

The European Union's SR 11 IB OT 01 programme for Serbia

Twinning Project: “Strengthening Capacities of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia in the EU Integration Process”

Project Guide
Conference material



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Implemented by the Hellenic Parliament
and the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia



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INTRODUCTION

The following material is a short manual of the European Union funded Twinning programme which will be conducted by the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia and a consortium of partners led by the Hellenic Parliament.

Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)

The Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) offers assistance to countries engaged in the accession process to the European Union.

The IPA funds are designed to build up the capacities of the countries throughout the accession process, resulting in progressive, positive developments in the region.

IPA is a financial instrument that offers assistance to countries engaged in the accession process to the European Union (EU) for the period 2007-2013. Pre-accession assistance supports the Stabilisation and Association process of candidate countries and potential candidate countries while respecting their specific features and the processes in which they are engaged. The IPA is intended as a flexible instrument and therefore provides aid, which depends on the progress made by the beneficiary countries and their needs as shown in the European Commission's evaluations and strategy papers.

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Twinning

Twinning is an instrument for the cooperation between Public Administrations of EU Member States (MS) and of beneficiary countries. Beneficiaries include candidate countries and potential candidates to EU membership, as well as countries covered by the European Neighborhood Policy. More specifically, in the IPA region, Twinning aims to provide support for the transposition, implementation and enforcement of the EU legislation (the *acquis*). It also strives to share good practices developed within the EU with beneficiary public administrations and to foster long-term relationships between twinning partners.

Twinning projects are based on EU policy objectives agreed between the public authorities of the beneficiary country and the Member States. This instrument consists of variety of activities which lead to the achievement of mandatory results.

Project background

During the last years significant reforms were made in the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia. In February 2010, the Parliament adopted the Law on the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, required by the Constitution. The law establishes parliamentary budgetary autonomy through a separate budget, as opposed to the previous practice of government-decided allocations. It also provides procedural innovations, particularly the establishment of a parliamentary collegium. Also, new parliamentary rules of procedure were adopted.



The new rules of procedure consolidate the existing instruments of control over the executive and further clarify the legislative procedures. Parliament has continued with regular hearings of the Government. However, further efforts are necessary to improve the quality of the legislative output. For instance, the electoral framework legislation needs to be fully aligned with the European standards. Therefore, this Twinning programme aims to guide the National Assembly in applying necessary reforms, through exchange of best practices, experiences and know-how from EU Member State Parliaments.

Project facts

Programme: IPA (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance) 2011

Twinning Number: SR 11 IB OT 01

Overall Objective:

To improve policy, legislation and implementation processes at the central level in the view of the EU accession of Serbia.

Project purpose:

To increase efficiency, liability and transparency of the Serbian National Assembly, particularly in the exercise of its representative role, its legislative function (especially in the process of harmonization of Serbian legislation with the EU acquis and in the implementation follow-up of the adopted legislation) and its oversight function towards the executive. Strengthening the administrative capacity of the NARS contributes to better implementation of reform changes and good European practices already transposed to the national institutional and legal framework.

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Main components:

1. Enhancing cooperation between the National Assembly and the Government in the law-making process
2. Improving working practices the National Assembly in the adoption of legislation, in particular as related to harmonisation with the acquis
3. Improvement of organizational structure, internal procedures and work practices and upgrading the level of professionalism in the Parliament
4. Improving the exercise of the parliamentary oversight function and the related cooperation with the Government and with Independent State Bodies
5. Increasing the transparency of the Parliament work and the participation of the civil society in the Parliament activities and in the law making process



The National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia

The National Assembly is the supreme representative body and the holder of constitutional and legislative power in the Republic of Serbia. It is entrusted with representative, legislative, electoral and oversight functions. The National Assembly consists of 250 deputies, who are elected on direct elections by secret ballot. Equality and representation of different genders and members of national minorities is guaranteed by the Law. In principle, the National Assembly adopts decisions by majority vote of deputies in sessions where the majority of deputies are present.

The framework regulating the functioning of the Parliament has undergone a number of changes during the past years. The Law on the National Assembly was adopted in February 2010, as required by the Constitution. Each Parliamentary Committee is technically supported by the competent staff of the Parliamentary Service. The new parliamentary Rules of Procedure, adopted in July 2010, provide for a reduction of the number of Parliamentary Committees from 30 to 20, while the twentieth Committee is the Committee on Children's Rights, considered as a specific parliamentary working body.

The New Act on Systematization of the National Assembly reflects all changes introduced by the new Law on the National Assembly, and outline a new structure, adapted to the obligations linked to Serbia pre-accession (and subsequently accession) to the EU. The Uniform Rules for the elaboration of legal acts, adopted in March 2010, establish uniform guidelines for the elaboration of all pieces of legislation developed by the Parliament or subject to adoption by the Parliament.

In order to ensure full-fledged implementation of the new regulatory framework, time and resources will be required. Moreover, the regulatory framework is probable to experience further assessment and revision. However, in this framework, the Serbian Parliament should greatly benefit from external technical assistance, as well as the expertise and experience of advanced EU democracies.

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Legislative function

The primary legislative role of the Parliament becomes more complex as Serbia accedes towards the European Union. Harmonizing national legislation with EU acquis in a transparent and consistent manner is considered as a priority by the Parliament. This also requires structured coordination with the Government, which is in charge of drafting legislation and certifying the compatibility of drafted laws with the relevant acquis.

Once the legislative proposal enters into parliamentary legislative procedure, it is typically subject to amendments that can seriously alter the nature of the proposal and thus affect its compatibility with the acquis. Therefore, the National Assembly is responsible for appropriate harmonization of national legislation with the acquis, and should be endowed with adequate capacities.



Basic preconditions for the Parliament to fully exercise this function have not been yet met: the quality of the Parliament and of Committees work is quite uneven; furthermore, there is a general lack of expertise, of support staff and of good practice. The further development of parliamentary research service will improve the processing and synthesizing information, electronic editing of background materials and forwarding them to the target groups. Moreover, the Parliament lacks a unique approach in consultations with the civil society, international organisations and other stakeholders.

In the EU integration process, the Legislative Sector, particularly the European Integration Department, plays a crucial role in providing assistance to the Parliamentary Committees. The internal organisation of the National Assembly should be further adjusted, in order to make European affairs almost a cross-cutting competence for both the MPs and Parliament staff.

Oversight function

According to the Law on the National Assembly, the Parliament oversees the work of: 1) the Government (and decides on its dissolution); 2) Security services; 3) Governor of the National Bank of Serbia; 4) Ombudsman; 5) other bodies and institutions stipulated by the Law.

