

## **CIVIL SERVANTS MOBILITY PROGRAM 2020**

### **KOSOVO, UKRAINE**

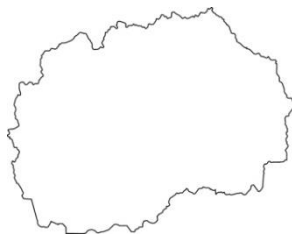
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## **CIVIL SERVANTS MOBILITY PROGRAM 2022**

### **BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, NORTH MACEDONIA UKRAINE**

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## STUDY VISITS CSMP 2020 & 2022

<b>CZECH REPUBLIC</b>	29 August – 2 September 2022 (Ukraine 2020 & 2022) 19 – 23 September 2022 (Bosnia and Herzegovina) 10 – 13 October 2022 (North Macedonia) 17 – 21 October 2022 (Kosovo 2020)
<b>HUNGARY</b>	11 – 17 September 2022 (Bosnia and Herzegovina) 9 – 15 October 2022 (North Macedonia) 15 – 18 November 2022 (Ukraine 2020 & 2022)
<b>POLAND</b>	24 April – 1 May 2022 (Kosovo 2020) 25 – 30 September 2022 (Ukraine) 3 – 8 October 2022 (North Macedonia) 10 – 15 October 2022 (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
<b>SLOVAKIA</b>	19 – 23 September 2022 (North Macedonia) 26 September – 2 October 2022 (Ukraine) 13–18 November 2022 (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

# REPORT

The Civil Servants Mobility Program (CSMP) is the **experience sharing instrument** for civil servants from the Eastern Partnership and Western Balkan countries. The main objective of the CSMP is to share the experience and the best practices through organizing of the **study visits in the V4 countries**. The visits are focused on the past and recent experience in the **implementation of the sectoral reforms and harmonization of the national legislation with the EU legislation** with a specific focus on the very concrete topic of the visit. Representatives of the governments and their agencies, public institutions, as well as regional and/or local government participate in study visits.

At the same time, this instrument contributes to **strengthening personal capacities** of the state and public administration and local self-government in partner countries. It also serves as the **networking tool**, widening and deepening the contacts of V4 civil servants and experts with representatives of state bodies and institutions in partner countries. As a rather flexible instrument, it responds to the specific requirements of the partner countries and adjusts program of the individual study stays accordingly.

The study visits have helped to open or develop an expert dialogue of partner institutions and organizations. Personal meetings of experts during study visits and sharing of professional experience helped to initiate **long-term formal and informal partnerships** across the state administration, public administration, territorial self-government, as well as non-governmental, academic and private sectors in V4 and partner countries.

The **Civil Servants Mobility Program 2020** was significantly affected by the pandemics and measures countries around the world took. The travelling was complicated if possible at all, the gatherings and meetings were limited in terms of number of people and difficult to carry out. Although we assumed that the implementation of the events would be possible in the second half of 2020, the reality proved otherwise. One wave followed another, and it was not easy to coordinate the stricter rules in each country. That is why, the decision was taken to move 2020 program to 2021. However, even though the situation improved slightly in the summer of 2021, we could not manage to organize all the planned visits in all countries and due to the COVID-19 restrictions we had postponed to 2022 the visits of **2 Kosovo** delegations to Poland and the Czech Republic respectively as well as **2 Ukrainian** delegations to Hungary and the Czech Republic respectively.

Additionally, the full program was also prepared for **2022 edition** and Think Visegrad platform partners hosted civil servants and experts from **Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Ukraine**. Despite the fact, that corona pandemics receded as the main obstacle for organizing the study visits, the Russian war of aggression in Ukraine that started on February 24, 2022 and had direct consequences on Visegrad region, impacted organization of the study visits for Ukrainian participants.

Notwithstanding the fact, that corona pandemics and Russian was of aggression in Ukraine significantly influenced the 2020 and 2022 edition, *CSMP proved to be an important instrument of the V4 experience and know-how sharing* from integration and reform processes. It was once again shown that the Think Visegrad platform is able to provide a wide range of expertise since nearly all of the participating groups had different thematic focus.

In 2022, Think Visegrad partners hosted **83** civil servants and experts: **33 Ukrainian** civil servants and experts, **11** civil servants from **Kosovo**, **21** from **Bosnia and Herzegovina** and **18** from **North Macedonia**

Regarding the two groups from **Kosovo**, the first group focused in Poland on the topic of public diplomacy its structure, means, and messages. The second one concentrated during their visit to the Czech Republic on EU accession process/enlargement agenda.

**Ukrainian civil servants** used the study trips to discuss integrated border management. i.e. safe and inclusive border in Slovakia, the implementation of sectoral reforms and the harmonization of the national legislation with the EU in Poland, the visit to Hungary focused on supporting the EU integration process of Ukraine and the role of the V4 and Hungary in particular in it and the visit to the Czech Republic on EU integration and its functioning.

The **civil servants from Bosnia and Herzegovina** focused in Hungary on topic of changing security architecture of Europe and NATO integration, with a special focus on Hungary's experience prior and after joining the military alliance. The group in Poland discussed issues related to the field of tourism, supporting entrepreneurship and cross-border cooperation and in Slovakia the issue of asylum procedures and social work in the field of migration. The visit to the Czech Republic concentrated on cyber criminality.

The delegations from **North Macedonia** carried out meetings in the Czech Republic related to translation of the EU acquis. In Slovakia, the issue of EU integration and new opportunities for more complex cooperation were in the center of discussion. Visit to Hungary focused on EU regional and agricultural policies as well as sharing Hungary's experiences concerning its EU accession process

## PART 1 – CZECH REPUBLIC

### UKRAINE 2020 & 2022\_PRAGUE\_29 August – 2 September 2022

#### Participants

<b>Alina Opanasenko</b>	Advisor on Foreign Policy to Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine
<b>Taras Holub</b>	Advisor to the Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine
<b>Andriy Sumyk</b>	State expert of the Expert group of environment, transport energy, and digitalization of the Government Office for Coordination on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration
<b>Ivanna Stetsiuk</b>	Chief specialist of the expert group on justice and social humanitarian issues at the Government Office for Coordination on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration
<b>Mykhailo Latynskyi</b>	Advisor to the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on EU Integration
<b>Andrii Bahrinets</b>	Deputy Head of the Secretariat of the Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on the Integration of Ukraine into the European Union
<b>Yurii Reva</b>	Head of the Expert group on European Integration and International technical assistance of the Directorate for Strategic Planning and European Integration,
<b>Yuliia Litosh</b>	Head of the unit of legal and contractual support of the Department of legal support
<b>Oleksandra Kozlovska</b>	Director General of the Directorate of International Cooperation and European Integration

The study trip for 2 delegations from Ukraine was organized in Prague by **EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy**. The main focus of the program was EU integration, the functioning of EU institutions, regional cooperation, and EU funds. The main goal of this trip was to enable civil servants from Ukraine to spend a week in the Czech Republic and to meet their counterparts or other experts in the defined area. As for the EU integration and its functioning, the EUROPEUM aimed to present through the various meetings the Czech experience, lessons learned, and through the meetings with representatives from various ministries and organizations based in Prague, to provide their valuable experience and present the Czech system, current forms of cooperation and its position inside the EU.

Starting their study trip, the Ukrainian delegation met with Mr **Pavel Telička**, Former Vice President of the European Parliament, and former Czech EU integration Chief Negotiator. This meeting was focused to present the participants with Mr Telička's valuable experience from the accession period, and his lessons learned as well. He also provided some advice on how to use in their best capacity this opportunity and make the process as effective and efficient as possible. The following meeting was with Mr **Kryštof Kruliš**, an analyst from the **Association for International Affairs**. His research focuses on the internal market of the EU, EU law, and relations between the EU and Anglophone countries and he kindly shared his knowledge about the internal functioning of the EU and the EU law mechanisms. The

last meeting was at the **Embassy of Ukraine in Prague**, where the group discussed with the embassy representatives the ongoing support of the Czech Republic to Ukraine.

The following day, we continued with a meeting with the representatives from the **Ministry of Regional Development** and the **Ministry of Agriculture**. Both ministries presented their work and also explained their experiences with EU funds and their effective usage. The group got a chance to look into the Czech experience with these funds and many interesting projects funded by EU sources. Both ministries expressed their interest in further cooperation with Ukraine in the future. In the afternoon, the group had an online meeting with the **Permanent Representation of the Czech Republic to the European Union**. The presentation focused on their work in Brussels, how they cooperate with other member states and with partners back home and they also described the activities during the ongoing Czech Presidency.

The study trip continued with the meeting at the **Ministry of Environment**, where the Ministry representatives presented their work, especially their activities during CZPRES, and echoed the importance of regional cooperation. They also presented their projects funded by the EU and shared some ideas on how to cooperate in the future. Later on, a few members of the group had a bilateral meeting with the **Ministry of Transport of the Czech Republic** and with the **Parliamentary Institute**.

On Thursday, the delegation had a meeting with the representatives of the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic**, namely with Ms *Jana Brázdová* and Ms *Irena Žižka*. After lunch, the group moved on to meeting with the representatives of the **European Commission Representation in the Czech Republic**, where the presentation focused on their activities in Prague and strengthening public engagement. Later on, the delegation met with Mr *Štěpán Černý*, Director-General, Section for European Affairs, **Office of the Government of the Czech Republic**, and with Mr *Pavel Žáček*, **Chamber of Deputies, Parliament of the Czech Republic**, who only emphasized Czech support and dedication towards Ukraine and its post-war recovery.

On the last working day, the group had a chance to meet Mr *Zdeněk Beránek*, Foreign Policy Advisor to the Speaker of the **Chamber of Deputies**, and later on, with the representatives of the **Ministry of Industry and Trade**, where they actively discussed possible cooperation, shared their experience and provided advice for the future development.

### **Feedback**

Overall, the program of this study trip and the meetings received very positive feedback from the Ukrainian delegation. Each of the visitors was satisfied with getting to know their counterparts in the Czech Republic, allowing them to build a base for future cooperation among these countries. All in all, each participant gave the program and its organization excellent feedback, rating it with 5/5 points. This included the accommodation facility, as well as the accompanying free-time program.

## PRAGUE\_19 – 23 September 2022 (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

### Participants

<b>Nenad Ešpek</b>	Expert Associate in the Sector for Combating Terrorism, Organized Crime, Corruption, War Crimes, and Narcotics Abuse of the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>Dario Zović</b>	Senior Inspector in the Federal Criminal Police Investigation Service, Federal Police Administration
<b>Olivije Zimonja</b>	Head of the Department for High-tech Crime, Criminal Police Directorate, Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republika Srpska
<b>Alisa Miščić</b>	Senior Investigator in the Department for the Prevention and Suppression of Organized Crime and Drug Abuse, Police of the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina

The study trip for a delegation from Bosnia and Herzegovina was organized in Prague by **EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy**. The main focus of the program was cyber criminality and cyber security. The main goal of this trip was to enable civil servants from Bosnia and Herzegovina to spend a week in the Czech Republic and to meet their counterparts or other experts in the defined area. As for the topic of cyber criminality, the organizers focused on four main pillars: the Czech experience, investigating crimes involving cryptocurrencies, crimes related to the protection of children from sexual abuse in the digital environment, and ransomware investigations.

On Monday morning, the delegation met with the representatives from **EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy** Mr **Christian Kvorning Lassen**, and Mr **Martin Vokálek**, who welcomed the group, introduced the institution as well as the project itself and discussed the topic and possible cooperation in the future. After lunch, the group had a meeting with Ms **Lucie Kosová**, Ministerial Counselor on Cyber prevention and Cybercrime at the **Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic**. In her presentation, she explained how their department works, and what are their activities, as well as shared some lessons learned from their work in the field. The group exchanged some valuable ideas about the projects they are currently working on and touched upon some concrete steps for their future cooperation. The last meeting of the day was with Ms **Adéla Klečková**, an Expert on Cyber Warfare and Cyber Activism. She provided valuable insight into the world of cyber activism, elves vs. trolls, and what our role can possibly be.

