitude for the letter of the nine foreign affairs ministers, including the Austrian minister, addressed to the EU High Representatives for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell, to return the Western Balkans on the EU Agenda. Their Austrian counterparts praised the country for the brave steps to solve bilateral issues with Greece and Bulgaria and the reform agenda, offering their full support and EU experience to their colleagues. They concluded by emphasizing that a rational approach is needed in the relations with Bulgaria, to maintain the credibility of the enlargement process.



LITHOUANIA REMAINS COMMITTED TO THE INTEGRATION OF THE WESTERN BALKAN COUNTRIES

The Parliamentary Cooperation Group from the Assembly held virtual meeting with their counterparts in the Lithuanian Parliament. Parliamentarians from the two parliaments exchanged views on the integration process of the Republic of North Macedonia and the possibilities for a closer cooperation. Lithuanian colleagues pointed to the positive experiences of the Baltic countries and their joint approach to the integration process, and expressed their commitment to assist Western Balkan countries and visit the region in the forthcoming period.



GENDER EQUALITY STRATEGY DEBATED IN PARLIAMENT

The Committee for Equal Opportunities of Women and Men held a public debate on the status of implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy. At the end of the meeting, they adopted conclusions demanding that each institution keeps gender separated indicators, to identify measurable indicators to be able to implement the objectives in the Strategy, to keep continuous monitoring of its implementation, especially on laws containing gender dimension. Stereotypes in the school books should continue to be eliminated.

Parliamentarians also called for strengthened role of the equal opportunity coordinators and balanced schedule of activities across state institutions, with a possibility of establishment of a Secretariat for Equal Opportunities. As elected representatives of the citizens, MPs should continue to be active and supported by NGOs to strengthen the awareness for gender equality at the lowest level and to create culture of equality promoted through the media. They concluded that gender equality budgeting should be particularly addressed in the new Budget.



FRENCH EXPERIENCES FOR THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC COUNCIL

The MPs Maja Morachanin met Jean-Marie Cambacères, President of the Section of European and International Affairs in the French Economic and Social Committee. He informed Ms. Morachanin on the positive experiences of the Council which served as a model for the European Economic and Social Council. Ms. Morachanin as an MP from the Green Party DOM expressed interest to use French experiences for our Economic and Social Council, particularly in the field of environment and climate change and for a more inclusive approach to these topics within the Council.



INTER-COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE ADOPTS IT AGENDA OF ACTIVITIES

The Committee on Relations Among Communities at its session discussed and adopted the Agenda of Activities and the Annual 2021 Program, with an accent on the improvement of inter-ethnic relations, especially in the sphere of education, culture, equal representation in state institutions, the use of languages, and fight against discrimination, with support of the members of the civil society and international institutions.

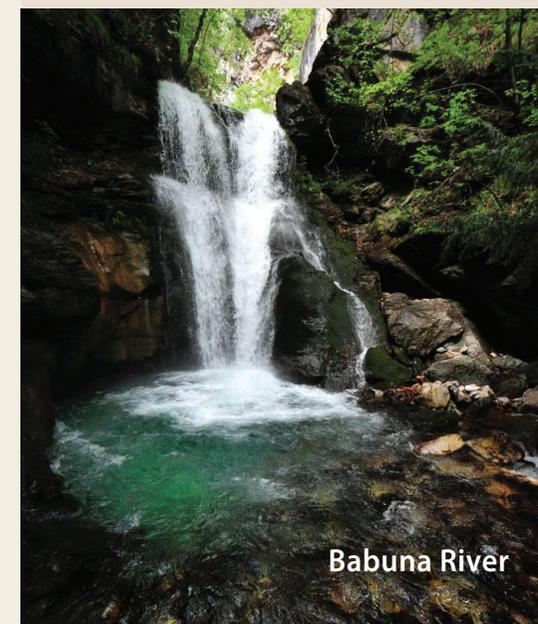
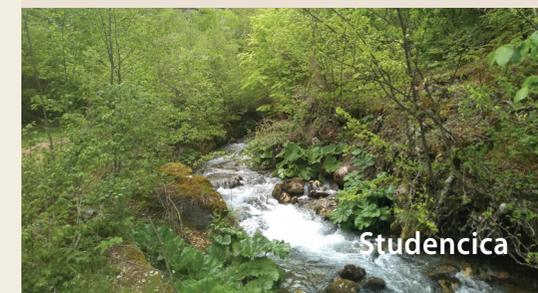
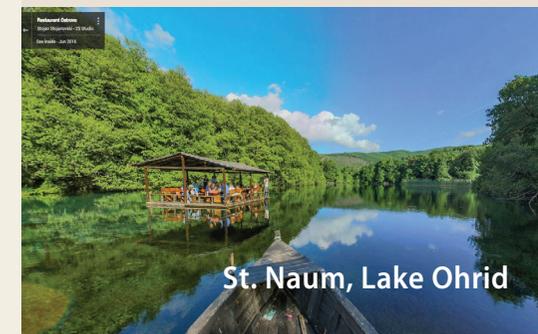


