

Pursuant to Article 36 paragraph (3) of the Law on the Government of the Republic of Macedonia ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No. 59/00, 12/03, 55/05, 37/06, 115/07, 19/08, 82/08, 10/10, 51/11, 15/13, 139/14, 196/15, 142/16 and 140/18 and "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No. 98/19), and relating to Article 45-a of the Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" no. 38/01, 98/02, 9/03, 47/03, 64/03, 67/03, 51/06, 5/07, 15/07, 26/07, 30/07, 58/07, 105/07, 116/07, 129/07, 157/07, 29/08, 51/08, 86/08, 144/08, 42/09, 62/09, 141/09, 162/09, 40/10, 83/10, 166/10, 172/10, 95/11, 151/11, 170/11, 67/13, 145/14, 62/15, 41/16, 153/16 and 113/17 and "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No. 228/19, 72/20, 215/20, 309/20, 41/ 21, 56/21 and 70/22), the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, on its session held on 05.09.2022, adopted a

**DECISION ON ESTABLISHING ACCESSION NEGOTIATIONS STRUCTURE  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA  
TO THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Subject**

Article 1

This Decision shall establish the Accession Negotiations Structure of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union (hereinafter: the Negotiating Structure) and shall lay down its composition, as well as the works and tasks that it shall perform.

**Negotiating Structure**

Article 2

The Negotiating Structure shall consist of:

- 1) **Chief Negotiator for Accession Negotiations of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union** (hereinafter: the Chief Negotiator),
- 2) **Deputy Chief Negotiator for Accession Negotiations of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union** (hereinafter: the Deputy of the Chief Negotiator),
- 3) Bodies established by this Decision, as follows:
  - **Committee for Accession Negotiations of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union** (hereinafter: the Negotiating Committee);
  - **State Delegation for Accession Negotiations of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union** (hereinafter: the State Delegation);
  - **Negotiating Group for Accession Negotiations of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union** (hereinafter: the Negotiating Group);
  - **Working Committee for European Integration** (hereinafter: the Working Committee);
  - **Working Groups for the Preparation of the Negotiating Positions for Accession Negotiations of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union** (hereinafter: the Working Groups),
- 4) **The Mission of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union in Brussels and**

5) **Secretariat for Accession Negotiations of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union** (hereinafter: the Negotiating Secretariat).

**Chief Negotiator**

Article 3

- (1) The Chief Negotiator shall be the Deputy Prime Minister of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia in charge of European Affairs, who is responsible to the President of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia for the immediate conduct of the negotiations in all clusters, areas, and chapters.
- (2) The Chief Negotiator shall be the Head of the Negotiating Group and shall manage its work, and he/she shall be the Deputy Head of the State Delegation.
- (3) The Chief Negotiator shall:
  - coordinate the tasks of the Working Groups related to the accession negotiations in respective clusters, areas and chapters;
  - coordinate the work of the Working Groups in the preparation of the analytical review and the assessment of the degree of harmonisation of the national legislation with the EU *acquis*;
  - coordinate the preparation and approve the reports on the implementation of the analytical review and the assessment of the degree of harmonisation of the national legislation with the EU *acquis*;
  - coordinate the preparation and approve the reports on the course of accession negotiations, including the fulfilment of the benchmarks established by the Council of the European Union for the opening of the clusters, the temporary benchmarks, the closing benchmarks for the chapters and the closing benchmarks for the Fundamentals cluster;
  - coordinate the preparation and approve opinions, attitudes and analyses related to accession negotiations;
  - define the necessary materials for the State Delegation, as well as approve the prepared materials of the Negotiating Group;
  - communicate, on behalf of the Negotiating Structure, at operational level with the representatives in the institutions and negotiators of the European Union;
  - coordinate and disseminate relevant materials and documents in the negotiation process bidirectionally, between the Negotiating Group on one hand and the Negotiating Structure of the European Commission on the other hand; and
  - report, during the negotiations, to the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia on a quarterly basis for the course of the negotiations and the established negotiating positions.
- (4) The Deputy Chief Negotiator shall be the State Secretary of the Secretariat for European Affairs, who shall replace the Chief Negotiator in the event of his/her absence or impediment.
- (5) The Chief Negotiator shall communicate with:
  - the President of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia,
  - the state administration bodies and other state bodies and institutions;

- the institutions of the European Union;
  - the institutions of the EU Member States;
  - the business community, chambers of commerce, trade unions, academic community, and civil society; and
  - other stakeholders.
- (6) The Chief Negotiator, and upon prior consent from the Chief Negotiator, and the Deputy Chief Negotiator and the members of the Negotiating Group, shall inform the public about the activities and the achieved results related to the accession negotiations of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union.