The following day, we continued with a meeting with the meeting with Mr **Jakub Drmola**, an Expert on Cybersecurity, at **Masaryk University in Brno**. In his remarks, he introduced their activities and projects at the University, as well as who their partners are and what they focus on in terms of research. After lunch, Mr **Lukáš Houdek**, Director of Hate Free Culture agreed to meet with the group and shared his experience with hate on the internet, his cooperation with law enforcement, other state institutions, and NGOs.

On Wednesday, we were happy to welcome Ms **Marta Pelechová**, Lead Negotiator for the UN Convention against Cybercrime, **Ministry of Justice of the Czech Republic**, Mr **Richard Kadlčák**, Special Representative for Cyberspace, Director of the Cybersecurity Department,

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic** and Mr **Pavel Zeman**, The Supreme State **Prosecutor's Office**. During this meeting, the group had a chance to discuss in depth the Czech experience, and regional cooperation in that regard, brainstorm new ideas and also draw some concrete challenges both sides share. After the meeting, Ms **Martina Mlinarević**, Ambassador, **Embassy of Bosnia and Herzegovina** kindly agreed to meet with the delegation over lunch.

Later on, the delegation met with Ms **Asya Metodieva** from the **Institute of International Relations in Prague**. Her research focus is on the mobilization of radical movements and the role of social networks in radicalization. Her broader research interests include terrorism and other forms of political violence, polarization and radicalization activities, and content moderation. She also provided some background from the region. After that, we met Ms **Kristina Soukupová**, President of **DefSec Innovation Hub**. In her presentation, he presented their work on the topic of cognitive warfare. The following day, we had an online meeting with Mr **Vladimír Bízík** from the Center for Security and Military-Strategic Studies, the **University of Defense in Brno**, and right after that, we had another online meeting with Ms **Markéta Gregorová**, a **Member of the European Parliament**, where the group discussed what the Czech Republic is doing with this particular agenda in Brussels.

On the last working day, the group had a chance to meet with the representatives of the **Police of the CZ** (Mr **Michal Černý** and Mr **Jaroslav Hüttl**). After lunch, the group enjoyed the tour in Prague.

#### **Feedback:**

Overall, the program of this study trip and the meetings received very positive feedback from the delegation from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Each of the visitors was satisfied with getting to know their counterparts in the Czech Republic and exchanging their experiences and ideas, allowing them to build a base for future cooperation among these countries. All in all, each participant gave the program and its organization excellent feedback, rating it with 5/5 points. This included the accommodation facility, as well as the accompanying free-time program.

## **NORTH MACEDONIA\_PRAGUE\_10 – 13 October 2022**

#### Participants

<b>Sladjana Angelova</b>	Head of Sector for the Preparation of the National Version of the Acquis
<b>Marija Bojkova-Blazheska</b>	Head of Unit for Translation and Coordination of the Process of Translation
<b>Mirjana Dimchova</b>	Senior Associate for Translation
<b>Aida Bashovikj</b>	Junior Associate for Translation
<b>Hristina Sofronijoska</b>	Head of the Department for Activities of Public Interest and Sustainable Development



The study trip for a delegation from North Macedonia was organized in Prague by **EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy**. The main focus of the program was the translation/transposition of the EU acquis into national legislation. The main goal of this trip was to enable civil servants from North Macedonia to spend a week in the Czech Republic and to meet their counterparts or other experts in the defined area. As for the topic of translation of the EU acquis, the organizers focused on four main pillars: the Czech experience with the translation of EU acquis, manners of cooperation/communication with institutions, especially in terms of expert and legal revision of the translated EU acquis, preparation of the terminology regarding the national version of EU acquis, especially in terms of the negotiation process, terminological databases and lastly building the lawyer-linguist profile.

On Monday morning, the delegation met with Mr **Saško Todorovski, Ambassador of the Republic of North Macedonia** to the Czech Republic, who welcomed the group and discussed the purpose of the group's study visit and the need for legal and expert review as well as support from other stakeholders, such as the Czech counterparts. After lunch, the group had a meeting with Ms **Nicole Grmelová**, Department of Business and European Law, **Prague University of Economics and Business**. In her presentation, she explained her previous experience as a lawyer-linguist in the European Parliament and offered some advice in this field. The group also exchanged some ideas and concrete steps that can be done in the future when it comes to cooperation between the Prague University of Economics and Business and Macedonian universities.

The following day, the group continued with a meeting with Mr **Jiří Lenfeld**, Head of Unit for Legislative Process of the EU from the Department for Compatibility and other representatives of the **Office of the Government of the Czech Republic**. In their presentation, the officials explained how their department works and what is their experience with the pre-accession period and the challenges they faced with the transposition of the EU acquis into the Czech legislation. The officials also emphasized the role of lawyer-linguists playing an important role in the negotiation process for EU membership. Lastly, the participants exchanged contacts for future cooperation and workshops aimed at the translation of the EU acquis. After lunch, the group had a meeting with Mr **Radovan Pekař**, a lawyer-linguist from the **Council of the European Union**, who introduced the work of legal linguists in EU institutions and presented the main tasks of their work being help with drafting legal acts in the source language and assuring coherence between linguistic versions.

On Wednesday, the group was welcomed at the premises of the **European Commission Representation** in the Czech Republic by Mr **Martin Stašek**, Deputy Head of Representation, Directorate-General for Translation Field Officer and Mr **Otto Pacholík**, long-time Head of the Czech Translation Department at DGT (2005–2020). In their presentation, the officials conveyed their experience as translators in the DGT, explained the work of linguists in the European Commission as well as discussed, the need for additional education for lawyer-linguists in the field of law. An idea to start raising awareness among faculties and students about opening a special department at the Faculty of Law, where law and languages would be taught together was suggested to the

participants. After lunch, the group met with Ms **Pavλίna Houbková**, a Doctoral Researcher at the Department of Law, **Université du Luxembourg**, who offered her experience as a lawyer-linguist, where she mostly talked about translating court decisions. Immediately afterwards, the group continued with the meeting with Mr **Petr Potůček** from the **European Parliament**, who offered his extensive experience in translation and talked about the creation of the Czech Translation Department of the European Parliament in Luxembourg. Together they discussed the common obstacles and challenges of their daily work, and he offered the participant some valuable advice.

The following day, the group had the opportunity to meet with Mr **Štěpán Pěcháček**, Director of the **Parliamentary Institute** and other representatives of the Parliamentary Institute, Chancellery of the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic. In their presentation, they discussed their experience concerning the harmonization of Czech legislation and advised the group that the most important thing is the cooperation between the Government and the Assembly. The members of the Parliamentary Institute also emphasized their interest in further cooperation with their North Macedonian counterpart. Before lunch, the participants met with Ms **Adéla Šuchmanová**, Head of the European Union Department, **Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic**. During the meeting, Ms. Šuchmanová explained the role of the Senate in the whole legislative process and the specific work they do when it comes to EU legislation. After the meeting, the group was offered a private tour around the premises of the Senate and a short introduction to the history of the institution.

#### **Feedback:**

Overall, the program of this study trip and the meetings received very positive feedback from the delegation from North Macedonia. Each of the visitors was satisfied with the prepared agenda, which was prepared according to their needs and requirements for gaining new experience. The group got to know their counterparts in the Czech Republic and exchange their experiences and ideas, allowing them to build a base for future cooperation between the countries. Each participant evaluated the program of the study visit and its organization with excellent feedback rating it with 5/5 points. The evaluation included the accommodation facility, breakfast and accompanying free-time program.

## **KOSOVO 2020 \_PRAGUE\_17 – 21 October 2022**

#### Participants

<b>Fatmir Curri</b>	Advisor on European Integration to 1st Deputy Prime Minister, Office of Prime Minister (OPM)
<b>Artan Çollaku</b>	Director, Office of Coordination of the Stabilisation and Association Process, OPM
<b>Jeton Karaqiça</b>	Director, Office for Economic Criteria, and Internal Market, OPM,
<b>Vjosa Beqaj</b>	Director, Office for Sectorial policies, OPM

<b>Mrika Pepa</b>	Acting Director, Office for Political Criteria/Office of Prime Minister, OPM
<b>Florim Canolli</b>	Director, Development Cooperation Office, OPM

The study trip for a delegation from Kosovo was organized in Prague by **EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy**. The main focus of the program was the EU accession process and the enlargement agenda by the Czech Presidency. The main goal of this trip was to enable civil servants from Kosovo to spend a week in the Czech Republic and to meet their counterparts or other experts in the defined area. As for the topic of the EU accession process/enlargement agenda, the organizers focused on four main pillars: the Czech experience with the EU accession process, difficulties and obstacles of the accession process, the current situation when it comes to Kosovo's Visa Liberalization and enlargement agenda by the CZPRES.

On Monday morning, the delegation participated in the **Eastern Partnership Business Forum: Geoeconomic challenges and opportunities** organized by the **Ministry of Industry and Trade** of the Czech Republic and got a chance to see a CZPRES event first-hand and to listen to interesting opening speeches. After the opening session, the group had the opportunity to listen to a ministerial panel on How to enhance economic ties with the EU and the resilience of Eastern Partners. After the forum, the group had some working online meetings.

The following day, the group continued with a meeting with Ms **Albesjana Iberhysaj, Ambassador of Kosovo** to the Czech Republic, where they discussed the upcoming meetings and briefed Ms. Ambassador about the program of the study visit as well as the situation at the departments, they are responsible for. After lunch, the participants had a meeting with Ms **Jana Kalmán**, Desk Officer for Kosovo, **Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic**. In her presentation, she talked about her daily work as a desk officer for Kosovo and the current developments in Kosovo-EU relations. The participants also had an opportunity to ask her many questions to which Ms Kalmán provided the answers. The last meeting of the day was with Mr **Lukáš Hendrych**, Director of the Cabinet of the Minister of the Interior of the Czech Republic. He offered an insight into the Visa Liberalization topic from the perception of the Ministry of Interior as well as acknowledged the participants about the latest updates regarding this topic. Lastly, Mr Hendrych mentioned the role of the Ministry of Interior during the CZPRES and their main priorities when discussing Kosovo.

On Wednesday, the group was welcomed at the premises of the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic** by the representatives of the MFA. In their presentation, the representatives offered valuable insight into the Czech foreign policies regarding the Western Balkans and Kosovo. The participants were also offered a presentation about the CZPRES coordination, and the efforts made by the presidency in case of enlargement agenda by the director for CZPRES Coordination Mr **Jakub Utešený**. Right after the meeting, the group continued with meeting with Mr **Martin Košatka**, Junior Deputy Minister, European Section; South and Southeast Europe Department, where they briefed

him about the arguments why Kosovo deserves the candidate status. After lunch, the group had a meeting with Mr **Pavel Telička**, Former Vice President of the European Parliament, and former Czech EU integration Chief Negotiator, who introduced the whole process of EU accession and the Czech experience. He also provided some valuable advice on how to negotiate with the politicians from the EU in order to get some positive outcomes.

The following day, the group met with Mr **Fredrik Jörgensen**, Swedish Ambassador to the Czech Republic, who welcomed the participants at the premises of the **Swedish embassy**. Together they discussed the upcoming Council Presidency of Sweden as well as the position of Sweden towards the Western Balkans and Visa Liberalization and the priorities of the Swedish Presidency. Ambassador was also interested in the progress of the country; therefore, the participants briefed him about the situation from their sector 's point of view. After lunch, the group continued with a visit to the **Office of the Government of the Czech Republic**, where they met with the representatives of the European Policies Coordination Department. In their presentation, the representatives talked about the coordination of European Policies, their current work related to the Western Balkans and Kosovo as well as upcoming meetings where Kosovo will be discussed.