In carrying out the oversight function over the Government, the national deputies are entitled to exercise the oversight function over the Government through: a) collection of information regarding the work of the Government (deputy's questions, fact-finding boards and commissions, public hearing, agendas and reports on the work of the Ministries and the Government) and b) perform the effective oversight over the work of the Government (by means of interpellation and voting on non confidence to the Government, or the members of the Government). In practice, the use of these instruments, although regular, remains a rather formalistic exercise.

In the frame of the relations between the legislative and the executive, the Assembly's relations with Independent State Bodies are particularly complex. Independent State Bodies were introduced in the Serbian institutional system in 2002 through specific sector laws. They are entrusted with different regulatory, executive or control functions, and must act independently from the executive or any political influence. Currently, there are approximately 30 Independent State Bodies, and their number is constantly increasing.

Many Independent State Bodies entrust Parliamentary Committees with the competence to propose their composition and review their reports. The majority of Independent State Bodies submit reports on their work to the National Assembly. So far, the relations between the Parliament and the Independent State Bodies could be improved through intensifying mutual communication and understanding of respective institutional roles and linkages. Overall, the general framework needs to be clarified and institutional relations to be integrated in all players' work.

The effective carrying out of oversight functions requires endowing the Assembly services with the necessary capacities, both in numbers and expertise. In particular, the capacities of the staff from the Parliamentary secretariats, which deal with Independent State Bodies should be strengthened.



Representative function

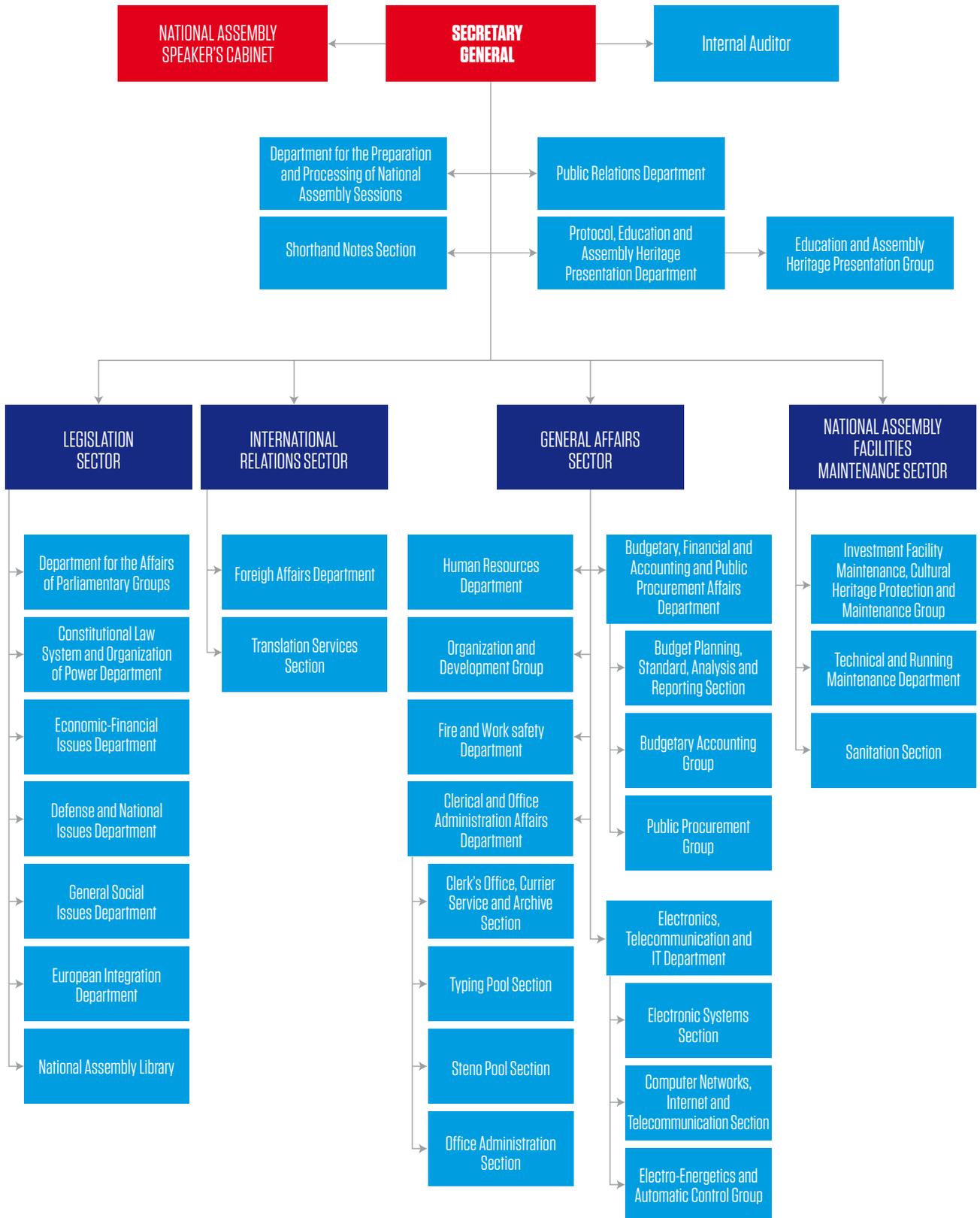
In regards to the representative role of the Parliament, public pool results have shown that citizens do not perceive this institution to be efficient or transparent. Legally, a number of communication instruments between the Serbian Parliament and the citizens already exist: written complaints from citizens, direct contacts between deputies and citizens, meetings of Parliamentary Committees at local self-government units, submission of civic initiatives at the occasion of public hearings organised by the Parliamentary Committees and the right of the citizens on free access to information of public importance. Also, representatives of the media have free access to the sessions of the National Assembly and of Parliamentary Committees.

However, the use of these instruments should be improved. In particular, the instrument of public hearings could be very useful tool to facilitate dialogue between deputies and civil society. The Law on the National Assembly and the Rules of Procedures provides the possibility for Parliamentary Committees to hold public hearings. However, this possibility until recently has been rarely used, and the idea is to use this instrument having in mind its potential and opportunities.

Transparency, accessibility, accountability, and citizens’ participation mostly depend on the quality of information available to the media and the wider public, and on communication capacities of deputies and parliamentary administration. The use of information and communication technologies can have a positive impact, and can significantly enhance communication and public consultation in policies development. At the same time, it is necessary to ensure permanent education of media representatives, parliamentary groups and professional parliamentary staff.



NARS organizational chart



IMPLEMENTATION BODIES

The NARS partners of this Twinning programme is a consortium that combines the services of prominent institutions from Greece, in collaboration with international experts, in order to provide the range of expertise required to perform the tasks envisaged by the project fiche. These institutions are:

The Hellenic Parliament

The Hellenic Parliament (www.hellenicparliament.gr) is the supreme democratic institution that represents the citizens through an elected body of Members of Parliament (MPs). The Hellenic Parliament consists of 300 MPs. The institutional role of the Parliament in shaping Greek foreign policy is acknowledged in a series of Constitutional articles and clauses as well as in its Standing Orders.

