

NEWSLETTER

OF THE MINISTRY OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS



NEWSLETTER

JULY – SEPTEMBER 2023.

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Editorial

Dear reader,

Twenty-fifth Newsletter on European integration presents the key developments and activities in the EU accession process that took place in the third quarter of 2023.

The Ministry of European Affairs is committed to coordinating the work of the negotiation structure and intensifying activities aimed at producing tangible results in all chapters, ensuring partnership and cooperation with other bodies, and strengthening the ties and relations with EU institutions and EU Member States so that Montenegro can take its place as one of the equal European partners.

During the previous three months we continued implementing the activities on coordination of the negotiation process, IPA, cooperation with local self-governments and civil sector, as well as organizing appropriate activities and campaigns.

We believe that this Newsletter contributes to the improvement of information, understanding and awareness of our citizens about the accession process and future Montenegro's membership in the EU.

MINISTRY OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
SECTOR FOR INFORMATION ABOUT EU AND EU ACCESSION PROCESS – SECRETARIAT GENERAL OF THE GOVERNMENT OF MONTENEGRO

THE ACCESSION NEGOTIATIONS

11. VII 2023.

STATE SECRETARY ŽIŽIĆ HELD A MEETING WITH THE HEADS OF THE NEGOTIATION WORKING

Meetings with the heads of negotiation working groups take place within regular activities on communication and coordination of the European integration process. Their goal is to consider key activities related to each individual chapter and take stocks of the situation in the implementation of the Montenegro's Programme of Accession to the EU 2023–2024.

State Secretary Žižić underlined the importance of full commitment of the negotiation structure to all obligations from the European agenda, emphasizing that it was a positive signal that out of 33 negotiation groups, 32 had been established. She said it was necessary to have the procedure for the remaining chapter 12 – Food Safety, Veterinary and Phytosanitary Policy finished by the end of July, and she invited heads of the working groups to submit suggestions and proposals aimed at improving the work of negotiation working groups. It was agreed that the heads of the working

groups would prepare reports taking stock of the current state of affairs and of maturity of the negotiation chapters for provisional closing so that Montenegro can be prepared for obtaining the closing benchmarks in the chapters 23 and 24 when the conditions are met. Thus, the door would be opened for obtaining conditions for provisional closing of certain number of chapters.

State Secretary noted the importance of the Growth Plan for the Western Balkans that was recently presented by the President of the European Commission Mrs von der Leyen. She emphasised that the synergy and good cooperation between different sectors constitute the key leverage for good planning and meeting of all obligations, particularly in relation to withdrawing the funds of the European Union for implementation of important capital projects, i.e., projects that are aimed at connecting the region in line with the Economic and Investment Plan for Western Balkans.



7.21.28. VII 2023.

CONSTITUTIVE MEETINGS OF NEGOTIATION GROUPS FOR CHAPTERS 6 – COMPANY LAW, 4 – FREE MOVEMENT OF CAPITAL AND 32 – FINANCIAL CONTROL TOOK PLACE

Among other things, these meetings dealt with the implemented activities and obligations planned for the period ahead. They emphasized the need to continue activities of aligning legislation with the EU acquis and discussed obligations stemming from Montenegro's Programme of Accession to the EU.



6. IX 2023.

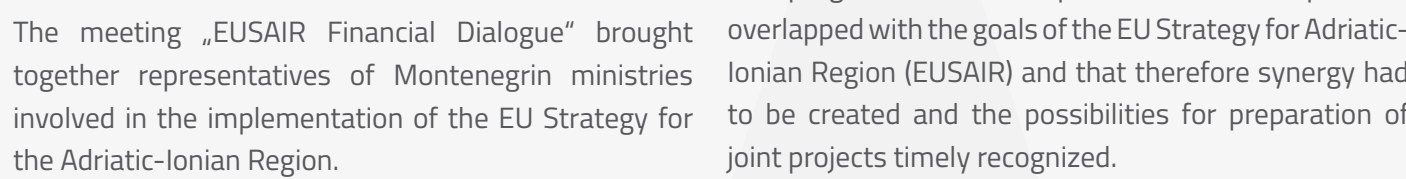
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT „POLITICAL AND LEGAL ADVISORY CENTRE FOR MONTENEGRO“ STARTED IN THE MINISTRY OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

The first meeting dedicated to implementation of the IPA technical assistance project „Political and Legal Advisory Centre for Montenegro“ took place. The primary beneficiary of this project is the Ministry of European Affairs, Directorate for Accession to the European Union and EU Acquis. The meeting was attended by representatives of the Ministry of European Affairs and the company WEGlobal that is in charge of implementing the project.

Total budget of this project that is financed from the European Union funds, amounts to 750,000 euros, while the period of implementation is 24 months. In addition to the Ministry of European Affairs, the beneficiaries include negotiation working groups, line institutions and structures relevant for certain chapters and processes within the accession negotiations.