### **Negotiating Committee**

#### Article 4

- (1) The Negotiating Committee shall be the highest Working Body of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia for coordination of the accession negotiations process to the European Union.
- (2) The Negotiating Committee shall review and establish the draft-negotiating positions of the Republic of North Macedonia before their adoption by the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, while discussing and taking position on the most important issues regarding the negotiations, including the fulfilment of the benchmarks established by the Council of the European Union for the opening of the clusters, the temporary benchmarks, the closing benchmarks for the chapters and the closing benchmarks for the Fundamentals cluster, as well as the negotiations dynamics, the deadlines for harmonisation of the national legislation with the legislation of the European Union, as well as the necessary financial funds to fulfil the obligations undertaken by the negotiations and to ensure the capacities for consistent enforcement of the European legislation in the Republic of North Macedonia.
- (3) The Negotiating Committee shall consist of:
1. the President of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia;
  2. the Deputy Prime Minister of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia in charge of European Affairs as Chief Negotiator;
  3. the First Deputy Prime Minister of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia and Minister for Political System and Inter-Community Relations;
  4. the Deputy President of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia in charge of Good Governance Policies;
  5. the Deputy Prime Minister of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia in charge of Economic Affairs, Coordination of Economic Sectors and Investments;
  6. the Minister of Foreign Affairs;
  7. the Minister of Finance; and
  8. the State Secretary of the Secretariat for European Affairs.
- (4) If necessary, other members of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, members of the other bodies of the Negotiating Structure (referred to in Article 2 point 3) of this Decision, as well as representatives of relevant social stakeholders for whom the President of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia shall decide upon, at the proposal of the Chief Negotiator, shall also participate in the Negotiating Committee's work.

- (5) The Negotiating Committee shall be chaired by the President of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, and in event of his/her impediment or absence, he/she shall be replaced by the Chief Negotiator.
- (6) The Negotiating Committee shall meet at least once before holding each Intergovernmental Conference on the Accession of North Macedonia to the European Union or a meeting of the Stabilisation and Association Council.
- (7) Any member of the Negotiating Committee may give a proposal for convening a meeting of the Negotiating Committee.
- (8) The Negotiating Committee shall have a Secretary, who shall be appointed by the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia at the proposal of the Chief Negotiator.
- (9) The Negotiating Committee shall inform the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia about its work, at the first following session of the Government after its meeting.

### **State Delegation**

#### Article 5

- (1) The State Delegation shall present the official negotiating positions at the Intergovernmental Conference on the Accession of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union.
- (2) The State Delegation shall consist of:
  1. The Minister of Foreign Affairs – Head of the State Delegation;
  2. Chief Negotiator – Deputy Head of the State Delegation;
  3. The Deputy of the Chief Negotiator;
  4. The Head of the Mission of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union in Brussels;
- (3) If necessary, other members of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, members of other bodies from the Negotiating Structure (referred to in Article 2 paragraph 3) of this Decision, as well as representatives of relevant social stakeholders for whom the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia shall decide upon, at the proposal of the Chief Negotiator, shall also participate in the State Delegation's work.
- (4) The Head of the State Delegation shall lead the Delegation, and in coordination with the Chief Negotiator shall represent the Republic of North Macedonia at the Intergovernmental Conference on the Accession of North Macedonia to the European Union.
- (5) In the event of absence or impediment of the Head of the State Delegation to participate in the Intergovernmental Conference on the Accession of North Macedonia to the European Union, the Chief Negotiator as Deputy Head of the Delegation shall replace the Head of the State Delegation.
- (6) The State Delegation shall submit a report to the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia for each held Intergovernmental Conference on the Accession of North Macedonia to the European Union no later than 15 days after the end of the Conference, as well as a special detailed report upon previously received request of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia.
- (7) Administrative and expert support to the State Delegation shall be provided by the Secretariat for European Affairs in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- (8) The State Delegation shall have a Secretary, from among the managerial administrative civil servants of the Secretariat for European Affairs, appointed by the Chief Negotiator.

