

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The third regular meeting of the CEFTA Working Group on Trade in Services was held in Pristina on 15 September 2011. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the current market openness of each individual Party, explore the potential for the negotiations and to agree on the two-year action plan.

MAIN POINTS OF THE THIRD MEETING

Under the item on the current market openness, the Parties discussed the highlights from the World Bank study on trade barriers in services undertaken in the previous year. The representative from the World Bank briefly presented the highlights of the study: the importance of the services sector for the CEFTA region; the four identified dominant sectors – construction, transport, legal services and ICT services; the quality of the statistics, which is quite good but the lack of subsector data for many Parties was emphasised.

The Parties informed the meeting on the current market openness in relation to the EU and WTO accession processes through the tailor made questionnaires.

In continuation, the members of the Working Group discussed the technical modalities of the potential negotiations, especially the format, time and scope, as well as the dynamics and involvement of relevant structures. The representative of the World Bank presented the best practices on modalities in selected FTAs, such as ASEAN, NAFTA and MERCOSUR and explained different approaches they followed for services integration. The Service Regulation Tool developed by the World Bank to help in addressing the services negotiations was also introduced to the Parties. The tool allows flexible uses and allows: (i) to assess a Party's current services regime by uploading the required information into the database; (ii) to assess a Party's commitments at different levels: WTO, regional and bilateral; (iii) to prepare for a negotiation.

The Parties endorsed the proposed draft of the Action Plan for the next two years.