State Secretary in the Ministry of European Affairs and National IPA Coordinator, Milena Žižić expressed satisfaction due to the beginning of this project that is aimed at encouraging Montenegro's accession negotiations process through the support to efficient alignment of national legislation with the EU acquis and its implementation, as well as through strengthening of professional capacities of the stakeholders included in the European integration process.

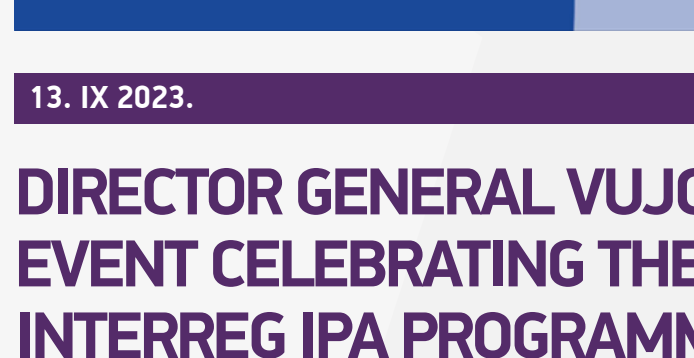
Project Director, Joe Miller, emphasized that WEGlobal was an international company with a large pool of experts in various fields of EU acquis and that he hoped for successful implementation of the planned activities which would result in the improved capacities of public administration, negotiation structure and academic community for the process of accession to the EU.



IPA

20. VII 2023.

DIRECTOR GENERAL VUJOVIĆ PARTICIPATED IN „EUSAIR FINANCIAL DIALOGUE“ MEETING



The meeting „EUSAIR Financial Dialogue“ brought together representatives of Montenegro ministries involved in the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region.

The meeting offered an opportunity to exchange information regarding implementation of activities in four thematic pillars of the Strategy, but also to make an overview of the process of EUSAIR audit that is in progress.

Director General of the Directorate for European Funds Bojan Vujović explained that EUSAIR was one of the tools that helped the European integration process.

He said that the priorities of the national IPA programmes and programmes of European territorial cooperation overlapped with the goals of the EU Strategy for Adriatic-Ionian Region (EUSAIR) and that therefore synergy had to be created and the possibilities for preparation of joint projects timely recognized.

28. VII 2023.

EXTENDED DEADLINE FOR THE FIRST CALL FOR PROPOSALS WITHIN THE INTERREG VI-A IPA



The deadline for submitting project proposals within the First Call for Proposals within the Interreg VI-A IPA Programme Croatia – Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro 2021 – 2027 has been extended by 3 PM, 2 August 2023.

For more details about the First Call, please visit the Programme website <https://interreg-hr-ba-me.eu/>.

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For more details about the First Call, please visit the Programme website <https://interreg-hr-ba-me.eu/>.

13. IX 2023.

DIRECTOR GENERAL VUJOVIĆ PARTICIPATED IN THE EVENT CELEBRATING THE END OF THE TRILATERAL INTERREG IPA PROGRAMME OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION ITALY-ALBANIA-MONTENEGRO 2014-2020



Director General of the Directorate for European Funds in the Ministry of European Affairs of Montenegro Bojan Vujović spoke in the event in Bari organized to mark the end of the trilateral Interreg IPA programme of cross-border cooperation Italy-Albania-Montenegro 2014–2020 and the beginning of the new cross-border cooperation programme between Italy, Albania, and Montenegro – Interreg IPA South Adriatic.

Mr Vujović said that, through the projects financed within that IPA programme, Montenegrin institutions and organizations used about 20 million euros of EU grants, which was almost a quarter of the total funds allocated through this programme within the financial perspective IPA II.

He emphasized that cooperation between Italian regions of Puglia and Molise, Albania and Montenegro proved to be very successful because it produced 101 projects in total, 86 of which included institutions and organizations from Montenegro as project partners.

Vujović underlined that, during the programme framework IPA III for the period 2021–2027, within the Interreg IPA programme South Adriatic, 81 million euros of EU funds would be available for support to the cross-border projects aimed at ensuring better society, economy, innovation and research, environment and governance.

13. IX 2023.

WEBINARS DEDICATED TO THE SECOND CALL FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS WITHIN THE PROGRAMME FOR THE DANUBE REGION ANNOUNCED



The announcement emphasized that the Second Call would start on 29 February 2024 and that it would be open for organizations and institutions that want to contribute to development of the Danube region through partnership. The total budget allocated for this call amounts to 55 million euros of EU contribution.

The Programme organizes a number of useful seminars to help potential beneficiaries to prepare their applications.

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CONFERENCES, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

6. VII 2023.

STATE SECRETARY ŽIŽIĆ WELCOMED THE DELEGATION OF THE AUSTRIAN PROVINCE



State Secretary in the Ministry of European Affairs Milena Žižić welcomed the delegation of the Austrian province Burgenland led by the Member of the European Parliament Christian Sagartz, and His Excellency Ambassador of the Republic of Austria in Montenegro Karl Müller.

