



NPC

Network of Parliamentary Committees
on Economy Finance and European
integration of Western Balkans



**WESTMINSTER
FOUNDATION FOR
DEMOCRACY**

**REPORT ON THE
REGIONAL PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE ON STATE AID, COMPETITIVENESS AND
FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENTS**

**“THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTS IN PROMOTING INVESTMENTS AND COMPETITIVENESS IN
THE WESTERN BALKANS”**



March 3rd and 4th 2014
Belgrade, Republic of Serbia

1. *Summary*

Nearly 100 MPs and parliamentary staff from eight Western Balkan parliaments and the Scottish parliament along with representatives from the business sector, agencies for promotion of investments, chambers of commerce and employers' associations convened at a regional conference in Belgrade, Republic of Serbia on March 3rd and 4th. The goal of the conference was to discuss the "Role of the Parliaments in promoting investments and competition in the Western Balkans"

The conference was opened by Mrs. Vesna Kovac, deputy president of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia by saying:

"The topics we will be discussing at the conference are particularly important for all the countries of the region. Foreign investments are a source of industrial expansion, modernization, production growth, exports and income. This conference will also deal with a very important topic and that's state aid. How much does state aid affect the competitiveness policies? In order for state aid to be effective it also has to be well-managed. "Mrs. Kovac stressed that:

"Strengthening the role of the parliaments in our region means strengthening the role of the parliamentary committees, which are very important in creating economic policies. The role of the committees are not only to accept the suggested laws but also to amend them qualitatively."

During the two day conference the panelists and participants exchanged views and arguments on "Promoting investments and competitiveness through the work of Parliament", "Introducing policies for attracting foreign direct investments and strengthening competition" and "State Aid policies and subsidies for investors in the Western Balkan region in light of EU accession".

A number of questions were raised by MPs and participants. Radojko Obradovic, MP from the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia raised a number of questions:

"The question we deal with today, among others, is do we subsidize investors and if yes, which ones? Is the policy of state aid and subsidies for investors sustainable? Is it something that is applicable only to this region or also outside of it? Do our policies and attitudes towards state aid change depending on the economic situation? Finally, do the changes affect our overall behaviour and relationships?"

Members of the business community, chambers of commerce, agencies for attracting investments and employer associations from the region also provided their views as panelists and as participants at the conference.

Aleksandar Damjanovic MP from Montenegro stated that “In creating a good business environment, the parliament has a double role. It has a direct role in creating special laws that would improve the investment climate, and indirect, by following up on laws drafted by the government from the fiscal and investment insurance sphere.”

One of the main conclusions of the conference was that the parliaments should further develop their oversight capacities through sharing and adopting best practices on oversight of state aid competition and FDI policies and called for further development of an oversight culture of regular annual oversight hearings. For more conclusions and recommendations from the conference click [here](#).

This is the first conference that the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) organized in 2014 as part of its work with the Network of Parliamentary Committees for Economy, Finance and European Integration of Western Balkans. The next conference will cover the topic of oversight of regional energy policies and energy investments and it will take place in autumn 2014 in Montenegro.

Conference Conclusions and Recommendations

The conclusions and recommendations from the Regional Conference on “*The Role of Parliaments in Promoting Investments and Competitiveness in the Western Balkans*” are grouped in 3 main areas.

- A. The role of the Parliaments**
- B. Network Recommendations**
- C. Capacity of the Parliaments to conduct oversight of policies on state aid, competitiveness and attracting investments.**
 - A. Parliaments have three key roles in promoting investments and competitiveness in the Western Balkans:**
 1. Establish legislative solutions for promotion and attracting investments and improving competitiveness
 2. Monitor the implementation of policies for promoting and attracting investments and improving competitiveness
 3. Provide a budget for activities for attracting investments and improving competitiveness



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B. Network of Parliamentary Committees Recommendations

1. The Network recognizes the importance of policies for attracting investments and the role of Parliaments in promoting investments and competitiveness in the Western Balkans.
2. Parliaments are encouraged to engage the business community, Chambers of Commerce, Union of Employers, Investors, Civil Society and other nongovernmental actors in the oversight of policies for state aid, competitiveness and FDIs.
3. The Network encourages Parliaments to engage in discussions on the development of regional economic development strategies, which would be developed by relevant regional institutions and initiatives.
4. The Network encourages the development of cost benefit analysis of the legislation in the Western Balkans region which regulates the overall improvement of the business environment.
5. The Network recommends the development of impact analysis of policies of state aid in the Western Balkans and to share it with the committees which are part of the Network.

