

PRESS RELEASE

Skopje, 23 September 2010

Workshop on better regulation through institutional networking and cooperation for the benefit of energy consumers

On Thursday, 23 September 2010, the public was invited to a workshop within the framework of the EU-funded Twinning project “Institutional strengthening of the Energy Regulatory Commission” at the EU InfoCentre in Skopje. Under the general catchphrase of “stakeholder cooperation”, the workshop aimed to highlight the benefits for all parties that can spring from sensible cooperation projects in overlapping fields of competence and interest among different institutions and organisations in a country.

For this purpose, the ERC’s partner in the Twinning project, the Austrian energy regulatory authority E-Control, brought representatives of Austrian institutions to Skopje to give domestic institutions examples of successful cooperation between different bodies. Walter Boltz, the Managing Director of E-Control, gave an overview of the cooperations and joint projects that have already been implemented in Austria in his opening statement and said that “As regulatory authority and as advocate of the energy consumers, we have benefitted greatly from this wide range of projects”. His counterpart Dimitar Petrov expressed similar views, emphasising the ERC’s commitment to stepping up cooperation in the country to make best use of synergies.

That there is indeed a wide range of possibilities for joining forces was exemplified by the line-up of Austrian institutions that were represented: Kurt Bruckner, for the Austrian standardisation institute TÜV Austria, explained the common interest with the regulator in green electricity labelling and certificates, which was addressed by a joint project. He was followed by Daniel Köster from the Austrian Economic Chamber, with whom E-Control has a number of very successful projects – among them an initiative on small and medium-sized enterprises, a power pooling project and the popular Tariff Calculator for consumers to find the cheapest energy suppliers. Then, from another point of view again, Veronika Haubner spoke about the gas and electricity sector enquiry executed by E-Control together with her institution, the Austrian Federal Competition Authority.

All speakers underlined the smooth cooperation with the regulatory authority and pointed out that a national strategy with a strong focus on networking with other authorities and bodies is positive for all involved parties and ultimately for the benefit of all energy consumers.

The workshop also marked about half way of the entire Twinning project implemented jointly by the ERC and E-Control. Commenting on the general development of the project, Walter Boltz said, “We are progressing swiftly and I am confident that together, we will be able to advance the institutional strengthening of the ERC and contribute to the longer-term development of the national energy market in line with the EU energy acquis.” Also Dimitar Petrov underlined the good achievements of the project and emphasised, “This is especially important for us with a view to developing the energy market to be ready for EU membership.”

Ends



This project is funded
by the European Union

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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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