The Hellenic Parliament steadily promotes stronger links with other EU national parliaments and the European Parliament (EP). Given this framework, the Parliament is actively involved in meetings between EU national parliaments and the EP, exchanges views on significant European affairs and acquaints the aforementioned parliaments with its views.

The Parliament decides, legislates and controls. The legislative work, namely voting of Bills and Law Proposals and the exercise of parliamentary control over the *Government*, are the core Parliament activities. Additionally each year, all *Independent Authorities* should have submitted to the Parliament their annual report on the activities and proceedings of the previous year. The Speaker of the Parliament submits the reports of the committees to both the Government and the Independent Authority. As for subsequent reports on findings, there may even be a debate in the Plenum but no voting whatsoever.

Hellenic Parliament has the role of oversight body in collaboration with the *Government* using the parliamentary Standing Committees for better regulation. Every law is submitted in the *Standing Committees* with a Regulatory Impact Assessment. The gradual metamorphosis of the Parliament from a representative instrument in charge of legislative work, to a modern, complex political and organizational democratic institution is a reality today, having a well prepared organization structure and adequate administrative procedures. Hellenic Parliament supports the participatory democracy enhancement through the citizens’ active participation in the everyday consultation process among the parliamentary Standing Committees for the civil society sustainable development. This task has been accomplished through the improvement of the services to *Citizens* through the enlargement of social consultation.

The European Public Law Center (EPLC)

The European Public Law Center (www.eplo.eu) is a Mandated Body for implementing Twinning programs on behalf of the Hellenic Republic. The EPLC has a long-standing experience in managing and coordinating such programs, as it has been responsible for the implementation of 34 Twinning and Twinning Light programs in numerous countries and sectors over the past 10 years.



Moreover, the EPLC has extensive and authoritative experience in Serbia having successfully accomplished a number of EU funded projects on rule of law and democracy, institution building, public administration reform and civil society. With the aim of strengthening and developing public institutions in the Balkans, the EPLC has made significant progress in promoting its activities within all the countries in this region. The EPLC already supports Parliaments and other public institutions in their approximation to the European public law and in the advancement of the European ideal.

The Centre for European Constitutional Law (CECL)

The Centre for European Constitutional Law (www.cecl.gr) is one of the most active European non-governmental organizations, operating as a public benefit institution. The Centre's objectives are to undertake theoretical and applied scientific research in the fields of Greek, European and comparative public law, institutions and public policies; to provide institutional and capacity-building support to developing countries and new member-states of the European Union and to promote public awareness of developments within the European area.

It was established in 1995 and has done substantial work in more than 20 countries in the field of institution building, providing technical assistance to parliamentary bodies, capacity building for public administration staff, upgrading skills in public administration reforms, measuring and reducing administrative burdens, legal support, legal harmonization and support to the law-making process.

Centre of International and European Economic Law (CIEEL)

Established in 1977, the Centre of International and European Economic Law (www.cieel.gr) is a public legal entity operating under private law, supervised by the Hellenic Ministry of Development, Competitiveness and Shipping. Its academic scope includes EU Law, jurisprudence of the Court of Justice and Court of First Instance of the European Communities, and practices followed by EU institutions, European and international Economic Law and International Business Law, Public Procurement, State Aid, Energy Law, Human Rights.

The CIEEL's objectives are to a) Promote and disseminate knowledge originating from basic and applied research in the areas of International and European economic law; b) Provide consultative support and legal information to the Greek State, public legal entities, professional organizations, agencies of financial activity and the legal profession in general on issues related to the academic field of the CIEEL and c) Implement projects. In its capacity as a mandated body it has implemented since 1998 approx. 25 Twinning projects in all newly acceded and candidate EU countries in the justice and home affairs and finance sectors, cooperating with Ministries and independent authorities in Greece and in several other member states.



EXPECTED RESULTS

The rationale of the Twinning programme is the achievement of the mandatory results, which will be assessed through benchmarks (previously set between NARS, Hellenic Parliament and the European Commission). High level MS experts will implement series of project activities (both theoretical and practical), which will lead to accomplishment of the set project objectives and mandatory results.

Component 1 benchmarks

- Improved quality and compliance with the acquis of adopted legislation;
- Improvements in the legislative procedure including more substantial assessment on the impact of the legislation and extensive discussions with relevant stakeholders;
- Improved follow-up on the implementation of the adopted legislation expressed e.g. in the increased number of the adopted pieces of secondary legislation when required by the law;
- Joint capacity building activities for the representatives of the Parliament and the Government, broadening the understanding of contents and implications of constitutional principle of separation of powers and mechanisms of "checks and balances"; participation in the activities (e.g. rate of attendance of training courses) and results of exemplary and exit tests.

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Component 2 benchmarks

- Time and effectiveness of legislative procedures;
- Quality of amendments and of adopted legislation;
- Quality of the expertise and technical support provided to Parliamentary Committees and to the Parliament;
- Recommendations /guidelines spread among Parliament staff and MPs;
- More than 20 employees and 30 MPs trained and training materials available for further use;
- Joint capacity building activities with the participation of representatives of Independent State Bodies; participation in the activities and results.

Component 3 benchmarks

- Improved organizational structure of the Parliament;
- Improved Parliament and Committees' working processes;
- Improved parliamentary research service and its information products in the terms of processing and synthesizing information, electronic editing of background materials and forwarding them to the target groups;
- Improved communication and information flows in the Parliament;
- Capacity building activities for Parliament professional staff, MPs and members of Parliamentary Committees to implement recommendations on improved working processes and procedures; participation in the activities and results;



- Capacity of the Sector for financial management of NARS strengthened through specific capacity building activities, in order to ensure capacities related to budgetary autonomy;
- Capacities related to resource planning strengthened, including human resources management, recruitment and career development.

Component 4 benchmarks

- Improved procedural and institutional relations between the Assembly on one side and the Government and Independent State Bodies on the other side;
- Improved and consolidated communication flow between the Assembly on one side and the Government and Independent State Bodies on the other side;
- Improved communication flow specifically between the Assembly and the Supreme Audit Institution;
- Independent State Bodies' reports timely and properly analyzed and discussed;
- Relevant Conclusions and Recommendations developed during Parliamentary Committees' sittings, showing increased quality of debate on Independent State Bodies Reports;
- Use of oversight instruments enhanced: e.g. increased number and substantial quality of oral and written deputies' questions; of general debates; of hearings; of meetings of Government representatives with Committees;
- Joint capacity building activities for the Parliament and Independent State Bodies' staff; participation in the activities and results.