NEIC CHAIR NIKOLOSKI MEETS MEP ANDREAS SCHIEDER

The Chair of the National European Integration Council (NEIC) Aleksandar Nikoloski met the MEP and JPC D-MK Chair Andreas Schieder to discuss the relations with the EU and the cooperation with the European Parliament. Mr. Schieder showed interest for the functioning of the NEIC and its composition and stressed the importance for continuation of cooperation within the frames of the Jean Monnet Dialogue with inclusion of all relevant parties in the process. Mr. Nikoloski informed his interlocutor of the wide spectrum of participants from the society and the legislative

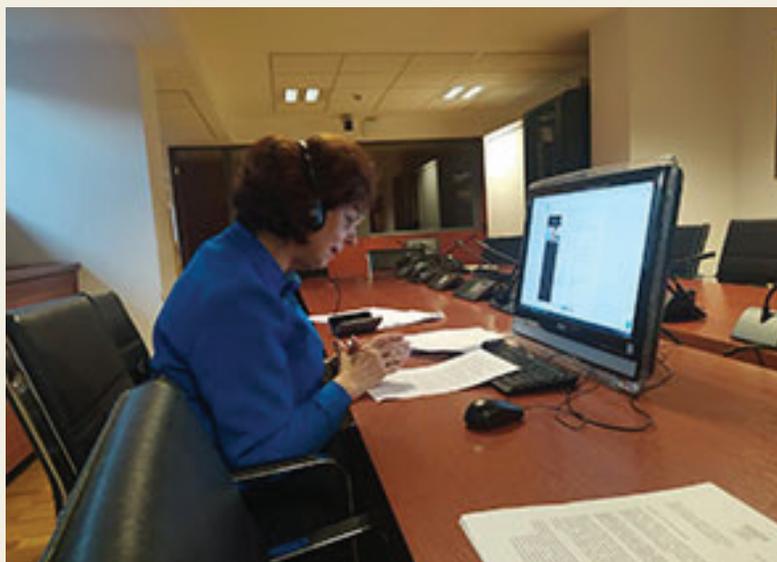
and the executive in the council, including economic chambers, religious communities and NGOs in building consensus for issues in competence of the Council and expressed support to the talks under the Jean Monnet Dialogue to overcome current challenges. They discussed also the key judicial reforms, fight against corruption, approach to persons with disabilities to the educational system and the incoming local elections.

SPRINGS IN NORTH MACEDONIA



SPENDING PUBLIC FINANCE EFFECTS ON GENDER EQUALITY IN PANDEMICS

The Chair of the Committee on Equal Opportunities of Women and Men Gordana Siljanovska Davkova took part in the analysis made on the spending of public finance effects on gender equality while managing the situation with Covid-19, organized by the Center for Research and Policy Making within the frames of the project Network for Gender Responsible Budgeting in Western Balkans, financially supported by the Austrian Development Agency and Swedish Agency for International Cooperation and Development. She reflected on the new issues emerging during pandemics on this important phenomenon and on the lack of gender divided indicators to evaluate the effects of in the gender gap, and stated that there should be an inclusive model of designed measures with wider consultations of the civil society and responsibility for disrespect of gender equality in public finances through the audit reports.



ESTABLISHMENT OF THE IPPG FOR ROMA RIGHTS ACTIVITIES

The Assembly established an Inter-Party Parliamentary Group (IPPG) for the Rights of the Roma, in which MPs from the current and past mandates will take part in its work. President Xhaferi addressed the participants, expressing unconditional support for the initiative and the work of this group to promote and protect further the rights of the Roma in the country.

Having in mind the fact that the specifics of the Roma as constitutionally recognized ethnic community, members of the group came out with numerous initiatives for improvement of the situation and their increased participation in the societal life in the Republic of North Macedonia.



PUBLIC DEBATE ON THE DRAFT- CONCEPT FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION

The Committee on Education, Science and Sport held a public debate on the Draft-Concept for Primary Education, inviting government officials, experts and university professors to take part in the debate and present their opinion on the document.

Participants considered that there is a need for modernization of the education with a new model that will be authentic to our societal and economic traditions and expressed different views on the dynamic with which new policies should be implemented in the primary education.



SPRINGS IN NORTH MACEDONIA



Vevcani



Mokrino



Vrutok

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