

BI-ANNUAL PROGRAMME OF ANTI-ILLICIT TRADE & FOOD COMMITTEE FOR THE PERIOD 2020/2021

Main priorities:

1. Full implementation on Law on Inspection Supervision, as well the further improvement of the National Programme for Fighting the Grey Economy
2. Improvement of regulatory framework related to food industry by implementing full harmonization of Serbian regulation with EU and ensuring uniform interpretation of the regulations of all sectors within the Ministries and unique treatment by the various inspection bodies
3. Trade facilitation with simplified import and export procedures
4. Establishment and implementation of a system of risk assessment in terms of food safety
5. Modernization of the market control institutions and mechanisms
6. Efficient cooperation with main GoV stakeholders and raising awareness and significance of AIT and food related topics – national and regional approach

Topic n°1:

Goal: Fight against illicit trade

Activity: Ensuring consistent application of the Law on Inspection Supervision with the preparation and timely enforcement of changes in sector laws towards their harmonisation with the framework envisaged by the Law on Inspection Oversight. Improving the efficiency of judicial proceedings in relation to illicit trade. Further activities enforcement and implementation of the coordination of all inspections. Assisting the GoV in drafting the legislation, planning and allocating adequate resources to upgrade the work of its institutions. Additionally, support the introduction of reporting system for the effects of implementation of Hodograms for control of anti-illicit trade of specific products/sectors and creation of a more efficient system of seizure of illegal goods.

Main partners: the Government (with all relevant ministries, administrations, directorates, inspections...), European Commission with its relevant bodies, IMF, WB, EBRD

Timeframe: as of September 2020

Topic n°2:

Goal: Introduction and implementation of international standards in food industry at the top of the Government's agenda

Activity: Full harmonization of Serbian regulation with EU, industry and international standards followed by consistent and transparent implementation by introduction of referent contact points within Ministries to remove differences in interpretations and implementation of the regulations. This will result in facilitation of trade in goods and improvement in cost and bureaucracy cutting. Ongoing dialogue with state and industry counterparts. Enactment of the Law on sanitary supervision and improvements in the inspection controls.

Main partners: Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Health, National reference laboratories, other business associations, various inspections

Timeframe: 2020-2021

Topic n°3:

Goal: Advocate for a more efficient import and export procedures

Activity: In line with the efforts of the Government of RoS, neighbouring countries and the World Bank to boost regional trade, address the issues from the local institutional framework and regional non-customs barriers that are making import and export procedures more complex. Focus on resolving technical difficulties within the authorities in Serbia ranging from an uneven treatment of customs officials that vary between border customs offices, uneven issuance practice for certificate of origin (non-recognition of

productions inputs), requirement of paper documents by different state authorities (customs and inspections) due to the lack of electronic connectivity between these institutions, slowdown of exports due to installation and removal of electronic truck locators, inadequate railway transport, complicated river-shipping procedures, etc. Moreover, non-customs barriers between the countries to be addressed jointly with the representatives of Government of RoS are the non-recognition of quality of goods certificates, inefficient border import procedures in the neighbouring countries as well as the need to harmonize technical regulations and standards for vehicle transportation requirements. Resolving these issues will create the basis for enabling a greater degree of freedom of movement of goods.

Main partners: Government of RoS (with relevant ministries and public administration), Serbian Chamber of Commerce, AMCHAM, CEFTA, World Bank, National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation, EU Delegation representative office.

Timeframe: 3Q of 2020 - ongoing

Topic n°4:

Goal: **Implementation of inspection controls based on meaningful risk-management**, in order to reduce complexity and inconsistent application of procedures that lead to differing treatment of domestic producers vs those who import all or part of their products or ingredients

Activity: Advocating meaningful risk control inspection model, and utilisation of centralized information management tools with consolidated data (with track records of operators), constructive cooperation in relevant processes

Main partners: Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, NKTOT – Expert Working Group for Agriculture, Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures, the Customs Office, forward agents

Timeframe: 2 years

Topic n°5:

Goal: **Support the ongoing Government of RoS' measures for the modernization of the market control associated institutions and mechanisms**

Activity: Advocate for a timely implementation of modernization procedures of inspection oversight system and the penalty system, with the emphasis on the increase of human and material capacities of inspections, introduction of the plea agreement on misdemeanour charges, specialization of prosecutors for misdemeanour charges, establishment of system for information exchange between inspections and judicial system, prevention of transshipment of goods in water transport, fiscalization system improvements and further regulation of parafiscal charges through creation of an electronic database of existing fees and taxes (in conformity with the National Programme for diminishing grey economy and its associated Action Plan).

Main partners: Government of RoS (with relevant ministries and public administration), Business Associations in Serbia, International institutions (EU Delegation representative office).

Timeframe: 3Q of 2020 - ongoing

Topic n°6:

Goal: **AIT & Food Committee as an unavoidable factor in public discussions on AIT and food issues**

Activity: Initiation and facilitation of dialogue and cooperation with Government bodies on AIT and food related issues. Open dialogue with stakeholders. Assisting the GoV in planning and allocating adequate resources to upgrade the work of its institutions. Joint actions with inspections, Prosecutor Office, Courts in order to reduce complexity and inconsistent application of procedures and create more efficient work and results. Finally, continue with activities aimed at keeping the public and Government focus on the importance of ongoing anti-illicit trade actions.

Main partners: Government bodies (Ministry of Public Administration, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Trade, Customs Administration...), National Consumer Protection organisations, media representatives, FIC offices from the region

Timeframe: as of September 2020