Component 5 benchmarks

- Increased number and substantive quality of public hearings held during the Parliament's sittings;
- Increased number of civil society representatives participating in public hearings;
- Increased number and relevance of requests and appeals submitted to the Parliament;
- Increased quality of initiatives for amending legal acts submitted to the Parliament;
- Improved consideration of presented proposals and feedback by the Parliament;
- Increased number and impact of new communication initiatives and activities;
- Increased number/frequency of draft laws shared with the civil society (for instance through availability at the Parliament's web portal and through public consultation)
- Sufficient time (average number of days or weeks) allocated to public debate/ public participation



WORK PLAN

Component 1: Enhancing cooperation between the National Assembly and the Government in the law-making process

A1.1- Coordination of the activities of ministries with relevant parliamentary committees

Sub-activity 1.1.1 – Assessment of the relevant parliamentary procedures regarding the coordination of activities with the Government

Sub-activity 1.1.2 – Joint capacity building activities for the representatives of the Parliament and the Government, broadening the understanding of contents and implications of constitutional principle of separation of powers.

Sub-activity 1.1.3 – Seminars for parliamentary and governmental bodies on technique for elaboration of legislative acts (approx. 30 participants).

Method: Current procedures will be examined and recommendations for the improvement of the current regulations will be provided and discussed. Where available, EU surveys and best practices will be taken into account. Proposals and recommendations for the improvement of coordination between Ministries and NARS will be developed, followed by an implementation roadmap. Joint capacity building techniques like on-the-job training, practical exercises and training seminars will be used for the recommendations fine tuning.

A1.2- Providing advice and recommendations on the implementation (and revision if appropriate) of the Rules of Procedure in order to assure appropriate cooperation between the Parliament and the Government

Sub-activity 1.2.1 – Coordination with the Government concerning the adoption of the annual working plan of the NARS (article 28 of the Rules of procedure of the NARS).

Description: This sub-activity comprises:

- a) The Budgetary aspect and
- b) The coordination plan of MPs activities

Sub-activity 1.2.2 – Analyzing of the trimestrial reports of the Ministries to the relevant parliamentary committees.

Sub-activity 1.2.3 – Analyzing of the annual reports of the Government to the plenary session and relevant parliamentary committees.

Method: CL, STEs, RTA and PL through the analysis of the relevant documents and regulation and through meeting with BC experts will gather relevant information to elaborate a proposal for the revision of the existing reporting procedures for the approximation process, taking into account their specific experience and EU requirements. The proposal will be accompanied by a roadmap.



A1.3-Study Visit for MPs and Staff

Method: One study visit of the MPs and parliamentary administration to the Slovakian Parliament. During this study visit in Slovakia, Members of the Parliament, BC and MS experts working in various parliamentary Committees, will work together with their Slovakian homologues to compare points of view and exchange practical experiences. The Slovakian parliament has been chosen for the following reasons:

- a) Slovakia is a new EU Member State. NARS can take profit from their experiences regarding cooperation between Government and Parliament.
- b) Slovakian Parliament STEs are participating in the project team
- c) Both Parliaments have excellent cooperation in related fields

A1.4-Roundtables and Working Plan

Method: Roundtables to develop a long term working plan for the priority legislation that will be approximated in the next 2-3 years. This is not related to the National Program of Integration (which is a Governmental document). Moreover, it is a guideline in order to achieve better cooperation between the Parliament and the Government regarding transposition of the *Aquis* into the Serbian Legislation.

A1.5- Realization of joint workshops for the staff of the Parliament and the Government - Coordination of the activities of ministries with relevant parliamentary committees

Sub-activity 1.5.1 – Workshop for the coordination of the ex-ante activities (before the adoption of legislation)

Sub-activity 1.5.2 – Workshop for the coordination of activities during the law making process

Sub-activity 1.5.3 – Workshop for MPs, parliamentary staff and Governmental officials for the coordination of activities between Government and Parliament in the law making process – Enhancing of the cooperation between Committees, parliamentary working bodies and relevant governmental bodies

Method: A comparative study will be prepared about how major European Parliaments are addressing the issue of coordination between Ministries and the relevant parliamentary committees. The study visit report from A.1.3 will be discussed in this context. Tailor made workshops will be organized. The program of the workshops will be also elaborated in accordance with eventual gaps and needs identified in the assessment of the current regulation.

Component 2 – Improving working practices of the National Assembly in the adoption of legislation, in particular as related to transposition of the *acquis* (NARS Working Practices)

A2.1- Work on improvement of the methodology of approximation

Sub-activity 2.1.1. - Analysing working methodologies and drafting recommendations on the necessary modifications to improve the work of the Parliament in the field of approximation of legislation with the EU *acquis*

Sub-activity 2.1.2. – Assessment of the need of elaboration of specific act relative to the relations of the Parliament and the Government in the field of EU integration



Method: CL, STEs, RTA and PL will review the existing duties and activities of the Parliamentary Committees and their legal basis, in comparison with their specific experience and with EU requirements, and deliver written recommendations on improving them. The distribution of responsibilities and coordination will also be assessed. Special attention will be given to the European Integration Committee. Where available, EU surveys and best practices will be taken into account.

Interviews will be organized and necessary experts’ analysis will be accomplished in order to assess the existing legislation, regulations and procedures in the field of approximation process. In the basis of this analysis, in guided brainstorm meetings led by the international experts, proposals for the improvement of procedures (+roadmap) will be provided. Furthermore, the working groups will draft and propose necessary amendments on the methodology of approximation of national legislation with the EU *acquis* within the NARS.

A2.2- Improvement of the quality and applicability of national legislation, in respect with the transposition of the *acquis*

Sub-activity 2.2.1. – Review of the procedures of the European Integration Committee. The existing procedures of the European Integration Committee in the field of law approximation will be analyzed, in order to improve the way national legislation is treated, in respect with the transposition of the *acquis*, before it goes to the plenary session for final approval.

Sub-activity 2.2.2. – Improving the procedures, promoting the need of impact assessment of the laws in everyday practice (Regulatory Impact Assessment), with respect to all relevant aspects of approximation. STEs, RTA will take into the consideration the existing structure of the relevant NARS’ committees and analyze which field of the *acquis* is applicable to their competences and how the process of law approximation could be improved.

Method: CL, STEs, RTA and PL will analyze existing legislation procedures that regulate the relevant field, in comparison with their specific experience and EU requirements, and deliver written recommendations for the quality of legislation in terms of clarity, consistency, and implementability. The MS experts will provide on-the-job training sessions to BC experts for acts/pieces of legislation that are in the processing queue at the time this sub activity takes place. These BC experts will again serve as trainers to other NARS employees using a train-the-trainer approach.