The message from the meeting was that Montenegro could count on full support of Austria in the continued implementation of reforms and speeding up of the process of accession to the EU.

State Secretary Žižić praised the successful cooperation Montenegro had with the Republic of Austria and the support that Austria provided to EU enlargement in the Western Balkans. She informed her interlocutors of the current state of affairs in the process of accession negotiations and use of EU funds in the implementation of the reforms required in that process.

MEP Sagartz said he was pleased with his visit to Montenegro and meetings with representatives of the central and local governments. He presented the region of Burgenland, its potentials, and resources, emphasizing in particular its success in using the EU structural funds. In his respect, he offered expert support, primarily in preparing and implementing infrastructural projects in the field of energy, waste and waste-water management.

26. IX 2023.

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MINISTRY OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS PARTICIPATED IN THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON PREPARING NATIONAL VERSIONS OF THE EU ACQUIS



Representatives of the Ministry of European Affairs participated in the Regional Conference on preparing national versions of the European Union acquis that took place in Belgrade, on the occasion of the European Day of Languages.

The Conference was organized by the Regional School for Public Administration in cooperation

with the Ministry of European Integration of the Republic of Serbia. The conference brought together representatives of units for translation of the acquis from Northern Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, representatives of the European Commission, civil servants and experts from EU Member States who participated in an open discussion about the state of affairs in the process of preparing national versions of the EU acquis in these candidate countries, challenges in that process, lessons learnt, quality of translation of EU acquis and other topical issues.

Preparing national versions of European legislation (EU acquis) constitutes one of the basic preconditions for European Union membership and an inevitable step in the legal harmonization of national legislation with European legal enactments.

29. IX 2023.

STATE SECRETARY ŽIŽIĆ WELCOMED STATE SECRETARY IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF NORTHERN MACEDONIA FILIP TOSEVSKI

State Secretary in the Ministry of European Affairs Milena Žižić welcomed the State Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Northern Macedonia Filip Tosevski.

The message from the meeting was that Montenegro and Northern Macedonia cherish traditionally friendly relationship and have fruitful cooperation. Northern Macedonia appreciates Montenegro's achievements and openness to share its experience and expertise from the negotiation process with Macedonian administration.

State Secretary Žižić underlined that it was necessary to strengthen the awareness about importance of European funds for implementation of reforms and improvement of regional cooperation in using support from EU funds in the accession process, particularly with a view to ensuring further economic growth of our neighbourhood.

State Secretary Tosevski emphasized the importance of strengthening the existing cooperation mechanisms and conveyed their willingness to work together on the affirmation of the policy of enlargement to the Western Balkans in the Member States and to their public.

The interlocutors jointly concluded that it was necessary to establish closer cooperation of the negotiation teams and organize very soon a meeting of the Joint Committee established by the Agreement on Cooperation between the Government of Montenegro and the Government of Northern Macedonia in the context of accession to the EU.

COOPERATION WITH THE CIVIL SECTOR

12. VII 2023.

MINISTRY OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS PUBLISHED THE LIST OF NGO REPRESENTATIVES PROPOSED FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (JCC) BETWEEN MONTENEGRO AND EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE (EESC)

On the basis of the Decree on the selection of representatives of non-government organizations in the working bodies of state administration and implementation of public consultation process in the preparation of laws and strategies (Official Gazette of Montenegro 41/18), and in relation to the Decision on establishing the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) of Montenegro and European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) adopted in the EU-Montenegro Council for Stabilisation and Association on 20 June 2011, as well as on the basis of Article 124 of the Stabilization and Association Agreement, the Ministry of European Affairs published the List of NGO representatives proposed to be members in the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) of Montenegro and European and Social Committee (EESC)

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OTHER

3. VII 2023.

SECRETARIAT GENERAL OF THE GOVERNMENT PUBLISHED THE TWELFTH ISSUE OF THE MAGAZINE EUROKAZ

Within several of its columns, Eurokaz presents topical issues from the negotiation process, results of reforms Montenegro is implementing in the accession process, as well as success stories about using EU funds.

Representatives of the Government of Montenegro, European Commission, journalists of Montenegrin

printed and electronic media and representatives of local self-governments, commercial sector and NGOs speak and write for Eurokaz.

Among other things, the twelfth issue of Eurokaz brings an article written by the Head of Montenegro's Mission in the EU, Ambassador Petar Marković; a story about the effects of the new Agreement on the Engagement of Frontex in Montenegrin borders; a text about the carbon footprint that can influence increases in prices of final products or decline of competitiveness; as well as a story about the Lipa Cave that has become an unavoidable attraction in the tourism map of Montenegro thanks to the support from EU funds. You can also read an article written by Jovana Janušević from the Centre for Protection of Birds about the Ulcinj Salt Pans; a story about initiation of the first rural parliament in Montenegro, as well as an article written by Adela Bahović from the Municipality of Tuzi about projects of cross-border cooperation that the Municipality of Tuzi will implement with a view to improving environment protection.