On Friday, the group had only one meeting with Ms **Hana Flanderová**, Legal and Consular Section, **Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic**, where they discussed the Visa Liberalization and the requests and questions of Member States on visa alignment policy of the Western Balkans with the EU Schengen zone.

#### **Feedback:**

Overall, the program of this study trip and the meetings received very positive feedback from the delegation of Kosovo. Each of the visitors was satisfied with the prepared agenda, which was prepared according to their needs and requirements for gaining new experience. The group got to know their counterparts in the Czech Republic and exchange their experiences and ideas, allowing them to build a base for future cooperation between their offices. Each participant evaluated the program of the study visit and its organization with excellent feedback rating it with 5/5 points. The evaluation included the accommodation facility, breakfast and accompanying free-time program.

## PART 2 – HUNGARY

### BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA\_BUDAPEST\_11–17 September 2022

#### Participants

<b>Momir Brajić</b>	Minister Counsellor and Head of Department for NATO and PFP
<b>Alma Vražalica</b>	Minister Counsellor at the Department for NATO and PFP
<b>Aleksandar Ostojić</b>	Second Secretary at the Department for NATO and PFP
<b>Nejra Sarić</b>	First Secretary at the Department for OSCE
<b>Marin Marić</b>	Second Secretary at the Protocol Department

The main topic of the study visit for civil servants from Bosnia and Herzegovina, that was organized by the **Institute for Foreign Affairs and Trade** was the changing security architecture of Europe and NATO integration, with a special focus on Hungary's experience prior and after joining the military alliance. The program included a field trip to Székesfehérvár on 16 September.

The week-long study program started on Monday with a visit to the Department for Western Balkans at **Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary**. Head of Department Mr **László Dux** briefed participants about the Hungarian standpoints on EU enlargement towards the Western Balkans, with a special emphasis on issues related to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Mr. Dux stressed that there is a political consensus on the importance of having all Western Balkan countries in the EU. Enlargement (to NATO and EU alike) remains not only a strategic interest for Hungary but the process itself is also the best anchor for providing stability and economic prosperity. In this regard, Hungary is committed to speeding up the integration process of the countries of Western Balkans and to provide technical assistance to the aspiring member states.

In the afternoon, the delegation returned to the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary**, where they were welcomed by the State Secretary for Security Policy. In his presentation, State Secretary Mr **Péter Sztáray** stressed the similarities between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Hungary in terms of economy and security threats, highlighting that the EuroAtlantic integration is of great importance from economic, political and security perspectives, but that the lack of consensus within the EU and NATO makes accession impossible. He also underlined that the security risk of the Russian-Ukrainian war and the related crises have brought a change in NATO's strategic concept, from which Bosnia and Herzegovina could also benefit (e.g. participation in the Defense Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic). In addition to NATO membership, the State Secretary also discussed security threats with the participants, such as migration and hybrid attacks.

On Tuesday afternoon, the program continued at the **Ministry of Defense of Hungary**, where the delegation was briefed by State Secretary for Defense Policy and Defense Development Mr **Gáspár Maróth**. The State Secretary briefly outlined the main priorities of the Hungarian defense policy and the Hungarian positions in the Russian-Ukrainian war. Mr Maróth also spoke about cyber threats from both civilian and military perspectives. In addition, the State Secretary said that border security, arms control and the fight against organized crime are all tasks on which Bosnia and Herzegovina must put more emphasis.

Wednesday began with a visit to the Political Director's Office at the **Prime Minister's Cabinet**, where Deputy State Secretary Mr **Márton Ugródsy** briefed the delegation about Hungary's position on current EU and regional affairs. Mr. Ugródsy explained that the EU must restore its credibility in the Western Balkans, as full membership is the only feasible way to reduce tensions. In other words, enlargement and deepening of the EU must continue simultaneously – as it did in the past. Mr. Ugródsy expressed support for the Open Balkan initiative as it would potentially have a positive economic impact on the region. As for the ongoing war in Ukraine, the Deputy State Secretary stressed that Hungary promotes peace and dialogue; however, the lack of clear objectives on both sides will make it difficult to reach any peaceful solution in the weeks to come.

On Thursday, participants engaged with members of think tanks and academia, and acquired a comprehensive understanding about Hungary's accession to NATO. The day kicked off with a **roundtable discussion** with Senior Research Fellow **Péter Wagner** from IFAT, Colonel **Klára Kecskeméthy Síposné** from the **University of Public Service (NUPS)** and Colonel **István Guba, Senior Specialist Officer** from the **Hungarian National Guard Command, Military Observatory** (cyber defense). Panelists not only explained Hungary's accession process to the military alliance but shared their lessons learned: the importance of having political and public consensus on membership and the significance of training civilian and non-civilian security and defense experts (i.e. language, public diplomacy within NATO). In addition, experts gave valuable suggestions on how Bosnia and Herzegovina should approach its NATO bid.

In afternoon the delegation met with Colonel **Zoltán Jobbágy**, Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Military Science and Officer Training at **NUPS** and Ms **Anna Molnár**, Head of the Department of International Security Studies at **NUPS**. Colonel Jobbágy highlighted the regional and global context in which Hungary's accession took place as well as the importance of representing one's own interest within the alliance. Interoperability with NATO and learning how the alliance works from a political/diplomatic side are of crucial importance. Ms. Molnár also mentioned the necessity of having enough civilian professionals with security and defence background prior and after joining NATO. In addition, the positive impacts of NATO accession to Hungary's security sector reform and democratisation process have been extensively discussed.

On Friday, participants made a field trip to **Székesfehérvár**. In the morning, the delegation visited the **Headquarters Multinational Division Center (HQ MND-C)**, which is part of the NATO Force Structure. Here the delegation was welcomed by Major General **Denis Tretinjak**, Commander of HQ MND-C, Brigadier General **Tibor Králik**, Deputy Commander, Brigadier General **Ernő Péter Siposs**, Chief of Staff of Headquarters and Command Sergeant Major **Mario Mateljić**. During the briefing, civil servants were given an overview about the current state of the command, its tasks, and the road ahead to full operational capability. For Bosnia and Herzegovina, education of the population about the role of the military alliance was seen as the most important cornerstone on the road to NATO membership.

On Friday afternoon, the delegation visited the **NATO Force Integration Unit Hungary (NFIU HUN)**, where they were received by Colonel **István Topor**, Commander of the NATO NFIU HUN. Colonel Topor provided a comprehensive summary of the history and, mission of the Unit and shared experiences regarding their cooperation with different NATO

bodies. The civil servants showed a keen interest in the relations between the NFIU HUN and Hungarian state institutions as well as the nature of their practical cooperation (i.e. in case of crisis, security, and infrastructure issues).

## NORTH MACEDONIA\_BUDAPEST\_09–15 October 2022

### Participants

<b>Aleksandra Zhogleva Vchkova</b>	Senior Associate, NIPAC Secretariat for European Affairs
<b>Tatjana Veta</b>	Deputy Head of EU Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy
<b>Mavlan Morina</b>	Advisor in the Unit of reference price database, IPARD Payment Agency
<b>Sinisha Cvetanoski</b>	Head of Unit for Agriculture and Food Safety, Secretariat for European Affairs

The study visit for civil servants from North Macedonia took place between 9-15 October in Budapest. The central topic of the program was EU regional and agricultural policies as well as sharing Hungary's experiences concerning its EU accession process.

The study program kicked off at the Department for Western Balkans at the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary**. Participants were briefed by Head of Department Mr **László Dux** and Mr **Miklós Varga**, Desk Officer for North Macedonia about Hungary's engagement towards the Western Balkans. Mr. Dux highlighted that since the 1990s, the country has been advocating an EU perspective for all Western Balkan states. Bilateral relations between Hungary and North Macedonia were also discussed, including trade relations, the presence of Hungarian police officers at the North Macedonian–Greek border and the technical assistance concerning EU integration. Mr. Dux stressed that agricultural policy as well as fishery (albeit being a landlocked country) were of high importance for Hungary's accession negotiations; the same would surely apply to North Macedonia.

The delegation then visited the Political Director's Office at the **Prime Minister's Cabinet** where Deputy State Secretary **Márton Ugrósdý** presented Hungary's position on EU enlargement and highlighted that the integration of the Western Balkans is an important element of the region's security. The Deputy State Secretary underlined that North Macedonia has made considerable progress towards EU integration and has gone through several painful concessions in the hope of EU accession. Mr Ugrósdý highlighted that the Open Balkan initiative was an excellent opportunity to boost local economies and that the free movement of goods and labor could further deepen regional cooperation. The delegation expressed its interest in Hungary's support to farmers' export activities and the Agricultural Marketing Center.

The program continued at the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary**, where the group was briefed by the Regional and Border Development Department. Deputy Head of Department Ms **Lívía Balozsán** gave a presentation on the infrastructure projects and EU cooperation. Ms Balozsán showed how the activities of the different ministries in Hungary

are coordinated by the Department in order to implement bilateral or multilateral projects. Ms Balozsán also spoke about the difficulties in implementing projects and the practical disadvantages of the Schengen Code and EU regulations in bilateral cooperation with non-member states (e.g. Romania, Croatia). Desk Officer **Diána Nagy** presented the potential of the European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC), highlighting the advantages of coordinating, and accessing EU funding through it. Together with the delegation, the Department staff examined the possibilities of establishing EGTCs in North Macedonia. On Tuesday, participants visited the **Western Balkans Green Center**. Here Executive Director Mr **Gábor Szántó** introduced the objectives of the so-called green investment agency: supporting green solutions, Hungarian companies, and their activities in the Western Balkans. The scope of the projects is numerous, covering all areas impacted by climate change. The Center currently has 47 adopted projects, out of which three focuses on North Macedonia (i.e. increasing the quality of the water in Skopje and mitigating the impacts of cloudburst and droughts). The Centre is also part of the Center for Excellence in Green Transition, together with the Vienna-based Energy Community.

The delegation paid a visit to the Department for Development Policy at the **Ministry of Agriculture of Hungary** on Wednesday. Mr **Viktor Nagy**, EAFRD and EU Relations Expert introduced the Hungarian rural development infrastructural framework and explained how the related portfolios (e.g. managing authority, paying agency, certification body) are divided between institutions/departments. Mr Nagy highlighted the call for tenders (support schemes), the project evaluation system and the organic farming requirements through various examples. Lastly, the possible changes in rural developments after 2023 were also discussed in detail.

The program on Wednesday continued with a working lunch with Chief Advisor and Senior Research Fellow Mr **László Vasa** from IFAT and Research Director for EU Affairs Mr Attila Kovács from the **Center for Fundamental Rights**. Experts shared their views on the negotiation process between Hungary and the EU with regards to agricultural policy. The main discussion centred around the consequences of membership to the Hungarian agricultural sector (i.e. sugar industry) and society.

The first meeting of Thursday took place at the **National Chamber of Agriculture (NCA)**, where the group was welcomed by Strategic and Rural Development Expert **Brigitta Balogh**, Foreign Affairs Expert **Szilvia Koczur**, Senior Land Expert **Diána Farkas** and Knowledge Transfer Expert Ms **Ágnes Jakab**. Ms. Farkas first introduced the structure of the NCA, highlighting the main differences between the former and the current organisational form. She pointed out the key elements of the new act which established the current format of the NCA (e.g., compulsory membership) and then explained the scope of the activities of the NCA. In the second presentation, Ms Jakab introduced the Hungarian farm advisory system. First, she elaborated on the actors in the system and their tasks, then on the necessary conditions for becoming a farm advisor in Hungary. The participants showed a particular interest in the advisory system as Ms Jakab talked about the relations with other international advisory organizations.