A2.3.-Training Needs Analysis (TNA)

Method: A training needs analysis will be performed by MS experts based on the findings of the previous activities. The MS experts, in cooperation with BC experts defined by their Serbian counterpart, will agree on the training needs of the personnel, based on the insight of the NARS needs acquired so far. The Training Needs Assessment and the Capacity Building methodology will follow basically the ANNEX E Methodological Tools of the project proposal.



A2.4-Delivering Trainings for Staff

Sub-activity 2.4.1 – trainings providing basic knowledge about the EU accession process to the staff of various parliamentary working bodies

Sub-activity 2.4.2 – tailor-made trainings about the law approximation for the secretaries of parliamentary committees

Sub-activity 2.4.3 – elaboration of Training materials for staff and training/informative materials for MPs

Method: Seminars will be organized in order to train the staff of the BC administration on the EU acquis. Special trainings will be organised for the committees with the largest workload of draft legislation with approximation to the acquis. Wherever possible, that is wherever the appropriate capacities in the respective NARS departments are available, the “Training the trainer” approach will be followed in order to guarantee effectiveness of the training program and the sustainability of the project results. The trainings will take the form of seminars, workshops and roundtables. This will be decided in the view of training needs analysis (A 2.3).

Generally, the seminars will have to fulfil the following tasks:

- To provide basic knowledge in the field of European Affairs and the operation of the EU;
- To define the main challenges and tasks of the EU accession process;
- To present the role of national parliaments in the accession process and within the EU;
- Based upon the results of the TNA (A 2.3) more specific issues will be addressed.

During the seminars, the relevant material produced by the experts (such as manuals, PowerPoint presentations, handouts, modules etc.) will be distributed.

Study visit reports and EU surveys, where available, will be used as background information for the training sessions.

A2.5-Workshops for MPs

Following the TNA from A 2.3, workshops for MPs will be scheduled. The contents of the workshops should be similar to these from the previous activity (A 2.4), which is planned to run parallel to this one. The workshops will be based on an interactive approach, in order for participants to be keen in the subject and methods and to allow them to be actively involved in the learning process.

A2.6-Study Visit for Staff

Method: One study visit in the Hellenic Parliament for 7 BC experts from various parliamentary working bodies to the relevant services (Committees) of the Hellenic Parliament. During the study visit in the Hellenic Parliament, the BC experts will work together with their Greek homologues to compare points of view and exchange practical experiences.



The examples of good practice of the working procedures of the Committees of the Hellenic Parliament and their secretariats will be shared with Serbian colleagues. Greece is having a considerable experience in EU affairs as an early MS. For this reason the Hellenic Parliament was chosen as a model for this sub-activity. Moreover, the experience of the Hellenic Parliament in the field of the transposition of European directives will be precious for the staff of various parliamentary working bodies of the NARS.

A2.7 Joint Workshops

Method: The same methodological tools and exercises as reported in previous activities for workshops realisation, will be used, inviting selected members from the Parliament, Government and Independent State Bodies in order to achieve cooperation and common understanding of the working practices in the NARS. The reports and the experiences of the participants in the study visit in A2.6 will be discussed in detail. Joint Workshops will be the main closing events of this Component.

Component 3 - Improvement of organizational structure, internal procedures and work practices and upgrading the level of professionalism in the Parliament

Activity 3.1- Improving internal procedures and parliamentary work practices, implementing new organizational structure

Sub-activity 3.1.1 - Assessment of the overall organizational structure, work practices and procedures of the NARS and development of a report on the main challenges in the process of restructuring of the National Parliament in the negotiation process with EU and for EU membership, accompanied by comparative study on best EU working practices, organizational examples and practice of internal control in national parliaments.

Method: Based on the above and the assessment methodology and tools in ANNEX E Methodological Tools of the Proposal an assessment report will be prepared for this Component. The project team in collaboration with the beneficiary counterparts will be able to map existing internal acts and current practices in the NARS, jointly with main challenges of the future public administration requirements in the EU Integration process.

The eventual assessment of the NARS Working Group draft report, so as the existing Long-term development plan of the National Assembly Service (2011-2015), and number of NARS internal decisions will support this Activity.

Sub-activity 3.1.2 – Workshop for the presentation of the main findings and best practices from sub-activity 3.1.1, for the improvement of public administration working practices according to the public administration reform requirements, in the process of EU Integration, related to the work of the national parliaments.

Method: Workshop for 20-25 participants. Main findings to be published as a manual.

Sub-activity 3.1.3 – Workshop and training to develop proposals for the improvement of the organization and functioning of the Parliament



Method: Based on previous Sub-activities and reports a workshop will be held in order to analyse and further develop the proposals (including roadmaps) of the MS experts towards the improvement of the organization and functioning of Parliament. The minutes and the discussed proposals will be issued as a report that will be translated and distributed in the NARS. During the workshop appropriate groups (4-5 persons/group) will be formed and will be given specific topics/assignments, which were previously discussed. The groups will have to study and research them, in order to prepare presentations for the upcoming specialized training session. In this training session each group will present its thematic unit to all participants, including findings and suggestions.

Activity 3.2 Improving Financial Management of NARS

Sub-activity 3.2.1 - On the basis of comparative studies of the best practices in Member States of the European Union for parliamentary financial management, a set of measures and practices will be recommended in order to optimize the working methods of the Committee on Budgetary-Administrative and Mandate-Immunity issues and Budget Division of the NARS, since this is the new Committee and new Unit in the National Assembly of Serbia, including recommendations.

Sub-activity 3.2.2 - Study visit in Greece: presentation of the Hellenic Parliament's budget and financial management to selected members of NARS, meetings with relevant committees of the Hellenic Parliament.

Method: This study visit will give a chance to the members of the Committee Budgetary-Administrative and Mandate-Immunity issues and Budgetary division staff to get an insight into Hellenic Parliament's budget and financial management and review the work of relevant committees of the Hellenic Parliament (Committee on Parliament's internal affairs and Committee on Parliamentary Ethics). During the study visit, the BC experts will work together with their homologues in the Hellenic Parliament to exchange practical experiences. The Hellenic Parliament experts will act hereby as mentors of the BC experts for rest period of this activity.

Sub-activity 3.2.3 - Workshop on main findings from the study visit

Sub-activity 3.2.4 – Workshop for the finalization of recommendations, guidelines, using recommendations from comparative study (Sub-activities 3.2.1, 3.2.2 & 3.2.3), in order to improve work practices for financial management of NARS activity.

Activity 3.3 Improving parliamentary research service and its information products, further developing its research methods in accordance with best European practices

Sub-activity 3.3.1 – Assessment of the relevant service in the NARS and comparative analysis of the research service in EU MS. Focus on the Scientific Service of the Hellenic Parliament.