C. Developing Parliaments' oversight capacities:

1. The Network encourages Parliaments to share and adopt best practice on oversight of policies of state aid and attracting FDIs.
2. The Network encourages Parliaments and Parliamentary Committees to develop an oversight culture of regular annual oversight hearings regarding the implementation of state aid and FDI policies.
3. The Network should realize more trainings and development of the parliamentary staff to equip them with the knowledge and tools necessary to support MPs in the oversight of policies of state aid, investments and competitiveness.

**Regional Parliamentary Conference on State Aid,
Competition and Foreign Direct Investments**

"The role of the Parliaments in promoting investments and competition in the Western Balkan region"

3-4 March 2014

Belgrade, Serbia

2. March 2014

Arrival of the participants at hotel Metropol Palace in Belgrade

3. March 2014

- 09:00 – 10:00** Registration of participants
- 10:00 – 10:15** **Introduction,**
Vice-President of the National Parliament of the Republic of Serbia - Mrs. Vesna Kovach
- 10:15 – 12:15** Panel 1: **"Promoting investments and competition through the work of the Parliament. Legislative solution for promoting and attracting investments and competition"**

Mr. Aleksandar Damjanovikj, MP in the Parliament of Montenegro, Chairperson of the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget;
Mr. Ervin Kochi, MP of the Parliament of Albania, member of the committee on Economy and Finance;
Mr. Murdo Fraser, member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP), Convener of the Committee on economy, energy and tourism;
Mr. Vladimir Marinkovikj, MP in the National Parliament of the Republic of Serbia, Chairperson of the Board of NPC
- 12:15 – 13:30** Lunch break
- 13:30 – 15:30** Panel 2: **"Introduction of policies for attraction of foreign direct investments and strengthening the competition. Regulations that define the work of the Agencies for investments"**

Mrs. Jasmina Roksikj, Ministry of foreign and domestic trade and telecommunications of the Republic of Serbia, Head of the Department for Loan agreements, subsidies and protection of the investments, concessions and foreign trade in controlled goods;
Mr. Vasko Karangeleski, KA Group Consulting, Manager; Macedonia
Mrs. Jelica Grujikj, Director of the Agency for Promotion of Foreign Investments of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FIPA);
- 15:30 – 15:45** Coffee break
- 15:45 – 16:00** **Conclusions of the first day**

Mr. Emil Atanasovski, Westminster Foundation for Democracy, Manager of the Program for Western Balkans

4. March 2014

- 09:00 – 10:00** Registration of the participants for the second day
- 10:00 – 10:05** Introduction in the second day, Vladimir Marinkovikj – Chairperson of the Board of NPC – the Network of Parliamentary Committees
- 10:05 – 12:00** **Panel 3: “State Aid policies and subsidies for investors in the Western Balkan region. Sustainability of the current state aid and subsidies, having in consideration EU accession process – implications for the future”**
- Mrs. Andrijana Curchic, Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Serbia, Head of the Department for oversight of the State Aid;
Mr. Radojko Obradovikj, MP of the National Parliament of the Republic of Serbia, vice-chairperson of the Committee on Finance, State budget and oversight of the public spending;
Ms. Bisera Turkovikj, European Movement in Montenegro, Secretary General;
Mr. Aleksandar Stojanovikj, Agency for Foreign Investments and Promotion of Export of the Republic of Serbia (SIEPA), Deputy Director for Promotion of Export;
Mr. Jovan Todorov, Committee for protection of competition of the Republic of Macedonia, Head of the State Aid Sector
- 12:00 – 13:00** Lunch break
- Panel 4: "Promotion of investments and competition, by strengthening the cooperation between the chambers of commerce, parliamentary committees, and government agencies. Cooperation mechanisms and tools for promotion and attraction of investments and competition"**
- Mr. Dejan Damjanovikj, ReAktiv registry solutions, Manager; Macedonia
Mr. Dusan Korunoski, Employers Union of Serbia, Secretary general;
Mr. Jovan Tegovski, Regional Cooperation Centre (RCC), Senior Analyst of policies
Mrs. Fabiola Duro, Chamber of commerce and industry Tirana, Chief of cabinet.
- 15:00 – 15:15** Coffee break
- 15:15 – 15:30** **Review of the conclusions of each panel**
- Mr. Emil Atanasovski, Westminster Foundation for Democracy, Manager of the Program for Western Balkans
- 15:30 – 16:00** **Recommendations and conclusions of the conference**
- Mr. Emil Atanasovski, Westminster Foundation for Democracy, Manager of the Program for Western Balkans
Mr. Vladimir Marinkovikj, MP in the National Parliament of the Republic of Serbia and current chairperson of the Network board;
- 16:00 – 16.15** Closing of the conference and handing over the presidency with the Network board
- Mr. Vladimir Marinkovikj, MP in the National Parliament of the Republic of Serbia and current chairperson of the Network board;
Mr. Aleksandar Damjanovikj, MP in the Parliament of Montenegro and future Chairperson of the Board of the Network.

