



The South East Compact for Reform, Investment, Integrity and Growth Under the EU Stability Pact - Working Table II



**2nd Working Group Meeting of the
THE SOUTH EASTERN EUROPEAN
PARTNERSHIP ON ACCOUNTANCY DEVELOPMENT**

on

**“Professional Education, Training and Certification Programmes
for Accountants and Auditors in South Eastern Europe”**

Agenda

5-6 June 2000

Location:

Hotel BOSNA

Kralja Petre Karadjordjevica 97

Banja Luka, Republic of Srpska

Bosnia and Herzegovina

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DAY 1: Monday, 5 June 2000

Co-chairs:

Mr. John Hegarty, Regional Financial Management Advisor, the World Bank
Prof. Dr. Vladislav Djurasovic, President, the Association of Accountants and Auditors of the Republika Srpska

Registration

08.30 - 09.00

Opening session: Welcoming remarks and opening presentations

09.00 - 09.45

- **Welcoming remarks:** *Prof. Dr. Vladislav Djurasovic*, President, the Association of Accountants and Auditors of the Republika Srpska; *Mr. Sebastian Molineus*, Project Manager, OECD
- **Opening presentation:** *Mr. Ramon de Reyna*, Consultant, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) on “an overview of the main issues in professional training, education and certification”
- **Presentation:** *Prof. Dr. Stoyan Durin*, Chairman of General Assembly, the Institute of Certified Public Accountants in Bulgaria on “a glossary of keywords for the accountancy profession in SEE”

Session 1: Professional qualification and certification

09.45 - 12.30

Opening presentation: *Mr. Jean-François des Robert*, Director, International Development and Co-operation, Compagnie Nationale des Commissaires aux Comptes (CNCC) / Conseil Supérieur de l'Ordre des Experts-Comptables (CSOEC) on “a comparison of international benchmarks on professional qualification and certification”

Roundtable discussion on:

- Final examination of professional competence
- Admission requirements on education and training
- Institutional responsibilities and expertise
- Output of qualified accountants and auditors

Synthesis of roundtable discussion: *Mr. Jean-François des Robert*, CNCC/CSOEC

Rapporteur: *Prof. Dr. Stoyan Durin*, the Institute of Certified Public Accountants in Bulgaria

Reference materials:

- IFAC's International Education Guideline (IEG) No. 9 and Advisory on Examination Administration
- UNCTAD's International Standards of Accounting and Reporting (ISAR) Model Curriculum on Education for the Qualification of Professional Accountants;
- Articles 4-8 of the 8th Directive of the European Union

12.30 - 14.00 Lunch

Session 2: Professional education

14.00 - 18.00

Opening presentation: *Mr. Michael Walsh*, Director, the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) on “a comparison of international benchmarks on professional education”

Roundtable discussion on:

- Core programme of professional education
- Standard setting, examination and assessment
- Providers of professional education
- Admission requirements to professional education
- Output of qualified candidates

Synthesis of roundtable discussion: *Mr. Michael Walsh*, ACCA

Rapporteur: *Mr. Jean-Paul Brunet*, Executive Director, Corpul Expertilor Contabili si Contabililor Autorizati din Romania

Reference materials:

- The WTO's Guidelines on Mutual Recognition and Disciplines on Domestic Regulation in the Accountancy Sector
- IFAC's International Education Guidelines (IEGs) No. 9 and 11;
- UNCTAD's International Standards of Accounting and Reporting (ISAR) Model Curriculum on Education for the Qualification of Professional Accountants;
- Article 6 of the 8th Directive of the European Union

DAY 2: Tuesday, 6 June 2000

Session 3: Practical training

09.00 - 12.30

Opening presentation: *Mr. Bernard Cooke*, Director of Business Courses, the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland (ICAS) on “a comparison of international benchmarks on practical training”

Roundtable discussion on:

- Core programme of practical training
- Standard setting and assessment
- Providers of practical training
- Admission requirements to practical training
- Output of qualified candidates
- Recognition of foreign professional titles

Synthesis of roundtable discussion: *Mr. Bernard Cooke* (ICAS)

Rapporteur: *Mr. Romeo Mitri*, Vice-President, the Albanian Institute of Authorised Chartered Accountants (IEKA)

Reference materials:

- IFAC’s International Education Guideline (IEGs) No. 9;
- IFAC’s Discussion Paper on Work Experience
- UNCTAD’s International Standards of Accounting and Reporting (ISAR) Model Curriculum on Education for the Qualification of Professional Accountants;
- Article 8 of the 8th Directive of the European Union

12.30 - 14.00 Lunch

Session 4: General education

14.00 - 16.00

Opening presentation: *Mr. Joseph F. Fischl*, Program Manager, East-West Management Institute (EWMI) on “international benchmarks on general education”

Roundtable discussion on:

- Core programme of general education
- Standard setting and assessment
- Output of qualified candidates

Synthesis of roundtable discussion: *Mr. Joseph F. Fischl*, EWMI

Rapporteur: *Prof. Dr. Dragan Mikerevic*, Vice-President, the Association of Accountants and Auditors of the Republika Srpska

Reference materials:

- IFAC’s International Education Guideline (IEGs) No. 9;

Concluding roundtable

16.00 - 18.00

Roundtable discussion on:

- Meeting conclusions and general recommendations
- The development of country based implementation plans
- An institutional structure for SEEPAD

Notes to the Agenda

General remarks:

1. The 2nd working group meeting of the South Eastern European Partnership on Accountancy Development (SEEPAD) has as its **purpose** to identify the principle issues in professional education, training and certification programmes in the region, develop a set of general recommendations on how to effectuate reforms in this area and serve as a starting point for country based implementation plans.
2. The proceedings will be **co-chaired** by *Prof. Dr. Vladislav Djurasovic*, President of the Executive Board, the Association of Accountants and Auditors of the Republika Srpska and *Mr. John Hegarty*, Regional Financial Management Advisor, the World Bank. The co-chairs will be responsible to focus the meeting participants on the relevant issues at hand and direct the roundtable discussions.
3. The meeting is divided into an opening session, four substantive sessions (i. professional qualification and certification, ii. professional education, iii. practical training and iv. general education) and a concluding roundtable. Each session contains a number of issues for discussion. Sessions 1-4 are to begin with brief **opening presentations** that are intended to introduce the respective subjects, provide an overview of relevant international benchmarks and suggest issues for the ensuing roundtables. These presentations are to be limited to 10 minutes to enable sufficient time for discussion during the roundtables.
4. The **roundtable discussions** are to allow the meeting participants to present their experiences in developing and implementing professional education, training and certification programmes. An informal and open--problem-solving--dialogue is encouraged. Meeting participants are to present both successes and shortcomings in SEE country programmes. The discussions are to be based on SEE country background papers and a comparative study on international benchmarks, including the relevant international guidelines and directives issued by IFAC, the EU and UNCTAD.
5. At the end of each session, the individual making the opening presentation is to provide the group with a 5 minute **synthesis** of the discussions. In addition, a **rappporteur** will be nominated for each session to provide in writing a set of general recommendations on how to reduce the gaps in country programmes. These recommendations are to be based on the opening presentations, roundtable discussions and synthesis.

Issues to be discussed under each session:

6. The **opening session** is to be kept as brief as possible and should not exceed 45 minutes. It is to allow for welcoming remarks that are to be kept to 5 minutes each, a keynote presentation (15 minutes), in addition to a discussion on a glossary developed by the Institute of Certified Public Accountants in Bulgaria (20 minutes).
7. **Session 1.** It is essential that accounting professionals not only demonstrate a sound theoretical knowledge but are also able to practically apply that knowledge in a competent manner. This session focuses on the professional qualification and certification of accountants and auditors. Its four themes are to focus the discussion on the final examination of professional competence, admission requirements, institutional responsibilities and expertise, and to what extent the programmes are producing qualified accountants and auditors.

Main issues for discussion:

- *What are final examination requirements? What is the level of the final examination compared with international standards? Does the final examination test theoretical knowledge and the ability to apply that knowledge in practice? Is there a periodic review process of the final examination?*

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- *What are the admission requirements on professional and general education? What are the admission requirements on practical training?*
- *Which institutes are responsible for standard setting and examination; is the examination organised or recognised by the State? What is the involvement of the professional bodies in the final examination? Are the necessary expertise and resources for the examination available?*
- *What is the output of qualified accountants and auditors? What is the employment sector of qualified accountants and auditors? Has national and/or international comparability been achieved?*

8. **Session 2** is to discuss the professional education of accountants and auditors. The discussion is to focus on core programmes of professional education, standard setting, examination and assessment, the providers of professional education and admission requirements to professional education.

Main issues for discussion:

- *What are the professional education requirements? What is the core programme of professional education? What is the level of professional education compared with international standards? Is there a periodic review process of professional education? What is the duration of professional education in years?*
- *What are the rules on standard setting, examination and assessment of skills?*
- *Which institutes provide professional education; how are they recognised; does the professional body provide professional education? What is the involvement of accountants and auditors in professional education? Are the necessary expertise and resources for professional education available?*
- *What are the admission requirements for professional education? Are there exemptions based on general education? What is the cost (time, money) and accessibility of professional education?*
- *What is the output of qualified candidates? Has national and international comparability been achieved?*

9. **Session 3** is to emphasise the importance of practical training for accountants and auditors. An appropriate period of relevant experience in performing the work of a professional accountant is an important component of a pre-qualification programme. Issues for discussion will encompass the core programme of practical training, standard setting and assessment, providers of practical training, admission requirements to practical training, and whether the training programmes are able to produce qualified candidates.

Main issues for discussion:

- *What are the practical training requirements? What is the core programme of practical training? What is the level of practical training compared with international standards? Is there a periodic review process of practical training? What is the duration of practical training in years?*
- *What are the rules on standard setting and assessment of skills?*
- *Which institutes provide practical training; how are they recognised? Are the necessary expertise and resources for practical training available?*
- *What are the admission requirements for practical training? Are exemptions based on previous experience provided for? What is the cost (time, money) and accessibility of practical training?*
- *What is the output of qualified candidates? Has national and international comparability been achieved? What is the employment sector of candidates during practical training?*

10. **Session 4** is to focus on general education. Because general education requirements vary greatly from country to country, and indeed from programme to programme, the discussion is to be limited to the core programme of

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general education, standard setting and assessment, admission requirements to general education and the output of qualified candidates.

Main issues for discussion:

- *What is the general education concept? What is the core programme of general education? Is there a periodic review process of general education curricula? What is the duration of general education in years?*
 - *What are the rules on standard setting and assessment of skills?*
 - *What are the admission requirements for general education? What is the cost (time, money) and accessibility of general education?*
 - *What is the output of qualified candidates?*
11. The purpose of the **concluding round table** is threefold. First, it is to develop the final set of general recommendations on how to improve upon professional education, training and certification programmes in SEE. More specifically, the chair will present the list of proposed general recommendations, as developed by the rapporteurs, to the meeting participants. The meeting participants will in turn discuss and adopt the final list of general recommendations. Second, the group is to agree upon the future programme of work, specifically on how to implement the general recommendations at the national level. A discussion on the institutional structure that SEEPAD is to adopt at the end of the year is to close the meeting.