## Negotiating Group

### Article 6

- (1) The Negotiating Group shall be the highest expert body within the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia for coordination with the institutions and preparation of the Draft Negotiating Positions by clusters, areas, and chapters in all phases of the negotiations.
- (2) The members of the Negotiating Group shall monitor the work of the Working Groups based on the guidelines received from the Chief Negotiator and the Secretariat for European Affairs, shall define the Draft Negotiating Positions, and shall submit them to the Chief Negotiator, who shall propose to be laid down by the Negotiating Committee and shall submit them for adoption to the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia.
- (3) The Chief Negotiator and the Negotiating Group shall perform the activities referred to in paragraphs (1) and (2) of this Article in accordance with the Negotiating Framework of the European Union and the guidelines for defining the negotiating positions adopted by the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, for each meeting at the Intergovernmental Conference.
- (4) The Negotiating Group shall adopt the Rules of Procedure, in cooperation with the Secretariat for European Affairs.
- (5) For their work, the members of the Negotiating Group shall be held accountable to the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, and the members of the Negotiating Group referred to in Article 7 paragraph (1) indents 2-9 of this Decision, shall be held accountable also to the Chief Negotiator.
- (6) The Negotiating Group shall submit to the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia regular monthly reports on its work, reports on the negotiations status and on the issues related to the accession negotiations, an extraordinary report or information on certain essential and systemic issues regarding the negotiations, as well as an annual report no later than the termination of the first quarter of the following year, for the previous year.

### Article 7

- (1) The Negotiating Group shall consist of:
  - The Chief Negotiator,
  - The Deputy of the Chief Negotiator,
  - Adviser for Accession Negotiations,
  - The members in charge of certain clusters, areas, and chapters of the negotiations,
  - Chief Economist,
  - Chief Legal Advisor,
  - Chief Anti-Corruption Advisor,
  - The Head of the Mission of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union in Brussels,
  - The Director of the EU Directorate from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and

- A representative from the Ministry of Finance.
- (2) The Negotiating Group shall be headed by the Chief Negotiator, and in event of his/her absence or impediment, shall be replaced by the Deputy Chief Negotiator.
  - (3) The Negotiating Group shall be appointed by the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia at the proposal of the Chief Negotiator.
  - (4) The Adviser for Accession Negotiations is one of the State Advisers in the Secretariat for European Affairs in charge of supporting the coordination of the Negotiating Group.
  - (5) The Chief Economist shall be in charge of horizontal coordination of all aspects of the accession negotiations related to economic policies and the respective chapters related to them.
  - (6) The Chief Legal Advisor shall be in charge of monitoring, coordination and expert opinions for all acts from a legal aspect in the entire negotiation process, as well as documenting the negotiation process, and shall be also responsible for formulating and continuously updating the content of the Draft Accession Agreement as a whole.
  - (7) The Chief Anti-Corruption Advisor shall be in charge of horizontal coordination and monitoring of policies and results in the fight against corruption and prevention of conflict of interests in all clusters, areas and chapters during accession negotiations.
  - (8) The Negotiating Group shall have a Secretary, who shall be appointed by the Chief Negotiator from among the managerial administrative state servants of the Secretariat for European Affairs.
  - (9) The Secretariat for European Affairs shall provide expert and administrative technical support to the Negotiating Group, including the Chief Economist, Chief Legal Advisor and Chief Anti-Corruption Advisor.
  - (10) The Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, at the proposal of the Chief Negotiator, may appoint advisory and expert individuals for a specific area, domestic and international, as support to the Negotiating Structure.
  - (11) In exceptional cases when the available capacity of the administration cannot respond to the required quality level, and to resolve certain essential and systemic issues related to the tasks of the Negotiating Group, the Chief Negotiator may engage experts with experience and expertise on the relevant issues related to the negotiations and common policies of the European Union.