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on Economy Finance and European
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Name	Last name	Country	Role
Ervin	Koci	Albania	NPC board + Panel 1
Anastas	Angjeli	Albania	Economy
Liljana	Elmazi	Albania	Economy
Andrea	Marto	Albania	Economy
Idlir	Gjata	Albania	Staff
Danijela	Martinovic	BiH	NPC board
Bosko	Tomic	BiH	Economy
Krunoslav	Vrdoljak	BiH	Economy
Mladen	Ivancic	BiH	Economy
Azra	Hadziahmetovic	BiH	Economy
Halid	Genjac	BiH	EU
Mira	Grgic	Federation BiH	NPC board
Omer	Vatric	Federation BiH	Economic and financial policy
Liljana	Zovko	Federation BiH	Economic and financial policy
Mirsad	Zaimovic	Federation BiH	Economic and financial policy
Sead	Dizdarevic	Federation BiH	EU
Almedina	Bulic	Federation BiH	Staff
Teuta	Sahatqija	Kosovo	Economy
Fikrim	Damka	Kosovo	Economy
Hashim	Deshishku	Kosovo	Economy
Ali	Sadriu	Kosovo	Finance oversight
Armend	Ademaj	Kosovo	Staff
Vasko	Karangeleski	Macedonia	Panelist - Panel no.2
Dejan	Damjanovic	Macedonia	Panelist - Panel no.4
Kiril	Kolemisevski	Macedonia	Participant
Gordan	Georgiev	Macedonia	Participant
Dragan	Pulevski	Macedonia	Staff
Aleksandar	Damjanovic	Montenegro	NPC board + Panel 1
Zoran	Vukcevic	Montenegro	Economy
Mladen	Bojanic	Montenegro	Economy
Fatmir	Djeka	Montenegro	Economy
Slaven	Radunovic	Montenegro	EU
Damir	Davidovic	Montenegro	Staff (Secretary General of Parliament)
Vladimir	Marinkovic	Serbia	NPC board + Panel 1
Jasminka	Roskic	Serbia	Panelist - Panel no.2
Miladin	Kovacevic	Serbia	Panelist - Panel no.2
Andrijana	Curic	Serbia	Panelist - Panel no.3
Aleksandar	Vasiljevic	Serbia	Participant
Vladimir	Milenkovic	Serbia	Participant



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Momo	Colakovic	Serbia	Participant
Miodrag	Nikolic Feman	Serbia	Participant
Vera	Paunovic	Serbia	Participant
Radojko	Obradovic	Serbia	MP + panelist
Uros	Gostic	Srpska	NPC board
Mladen	Krstic	Srpska	Economy
Lazar	Mirkic	Srpska	Economy
Dragutin	Skrebic	Srpska	Economy
Branislav	Borenovic	Srpska	EU
Igor	Sekulic	Srpska	Staff
Emil	Atanasovski	Macedonia	WFD
Marija	Kostovska	Macedonia	WFD
Damir	Neziri	Macedonia	WFD
Aleksandar	Stojanovic	Serbia	Participant
Biljana	Ilic	Serbia	Participant
Bosko	Ristic	Serbia	Participant
Dejan	Rajcic	Serbia	Participant
Dragoje	Pavlovic	Serbia	Participant
Dragomir	Karic	Serbia	Participant
Dubravka	Filipovski	Serbia	MP
Dusan	Lazic	Serbia	MP
Gordana	Comic	Serbia	Participant
Ivan	Bauer	Serbia	MP
Jelena	Trivan	Serbia	Participant
Marina	Prilic	Serbia	Participant
Marko	Manojlovic	Serbia	Staff
Milan	Lapcevic	Serbia	MP
Nebojsa	Beric	Serbia	Participant
Nikola	Milicevic	Serbia	Participant
Novica	Kulic	Serbia	Participant
Radovan	Raicevic	Serbia	Participant
Slavica	Savic	Serbia	Staff
Slobodan	Peric	Serbia	Participant
Snezana	Paunovic	Serbia	Participant
Velimir	Stanojevic	Serbia	Participant
Vesna	Kovac	Serbia	MP
Vesna	Lalovic	Serbia	Staff
Zoran	Andjelkovic	Serbia	Participant
Zoran	Djumic	Serbia	Participant