The program then continued at IFAT, where the group was briefed by **Nikoletta Horváth**, Head of the Department for Cross-border Interreg Programs of the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary**. Ms Horváth presented the legal background of the Interreg



programs and the current projects supported by cohesion funds. She pointed out that cross-border Interreg programs are an opportunity to connect countries and strengthen the sense of regional cohesion. Ms Horváth gave a detailed overview of the Hungarian implementation of the Interreg program framework, the Hungarian legal background, the implementing bodies, and authorities, which could serve as good practices for the institutions in North Macedonia. In response to the interest of the participants, the Head of the Department presented examples of cooperation between the countries in the field of Interreg IPA coordination. During the discussion at the end of the presentation, the civil servants asked Ms Horváth for advice on their cross-border initiatives in the Western Balkans.

On Friday morning the delegation visited the **Prime Minister's Office**, where they were welcomed by Mr **Balázs Greinstetter**, Deputy State Secretary for the Economic Development Programs (EDP). The meeting was also attended by Mr **Péter Keller**, Head of the Department for Strategy of the EDP and Head of Unit Ms **Noémi Danajka**. Mr Keller presented the history of the Deputy State Secretariat and the “implementation of competitiveness” through the operational programs. Presenting the background of the Managing Authority and its institutional development, the Head of Department highlighted the links between the managing authorities, intermediary bodies, and ministries. According to participants, the Managing Authority's financial envelope, its call for proposals process and project selection methodology could all be envisaged for implementation in their national system.

## UKRAINE 2020 & 2022 \_BUDAPEST\_15–18 November 2022

### Participants

<b>Hennadiy Maksak</b>	Executive Director, Foreign Policy Council “Ukrainian Prism”
<b>Dmytro Tuzhanskyi</b>	Director of the Institute for Central European Strategy
<b>Mariia Koval-Honchar</b>	Expert of European Studies Program, Ukrainian Prism
<b>Olga Chyzhova</b>	Communication Director, Expert on Digital diplomacy
<b>Yuliia Kazdobina</b>	Head of the Ukrainian Foundation for Security Studies
<b>Iryna Kosse</b>	Senior Research Fellow, Institute for Economic Research and Policy Consulting
<b>Yuri Vdovenko</b>	Coordinator of the Ukrainian national platform of the EaP CSF,
<b>Yuliia Shaipova</b>	Team Lead, Centre for Economic Recovery,
<b>Maria Zolkina</b>	Head of Regional Security and Conflict Studies, Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation

The Civil Servant Mobility Program of 2022 was a combined program of 2020 and 2022 editions due to the cancellation of the previous one as the result of the coronavirus pandemic. The program was designed for 10 participants. As the impact of the Russian aggression in Ukraine, **CEID**, which organized the study visits was advised to wait with the organization until May 2022, however as bilateral relations were seriously worsened in the given period, both MFA and the Embassy of Hungary in Kyiv were hesitant to decide on the program.

In September, following consultations with the V4 coordinator, we were advised to host representatives of think tanks and focus on sharing the experience of the Hungarian accession to the European Union. In October we agreed with the **Foreign Policy Council Ukrainian „PRISM”** on the program and together we invited over 20 people to participate. CEID director, Mr **Daniel Bartha** travelled to Lviv to the Central European Forum to prepare the program and meet most of the participants and conduct interviews about the program's needs. By mid-October 15 people accepted the invitation, however, some invited ministry officials already indicated that they won't receive authorization to leave the country. By the end of October, the participant list was shortened to 12 people, as we learned three of them won't receive authorization to leave the country due to compulsory military service. Finally, 3 people were cancelled two days before the program due to health issues and last-minute denial to leave the country. Due to the circumstances, those who participated from Ukraine had to travel between 12 – 30 hours to join the program.

We have created a balanced program of meeting politicians from both the opposition and the government, high-level officials, think-tankers and the media. On the first day of the program, following the arrival delegation visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade to meet Mr **Miklós Boros**, V4 Coordinator of the MFA, Ms **Nóra Kertész** IVF Coordinator of the MFA and Ms **Boglárka Horváth** EU coordination and enlargement expert. Mr Boros introduced the work of the V4, the role of the presidencies, the V4 agenda towards Ukraine and support programs to help the country financed through the IVF. He has shortly introduced Hungarian efforts on a bilateral level. He has highlighted the agenda of V4 related to EU enlargement and shared a few best practices from the Western Balkans, such as the Think Balkans initiative.

Ms Horváth introduced technical recommendations regarding the EU enlargement and best practices from the Western Balkans regarding the negotiations. She focused primarily on the training of EU experts and the necessary preparation for negotiating each chapter through the help of the experts of line ministries.

Following that on the same day, Ukrainian experts met with the representatives of the Hungarian opposition in the **Parliament**. The Head of the Budgetary Committee, Mr **Zoltán Vajda** hosted the participants, who was speaking about the need for economic reforms and the support of neighboring countries. On behalf of the **EU Committee, András Fekete-Győr, MP of the Momentum** party welcomed the participants. He was speaking about his party's efforts to support Ukraine and its integration into the EU and highlighted that the party leadership is currently in Kyiv to meet Ukrainian MPs and experts. Finally, Mr **Koloman Brenner**, Deputy-Head of the **Foreign Affairs Committee**, introduced their efforts to support EU policies and support Ukraine. All hosts condemned the Hungarian official policy and offered their full support to Ukraine. After the meeting participants visited the Hungarian Parliament on a guided tour.

Later, the delegation was hosted by **Minister Tibor Navracsics, Minister of Regional Development and former EU Commissioner**, who introduced shortly the Hungarian accession and EU process and talked about current disputes with the EU. As the chief negotiator on behalf of the Hungarian government he talked about the possible outcomes of the negotiations and the main concerns of the Hungarian government. Within Q&A,

participants had a long debate on the minority rights in Ukraine and the Hungarian position to block the NATO-Ukraine council and other important formats of cooperation.

On the second day, CEID organized a civil society workshop with over 15 Hungarian participants representing different sectors of the Hungarian think-tank field. Following the introductory speech by **Péter Balázs** former **Foreign Minister and EU Commissioner**, participants had a 3-hour discussion on bilateral relations, the EU integration process and potential ways to support Ukraine in the upcoming years.

In the late afternoon, a background discussion was organized for Hungarian journalists from **Népszava** (daily), 444, 24.hu, **Radio Free Europe** and **Válasz Online** among others.

During the last working day of the visit participants visited the **Ministry of Justice** where Mr **Viktor Kecskés**, Head of the EU Political Communication and Public Relations Department and Mr **László Sinka**, Head of Department, Department of General EU Affairs, Economic Policy and Migration hosted the group for a 3-hour long meeting. They have introduced major EU policies, current debates, main issues in the EU and the need for potential reforms and introduced the Hungarian position on the enlargement agenda.

At a final informal meeting, Deputy State Secretary Mr **Marton Ugrósy** from the **Office of the Political Director of the Prime Minister** hosted an open debate on bilateral issues, Hungarian sanctions policy, the future of Hungary in the EU and prospects for Hungarian support for Ukraine. The meeting which had a highly pessimistic tone concluded with the recommendation to organize more CSMP projects designated to think tankers and the role of the think tanks in formulating the debate between the two countries, possibly through high-level forums and with the involvement of representatives of the governments.

## PART 3 – POLAND

### KOSOVO 2020\_WARSAW\_24 April–1 May 2022

#### Participants

<b>Arben Rugova</b>	Information and Media Monitoring Officer at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora (MFAD)
<b>Fatlinda Osmani</b>	Economic Diplomacy Officer (MFAD)
<b>Anell Bajra</b>	Training and Development Officer (MFAD)
<b>Mehmet Morina</b>	Senior Officer for Legal Affairs (MFAD)
<b>Enis Xhemaili</b>	Training and Development Senior Officer (MFAD)

The goal of the study organized by **Centre for Eastern Studies** visit was to introduce the delegation from Kosovo to the Polish model of public diplomacy, with particular emphasis on the politics of memory. During meetings with representatives of Polish institutions and agencies, the concepts, strategies, priorities, and practice of Polish public diplomacy were presented. The participants were acquainted with key instruments for building Polish soft power as well as the roles of various Polish institutions in public, cultural, and economic diplomacy.

At the beginning of the study visit, the Kosovo delegation met with experts of the **Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM)**: Mr **Łukasz Kulesa**, deputy head of research, and Mr **Łukasz Ogrodnik**, an analyst with PISM's Central Europe Program. This meeting was focused on the role of analytical institutions in shaping the public diplomacy of Poland. Mr Kulesa presented the main tasks of PISM, the scope of its cooperation with Polish public administration and government institutions and its role in providing information about the international environment and processes affecting the Polish position in the world. The discussion included the current international situation, in particular the Russian invasion of Ukraine. In the **Diplomatic Academy of the Polish MFA**, Deputy Director Mr **Arkadiusz Radwan**, Deputy Director Ms **Marta Zielińska-Śliwka**, and expert Mr **Jakub Drożdż** presented the Polish model of recruitment to diplomatic and consular training and curriculum of the training, with special emphasis on courses about public diplomacy. The participants from Kosovo learned about the role of the Diplomatic Academy in the professional development of MFA staff and in offering education and training opportunities for institutions at home and abroad. Possible areas of cooperation between Kosovo and Poland in the form of common training courses, internships, and study visits were also discussed.

The next day, the participants met with a representative of the Department of European Policy of the Polish MFA, Ms **Weronika Staniec-Porczyk**, head of the South East Europe Division, and former ambassador to Hungary Mr **Roman Kowalski**. The discussion focused on the current state of cooperation between Warsaw and Pristina. Questions included the possible public diplomacy tools to enhance cooperation between the two countries and good practices that can be implemented to improve the image of Kosovo in Poland. The participants also asked about Poland's perspective on EU enlargement, its assessment of

the effectiveness of this policy, as well as about the challenges Kosovo faces on its path to the EU.

The participants also met with Mr **Rafał Wolski**, the director of the Department of Public and Cultural Diplomacy at the MFA, who presented the evolution of the tasks of Polish public diplomacy since the democratic transformation in 1989. The participants were presented with the priorities and strategies of Polish public diplomacy and the network of Polish Institutes.

Director Wolski also brought up the recent campaign of support for Ukraine as an example of an activity of Polish public diplomacy. In turn, Ms **Malgorzata Bochwic-Ivanovska**, deputy director of the department, briefed the participants on the mission of the Polish Institutes and their role in promoting Polish culture, history, science, the Polish language, and national heritage. Bochwic-Ivanovska also presented the day-to-day work of the Polish Institutes. This was followed by a discussion with a focus on an exchange of know-how concerning Polish public diplomacy and communication strategies during the process of applying for EU membership.

Mr **Sławomir Kowalski**, director of the Department for Cooperation with the Polish Diaspora and Poles Abroad also met with the guests from Kosovo. Mr Kowalski explained that Poles and people of Polish origin on all continents are perceived as natural allies in the development and reinforcement of a favorable image of Poland around the world. Mr Kowalski introduced the main duties of the department, which are focused on shaping, conducting, and coordinating cooperation with Poles abroad. He also presented the Polish scholar system for pupils living outside Poland as well as the challenges it faces. Participants received insight into programs aimed at engaging active Polish diaspora groups and Poles living abroad in image-building activities.

Wednesday started with a sightseeing tour in Warsaw and a visit to the **POLIN Museum**. It was an opportunity to acquaint the participants with the history of Poland and the Jewish community. The participants also learned about the role of this museum in restoring the memory of Jewish culture and the popularization of the multicultural heritage of Poland. In the afternoon, the Kosovo representatives met **Polish Investment and Trade Agency (PAIH)** Deputy Director Mr **Łukasz Grabowski** and a consultant on Southern Europe, Ms **Karolina Myszka**. The participants were briefed about the **Polish Development Fund Group**, its structure, task and role in the sustainable social and economic development of the country. Director Grabowski explained how the role of this institution is to efficiently coordinate development programs through a uniform strategy and integrated channels of contact with businesses, local governments, and individual clients. Special emphasis was put on the role of PAIH in supporting both the foreign expansion of Polish business and boosting their exports, as well as the inflow of FDI into Poland. The guests from Kosovo asked about the possibilities of enhancing economic cooperation between the two countries.

