

Launching Meeting

Legislatures and Citizens:

A programme for the parliaments and the civil societies of Southeastern Europe

AGENDA

- Venue:** Holiday Inn Hotel Vienna,
Handelskai 269, 1020 Vienna, Austria
Tel.: +43 1 72777, fax: +43 1 727944
- Participants:** Members of Parliament and NGO representatives from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia; representatives of the East-West Parliamentary Practice Project Steering Committee, Advisory Board and staff
- Working Language:** English
- Local Partners:** The programme *Legislatures and Citizens* is a joint initiative of the East-West Parliamentary Practice Project (the Netherlands), the Albanian Centre for Human Rights, the Centres for Civic Initiatives (Bosnia and Herzegovina), the Free and Democratic Bulgaria Foundation, the Croatian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, the Centre for Strategic Research and Documentation (Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), the Centre for Democracy and Human Rights (Montenegro), the Pro Democracy Association (Romania) and the European Movement in Serbia.
- Financing:** This programme is financed by the EU's Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands. The European Cultural Foundation provides core funding for the activities of the East-West Parliamentary Practice Project.

Friday, 16 November 2001

Arrival of participants.

Participants will be picked up from the airport (arrivals hall) and brought to the Holiday Inn Hotel.

19:30 Reception at the hotel
(please see the message board in the lobby of the hotel for the exact location)

Saturday, 17 November 2001

Launching Meeting *Legislatures and Citizens*

■ *Conference centre Holiday Inn Hotel, Rooms A, B, C*

08.30 – 09:00 Registration of participants

09:00 – 09:30 Opening of the conference

■ Welcome remarks by Maria van der Hoeven, MP; Chairperson, EWPPP Steering Committee

■ Introduction of the programme and the participants by Jill Adler, EWPPP Director

09:30 – 11:00 *Cooperation between civil society and parliaments in the legislative process*

Session 1: The NGO Perspective

Chair: David Skaggs, EWPPP Steering Committee

This session will focus on the role of civil society in the legislative process in the respective countries, with an emphasis on the extent to which civil society can influence draft legislation at various stages.

■ Presentations by representatives of partner NGOs (ten minutes):

- Albanian Centre for Human Rights
- Centres for Civic Initiatives (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
- Free and Democratic Bulgaria Foundation
- Croatian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights
- Centre for Strategic Research and Documentation (Macedonia)
- Centre for Democracy and Human Rights (Montenegro)
- Pro Democracy Association (Romania)
- European Movement in Serbia

11:00 – 11:15 Coffee Break

11:15 – 13:00 **Session 2: The Parliamentary Perspective**

Chair: Lord Roper, House of Lords, United Kingdom

In this session, representatives of Southeast European parliaments will assess the role of civil society in the legislative process from the point of view of the parliament. The existing level of cooperation between parliamentary committees and NGOs with respect to the drafting of legislation will be assessed.

■ Presentations by representatives of Southeast European parliaments (ten minutes):

- Albania
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- FYR of Macedonia
- Montenegro
- Romania
- Serbia

13:00 – 15:00 Lunch in hotel restaurant

15:00 – 16:30 ***Roundtable discussion on strategies for project implementation***

Chair: Maria van der Hoeven, MP; Chairperson, EWPPP Steering Committee

The overall programme will have three core components:

1. In-country activities on legislative feedback

The first part of the programme is aimed at involving civil society representatives in the parliamentary process of reviewing proposed legislation. In each country, the parliament will identify a committee willing to share a piece of legislation for the purposes of this project. The second stage will take the form of public fora and debates.

2. Regional cooperation

Regional cooperation is an ongoing programme component that will take the form of regional exchanges study trips to neighbouring parliaments.

3. International conferences

The organisation of two international events – a mid-term regional conference and a final regional conference - will involve the participation of experts and members of parliament from EU member states. The aim of these two conferences is to discuss the programme within the framework of the EU and the Stability Pact, make common assessments, to exchange best/worse practices, and to reinforce pan-European cooperation.

- Representatives of both Southeast European parliaments and NGOs will take the floor to discuss general country strategies for programme implementation.

16:30 – 16:45 Coffee Break

16:45 – 17.15 *Next steps: follow-up and planning*

Chair: Radu Ghidau, EWPPP Steering Committee

19:15 Meet in hotel lobby for transfer to Restaurant Figlmüller
Grinzinger Straße 55, Tel.: (+40 1) 3204257

22.00 Transfer from restaurant to Hotel Holiday Inn

Sunday, 18 November 2001

Departure of participants
(please see the pick-up schedule for the time of departure from the hotel)