### **Working Committee**

#### Article 8

- (1) The Working Committee is a body of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia for coordination of the implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the Republic of North Macedonia and the European Union and for coordination of activities related to the accession negotiations of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union.
- (2) The tasks of the Working Committee shall be:
  - to monitor the accession negotiation process, the process of coordination of the preparations of the negotiating positions and the fulfilment of the defined benchmarks established by the Council of the European Union for the opening of the clusters, the temporary benchmarks, the closing benchmarks for the chapters and the closing benchmarks for the Fundamentals cluster, as well as the negotiations dynamics, the deadlines for harmonisation of the national legislation with the legislation of the European Union;

- to monitor the implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement and all other agreements and other legal acts that regulate the relations between the Republic of North Macedonia and the European Union;
- to monitor and coordinate the work of all subcommittees and the Special Group for Public Administration Reform, established within the Stabilisation and Association Committee;
- to monitor, coordinate and synchronise the work of the Working Groups during the preparation of the National Program for the Adoption of the EU *acquis* (hereinafter: NPAA);
- to determine the needs and coordinate the priorities in the process of preparation of the national version of the EU *acquis* in Macedonian language, synchronised with the dynamics of the accession negotiations process;
- to monitor the realisation of the overall financial cooperation of the Republic of North Macedonia with the European Union and bilateral and multilateral aid; and
- to monitor all other issues related to the accession process of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union.

#### Article 9

- (1) The Working Committee shall consist of a President, its Deputy, and Members.
- (2) The President of the Working Committee shall be the Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of North Macedonia in charge of European Affairs, and in event of his/her absence or impediment, shall be replaced in performing his/her duties by the State Secretary of the Secretariat for European Affairs.
- (3) Members of the Working Committee shall be the State Secretaries from all ministries, the State Secretary of the Secretariat for European Affairs and the Chairman of the Stabilisation and Association Committee, the General Secretary of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, the Secretary of the Secretariat for Legislation, as well as the Members of the Negotiating Group.
- (4) The Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of North Macedonia in charge of European Affairs shall appoint the Secretary of the Working Committee from among the administrative state servants within the Secretariat for European Affairs.
- (5) The Co-Chairs of the Stabilisation and Association Subcommittees and the Special Group for Public Administration Reform, as well as the Secretary of the Stabilisation and Association Council, shall participate in the work of the Working Committee.
- (6) Representatives of the ministries and other state administrative bodies, other state bodies, as well as other persons may participate in the work of the Working Committee, for which the Chairperson of the Working Committee shall decide, and in his/her absence or impediment, the Deputy of the President of the Working Committee.
- (7) Administrative and expert support to the Working Committee shall be provided by the Secretariat for European Affairs.

#### Article 10

- (1) The Working Committee shall hold regular monthly sessions, and more frequently if necessary.

- (2) The President of the Working Committee shall inform the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia at its first following session on the work of each session of the Working Committee, including all conclusions and open questions.
- (3) The work of the Working Committee shall be regulated in detail by the Rules of Procedure which shall be adopted by the Working Committee, at the proposal of the Secretariat for European Affairs.

## **Working Groups**

### Article 11

The Working Groups as auxiliary bodies of the Working Committee, pursuant to the guidelines of the Secretariat for European Affairs shall:

- participate in the preparation of the analytical review and assessment of the degree of harmonisation of the legislation of the Republic of North Macedonia with the EU *acquis*;
- prepare the Draft Negotiating Positions of the Republic of North Macedonia in cooperation with the members of the Negotiating Group, including the defined benchmarks established by the Council of the European Union for the opening of the clusters, the temporary benchmarks, the closing benchmarks for the chapters and the closing benchmarks for the Fundamentals cluster; prepare Annexes to the working version of the NPAA;
- monitor the implementation and regularly update the section related to the cluster, area and chapter for which they are responsible, as well as the priorities for using foreign aid;
- provide recommendations on the dynamics of harmonisation of the national legislation with the EU *acquis*;
- monitor the implementation of the undertaken obligations from the association and accession processes to the European Union and submit reports to the Working Committee;
- assess the necessary resources (human, material, technical, etc.) for capacity building for the implementation of the obligations undertaken by the negotiations;
- plan the activities and determine the draft priorities for harmonisation and preparation of the national version of the EU *acquis* in Macedonian language; and
- also perform other activities within the accession process to the European Union, by direction of the Secretariat for European Affairs.