On Thursday, a meeting at the **Adam Mickiewicz Institute** with Ms **Sylvia Heinrich**, head of the Department of Project Development and Relations, was devoted to a discussion about

instruments of promotion of Polish culture abroad. The participants were briefed about the structure and tasks of the institute. Strategies for the promotion of Polish culture abroad were also presented. During the discussion, the emphasis was put on international cooperation in the field of culture. The key projects for the promotion of Polish culture abroad in recent years were also presented, as well as experience with the development of a website for this purpose (culture.pl).

The group from Kosovo also visited the **Warsaw Rising Museum**. The deputy director of the museum, Mr **Paweł Ukielski**, sketched the overall concept and history of the museum, which was the first truly modern museum built in Poland. He also touched on the museum's experience with shaping public opinion. Mr Ukielski noted that the educational and research activities of the museum are aimed at the dissemination of knowledge about the Warsaw Rising. During a guided tour, the group gained vast knowledge about the Warsaw Rising, as well as about the exhibition structure.

Friday started with a meeting with Mr **Adam Sauer** from **Solidarity Found PL (FSM)**. The participants learned about the role of Polish development assistance in strengthening a positive image of the country and its position in the international arena. Mr Sauer briefed participants on the structure and tasks of the FSM and its cooperation with foreign grantors. Examples of successful Polish development aid projects were also presented. Participants asked questions about the effectiveness of these projects and possible areas of cooperation between Poland and Kosovo. The participants were also welcomed by Deputy Director Mr **Wojciech Konończuk** and Balkans experts Mr **Bogdan Zawadewicz** and Ms **Marta Szpala** in a meeting at the Centre for Eastern Studies. The discussion was devoted to the security situation in Central Europe, Ukraine, Belarus, and the Western Balkans, and on EU policy towards the neighborhood. It was also an opportunity to discuss the course of the study visit and the participants' assessment of the meetings and possible future areas of cooperation. The Kosovo delegation underlined the need for a Civil Servants Mobility Program and similar programs facilitating the sharing of V4 best practices and enabling deepening cooperation between the V4 and the Western Balkans countries.

The guests from Kosovo also visited the **KARTA Centre Foundation**. The president of the foundation, Mr **Zbigniew Gluza**, and board member Ms **Alicja Wancerz-Gluza** presented the concept of social archives and their role in disseminating knowledge about the history of Poland and the region. Participants also received insight into the oral history program, which aims to record, archive, and make available biographical testimonies of 20<sup>th</sup> century witnesses to history. The archive's emergency service, which helps to rescue documents or to exhibit documents to the public, was also presented.

On Saturday, the participants from Kosovo visited the **Palmiry National Memorial and Museum in the Kampinos Forest** outside Warsaw, which commemorates victims of mass executions carried out by the Nazis during World War II. Participants not only received information about the events that took place there but also had a closer look at the architecture of the modern memorial sites. The exhibition is housed in a stark, modernist building surrounded by woods where the execution sites are marked with four birch trees growing in separate glass tubes.

### **Feedback:**

The delegation from Kosovo positively assessed the study visit program, the meetings, and their information value. The participants were active, raised a lot of practical and detailed questions and showed great interest in obtaining training support, learning good practices, and exchanging experiences to strengthen their competence in the area of public diplomacy. The meetings were a great opportunity for the exchange of contacts and establishing communication for further cooperation. The Polish side was open to assistance and further study visits from Kosovo. In the participants' opinion, the study visit was very informative and organized at the right time, as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kosovo is changing its organizational structure and the tasks of its departments. Therefore, gaining insight into the Polish experience was highly valuable input for the MFA's internal reforms.

Poland and the other V4 countries have consistently been among the main supporters of the EU's further enlargement and have supported the Western Balkans countries in their ambition to join the European Union by sharing the experience with necessary reforms. One of the main challenges for the enlargement process is the drop in support for it as a result of a neutral or negative perception (based on a lack of knowledge) of the Western Balkan states. Therefore, exchanging information about V4 models of diplomacy could be an important element of support for Kosovo and other Western Balkan countries on their paths to the EU as it could contribute to an improvement of their image abroad.

## **UKRAINE\_WARSAW\_25–30 September 2022**

### Participants

<b>Maryna Nelina</b>	Head of expert group on finance, customs, tax and entrepreneurship policies at the Government Office for European and EuroAtlantic Integration
<b>Elvir Sahirman</b>	State expert of the Expert group for coordination and communication of the European integration policy at the Secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine
<b>Tetiana Topolanska</b>	Head of the sector for European Integration at the Main Legal Department in the Parliament of Ukraine
<b>Alona Panarina</b>	Chief Consultant of the Secretariat of the Parliamentary Committee on Ukraine's Integration into the European Union
<b>Valeriy Kravchenko</b>	Head of the Expert Group for Analytical Support of Political Directorate at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<b>Alla Loboda</b>	Director for European Integration and International Cooperation Department at the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources
<b>Alina Oponasenko</b>	Advisor on Foreign Policy to the Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine
<b>Oleksandra Nechyporenko</b>	Deputy Director of International Trade and Economic Cooperation Department - Head of Division on Cooperation with the European Union

**Tetiana Movchan**  
**Mykhailo Slyzhuk**

Deputy Head of Division for agricultural infrastructure  
State expert of the Expert group on biosafety and rapid response  
to emergencies of international concern of the Directorate of  
Public Health and Disease Prevention

The study visit opened with a session with Ms **Jolanta Szymańska**, head of the EU Program at **PISM**, and Mr **Daniel Szeligowski**, head of Eastern Europe Program at PISM. Both informed the participants with the foundations of Polish foreign policy, including the context of Poland's membership in the EU.

The next session was held with Mr **Jarosław Pietras**, former Polish diplomat and Minister for European Affairs, and Mr **Marek Tabor**, former official of the Office of the Committee for European Integration of the Polish Government. The meeting was devoted to the institutional architecture of the Polish membership negotiations with the EU and lessons learned during this period, which could currently be applied to the institutional background in Ukraine.

The session with Ms **Magdalena Surowiec** from the **European Commission Representation** in Poland, Mr **Witold Naturski** from the **European Parliament Liaison Office** in Poland and Mr **Jan Truszczyński**, former ambassador of Poland to the EU and chief negotiator of Poland's accession to the EU, was devoted to the experience of Polish membership negotiations with the EU. The session was joined also on-line by Mr **Georg Ziegler** from **DG NEAR Support Group for Ukraine**. The discussion touched upon several issues related to the Polish membership negotiations experience and its applicability to the Ukrainian case.

The study visit to the **Polish Parliament** included a meeting with Mr **Leszek Kieniewicz**, director of the Office for international and EU Affairs of the Chancellery of the Senate, as well as Ms **Danuta Jazłowiecka**, long-standing Polish MP and former Polish MEP. The discussion was primarily devoted to the legal issues that arise from the EU integration, such as regulatory approximation, legal harmonization, the activities of the national parliaments in this respect.

The meeting with **PISM** experts Mr **Łukasz Maślanka**, Mr **Łukasz Jasiński** and Mr **Przemysław Biskup** was devoted to the foreign policy of the big three European countries: Germany, France, and the UK. Special focus was put on their support for Ukraine during the Russian invasion, as well as their respective positions regarding Ukraine's EU membership perspective.

Study visit to the **City Hall of Warsaw** included a meeting with Mr **Maciej Fijałkowski**, director of European Funds and Development Policy Office of the City Hall. The topic of the discussion was role of the self-government in the EU integration, as well as the EU structural and development funds.

The fourth day of the study visit featured a local trip to **Żelazowa Wola**, a home of Fryderyk Chopin, famous Polish composer.



On the last day of the study visit, a special meeting was held in the **Polish Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy**, with the presence of a series of high-ranking officials. The discussion was devoted to the EU development policy, the structural funds, the institutional and legal issues of the EU local development.

The last two meetings featured Mr **Leszek Jesień**, former chief negotiator of the Polish membership talks with the EU, as well as Ms **Danuta Huebner**, former Polish Minister for European Affairs and then the first Polish Commissioner after the accession to the EU. The topic of the discussion was a broad range of issues connected to the negotiation procedure, accession talks, and preparing for the EU membership.

## **NORTH MACEDONIA\_WARSAW\_WROCLAW\_03-08 October 2022**

### Participants

<b>Fuad Jonuzi</b>	Coordinator for Political criteria and anticorruption policy, in the Unit for Justice, freedom and security, Secretariat for European Affairs
<b>Flutura Lazami</b>	Advisor in the Unit for Justice, freedom and security (Sector for Integration) within the Secretariat for European Affairs
<b>Ramije Avziu</b>	Head of the Unit, Directorate of European Union, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<b>Tatjana Janevska Stankovikj</b>	Programme Officer of INTERREG IPA CBC Bulgaria - North Macedonia in the EU-Department; CBC - Cross border cooperation, Ministry of Local Government
<b>Natalija Filipovska</b>	Junior Project Implementation Associate, Secretariat for European Affairs, Unit for Bilateral and Multilateral Assistance, Sector for coordination of the European funds and other foreign assistance

The study visit was organized by the **Polish Institute of International Affairs**. Five representatives of central ministries participated in the visit: three people representing the Secretariat of European Affairs, responsible for the entire EU accession process, one person from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and one person from the Ministry of Local Government, responsible for the CBC Macedonia-Bulgaria cooperation program. The goal of the visit was to provide participants from North Macedonia with the experience of Poland's accession to the EU, practical aspects of membership negotiations, with particular emphasis on JHA issues, counteracting corruption, the rule of law, as well as cooperation with the OSCE and cross-border cooperation. The goal was also to establish relationships that may lead to cooperation in the future, further exchange of experiences or creating joint projects.

During each meeting, representatives of the delegation asked many detailed questions. Issues related to the use of EU funds, acquisition, implementation, reporting and results of European projects were of particular interest to the participants. Also important were aspects related to the organization of the accession process, possible formats of cooperation with partners from Poland in this area, as well as the functioning of EU and

international institutions located in Poland. The meetings on cross-border cooperation programs were important, as Macedonia benefits from EU support for cross-border cooperation at all its borders. Hence, the exchange of experiences in this area has a practical dimension. However, it is worth remembering that the use of structural funds in Poland, to which Macedonia as a non-EU country has no access, has only an educational dimension for the future. Currently, Macedonia uses the IPA program – Instruments for Pre-Accession Assistance, which is a program different from the structural funds implemented in the member states.

The first point was a visit to the **Polish Institute of International Affairs**, during which participants were presented with the program, goals and study visits. In addition, there was a presentation of Institute's activities, programs, analytical work and publications. The participants' questions concerned the process of analytical consultancy by Institute for public institutions in international affairs. There is no similar public institution in Macedonia that would deal with analytical work on international affairs.

The next meeting was held at the Center for European Projects Service of the **Ministry of Interior and Administration** with Mr **Jan Krzesinski**, Head of the Internal Security Team. It is a unit subordinate to the Ministry of Interior and Administration, which, commissioned by the Ministry, implements projects financed from European funds with a total value of 300 million euros. These are projects for the police, border guards and other uniformed services regarding the creation of infrastructure, equipment, communication systems, etc. The meeting had an extremely practical dimension, based on specific examples of implemented projects, principles of cooperation with the EU and national institutions.

