

PRESS RELEASE

Skopje, 25 March 2010

EU boosts better regulation through energy Twinning with Energy Regulatory Commission

On Thursday, 25 March 2010, the aims and objectives of an EU-funded Twinning project entitled "Institutional strengthening of the Energy Regulatory Commission" (ERC) were presented to the wider public for the first time. The ambitious project, which boasts the joint forces of project partners from the FYR of Macedonia and Austria, pursues the target of helping the ERC to level up its institutional capacity to the EU energy acquis within 16 months' time. And the first interim objectives have already been reached.

The public kick-off workshop of this project saw the Who's Who of energy policy and regulation gather at the EU InfoCentre in Skopje: representatives from the ERC were joined by their counterparts from the Austrian energy regulator E-Control, the Delegation of the European Union, domestic and international institutions, energy authorities, policy makers, academics, regulated firms and the press.

"The Republic of Macedonia is the first regional country whose projects have been approved by the European Commission and the first country to sign the financial accord on 30 October 2007, which allowed for the use of IPA funds," said Mr. Vladimir Peshevski, Deputy Prime Minister of the FYR of Macedonia in charge of Economic Affairs. He added that these kinds of projects "contribute to the development of a functional market economy, improvement of the business environment and greater international economic competitiveness, the effects of which lead to the creation of lasting values and benefits for all participants."

His statement was confirmed by Mr Lukas Melka from the Delegation of the European Union. Dr. Dirk Buschle from the Energy Community Secretariat highlighted, "Regulatory authorities are our natural allies when it comes to promoting the enhancement of energy markets to the benefit of all consumers." His Excellency Dr. Alois Kraut, Ambassador of the Republic of Austria added that "this project is a further sign of support by Austria for the accession of this country to the European Union."

By partnering up two authorities that work in the same fields but in different countries, Twinning projects are especially suited to deliver sustainable results. This was emphasised by Mr Dimitar Petrov, President of the ERC, in an address on the long-term goals of regulation in the FYR of Macedonia. Referring to this particular project he said, "It shall undoubtedly contribute to the even further improvement of ERC's capacities, especially in terms of monitoring of energy markets, licensing, relations with stakeholders and the media, as well as in terms of improving the internal procedures." His counterpart, Mr Walter Boltz from Austrian E-Control, provided an insight into how the project fits into the bigger picture. "With the 3rd Energy Package being introduced in the EU, the regulatory landscape is changing, and this will sooner or later also have an impact on the countries of the Energy Community. Our joint Twinning project also helps the ERC to prepare for such future challenges", said Boltz.

Ends



This project is funded
by the European Union

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A project implemented
By AEI

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The European Commission is the EU's executive body.

The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

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Notes:

The Twinning project “Institutional strengthening of the Energy Regulatory Commission” (MK/2007/IB/EN/01) is funded by the European Union with an overall project budget of EUR 600,000. It is jointly implemented by

- AEI, the Agency for European Integration and Economic Development,
- E-Control, the Austrian regulatory authority for the electricity and gas markets,
- the Energy Regulatory Commission, the energy regulatory authority in the FYR of Macedonia,
- EXAA, the Austrian energy exchange,
- TÜV, the Austrian standardisation institute, and
- AGEN-RS, the energy regulatory authority in the Republic of Slovenia.

The Twinning project has an overall implementation period of 16 months. Expected key results are as follows:

- Introduction of an effective license compliance monitoring system for the generation of electricity and heat; the transmission of electricity and natural gas; the distribution of electricity, heat and natural gas; the supply, trade and cross-border transmission (import, export, transit) of electricity, and adequate training on the compliance monitoring system;
- Establishment of market monitoring mechanisms that ensure non-discrimination, effective competition and the efficient functioning of the market;
- Review and implementation of quality management procedures, addressing inter alia internal communication procedures, archiving and document management procedures, as well as internal rules to reduce the risk of corrupt behaviour; and
- Cooperation with relevant stakeholders, enhancing the stakeholder network and improving the cooperation between the ERC and relevant bodies at national, regional and European level.

Twinning project: www.e-twinning.at

E-Control: www.e-control.at

AEI: www.aei.at

ERC: www.erc.org.mk

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