### Article 12

- (1) A special Working Group shall be established for each area and chapter for negotiations, which shall be grouped into six clusters, pursuant to the Methodology of the Negotiations of the European Commission, accepted by the Council of the European Union in March 2020.
- (2) For the administrative capacities and criteria for accession to the European Union, a special Working Group shall be established.
- (3) A special Working Group shall be established for expert consultation on terminology for the EU *acquis*.
- (4) For the Working Groups referred to in paragraphs (1), (2) and (3) of this Article, institution in charge shall be established at the level of a cluster, area, and chapter among which the Head of the Working Group shall be designated.



- (5) An institution in charge for each Working Group at the level of a cluster, area, and chapter, shall be proposed, among which the responsible person by area shall be designated.

### Article 13

The Working Groups for clusters, areas and chapters shall be established, as follows:

Working Group on **Fundamentals cluster**, coordinated by the Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of North Macedonia in charge of European Affairs and Chief Negotiator, wherein the following areas and chapters shall be grouped:

- Working Group on Rule of Law comprising the Working Group on Chapter 23 - Justice and Fundamental Rights and the Working Group on Chapter 24 - Justice, Freedom, and Security,
  - Working Group on Economic Criteria,
  - Working Group on Functioning of Democratic Institutions,
  - Working Group on Public Administration Reform,
  - Working Group on Chapter 5 - Public Procurement,
  - Working Group on Chapter 18 – Statistics, and
  - Working Group on Chapter 32 - Financial Control;
- 2) Working Group on **Internal Market cluster** coordinated by the Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of North Macedonia in charge of Economic Affairs, Coordination with the Economic Departments, and Investments, wherein the following chapters shall be grouped:
- Working Group on Chapter 1 – Free Movement of Goods,
  - Working Group on Chapter 2 – Freedom of Movement of Workers,
  - Working Group on Chapter 3 – Right of Establishment and Freedom to Provide Services,
  - Working Group on Chapter 4 – Free Movement of Capital,
  - Working Group on Chapter 6 – Company Law,
  - Working Group on Chapter 7 – Intellectual Property Law,
  - Working Group on Chapter 8 – Competition Policy,
  - Working Group on Chapter 9 - Financial Services and
  - Working Group on Chapter 28 – Consumer Protection and Public Health;
- 3) Working Group on **Competitiveness and Inclusive Growth cluster** coordinated by the Minister of Finance, wherein the following chapters shall be grouped:
- Working Group on Chapter 10 – Information Society and Media,
  - Working Group on Chapter 16 – Taxation,
  - Working Group on Chapter 17 – Economic and Monetary Policy,
  - Working Group on Chapter 19 – Social Policy and Employment,
  - Working Group on Chapter 20 – Enterprise and Industrial Policy,
  - Working Group on Chapter 25 – Science and Research,
  - Working Group on Chapter 26 – Education and Culture and
  - Working Group on Chapter 29 – Customs Union;
- 4) Working Group on **Green Agenda and Sustainable Connectivity cluster**, coordinated by the Minister of Environment and Spatial Planning, wherein the following chapters shall be grouped:
- Working Group on Chapter 14 – Transport Policy,
  - Working Group on Chapter 15 – Energy,

- Working Group on Chapter 21 – Trans-European network and Working Group on Chapter 27 – Environment and Climate Change;
- 5) Working Group on **Resources, Agriculture and Cohesion cluster** coordinated by the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, wherein the following chapters shall be grouped:
- Working Group on Chapter 11 – Agriculture and Rural Development,
  - Working Group on Chapter 12 – Food Safety, Veterinary and Phytosanitary Policy,
  - Working Group on Chapter 13 – Fisheries,
  - Working Group on Chapter 22 – Regional Policy and Coordination of Structural Instruments and
  - Working Group on Chapter 33 – Financial and Budgetary Provisions;
- 6) Working Group on **External Relations cluster** coordinated by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, wherein the following chapters shall be grouped:
- Working Group on Chapter 30 – External Relations and
  - Working Group on Chapter 31 – Foreign, Security and Defence Policy.