An important point of the study visit were meetings at the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs** with Mr **Pawel Kotowski**, Director of the Office of the Polish Presidency Organization in the OSCE and Ms **Weronika Staniec-Porczyk**, Head of the South-Eastern Europe Unit at the Department of Europe. Macedonia takes over the chairmanship of the OSCE after Poland, hence the discussion on the priorities of the Polish chairmanship and the practical aspects of holding the chairmanship was relevant for the participants of the study visit. From the point of view of Macedonia, a country that is not a member of the EU, the chairmanship of the OSCE is a great challenge and is significant for Macedonian diplomacy. Preparations for the presidency of the OSCE have been going on for a long time in the Macedonian authorities. The conversation with the Head of the South-East Europe Department concerned the priorities in bilateral relations between Poland and Macedonia, as well as the formats of multilateral cooperation, such as the Berlin Process. Technical assistance projects implemented by Polish partners for the strengthening of administrative structures in Macedonia were also discussed.

The group also visited the **North Macedonian Embassy** in Warsaw, where there was a meeting with the Embassy chargé d'affaires, Mr **Ilija Psaltirov**, Economic Counselor for Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, and Mr **Aleksandr Dimovski**, second secretary of the Embassy. The subject of the meeting was bilateral cooperation between both countries, economic cooperation, and Poland's support for the accession process of Macedonia.

At the **Ministry of Funds and Regional Policy**, Mr **Jaroslav Sopol**, Head of the Unit of Analyzes, International Cooperation and Information at the Department of Territorial Cooperation, presented cross-border cooperation programs along all Polish borders. The presentation concerned the priorities, strategies, financing and effects of the implemented projects. The presentation also included examples of specific projects in the areas of tourism, environmental protection, infrastructure and institutional cooperation.

During the visit to **FRONTEX**, a meeting was held with Ms **Karolina Hawryszkow**, specialist from the Unit of International Cooperation, dealing with the WB6 countries, regarding the basic goals and functioning of FRONTEX and cooperation with North Macedonia and other countries in the region. The group also visited the monitoring center for the situation on the EU borders, the task of which is to obtain and analyze information that is the basis for decision-making by the management of the institution.

A meeting was held at the **ODIHR** headquarters with the participation of Ms **Katya Andrusz**, the Press Spokesperson as well as people responsible for monitoring of human rights situation, observations of the election processes in North Macedonia and other countries in the region. The talks focused on the activities of ODIHR in cooperation with partners in North Macedonia, including election and referenda observation missions as well as human rights monitoring.

On the last day of the stay in Warsaw, a meeting was held at the independent NGO **Institute of Public Affairs** with the President, Mr **Jacek Kucharczyk** and Ms **Małgorzata Kopka-Piatek**, Director of the European Program. The subject of the meeting was the involvement of civil society in the process of Poland's accession to the EU. The Institute was an institution actively working to persuade Poles to participate in the referendum on EU accession in June 2003. The Institute was also involved in the work of the social advisory group in the process of Poland's accession to the EU. Currently, the Institute conducts numerous research projects on Poles' attitudes towards EU membership.

Then the group visited the **Polin Museum**, presenting the history of Jews in Poland.

The last day of the study visit to Poland was organized in **Wroclaw**, a city that is the capital of Lower Silesia, one of the 16 regions of Poland. The program in Wroclaw consisted of three meetings: with Mr **Krzysztof Kolanowski**, Head of the Secretariat of the Poland-Saxony CrossBorder Cooperation Program. The meeting concerned strategies for supporting cross-border cooperation with EU funds, as well as examples of specific projects. Another meeting with Mr **Jacek Wasik**, Director of the Regional Representation of the European Commission in Wroclaw. The conversation concerned information activities of the Representation addressed to various target groups about the European Union. The last item on the study visit was a meeting with Mr **Jaroslav Obremski**, Governor of Lower Silesia – the representative of the central government in the region. The subject of the meeting was the structure of governmental and local government authorities in the region, the division of competences, cooperation between the governor and local governments in crisis situations.

## **Feedback**

The participants of the visit confirmed in an interview with the coordinator that the Polish experience will be useful in their professional work in central institutions. The subject of the study visit was selected optimally and corresponds to the current needs and challenges faced by institutions in North Macedonia in the accession process.

Practical experience have been important and are reflected in the EU funds currently available in Macedonia. Such as pre-accession funds and CBC. Hence, the study visit did not focus on structural funds, regional operational programs, available only to member states.

Representatives of the Macedonian side are interested in maintaining further contacts with the institutions they visited during their stay in Poland. It is especially about the possibility of using Polish experience and know-how, as well as the possibility of implementing joint projects in the future in the field of strengthening the effectiveness of administration.

A major challenge for the Macedonian authorities is to maintain interest in and support for the EU accession process. It is related to the lack of a clear perspective of the country's membership in the EU. Hence, cooperation formats aimed at selected social groups such as young people, teachers, journalists etc. would be important. Showing the benefits of EU membership and the changes introduced in Poland during the EU accession process.

## **BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA\_WARSAW\_KATOWICE\_CIESZYN\_10–15 October 2022**

### Participants

<b>Amela Sjekirica-Suljić</b>	Expert Advisor for EU funds and eneterpreneurship development, Business Service Center, City of Mostar
<b>Mia Drmać</b>	Expert Advisor for development strategy and concessions, Business Service Center, City of Mostar
<b>Bojan Vučurević</b>	Acting Head of the Department for Tourism, Agriculture and Eneterpreneurship, Trebinje
<b>Maja Lopin</b>	Specialist, Public Institution for Development of Tourism and Protexion of the Cultural, Historical and Natural Heritage of “Radimlja” Stolac

The study visit was organized by the **Polish Institute of International Affairs** in cooperation with the **Center for Eastern Studies**. Four civil servants, representatives of three cities: Mostar, Trebinje and Stolac participated in the visit.

The aim of the visit was to provide participants from Bosnia and Herzegovina with Polish practical experience at various levels in the field of tourism, supporting entrepreneurship and cross-border cooperation. The goal was also to establish relationships that may lead to cooperation in the future, further exchange of experiences or creating joint projects.

The first item on the agenda was a visit to the **Polish Institute of International Affairs**, during which participants were presented with the program of the visit, its goals and applications. In addition, there was a presentation of PISM's activities, programs, analytical work and publications.

The next meeting was held with Mr **Jan Krzyzanowski** at the **Targowa Creativity Center**. It is a business support center and startup incubator run by the local government of the City of Warsaw. The main topic of the talks were entrepreneurship support programs conducted by the city's local government, aimed at enabling small and medium-sized enterprises to use services for business offered by public institutions, training programs for entrepreneurs, networking between companies, as well as internationalization of economic activity.

The second meeting took place at the **Mazovia Development Agency** with the participation of representatives of the Marshal's Office of the Mazovia Voivodeship and the Tourism Department of the City of Warsaw. The meeting concerned the strategy of attracting investments by the Mazovia region, projects implemented for the development of rural areas, tourism development strategy in Mazovia and the city of Warsaw.

The next meeting with Ms **Dorota Zadrożna**, Head of the Promotion and Foreign Cooperation Department at the **Polish Tourist Organization** concerned the activities of the Polish Tourist Organization to promote tourism on foreign markets through the Polish Tourist Organization's foreign offices and other tools. An important topic of the meeting was also the cooperation of the Polish Tourist Organization with regional tourist organizations, as well as local tourist organizations and local governments.

The group was also received by Ms **Kovilijka Spiric**, Ambassador of **Bosnia and Herzegovina** in Warsaw at the **Embassy**.

A meeting was held at the seat of the **Center for Eastern Studies** with the participation of representatives of the Polish Institute of International Affairs and Ms **Weronika Staniec-Porczyk**, Head of the South-Eastern Europe Unit of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The meeting concerned current development issues at local level in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the sociopolitical situation in the country. The participants of the study visit shared their opinions on the current challenges for the self-governments of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The group visited the **Polish Investment and Trade Agency**, where representatives of the Agency presented activities aimed at attracting and servicing foreign investors in Poland and tools for supporting Polish exporters abroad, including on the markets of the WB6 countries. In the WB6 countries, the Agency has so far only had one foreign office, located in Belgrade.

During a visit to Katowice at the **Marshal's Office of the Silesia Voivodeship**, the group was hosted by Mr **Dariusz Ptas**, Chief of Administration of the Silesia Voivodeship. The meeting concerned the competences, structure and main challenges of the regional government in

the Silesia Voivodeship. The guests visited the hall of the **Silesian Sejm**, which was established in 1929 and is the most beautiful hall of the regional parliament in Poland. In addition, representatives of the Marshal's Office discussed on practical examples the tool for economic promotion of the region, the tourism development strategy and the region's involvement in two cross-border cooperation programs Poland-Czech Republic and Poland-Slovakia, financed from EU funds. During the discussion on the development of tourism, the idea of establishing cooperation in the exchange of historical reconstruction groups during festivals of tourism or culture promotion emerged.

The participants of the study visit visited the **Silesian Museum**, presenting regional art and the history of Silesia. The participants were greatly impressed by the interactive form of presenting museum exhibits. According to the participants, most museums in Bosnia and Herzegovina are organized in a traditional way, presenting the exhibits in display cases. Unlike the Silesian Museum, which presents an attractive message in a suggestive way that appeals to the imagination of its visitors.

The last day of the study visit was in **Cieszyn**, where the group met with Ms **Gabriela Staszkiwicz**, the **Mayor of Cieszyn**, as well as Ms **Renata Karpinska**, Plenipotentiary for cooperation with the Czechs of the city of Cieszyn, Mr **Pavel Santarius**, Plenipotentiary for cooperation with Poland in Czech Cieszyn. Cieszyn lies directly on the Polish-Czech border and functionally forms one organism with the city of Czech Cieszyn, which lies on the other side of the river in the Czech Republic. Therefore, the meeting concerned the formats of cooperation between both cities, joint projects, as well as planning infrastructure and some public services so that they are complementary to each other in both cities.

The group then met with Mr **Jiri Vziątek**, Director of the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation **TRITIA**. It is the first EGTC established in Poland in 2013 by three regions: the Silesian Voivodeship, the Moravian-Silesian Region and the Zilina Self-Government Region. During the meeting, the goals and methods of functioning of the EGTC were presented, which is a further-reaching form of cooperation than the Euroregions, because the EGTC as a whole has legal personality and represents the interests of its members from two or more countries at the same time. In addition, EGTC TRITIA cooperates with partners from Serbia in the field of care for seniors, supported by the International Visegrad Fund. Participants from Bosnia and Herzegovina were interested in developing cooperation under the support opportunities offered by the International Visegrad Fund.

The last point of the study visit was a visit to Czech Cieszyn in the Czech Republic at the headquarters of the Czech side of the **Cieszyn Silesia Euroregion**. The meeting was attended by Mr **Bogdan Kasperek**, Director of the Polish side of the Cieszyn Silesia Euroregion and Mr **Tomas Balcar**, Director of the Czech side of the Euroregion. The topics of the meeting were joint activities of both parts of the Euroregion for the creation, development and promotion of tourist products, as well as forms of cross-border cooperation. One of the interesting examples of cooperation formats was the creation of the Euro-institute, the aim of which is to conduct cross-border training, studies and recommendations for cross-border cooperation. The inspiration for establishing the

Institute was a similar institution operating in the Pamina region on the Franco-German border, with which the Cieszyn Silesia Euroregion cooperates.

### **Feedback**

The participants of the visit confirmed in an interview with the coordinator that the Polish experience will be useful in their professional work in their local self-governments. Practical experience presented during visits to institutions were important. It was interesting for the participants to show different perspectives from the central level, through the regional level, to the local level. Representatives of the Bosnian side are interested in maintaining further contacts with the institutions they visited during their stay in Poland. In particular, it is about the possibility of implementing joint projects in the future in the field of cultural and tourist exchange and the transfer of know-how.

