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## INVITATION

### National Convention on European Integration

#### Working Group IV (Regional Policy and Coordination of Structural Instruments)

#### Session 1, Topic: Challenges of Albania concerning Chapter 22 and managing the EU funds

Friday, 23 October 2020, 10:00 -11:30

Online Activity in ZOOM

European Movement in Albania (EMA) and the Albanian Development Fund (ADF) in partnership with Slovak Foreign Policy Association and financial support of Slovak Aid, have the pleasure to invite you on the Session I of Working Groups IV: "Challenges of Albania concerning Chapter 22 and managing the EU funds". With the main aim on establishing bridges of cooperation and communication among public institutions and civil society actors, while strengthening their capacities, the National Convention on European Integration is returned to be implemented in Albania for the period 2019-2021, after a successful implementation by EMA in partnership with line ministries for the period 2014-2016.

National Convention on European Integration is a platform which aims **to institutionalize the public debate in EU related issues based on the partnership of governmental, non-governmental and business organizations; to strengthen the expert capacities on negotiations on EU Integration; and to transfer the Slovak know-how in the field of democratic institutions building and permanent expert dialogue.** Firstly, this unique model has been developed by the Slovak Foreign Policy Association and extended through the support of Slovakia's bilateral development assistance (Slovak Aid) in Albania, Serbia, B&H, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Ukraine and Moldova.

There are formed 4 Working Groups whose topics are directly related to EU integration process and EU Acquis chapters: **WG 1: Judiciary and Human Rights** (Chapter 23); **WG 2: Justice, Freedom, Security** (Chapter 24); **WG 3: Agriculture and Consumer Protection** (Chapter 11&12); **WG 4: Regional Policy and Coordination of Structural Instruments** (Chapter 22) and involve participants from state institutions, civil society sectors, International organizations and interest groups.

The WG IV, thanks to the experiences of experts, is assessing issues related with process of implementation of IPA national programme and management of EU funds by Albania; negotiations with EU on chapter 22; topics on programming and implementing of the financial programmes with peculiar attention to national and regional level. An important element is the European Structural and Investment Fund, how it functions, which are the main challenges it faces and what are the lessons learned drawn by the Slovak experience. In this WG four sessions will be organized. These sessions are planned to be co-chaired by representatives from the Albanian Development Fund and internal experts of NCEI. Each session aims to gather 25-30 representatives from State Institutions, NGOs, private sector and academia focused on topics related with Chapter 22 of EU Acquis. Participation of such actors is of utmost relevance in order to provide recommendations and suggestions concerning the topic discussed and issues related with legal framework; institutional capacity and tackling the issues. Session 1 of the WG IV is focused on the function and assessment of the European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF).

*\*Here are the details to join the meeting on ZOOM:*

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88266944740?pwd=Q3N4UjJoTDBmdUVNVjNwY3pNbmg5dz09>

Meeting ID: 882 6694 4740

Passcode: Emaconv

*\*The presentation of Mr. Vladimír Benč will be interpreted in Albanian language*

## PROGRAMME

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- 09:45-10:00**    **Online Registration of participants**  
*- Orientation on logistical issues to attend and to be engaged on the activity online*
- 10:00-10:15**    **Introductory Speeches**  
**Mr. Ermal Ilirjani**, Head of Programming Unit  
**Mr. Gledis Gjipali**, Executive Director of European Movement Albania
- 10:15-10:40**    **Present and future of Chapter 22 in Albania**  
**Mr. Florian Xhafa**, National Expert of National Convention on European Integration (NCEI)  
*- The experience of Albania in the use of EU funds*  
*- The EU membership perspectives and challenges for Albania concerning Chapter 22*  
*- Key differences between the management of pre-accession and post-accession funds*
- 10:40-11:10**    **The European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) in Slovakia: management and implementation**  
**Mr. Vladimír Benč**, Expert on the ESIF, Project Manager and Evaluator  
*- EU Funds in Slovakia: Short historical background*  
*- Introduction to ESIF 2014-2020: Institutional set up, management, financial systems*  
*- Details on Operational Programmes: Case study of at least 2 OPs*  
*- System of the projects preparation, selection, implementation and evaluation*
- 11:10-11:30**    **Open Discussion with participants**  
Providing conclusions and recommendations