#### Article 14

- (1) The institutions whose representatives are part of the Working Groups referred to in Article 13 of this Decision, at the proposal of the Chief Negotiator, shall be determined by the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia.
- (2) The representatives of the institutions referred to in paragraph (1) of this Article in the Working Groups, for the clusters, areas, and chapters, shall be appointed by the Chief Negotiator, in cooperation with the Members of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia who coordinate with the respective cluster.

#### Article 15

- (1) The Working Groups for an area and a chapter shall consist of:
- Head of the Working Group designated in accordance with Article 14 paragraph (2) of this Decision;
  - Deputy Head of the Working Group designated in accordance with Article 14 paragraph (2) of this Decision;
  - a coordinator from the Secretariat for European Affairs, designated by the Chief Negotiator;
  - Member of the Negotiating Group in charge of cluster, designated by the Chief Negotiator;
  - and Members, designated in accordance with Article 14 paragraph (2) of this Decision;
- (2) Representatives of the Secretariat for European Affairs, the Secretariat for Legislation, the Ministry of Finance, and the State Statistical Office shall be members of all Working Groups.
- (3) The members of the Working Groups may be representatives of the ministries and other state administration bodies and administrative organisations, the services of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, other state authorities, the legal entities entrusted with exercising public authorisations, regulatory bodies, judicial authorities, and the units of the local self-government.

- (4) Representatives of trade unions, the academic community and civil society, the business community, and chambers of commerce, as well as other stakeholders may participate in the work of the Working Groups, as decided by the Chief Negotiator.
- (5) The manner of participation of the subjects referred to in paragraph (4) of this Article shall be determined by the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia at the proposal of the Chief Negotiator.
- (6) The work of the Working Groups for a cluster, an area and a chapter shall be regulated in detail by the Rules of Procedure adopted by the Working Group, at the proposal of the Chief Negotiator.

#### Article 16

The Chief Negotiator, in consultation with the Head of the Working Group, shall invite representatives of trade unions, the academic community and civil society, the business community and chambers of commerce, as well as other stakeholders to participate in the work of the Working Groups.

#### Article 17

- (1) The Head of the Working Group shall manage its work pursuant to the guidelines of the Chief Negotiator.
- (2) The Head of the Working Group shall be held accountable for his/her work to the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, the Chief Negotiator, and the Head of the Institution where he/she is employed.
- (3) The Deputy Head of the Working Group and all members of the Working Group shall be held accountable for their work to the Head of the Working Group and the Head of the Institution where they are employed.
- (4) If the Head of the Working Group is not satisfied with the work of any member of the Working Group, he/she can propose his/her replacement to the Chief Negotiator.
- (5) The Head, the Deputy Head, the coordinator, and the members of the Working Group shall promptly inform their superiors about their activities in the Working Group, shall consult within their Institution about the activities of the Working Group and shall cooperate as necessary with all relevant institutions.
- (6) During their work, the Head, the Deputy Head, the coordinator, and the members of the Working Group shall respect the principles of secrecy, confidentiality, protection of personal data and proper handling of classified information with an appropriate degree of secrecy in accordance with the regulations on classified information.
- (7) The Secretariat for European Affairs coordinator, in each Working Group, shall:
  - coordinate the methodological and process aspects regarding the work of the Working Group and coordinate with other bodies of the Negotiation Structure;
  - monitor and coordinate the work of the Working Group and ensure that the guidelines on performing its tasks are followed;
  - provide guidelines from the Chief Negotiator regarding the task performance, the time frame and the methodology for the preparation of the NPAA;
  - control the quality of the materials that are prepared within the Working Group;
  - give an opinion on the compliance of the NPAA priorities with the priorities given by the

- European Commission, as well as with the national strategic documents;
- give recommendations on donor aid programming and monitor the compliance of priorities in projects with the priorities of the accession process; and
  - keep the entire documentation prepared by the Working Group in electronic form, according to the storage procedures established by the Secretariat for European Affairs.

