



GPKT Phase II – Integrated Development Assistance  
Report No. 9  
Launch of the GPKT Policy Report on  
Cross-Border Trade and Tariffs

*November 2007*

This past autumn Mr. Vasileios Panousopoulos completed a policy report on Cross-Border Trade and Tariffs for the GPKT (Gjilan/Gnjilane, Presevo, Kumanovo and Trgoviste) micro-region. The report highlighted the critical challenges for cross-border trade in the micro-region, and was launched at a panel discussion on 23 November in Skopje. Over forty participants from the region attended, representing central and local government administrations, local businesses, Chambers of Commerce, the NGO sector and the donor community.



After an introduction from EWI Programme Director Mr. Robert Garnett, the first session began with a presentation by Mr. Panousopoulos, who highlighted some of the key constraints, as well as opportunities, for cross-border trade in the region. The presentation of Mr. Panousopoulos was then followed by presentations from representatives across the region. Mr. Edin Fakic, Head of the IT Department and Mr. Danco Petrov, Assistant Director from the Directorate for Free Economic Zones in Macedonia, provided an overview of current Free Economic Zones in Macedonia. Their presentation focused on the level of development of the existing zones in Skopje, Stip and Prilep, as well as the infrastructure needed for opening such zones and the potential risks for operating these zones.

Mr. Zoran Stojanovic, Secretary General of the Regional Chamber of Economy, Nis, detailed his organisation's activities in the areas of cross-border co-operation highlighting co-operation with foreign bilateral and multilateral donors and newly established business development with neighbouring Bulgaria. The final speaker was Mr. Flamur Keqa, Director of the Department for Economic Analyses and Social Dialogue of the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce, who gave an overview of the current economic and trade situation of Kosovo with respect to its neighbours. His address focused primarily on the presentation of the economic achievements of Kosovo, and the problems that Kosovo's business community faces with regard to the unsolved political status.



The second session of the panel discussion was designed to allow members of the audience to raise questions and give comments on the presentations. “This was a rare opportunity for the business community of this region to be present on an event of this kind and have the chance to contribute to the discussion,” stated Mr. Nehat Hyseni, manager of ARTA Company and Founder of the Regional Agency for Economic Development of Presevo and Bujanovac Region. The momentum of the discussion was carried over into the cocktail reception afterwards.

The overall impression of the launch was very positive for the panellists and participants. Comments received and discussions that were held among the guests shed light on perspectives for future co-operation in many fields, and enabled participants to see potential opportunities for business development, creating new links that will serve as the basis for future co-operation.

Written and electronic media covered the event, and statements from the panellists were taken by several TV and Radio Stations including Macedonian National Radio and Television and the National News Agency MIA.

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