Method: The MS experts will review the structure and the operating principles of the Research Service of the Library in the NARS. A comparative analysis will be performed between the Scientific Departments/Services of major European Parliaments. Priority and focus will be given to the Scientific Service of the Hellenic Parliament.



Sub-activity 3.3.2 - Roundtables on main findings of comparative analysis and recommendations on possible improvements of the research methods and methods of collecting and processing information in the EU MS parliaments. Discussion of the organizational structure of the NARS research tasks and Library in the view of the best practices mentioned above. Specialized Training on scientific aspects of parliamentary working will be provided. The results from the training program will be published as a manual.

The NARS Library produces various background research and information which are important for the scientific support of the twinning programme. The produced information/reports must be distributed easily and must be archived effectively to ensure long-time availability and preservation. Therefore a document-based collaboration system for cooperative work and group decision support will be provided.

This is considered to be an internal web based software platform for searching and exchanging documents and information between NARS departments. Open source and commercial software (e.g. OPAC Intranet/Internet modules) will be evaluated by MS and BC experts. Customisation from IT experts might be needed in order to configure the platform according to NARS needs. This software will upgrade the functionality of the research services of the NARS Library. Further, it will increase user's awareness of Library services and help deliver precise research services to them.

A3.4-Strategic and Operational Plan for 2015-2020

Method: Development of a Strategic and Operational Plan for the financing of NARS activities towards EU integration process and design of an organization scheme for a European Programs Managing Authority within the NARS structure.

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In its path towards European Integration, the Serbian Assembly will be gradually transformed into an active counterpart of the EU. The gradual metamorphosis of the Serbian Assembly from a representative instrument in charge of legislative work, to a modern, complex political and organizational democratic institution will be supported by all adequate means and measures as derived from the present winning project activities and tasks. The project team will record and analyze all this facts and findings. At the end, a Strategic and Operational plan of the NARS will be drafted aiming to ensure the project results sustainability and further exploitation.

The Project team will make a proposal for the creation of a Service for European Programs Design, Implementation, Monitoring and Control, aiming to European Programs financial support under the respective EC budget lines. Direct knowledge transfer will be done from the Hellenic Parliament, modified according to NARS needs.

Operational Plan analysis per sector and respective field will be done based on the above strategic goals. The project team will elaborate this analysis. List of indicative projects that could be applied in Serbia will be initiated in collaboration between MS Experts and NARS officials.

NARS respective counterpart will act as end user and procurement managing authority, ensuring that the projects contribute to the overall objectives of the CSF/NSRF programs and not only. Best practices will be recorded from other EU countries. The project team will create the most appropriate structure for collaboration schemes with other EU parliaments and other EU partners.



Component 4 - Improving the exercise of the parliamentary oversight function and the related cooperation with the Government and with Independent State Bodies

Activity 4.1- Improving parliamentary oversight function

Sub-activity 4.1.1 - Current Status Assessment and review of the oversight mechanisms and best practices of scrutiny procedures over the Government in the chosen European Union Member states, including Greek Parliament; in-depth assessment of the oversight functions' exercise in NARS; on this basis, detailed recommendations for the improvement of the oversight practices of the committees of the NARS.

Method: Based on the assessment methodology and tools in ANNEX E Methodological Tools of the proposal an assessment report will be prepared for this Component. The project team in collaboration with the beneficiary counterparts will be able to map the oversight mechanisms over the Government, and map current practices in both countries. Reports, minutes, presentations, workshops outputs and all the other documents elaborated during the implementation of the activities in component 4 will be included in the final report on main findings on the possibility for the improvement of the oversight function of the NARS.

Sub-activity 4.1.2 - Workshop on the political parliamentary oversight over the Government, considering European best practices, particularly practices of the Hellenic Parliament.

Method: A workshop for 20-25 participants (MPs and parliamentary staff) will be held. The draft of the assessment Study from Sub-activity 4.1.1 will be discussed with NARS officials.

Sub-activity 4.1.3 - Joint workshop on main findings from the assessment study; recommendations for the improvement of the oversight practices.

Activity 4.2- Improving relations with Independent State bodies, procedures and practice of consideration of their Reports.

Sub-activity 4.2.1 - Assessment of the relations between the Parliament, the Government and Independent State Bodies; emphasis on NARS relative procedures; comparative study on best practices of Independent State Bodies' establishment and cooperation; reports review by the Parliament's plenary and committees, so as conclusions and recommendations of the review to be useful for the Independent State Bodies work.

Method: This assessment should include best practices of the chosen EU member states, provided that there is access of their relevant legislation and practices in the working language of the project, (obligatory including Sweden, Finland, Denmark, as a pioneers in the area of introduction and functioning of the Independent State Bodies, if possible + EEA member state Norway, and newer member state Slovenia, as a politically and legally most similar governance to the Serbian political and legal order, and state with the different kind of Independent Bodies introduced during the Accession Negotiation period and in a later stage), provided that there is access of their relevant legislation and practices in the working language of the project, particularly counterparts to the NARS Committee on Constitutional and Legal Affairs, Committee on justice, administration and local self government, Committee



on finance, budget and control of public spending, Committee on Human and Minority Rights and Gender Equality, and Culture and Information Committee, particularly when examining reports of the Ombudsman, State Audit Institution, Bodies equal to the Serbian Agency for fight against corruption, Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection, Commissioner for Protection of Equality.

The assessment report for this Component will be based on the above and the assessment methodology and tools in ANNEX E Methodological Tools of the proposal. The Reports, minutes, presentations, previous outputs and all the other documents elaborated during the implementation of the activity of component 4 will be included in the final conclusions and recommendations report on main findings on the possibility for the improvement for the improvement of the communication flow, report consideration, procedures and best practices between NARS and Independent State Bodies.

Sub-activity 4.2.2 - Study visit in Sweden

Method: The study visit to the Swedish Parliament and relevant committees in one of the funding fathers of the establishment and work of the Independent State Bodies will give an opportunity to BC members of the relevant committees, accompanied by experts to examine and get insight into procedures and best practices, which will practically elaborate the assessment study made in the first sub-activity. The visit and meetings with their counterparts will help report consideration practices and recommendations that could be done, eventually, by competent committees, when considering the reports of Independent bodies and help further use of parliamentary procedures in order to upgrade their communication flow, in general.

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Experiences of the above mentioned MS were inspiration for the introduction of the Independent State Bodies at the Western Balkans, and working practices and legal solutions needs to be checked timely and relay on the European best experiences in this area. Direct examination of the working practices of the most developed parliamentary system with number of established and highly functional Independent State Bodies will strongly contribute to the achievement of the results set out in a Fiche, justify the ideas and legal background of the institutional relations and communication flows with Independent State bodies, giving a comparative qualitative advantage of introducing advanced practices of one of the chosen Parliaments, above, into the daily work of NARS. This tool will help, in practical terms preservation of permanent, personal relations and indeed contribute to the further reinforcement of the structural links between the respective administrations involved, and gives sustainability to the intention of NARS to keep and introduce best experiences, necessary changes and practices into the daily work of the committees, Parliamentary Plenum and its members.