### **Mission of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union in Brussels**

#### Article 18

- (1) During the accession negotiations of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union, the task of the Mission of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union in Brussels shall be:
  - to communicate with the representatives in the Institutions and Negotiators of the European Union on the Structure at the operational level and
  - to coordinate and disseminate relevant materials and documents in the negotiations process bidirectionally, between the Chief Negotiator on the one hand and the Negotiating Structure of the European Commission on the other hand and
  - to perform other tasks at the request of the Chief Negotiator.
- (2) The Chief Negotiator, the Deputy Chief Negotiator, and the members of the Negotiating Group, who perform their duties partly within the Mission of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union in Brussels, in order to perform their working tasks conveniently, shall be assigned appropriate diplomatic status, on the recommendation of the Chief Negotiator, in coordination with the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia and the Minister of Foreign Affairs.
- (3) A Coordinator for European Union sectorial policies shall be appointed in the Mission by the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, at the proposal of the Chief Negotiator, from among managerial administrative state servants assigned by the Secretariat for European Affairs in charge of coordinating the Mission's activities related to European Union sectorial policies and the accession negotiations process to the European Union.
- (4) The working tasks resulting from the European Union sectorial policies shall be performed by diplomats from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, administrative state servants from the Secretariat for European Affairs and administrative state servants from the state bodies and other state administration authorities designated to work in the Mission.

### **Negotiating Secretariat**

#### Article 19

The Secretariat for European Affairs shall perform the tasks as the Negotiating Secretariat, and if necessary, shall perform other work related to accession negotiations entrusted by the Chief Negotiator.

#### Article 20

The task of the Negotiating Secretariat shall be:

- to provide administrative and expert support to the work of the Chief Negotiator and the Deputy Chief Negotiator, as well as to the Members of the Negotiating Group;
- to monitor and coordinate the work of the Working Groups by providing guidelines that determine the

- performance of the tasks of the Working Groups referred to in Article 13 of this Decision;
- to establish a time frame and methodology for the preparation of the NPAA;
  - to perform quality control of the materials received from the Working Groups and, in cooperation with the Working Groups, to correct their content;
  - to prescribe the storage procedure and to keep the entire documentation prepared by the Working Groups in electronic form;
  - to perform consultations with donors on the planning and implementation of foreign assistance to support the NPAA priorities;
  - to give an opinion on the compliance of the NPAA priorities with the national strategic programmes; and
  - to perform other work necessary to fulfil the tasks related to the accession negotiations.

## **Funds**

### Article 21

- (1) The funds intended for the work of the Negotiating Group shall be provided by the budget of the Secretariat for European Affairs, and the funds for the activities of the members of the other bodies of the Negotiating Structure shall be on the burden of the budget user where that member is employed.
- (2) The funds to cover the expenses of the persons referred to in Article 7 paragraphs (10) and (11) of this Decision shall be provided by the Secretariat for European Affairs.
- (3) The members of the Working Groups shall be paid remuneration for their work in the Working Group, pursuant to law.

### Article 22

During the establishment of the Negotiating Structure, the principle of adequate and fair representation of all members of the communities, based on the principles of expertise and competence, shall be respected.

### Article 23

The Decision on establishing a Committee for Accession Negotiations of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union ("Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No. 159/19), the Decision on establishing a State Delegation for Accession Negotiations of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union ("Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No. 159/19), the Decision on performing activities on Accession Negotiations of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union ("Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No. 159/19), the Decision on establishing of a Group for Accession Negotiations of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union ("Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No. 159/19), the Decision on establishing an Office of the Chief Technical Negotiator for Accession Negotiations of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union ("Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No. 159/19 ), the Decision on establishing Working Groups for preparation of the National Programme for Adoption of the *acquis* and preparation of the negotiating positions for membership negotiations in the European Union ("Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No. 159/19) and the Decision on establishing the Committee for European Integration

("Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No. 159\19) shall cease to be valid on the day of entry into force of this Decision.

Article 24

This Decision shall enter into force on the day following that of its publication in the "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia".

No. 41-7656/1  
05.09.2022, Skopje

President of the Government  
of the Republic of North Macedonia,  
**Dimitar Kovachevski**