



EUROPEAN UNION

Delegation of the European Union

Skopje, 18 April 2012

**Closing Conference of the EU-funded project:
Support to more efficient, effective and modern operation and
functioning of the Administrative Court**

18 April 2012,

EU InfoCentre

Speaking points

H.E. Mr. Aivo Orav,

Head of the Delegation of European
Union

Dear Deputy Prime Minister Ms. Arifi,
Dear Minister Mr. Bexheti,
Dear President of the High Administrative Court Ms. Kochkovska,
Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to be with you today and to officially close this important EU-funded project on administrative justice reform.

Independent, efficient and professional judiciary constitutes one of the key pre-accession requirements for any EU candidate country.

An independent, efficient and professional administrative justice system ensures the right balance between the state and its citizens; protects the citizens from state abuse and consolidates democratic principles in the work of state institutions.

As a rule, a well-functioning administrative justice system is indispensable for building citizens' trust in the state and plays a crucial role in its socio-economic development.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

For all these and many other reasons, Administrative justice reform that was launched in the country few years ago is of paramount importance.

The EU from the very start of the process decided to assist in bringing the reforms forward.

I am pleased to note that our Project provided comprehensive support that was both timely and relevant to our Beneficiaries – the Ministry of Justice and the Administrative Courts.

Firstly, **experienced project experts** from various EU countries made substantial contributions to the improvement of legal and institutional framework.

Secondly, after lengthy analysis, the project team provided **comprehensive recommendations to the beneficiaries** for the improvement of the existing court, case and human resources management system. Some of these recommendations go beyond administrative courts, and can serve as a model also for other branches of the judicial system.

Thirdly, numerous **trainings** on administrative law and soft skills were delivered to the staff of Administrative Courts.

The project made **in-depth analysis and recommendations on the interconnection of the Administrative Court with other state institutions.**

We trust that the recommendations of our project will be put into practice.

Let me warmly thank the project team and all the experts for their dedication and professionalism shown throughout the project implementation.

We also thank the beneficiaries and other involved institutions for their kind cooperation and active engagement; special thanks go the Administrative Court staff for physically hosting and taking good care of the project team!

Dear Colleagues,

A lot has been done in the field of administrative justice during the life of the Project. Laws were changed, the Higher Administrative Court was established, and additional employments took place.

Now a Working Group is considering a new Version of the Law on Administrative Disputes that was proposed by our Project.

In light of these transformative processes, I can only wish and encourage the Reform to continue - to make it bear real, visible fruits in the form of well-functioning administrative justice.

For this to happen, strong leadership on the side of the Government and the Ministry of Justice is crucial. But also active engagement of all other actors – the courts, the Judicial Council, the Ministries of Public Administration and Finance and others.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Independence, efficiency and professionalism are three indivisible components of every well-functioning justice system. Should one of these three components fail, the entire justice system gets compromised.

We trust that both the Judiciary and our Government partners will give equal importance to all these three components and will successfully complete the ongoing justice reforms for the benefit of the country and its citizens.

The EU will continue providing its assistance in these important EU pre-accession reforms.

Thank you for your attention!