Sub-activity 4.2.3 Workshop on the main findings of the Assessment Report, comparative study and study visit, assessing particularly these relations in the area of protection of human and minority rights, depending on the level of access to the relevant information. Practical exercises will be used for the comprehension of the workshop material.

Sub-activity 4.2.4 Interviews and meetings with parliamentary staff and MPs working with the reports of the Agency for Fight Against Corruption, accompanied with interviews with the Agency for Fight Against Corruption representatives, using the materials and main findings of the study from the Sub-activity 4.2.1., including material from all other activities from the Activity 4.2.



Method: Special attention will be given to the relations (communication, reporting) between the Parliament and Agency for Fight Against Corruption. At this stage the experience of the MS experts, Scientific Advisors of the Project team, and BC Committee staff will be recorded.

Reports, minutes, presentations, previous outputs and all the other documents elaborated during the implementation of the activity of component 4 will be included in the final conclusions and recommendations report on main findings on the possibility for the improvement of communication flow, report consideration, procedures and best practices between NARS and Agency for Fight Against Corruption.

Sub-activity 4.2.5 – Roundtable on the main findings of the Assessment Report, conclusions and recommendation for the improvement of the communication flow, discussion of relevant parliamentary procedures and EU best practices, in order to draft conclusions and recommendations for future work of the NARS committees.

Activity 4.3-Specific Assessment of the relations with Supreme Audit Institution

Sub-activity 4.3.1 - Interviews and meetings with parliamentary staff and MPs working with the reports of the Supreme Audit Institution, accompanied with interviews with the Supreme Audit Institution representatives, using the materials and main findings of the study from the Sub-activity 4.2.1., including material from all other activities from the Activity 4.2.

Method: Special attention will be given to the relations (communication, reporting) between the Parliament and the Supreme Audit Institution. At this stage the experience of the MS experts, Scientific Advisors of the Project team, and BC MPs Committee on finance, budget and control of public spending, staff of the committee will be recorded. Reports, minutes, presentations, previous outputs and all the other documents elaborated during the implementation of the activity of component 4 will be included in the final conclusions and recommendations report on main findings on the possibility for the improvement of communication flow, report consideration, procedures and best practices between NARS and Supreme Audit Institution.

Sub-activity 4.3.2 - Roundtable with MS and BC MPs and staff and representatives of the Supreme Audit Institution, in order to discuss the main findings of the previous sub activities, finalized with conclusions and recommendations for the improvement of the communication flow, report consideration, procedure and best practices between NARS and Supreme Audit Institution.

Component 5 - Increasing the transparency of the Parliament work and the participation of the civil society in the Parliament activities and in the law making process

A5.1-Assessing existing visibility tools

Method: CL, STEs, RTA and PL will review the existing competences, duties and functioning of the Public Relations Department, European Integration Department and the Sector for Foreign Affairs and deliver written recommendations on improving them. For the successful implementation of the overall assessment the use of a public opinion poll is necessary. This poll will be conducted by an acknowl-



edged private company according to international opinion poll standards and the twinning rules. A statistical sufficient number of citizens will take part at the opinion poll. The poll will focus on the role of the Parliament as a public institution and its relations to society at large.

A5.2-Preparation and holding of Public Hearings

Method: Workshops will be held, where Greek, Belgian and Slovak experts will present their experiences on the participation of civil society in parliamentary public hearings. A brief EU survey will be presented during the workshops regarding EU best practices in public hearings.

A5.3- Support to citizens requests & appeals

Sub-activity 5.3.1 - Seminar on the best European practices on the operations of parliamentary committees dealing with citizens' requests, appeals and petition. A comparative analysis of the relative best European practices will be presented.

Sub-activity 5.3.2 – Workshops on "How to address citizens' requests, appeals and petitions on different topics"

Sub-activity 5.3.3 – Seminar for employees and MPs on „How to address citizens' appeals and requests on the NARS Web site – e-petitions"

Sub-activity 5.3.4 – Study visit for 7 employees in the Department for Appeals and Petitions of the Hellenic Parliament

Method: To learn on the spot how the Hellenic Parliament addresses citizens' appeals, requests and petitions. Direct examination of the working practices of the Hellenic parliament will strongly contribute to the achievement of the results set out in the Fiche, justify the ideas and legal background of NARS dealing with citizens' appeals and requests, giving a comparative qualitative advantage of introducing advanced practices of Hellenic parliament into the daily work of NARS. The internship report will be discussed extensively within the workshops and seminars of this activity.

A5.4-Communication Material

Method: Informative material design will be prepared based on the above results. The project team will provide an indicative list for further designing communication materials and will assist in the elaboration of handouts (brochures) on Parliament related activities adapted to the civil society. A workshop will be organized and a detailed plan for future activities on communication developed. During this workshop, on-the-job training of NARS staff will be performed by highly skilled MS professionals, in order to show the use of sophisticated communication tools on real parliamentary applications.



A5.5-Seminars & workshops for NARS reporting

Method: Specific seminars and workshops will be organized, the program will take into consideration eventual gap and criticalities identified during the roundtable sessions. Through organization of appropriate activities (like workshops/presentations) for media representatives the project team aims to ensure more active and comprehensive reporting on NARS activities.

Sub-activity 5.5.1 - Workshops for the National Assembly staff and MPs

Sub-activity 5.5.2 - Seminars for the journalists on Parliamentary proceedings and EU topics

Sub-activity 5.5.3 – Assistance in organizing media campaigns (promoting role of NARS in the EU integration process – promoting each important public hearing or similar event, etc.). Participation in the media campaign plan and the concept finalisation. Meetings with Serbian counterpart. The assistance will take the form of on-the-job training. MS experts will act as mentors throughout the duration of this activity. Practical exercises will be used for educational purposes.

A5.6-Web Communication

Method: Using best practices from other EU Parliaments, European Parliament and European Commission Web presence in social networks as well as EU funded projects in the field of e-participation, public consultation and e-democracy, the Project Team will propose the best applicable ways for the Parliament's web presence. All the last evolutions, tools and ICT developments will be used accordingly. Specialized training and guidelines for the operation of social media dedicated NARS employees will be provided. The activity aims at improving web design and functionality, for it to be more user-friendly and effectively linked to NARS activities.