Participants of the study visit are also interested in establishing partnerships and cooperation between local governments from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Poland.

## PART 4 – SLOVAKIA

### NORTH MACEDONIA\_BRATISLAVA\_19–23 September 2022

#### Participants

<b>Renata Ivanovska</b>	Head of Unit for Internal Market and Competition
<b>Njomza Roci-Xheladini</b>	Senior Associate in Policy, Environment and Climate Change
<b>Zulejha Tahiri</b>	Junior Associate
<b>Semir Veli</b>	Associate for Bilateral Cooperation

The main focus of the study trip of four civil servants from Secretariat for European Affairs of North Macedonia in Slovakia was the EU integration – new opportunities for more complex cooperation. During the meetings organized by the **Research Center of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association**, they gained knowledge about the institutional and legislative framework and the governance in the field, concrete projects (at municipal and national level) and the current activities of the respective institutions, including their competencies and interaction.

The official working program for the expert group was organized into five working days and consisted of series of meetings with leading representatives and experts from the Slovak institutions, governmental agencies, companies and independent experts in the field of judiciary, energy, environmental and security sector. Members of the group could share not only governmental experience i.e. state organizations, ministries and their agencies, but also the experience of companies that work in the field and have the first-hand experience with reality of legislative and institutional framework in practice.

The team of Macedonian experts was officially briefed and received by the **RC SFPA's** analyst of Economic and Development Policy Program **Peter Brezáni** and project coordinator **Barbora Legényová** upon arrival during the orientation meeting.

The first meeting with Mr **Alexander Duleba**, **RC SFPA's** analyst and energy expert focused on the topic of energy security. The participants had the chance to learn more about Slovakia's experience with reforms in the area of energy security and adopt best practices that can inspire them on North Macedonia's path to European integration.

The second day was opened with the meeting with representatives of the **Slovak Innovation and Energy Agency**. Mr **Ján Magyar**, Department of International Cooperation and Mr **Stanislav Laktiš**, Project Manager, talked about reforms in the field of energy efficiency and renewable energy sources with a focus on current trends and examples of good practice in Slovakia. The participants were given a short introduction to SIEA's main activities and the projects the agency is currently working on. Representatives of SIEA also



talked about EU goals, policies and initiatives focused on energy efficiency and renewable resources. At the same time, CSMP participants were introduced to the legislation of the Slovak Republic in this area and were provided with examples of the use of European Structural Funds in Slovakia.

The next meeting took place on the premises of the **Stop Corruption Foundation**. The delegation was received by the Director of the foundation Ms **Zuzana Petková**. The participants were informed about the activities of the foundation and the areas in which Slovakia has achieved significant progress in terms of the fight against corruption thanks to foundation's activities. Ms Petková also pointed out several problems that Slovakia is currently facing in connection with corruption and the activities through which they are working on the necessary reforms.

The last meeting of the day took place at the **Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic**. Mr **Michal Kotlárík**, Director General of the International Law Section, summarized the ministry's activities in selected areas. He spoke about best practices related to European integration, implementation of laws, and Slovakia's cooperation with EU authorities. Laws and initiatives in the field of corruption, public procurement, media freedom and disinformation were among the topics discussed.

The Macedonian delegation continued the second day with the meeting with Ms **Veronika Oravcová**, Expert on energy transition and energy security in Central and Eastern Europe and Research Fellow at **RC SFPA**, who presented the topic of the energy sector in Slovakia. In her presentation, Ms Oravcová focused on the process of transition from coal to more ecological sources of energy and the associated opportunities and challenges Slovakia is facing in this regard. She also spoke with the delegation about investments in the electrification of railways, the just transformation of Slovak mining regions, and the EU financing of initiatives in the field of energy sector. The information regarding coal transition process was perceived as very interesting and useful.

The next topic of the agenda was judiciary sector. The delegation met with Mr **Andrej Leontiev**, lawyer from **Taylor Wessing Slovakia**, who covered the topic of corruption and money laundering reforms. The participants were introduced to the Register of Beneficial Ownership in Slovakia, its three main pillars and successes, which Mr Leontiev illustrated on specific case studies. Mr Leontiev then shared his experience and best practices in the fight against corruption and efforts to increase transparency of the business and public sector in Slovakia.

The delegation further met with **RC SFPA's** analyst of Economic and Development Policy Program and project manager Mr **Peter Brezáni** discussing structure, prospects and usefulness of platform National Convention on the EU in the North Macedonia.

The last two meetings of the day were focused on the environment and fight against climate change. Ms **Ivana Maleš**, Expert on environmental policy and strategies in the circular economy of **Circular Economy Institute** introduced the concept of circular economy and Slovakia's activities in this area. Ms Maleš also addressed the topic of waste

management and the way in which Slovakia motivates citizens to recycle and reduce the amount of waste produced.

In the evening, the delegation was received at the **Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic** by Ms **Zuzana Fejrdová**, Director of Department of Bilateral and Multilateral Cooperation, Mr **Šimon Lacena**, Senior State Advisor from Department of Emission Trading, Ms **Viera Špalková** from Circular Economy Section and **Mária Fischerová** from Department of Environmental Policy Coordination, Foreign Relations and Environmental Policy Section. The topic of the meeting was environment protection and Green Deal and its implementation and the representatives of the ministry spoke about important strategic documents, goals and initiatives of the EU in the field of the environment and their implementation by Slovakia. The delegation learned about the Recovery and Resilience Plan, European Green Deal, Fit for 55 package, the Action Plan for the Circular Economy and the obligations and benefits resulting from them for the member states including Slovakia.

On September 22 the delegation started the day with the meeting with Mr **Tomáš Kozák**, Director General of the European Affairs Directorate at the **Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic**. Mr. Kozák introduced the agenda of his section and spoke about coordination of EU affairs at the national level, his experience with Slovakia's accession process to the EU and the obstacles it faced in the process of obtaining membership. At the same time, Mr Kozák expressed strong support for North Macedonia in the accession process they recently started and shared the best practices that helped Slovakia gain the status of an EU member state. The delegation spoke about the challenges the Secretariat for European Affairs of North Macedonia currently faces in paving their way to EU membership and posed a lot of questions. They found the meeting with Mr Kozák beneficial.

The delegation then continued to the **Ministry of Defense of the Slovak Republic**, to discuss security and defense initiatives and EU common security and defense policy. The participants met with Ms **Iveta Hnátová** from International Organizations Unit, Policy Department, Ms **Jaroslava Pitáková** from Defense Policy Department and Mr **Igor Dobrovič** from International Relations Unit, Modernization Department. The representatives of ministry gave presentations about the most important strategic documents - EU Common Foreign and Security Policy, EU Common Security and Defense Policy, Global Strategy for EU Foreign and Security Policy, EU Strategic Compass for Security and Defense, as well as new EU defense and security initiatives. The participants also learned more about the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) and the projects in which Slovakia is involved, as well as the European Defense Fund and the process of selecting projects that are eligible for financing.

The meeting at the Ministry of Defense was followed by the meeting with **Human Rights League** Lawyer **Miroslava Mittelmannová**, who showed the delegation around the Assistance center for people from Ukraine. She presented the Human Rights League's agenda, the ways in which they help refugees from Ukraine and clarified the concept of temporary refuge. She also presented cooperation of HRL with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the ways in which HRL integrates lawyers and experts from Ukraine who came to Slovakia into their daily activities. It was

very interesting for participants to see how Slovakia copes with the large number of refugees coming from Ukraine.

The day ended with the visit at the **Ministry of Investment, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic**. The delegation was welcomed by Mr **František Koločány**, National coordinator of the Danube strategy from the Department of Transitional Cooperation Programs and Mr **Tomáš Swiatlowski**, Director of the Department of Management and Implementation of Cross-border Cooperation Programs. They presented programs of transnational and cross-border cooperation, talked about their experience with European structural and investment funds, introduced four cross-border programs in which Slovakia is involved and presented the implementation, financing and selection process of partners of Danube Transnational Program and the Central Europe Program.

The last day of the trip focused on security and environmental sector. During the meeting with Mr **Matej Kandrík**, Executive Director of the **Adapt Institute**, the participants learned more about challenges and prospects of hybrid warfare. Mr Kandrík presented the activities of the Adapt Institute and other Slovak institutions focused on hybrid and cyber threats and mentioned the importance of addressing the issue of disinformation and enhancing the critical thinking in every society. He also familiarized participants with the hybrid threats that Slovakia faces from the Russian and Chinese side, as well as the ways in which these two countries are influencing Slovak society.

The last point of the delegation's agenda in Bratislava was meeting with MEP Mr **Martin Hojsík**. He talked about his work in the European Parliament and the topics he mainly focuses on. Together with the delegation they led a discussion about the energy sectors of Slovakia and North Macedonia, the willingness of the EU to invest in renewable sources, regulations in the field of photovoltaics, the future of geothermal energy and the importance of the energy efficiency of buildings. Mr Hojsík shared his experience and gave recommendations on whom to turn to for technical advice, what is worth working on in the future and, conversely, what to avoid in order for North Macedonia to successfully complete the EU accession process.

#### **Feedback:**

Participants from North Macedonia responded positively to the structure of the agenda, the course of meetings, quality of experts as well as the value of information shared with them. Participants were active, asked many practical questions and expressed their will to continue in the cooperation in future.

## **UKRAINE\_BRATISLAVA\_26 September – 2 October 2022**

#### Participants

<b>Mykola Botosh</b>	Head of the Customs Control Department
<b>Victor Kutskyr</b>	Deputy Head of the Customs Control Department No. 4 (Uzhhorod-avto)

<b>Mykhaylo Tupytsya</b>	Senior Inspector of the Customs Control Department No. 2 (Malyi Beresnyi)
<b>Nataliia Khoruzha</b>	Head of the International Cooperation Group, 94 Border Detachment
<b>Anton Matvieiev</b>	Deputy Chief of the Border Control Department, 94 Border Detachment

The main focus of the study visit of five civil servants in Slovakia organized by the **Research Center of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association** that took place under the title Safe and inclusive border between Ukraine and Slovakia was integrated border management between Slovakia and Ukraine. During the meetings, members of the group made acquaintance of the institutional and legislative framework and the governance in the field, concrete projects and measures and the current activities of the respective institutions, including their competencies and interaction.

The official working program for the expert group from Ukraine was organized into the five working days and combined various meetings in order for the experts to discuss and share governmental experience, i.e. state organizations, ministries and their agencies and the first-hand knowledge of legislative and institutional framework in practice. The program of the study trip thus consisted of series of meetings with leading representatives and experts of the official Slovak institutions.

The team of Ukrainian experts (3 from Customs Office of Ukraine, 2 from Border Office of Ukraine) was officially briefed and received by the **SFPA's** Executive Director **Jitka Ivančíková**, RC SFPA's analyst of Economic and Development Policy Program **Peter Brezáni** Project Coordinator **Barbora Legényová** upon arrival during the orientation meeting. The program and agenda were discussed.

Given the structure of the study group, all meetings took place at the **Bureau of the Border and Foreign Police** and the **Financial Directorate of the Slovak Republic**.

On Monday, the program started at the **Bureau of the Border and Foreign Police**, where the delegation attended two meetings. The first presentation on the European integrated border management was given by Ms **Milada Bucseková** from the Department of the Border Police, who introduced the work of the Bureau, its organizational structure, main tasks and regional departments and spoke about the Schengen area, the legislation in the field of external border control of the Slovak Republic and the rules for crossing them, about individual types of border controls or conditions for the entry for nationals of third countries. The topic of application of IT technologies in border control procedures was presented by Mr **Roman Pochylý**, Director of the Department of Risk Analysis and Coordination. He spoke with the participants about the division of information systems, about the Central Lustration Console and addressed the procedures for lustration of vehicles and people crossing borders and about devices they are using for scanning fingerprints.

