

Co-Chairs' Statement: Seventh Regional Meeting on BEPS for Eurasian Countries

Virtual Meeting 18 – 19 November 2021

The Seventh Regional Meeting on BEPS for Eurasian countries took place virtually from 18-19 November 2021. It was hosted by the Ministry of Finance of North Macedonia, the Intra-European Organisation of Tax Administrations (IOTA) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The meeting was opened by Mr. Fatmir Besimi, Minister of Finance of North Macedonia, and Mr. Harry Tonino, Deputy Head of the Global Relations and Development Division of the Centre for Tax Policy and Administration at the OECD. It was co-chaired by Ms. Tracey Brooks, IOTA International Taxation Expert and Ms. Natalija Kozhavska, (Tax Advisor), Ministry of Finance of North Macedonia. In his opening remarks, Minister Besimi stressed the importance of strengthening countries' engagement in finalising the work towards a Two-Pillar solution to address the tax challenges of the digitalisation of the economy and its implementation with the support of capacity-building programmes, as well as continuing to monitor the implementation of the BEPS minimum standards.

Over 100 delegates from 18 countries along with representatives from international and regional organisations (IOTA, Asian Development Bank), the business community and academia participated in the event. Participants included senior officials from ministries of finance and tax administrations from Armenia, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Lithuania, North Macedonia, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Srpska (B&H), Romania, Russian Federation, Slovak Republic and Ukraine. This summary of the discussions has been prepared by the co-chairs and shared with all delegates.

The co-chairs welcomed the participants from governments, international and regional organisations, business and civil society and emphasised that the main objectives of the meeting were to exchange views, best practices, opportunities and challenges.

The agenda included sessions on:

- The recent work of the Inclusive Framework on the digitalisation of the economy and addressing the tax challenges that arise from it, including separate sessions on Pillars 1 and 2.
- Implementation requirements, peer review processes and the review of the standard of Action 5 (harmful tax practices), Action 13 (Country-by-Country Reporting) and Action 14 (making dispute resolution more effective).
- Latest developments on the membership of the Inclusive Framework (IF).
- Capacity building initiatives for capacity-limited countries.
- Perspectives from local business, civil society and academia.

Conclusions

This regional meeting offered an opportunity for participants to contribute actively to the discussions and to provide input on the different work streams related to BEPS. Participants appreciated the chance to share best practices and experiences and highlighted their priorities in relation to the Inclusive Framework's work, especially in the area of addressing the challenges of the digitalisation of the economy. They also welcomed the capacity building initiatives of the international and regional organisations in supporting their BEPS implementation efforts.

Summary of key messages:

- Representatives of the business community expressed their support for effective and consistent implementation by all countries of the BEPS minimum standards. Business community members from North Macedonia expressed their views in particular about the Mutual Agreement Procedure (MAP), Country-by-Country reporting and the Two-Pillar solution to address the tax challenges of the digitalisation of the economy.
- Participants noted the implications for countries in terms of strengthening the coherence and transparency of the international tax system. In this regard, they welcomed the initiatives of the OECD and other international and regional organisations to support countries.
- Representatives from North Macedonia shared their experience in assessing the likely impact of the new measures developed to address the tax challenges of the digitalisation of the economy.
- On capacity building, the various modes of available support were discussed and welcomed, including the Tax Inspectors Without Borders programme and its expansion into new areas. They also emphasised the importance of support for the implementation of the new measures developed to address the tax challenges of the digitalisation of the economy.
- Participants welcomed the on-going collaboration between the OECD and IOTA as well as the co-operation with the work carried out by other international organisations, development banks and agencies.

For more information, visit: www.oecd.org/tax/beps/beps-regional-meetings-eurasian-countries.htm