PROJECT TEAM and EXPERTS

MS PROJECT TEAM

THE PROJECT LEADER

Dr. Vasilius Svolopoulos served as a Director of the Special Secretariat Office to the President of the Hellenic Parliament (2004 – 2006). At the same time, he monitored the financing of all external projects funded by the Parliament. As a Coordinator of European Programs Implementation Service (Sept. 2006- present), Dr. Svolopoulos quickly managed to initiate numerous projects, to be certified by ISO, to cooperate with Independent Authorities and in 2007, to produce a Strategic and Operational Plan for the Hellenic Parliament.

He currently continues to work as an Advisor – Professor (since 2001) at the Hellenic Open University teaching research methodology. He has extensive experience with the framework of all CSF funds for Greece starting with the 2nd of 1996 – 2000 to the present day. He has therefore acquired extensive experience in all aspects of EU procedures, in project planning, management, monitoring and assessment.

He holds a Ph.D. in Science Education from New York University (studying the role of partnerships between the public, private, research and educational sectors in a research internship for science teachers, within the epistemological and philosophical framework of authentic science). He also holds a Master's Degree in Teaching Physics with computer simulations and a BS Degree in Physics.

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THE RESIDENT TWINNING ADVISOR

Dr. Fotis Fitsilis studied Electrical Engineering at the University of Technology in Aachen, Germany. After his Diploma we worked as a research engineer at the Research Center Jülich and earned his Ph.D. in the field of Material Science. Additionally, Dr. Fitsilis studied economics at the University of Hagen in Germany and earned a Diploma in Financial Engineering.

From 2004 to 2007 he worked as a Special Advisor on industry matters to the Minister of Development. During this time he was a member of several legislative committees. In addition to that, he was closely monitoring the parliamentary activities and the intergovernmental relations of the Ministry.

Since 2007 he is working at the Hellenic Parliament; initially as a Scientific Advisor of the Speaker of the Parliament and, since 2009, as Head of the Department for Scientific Supervision and Reporting. During the last years he had a central planning role in the organizational restructuring of the Parliament.

THE COMPONENT LEADERS

Component Leader 1: Mr. Stefanos Koutsoubinas is the head in Office of the Department for the Legal Elaboration of Draft Laws and Proposals in the Directorate of Scientific Studies of the Hellenic



Parliament since 1989 and assistant Professor of Public Law, Faculty of Law, Democritus University of Thrace. He has great expertise in conducting comparative studies aiming at improving the legislative procedure for a more effective legal approximation. Mr. Koutsoubinas is also an experienced trainer: since 1986 he is Member of the Teaching Staff in the National Center for Public Administration and several Universities. He holds a Doctorat d'État in Constitutional Law, Faculty of Law, University of Nancy II, France.

Component Leader 2: Mr. Xenophon Paparrigopoulos has a PhD in Law from Harvard Law School and a very good command of English. Mr. Xenophon Paparrigopoulos has worked since 1998 in the Hellenic Parliament as a legal professional, carrying out responsibilities in Review of draft laws and bills, Constitutionality review of legislation, Conformity with EU law and *acquis communautaire*. He has strong experience in conducting comparative studies aiming at improving the legislative procedure for a more effective legal approximation. Since 1995 he is also teaching legal subjects at the University of Thessaly, Volos (Greece) and he is an experienced trainer.

Component Leader 3: Mr. Athanasios Pallikaris worked as administration officer - Parliamentary Group from 1990 to 2008 carrying out responsibilities in Design and preparation of legislative texts (experience in the regulation of the Parliament), preparation of documents to the Parliament, handling of Parliamentary Group contacts with the Services of Parliament. Since 2010 he is Deputy Head officer in the Accounting Department of the Hellenic Parliament. Mr. Pallikaris has a Bachelor degree in Business Administration.

Component Leader 4: Ms. Eleni Kanellopoulou has worked since 2004 as Special Scientific Associate in the Hellenic Parliament. Her main responsibilities regard the drafting of reports on submitted bills regarding their compatibility with the Constitution, European Union legislation, International Conventions and Jurisdiction, before the bills are debated and voted in the plenum. Ms. Eleni Kanellopoulou has a Master's Degree in European Community Law from University of Essex.

Component Leader 5: Mr. Panos Kouanis has extensive experience in all aspects of the Audiovisual industry including film and television production, distribution and sales, broadcasting and the electronic commerce field. He currently works as the Finance & New Media Manager at the Hellenic Parliament Television and Radio Station (2002 to date). He holds a Ph.D. degree from the University of Athens, School of Economic Sciences, in the marketing of audiovisual programs. Moreover, he holds a Master of Science (M.Sc.) degree in Broadcasting and Film from the College of Communication of Boston University and a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degree in Economics from the University of Athens.

PROJECT OFFICER

Mr. Dimitris Koryzis is an expert in Procurement & Contract Management for European funded projects in the European Programs Implementation Service of the Hellenic Parliament. Furthermore, he excels in the development and realisation, business planning, project management and production engineering case studies. He has participated as project manager, project coordinator, researcher and consultant in more than 40 national and international projects. He has 9 publications presented in international conferences and was responsible for 1 book publication.



PROJECT ASSISTANT

Ms Aleksandra Plazinić holds a Master degree in Advanced European studies and International relations from the European Institute, obtained in France and Germany, and a Master degree in International Marketing and Management from the Faculty of Economics of the University of Belgrade. Ms Plazinić gained her professional experience within the European Union Delegation in Serbia and management consulting companies in Austria and Serbia. She has broad international experience and speaks English, French, German and Spanish.

BC PROJECT TEAM AND EXPERTS

Name	Position	Capacity
Jana Ljubičić	Secretary General	BC Project Leader
Mladen Mladenović	Deputy Secretary General	BC Deputy Project Leader
Đordana Kurir	Head of the European Integration Department	BC RTA counterpart
Mirjana Radaković	Assistant to the Secretary General	Key expert Component 1
Milan Ćuljković	Secretary of the Committee for Defence and Security	Key expert Component 1
Uroš Ćemalović	Adviser in the European Integration Department	Key expert Component 2
Veljko Racković	Adviser in the European Integration Department	Key expert Component 2
Aleksandra Šašo	Adviser in the Committee on Administrative and Budgetary and Mandatory Immunity Issues	Key expert Component 3
Miloš Prošić	Adviser in the Human Resources Department	Key expert Component 3
Katarina Ristić	Researcher in the Library	Key expert Component 4
Novica Kulić	Head of the Department for Constitutional Law System and organisation of power	Key expert Component 4
Radoje Cerović	Secretary of the Constitutional and Legal Committee	Key expert Component 4
Ljiljana Živković	Secretary for Justice and Public Administration	Key expert Component 4
Marija Urošević	Adviser in the European Integration Department	Key expert Component 4
Radoslava Marković	Head of the Public Relation Department	Key expert Component 5
Biljana Milosavljević	Head of the Education Unit	Key expert Component 5
Aleksandra Jovanović	Adviser in the European Integration Department	Key expert Component 5