The second day continued with series of presentations at the Border Police. The first meeting was chaired by Ms **Miroslava Vrábellová** from the Coordination Department of the National Unit for Combating Illegal Migration of the Bureau of the Border and Foreign Police, who presented the issue of smuggling and human trafficking. Ms Vrábellová spoke about the scope of the unit's responsibilities, its organizational structure and main tasks and played a short video depicting the unit's activities in practice. As a specialist in criminal acts related to human trafficking, she then provided the participants with a closer look at this issue – what actions can constitute such a criminal act, its means, purpose and indicators, types of exploitation, the profile of human traffickers and the profile of the victim. She also emphasized the importance of international cooperation in the prevention and investigation of such crimes and provided specific statistics and examples from practice.

The concept of temporary refuge was explained to the participants by Ms **Kristína Bebjaková** from the Foreign Police Department. In her presentation, she talked about the legislation of the EU and the Slovak Republic regulating temporary refuge, about what rights arise from the temporary refuge and the scope of this type of protection for persons fleeing war in Ukraine. The representatives of the delegation also learned more about the procedure for applying for temporary refuge and who can be an authorized applicant, about the places where such applications are submitted and about the location of foreign police departments, asylums and high-capacity centers in Slovakia. The representatives of border and customs service from Ukraine also had the opportunity to see a sample of the application for temporary refuge and statistics on the number of people who applied for such protection in Slovakia since the beginning of the war in Ukraine.

On Wednesday, September 28, 2022, the delegation commenced with their meetings at the **Financial Directorate of the Slovak Republic**. The participants were received by the Director of Department of International Relations and Cooperation Mr **Andrej Hanus** and Ms **Lucia Pešková**, Head of the Department of Public Education of the Academy of Financial Administration. In her presentation dedicated to education within the Academy of Financial Administration, Ms Pešková spoke about the activities aimed at training armed members of the Financial Administration, which the Academy implements within the Department of Public Education. The participants learned about locations of Academy's training centers in Slovakia, about Academy's cooperation with other countries and were informed also about modular education – its basic principles, the course of the training process for members of the Financial Administration. The participants also took a closer look at the types of education in the Financial Administration, from adaptation through professional to competence education. In the afternoon, Mr Andrej Hanus gave the second part of the lecture, which was devoted to the performance of the customs service on the Ukrainian-Slovak border. Mr Hanus presented the organizational structure and main tasks of the Financial Administration, with a focus on the Customs Office in Michalovce, which is responsible for all border crossings with Ukraine. The participants learned more about the special technologies used by the Financial Administration – types of weapons, the equipment of the vehicle fleet or the specialization of the dogs in the canine centers. The presentation covered also the TALON database used to record state border crossings and individual border crossings between Slovakia and Ukraine.

The Thursday agenda of the delegation continued with three more presentations at the Financial Directorate of the Slovak Republic. Ms **Katarína Vivodová** from the Department of Risk Management and Analysis presented the topic of the role of risk management system in customs control. She explained to the participants what it means for Slovakia to be part of the customs union of the European Union and what competences result from this for the EU and Slovakia itself. She also spoke about the strategies and visions of European policy in the area of the customs union and addressed the customs risk management agenda. She clarified the legal basis on which customs risk management is based, what are its three main pillars, what are priority control areas (PCAs) and explained the criteria for financial risks assessment. She also explained what risk profiles are and what procedure is applied by customs officers in case of their activation. Mr **Michal Duška** from the Department of Service Performance and Special Technologies guided the participants through the topic of technologies used in customs controls at the external border of the European Union. In his presentation, the delegation learned more about the deployment of mobile and stationary inspection systems within the territory of the Slovak Republic. Participants were also able to see photos of radiation gates, mobile detection devices and spectrometers at our border crossings with Ukraine. At the end of the meeting, Mr Duška demonstrated the use of spectrometers in practice.

The last lecture presented by Mr **Andrej Hanus**, was focused on the Criminal Office of the Financial Administration and its branches. He presented the organizational structure, tasks and authorizations of the office, the legislative framework for its activity, and the performance of customs control and customs supervision related to military goods and dual-use goods. He ended his lecture with several case studies related to PG-1M artillery sights and K1 collimators, ballistic protection helmets, international anti-trafficking action or illegal importation of narcotic and psychotropic substances on the territory of the Slovak Republic.

The delegation's last day of the study trip in Bratislava began with the visit to Bratislava airport and presentation of border and custom procedures in practice. The delegation was welcomed by Mr **Pavol Buza**, Director of the Border Control Department of the Bratislava Ružinov – Airport Police Force and his deputy Mr **Robert Szabari**. The participants learned more about the airport and the organizational structure of Border Control Department. The delegation could also see directly in the field, what encompasses the cooperation of the police with the airport in the field of protection of civil aviation and border control. Participants had the opportunity to see the work of the permanent service, which monitors critical infrastructure, first-line and second-line border control, and were told about the procedure of detaining suspicious persons at the airport and the criteria for denying entry to persons coming from EU member and non-member countries. The participants were also shown around the Schengen and non-Schengen parts of the airport. Subsequently, the participants met with Mr **Patrik Okruhlic**, head of the Customs Office branch, who introduced the participants to the process of goods inspection. They learned what tools the customs service uses when working at the airport and saw a demonstration of baggage control with a dog handler.

### **Feedback:**

Delegation from Ukraine positively assess the structure of the program, the meetings and their information value as well as quality of experts. The participants of the visit confirmed in an interview with the coordinator that Slovak experience is very useful in their work. All participants were interested in maintaining further contacts with the institutions they visited during their stay, discussing the options of the joint activities and projects. Participants of the study visit are also interested in strengthening partnerships and cooperation between border services.

## **BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA \_BRATISLAVA\_ 13–18 November 2022**

### Participants

<b>Mustafa Pašalić</b>	Assistant Minister in the field of asylum, Directorate for Asylum at the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>Miljana Vujadin</b>	Head of the Asylum Department, Directorate for Asylum at the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>Aleksandra Čećez</b>	Associate Expert for asylum issues, Directorate for Asylum at the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>Amra Isović Operta</b>	Directorate for at the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>Senad Tutić</b>	Director, Center for Social Services Bihać, Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>Dijana Nuspačić</b>	Director of the legal department, Center for Social Services Bihać, Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>Muhamed Handukić</b>	Social Assistant, Center for Social Services Bihać, Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>Leona Isić</b>	Social Worker, Center for Social Services Bihać, Bosnia and Herzegovina

The main focus of the study trip of eight civil servants from Directorate for Asylum at the **Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina** and **Center for Social Services Bihać**, Bosnia and Herzegovina in Slovakia were asylum procedures and social work in the field of migration. During the meetings prepared and implemented by the **Research Center of the Slovak Foreign Policy** association in cooperation with the team of the Migration and Integration Department and the Procedural Department of the Migration Office, they made acquaintance of the institutional and legislative framework and the governance in the field, concrete projects and the current activities of the respective institutions, including their competencies and interaction. The visit builds upon the long-term cooperation between Migration Office and the Ministry of Security, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The official working program for the expert group was organized into five working days and consisted of series of meetings with leading representatives and experts from the Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic.

The team of experts from Bosnia and Herzegovina was officially briefed and received by the RC SFPA's analyst of Economic and Development Policy Program Peter Brezáni upon arrival during the orientation meeting.

On the first day of the reception of partners from Bosnia and Herzegovina the delegation was received at the Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic.

Meetings here were devoted to the exchange of practical experiences aimed at getting to know the asylum system of the Slovak Republic and the functioning of the **Migration Office of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic**. The delegation met with Mr **Ján Orlovský**, Director of the Migration Office and the presentations of Slovak institutional and legislative framework, projects and experience were given by Mr **Ján Kušnárík**, Director of Organization and Legal Department, Ms **Iveta Zraková**, Director of Procedural Department, Ms **Petra Achbergerová**, Director of Migration and Integration Department, Mr **Róbert Šiška**, Department of Documentation and International Cooperation, Ms **Veronika Mikušiaková**, Director of Department, Dublin Centre and Ms **Patrícia Artimová**, Director of Asylum Facilities Unit.

In the evening, the delegation visited **Assistance Center of Help** on Bottová street in Bratislava, where people from Ukraine can get the necessary information under one roof, apply for temporary shelter, get financial need benefits or accommodation.

The delegation was divided in two groups and meetings the next two days of their stay and participated at expert discussions on the topic of the asylum procedure and social work in the field of migration. In addition to meetings at the Migration Office of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic with colleagues from the procedural department, meetings and exchange of experience also took place at the **Center for Labor, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic** and at the Department of Social Work of the **Comenius University** in Bratislava.

During the meeting at the Center for Labour, Social Affairs and Family on Tuesday, the delegation learned about the processes of ensuring care for unaccompanied minor migrants in Slovakia. They also had the opportunity to hear the first hand experience from the experts from the east part of Slovakia in the field of guardianship and wardship for unaccompanied minors, as well as their experience in providing institutional care. The delegation met with Ms **Jana Blanárová**, Social Worker, Office of Labour, Social and Family Affairs in Stropkov- Medzilaborce office, Mr **Vladislav Fejo**, Director, Center for children and family, Medzilaborce, Ms **Martina Bošelová**, designate director, Department of implementation of social protection measures for children and social guardianship, Office of Labour, Social and Family Affairs and Mr **Ján Galáš**, Head of methodology unit.

The delegation also visited **Asylum camp in Rohovce** that is run by the Migration Office, where they were received by the Director of the camp Peter Privitzer, who presented the work and operation of the center and gave participants a detailed tour through the camp facilities. The delegation has also opportunity to discuss the situation and procedure with asylum seekers, that were present in camp.



On Wednesday Ms **Monika Mačkinová** and Mr **Pavol Kopinec** from the Department of Social Work of the **Comenius University in Bratislava** shared with the delegation their experience in the field of theory and applied practice of social work in the area of migration. They introduced them to cooperation with the Migration Office to create a systemic approach for identifying and working with vulnerable children in asylum facilities of the Migration Office. Participants were particularly interested in this cooperation and the connection between the activities of the state institution and the academic environment. They also drew attention to the irreplaceable role of social workers in the field of migration. Our Bosnian visitors also had the opportunity to participate in part of the interactive training for social workers, which is being implemented by the Department of Social Work for employees of the Migration Office and non-governmental organizations in cooperation with the international organization UNICEF and the Migration Office of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic.

Ms **Irina Adamová**, Project Manager at **Slovak Humanitarian Council**, presented the *Rifugio* project, which helps in the integration of persons granted asylum and provided with supplementary protection in the Slovak Republic and offers professional assistance in several areas of integration. During discussion the project *Effective services for asylum seekers in SR III* was also debated. It is about ensuring comprehensive care for asylum seekers within the entire territory of the Slovak Republic through the provision of additional services beyond the standard services provided by the Slovak Republic.

On Thursday, members of the delegation visited the **Humanitarian Center in Gabčíkovo**, also run by the Migration Office. The delegation was given presentation and detour of the Humanitarian Center, during which the functioning of the facility, the services provided, as well as the challenges that are currently being addressed in the Humanitarian Center were discussed.

The delegation further visited the **Honorary Consulate of Bosnia and Herzegovina** in Slovakia where they were received by the Honorary Consul of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Slovakia Mr **Munir Pašagić**, who is making an invaluable contribution to the success of these expert exchanges and supports this project.

The program was concluded with the debriefing visit to the International Visegrad Fund.

#### **Feedback:**

In overall, the delegation from Bosnia and Herzegovina reacted very positively to the structure of the agenda, the course of meetings, quality of experts as well as the value of information shared with them. Participants were active, asked many practical questions and expressed their will to continue in the cooperation in future. The interest in the continuation of partnership cooperation resonated not only in the conclusions and in the evaluation of discussions, but resonated regularly in meetings throughout the week.