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XIV. INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY

1. PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS FINANCED BY THE EU PRE-ACCESSION FUNDS

Bulgaria undergoes a process of harmonization of the practices, rules, procedures and the national legislation with those of the EU in view of the obligations the country has undertaken with regard to its accession to the EU.

This necessitated that the collaboration of CRC with the structures of the European Commission (EC) be regarded as a task of a paramount importance. That collaboration concerned mainly PHARE projects and accounts for the work and overall implementation of the short- and medium-term priorities set under the National Program for Adoption of *acquis communautaire*. Together with the Ministry of Transport and Communications, information was prepared about the regular reports on Bulgaria and the assessments made by the European Commission with regard to the preparation of our EU membership.

The following activities were implemented in particular:

- The terms of reference were revised by the separate components of the project for institutional development of CRC – BG0003.01 under the PHARE National Program in accordance with the requirements set by the Central Finance and Contracting Unit at the Ministry of Finance, Delegation of European Commission in Bulgaria and the European Commission in Brussels. The required data, information, rationales, specifications are submitted to the Ministry of Finance for carrying out the actions needed for administration of the project with strict adherence to the PHARE procedures.
- A framework contract for assessment of the technical specification of the sub-project for supply of spectrum monitoring equipment and software was implemented.
- A project fiche for twinning in postal regulation was prepared and in search of alternative possibilities particular documentation under framework contracts was compiled.
- In connection with the implementation of the PHARE project, the “International Relations and Projects” Directorate prepared and presented in June and November the regular reports on the participation of CRC in the work of the joint sub-committee for monitoring of Energy and Telecommunications Sectors. Besides, the Directorate had also to take care of the information and participate in the meetings with EMS (an independent unit engaged in project monitoring).
- CRC organized the participation of some of its employees in seminars initiated by the European Union and dealing with the new regulatory framework in the fields of telecommunications, human resource management, etc.
- Some of the directorate experts participated in commissions formed to prepare new regulations related to the requirements of the European legislation.
- The “International Relations and Projects” Directorate furnished to CRC information about any new EU documents in the field of telecommunications (directives, summaries of answers to inquiries, the EU report on the development of Bulgaria in its part on telecommunications, posts, etc.).
- A project for institutional development of CRC was prepared whereby CRC applied for financing under the Dutch program PSO designed for countries in pre-accession period.

2. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND COOPERATION

In 2002 Communications Regulation Commission took active part in the work of the main international organizations in the field of telecommunications such as the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), Universal Postal Union (UPU), European Commission (EC), Conference of European Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT) and European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI).

According to the preliminary plan for international activities, the following ones were carried out during the past period:

- A meeting was held in February in Sofia between the CRC experts and the Turkish telecommunications regulatory body during which a work program for cooperation was signed.

- Mr. Houlin Zhao, director of Telecommunication Standardization Bureau at the International Telecommunications Union, paid a visit in March, when a meeting with CRC experts was held.
- The CRC representatives took part in the third World Telecommunication Development Conference held in Istanbul, Turkey, from 24 through 27 March. On behalf of the Bulgarian delegation the Chairman of Communications Regulation Commission delivered an address to the participants.
- At the invitation of the World Bank the CRC members visited USA and UK in June where they met the management bodies of the Federal Communication Commission (FCC), and of the British regulatory organizations Office of Telecommunications (OFTEL) and Radiocommunications Agency (RA).
- In September CRC hosted one of the meeting of a project team of the Electronic Communications Committee ECC PT-4 APRIL (Accounting Principles and Regulatory Interconnection Issues) within CEPT; CRC also took part in ITU Plenipotentiary Conference held in Marrakesh, Morocco. An information leaflet was prepared together with the Ministry of Transport and Communications.
- The Chairman of Communications Regulation Commission took part in the Strategic Conference held in October by the Universal Postal Union.
- In November together with the Ministry of Transport and Communications CRC organized a Plenary Meeting of Committee on European Postal Regulation (CERP) at CEPT whereat the new functions of CRC related to postal regulation were presented.
- In December CRC was a host and co-organizer of the third regional telecommunications symposium of the Southeastern European countries. The first seminar of the Southeastern Europe Telecommunications Academy (SETA) was held. Working groups on SETA policy and regulation were created.
- Representatives of CRC took part in ITU Telecom and Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR) held in Hong Kong, China, and in Communications Committee at the EC in Brussels, Belgium.
- Representatives of the CRC administration took part in the regular meetings of the following working bodies of ECC – WG FM, ERO Council, PT-4 APRIL, PT-3 TRIS, WG RR, CPG; General Assembly of European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI), seminars organized by the Ministry of Transport and Communications, seminars organized by the European Commission in Brussels, Belgium.
- CRC participated as an observer in the technical working groups of Berlin Agreement; a bilateral meeting was held with the Romanian administration;
- Replies on a summarized questionnaire (regular study 2002) were prepared and sent – ITU, and assistance was provided with respect to preparation of updated information about the implementation of ERC (ECC) decisions.

Within the framework of the international activities of CRC it was admitted that the Commission needs to participate in the work of the major international organizations dealing with issues of the telecommunications sector and the ultimate objective was that the Bulgarian regulatory system in telecommunications to become as close as possible to that of the European countries in particular. In this respect, CRC participates in the work of such organizations as part of the harmonization of administrative, technical and regulatory procedures applied both in Bulgaria and EU countries. The Commission was granted an access to databases and documents and the right of participation in working groups.

3. INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION AND NOTIFICATION

The international coordination in 2002 had been implemented on the basis of the Radio Regulations of the International Telecommunication Unit and the European agreements on various radio services. After the end of the international coordination the stations, which were agreed on, were entered into the Master International Frequency Register kept by the International Telecommunication Unit. With this respect CRC fulfilled the following:

- Requests were filed for international coordination of 121 Bulgarian VHF FM radio stations, 105 Bulgarian TV stations and 17 Bulgarian terrestrial satellite stations.
- Requests by foreign administrations were received demanding coordination of 41 VHF FM radio stations, 54 TV stations and 1 terrestrial satellite station.
- The two-week circular letters for the terrestrial and space services of the Radio Communication Bureau at the International Telecommunication Unit were processed on a regular basis.
- Bulgarian stations were entered in the Master International Frequency Register – 45 TV broadcasting stations and 39 radio-broadcasting stations.
- The application for non-planned satellite system BULSAT-BSS was further processed.
- Correspondence with EUTELSAT IGO was maintained.