

The President of the State Aid Control Commission, Vladimir Antonijević, said today that a new Law on State Aid Control had been passed in Serbia, a new Commission had been elected, EU regulations had been transposed into domestic legislation, and a transition to electronic application was planned.

“We have closely followed the practice of the European Commission when it comes to Covid-19. We have worked intensively on drafting bylaws related to the pandemic period, we have started harmonizing the temporary EU rules and we are among the first non-EU countries to adopt them, and we are also planning to switch to electronic notification of state aid,” said Antonijevic at another regional conference “State Aid and Economies of the Western Balkans” in Belgrade.

The conference was organized by the project “Support to the Commission for Control of State Aid”, which in Serbia is financed by the EU from almost one million euros from IPA funds, and is managed by the Ministry of Finance, the sector for contracting and financing programs from EU funds.

It is the second regional meeting on state aid after the first conference organized by the project in September 2019, and brought together representatives of the State Aid Control Commission, the European Commission, state aid control bodies from the region and European experts who exchanged experiences on state aid.

Antonijević said that after the drafting of legal regulations, the transposition of European regulations into the national legal framework of Serbia began and that more than 20 bylaws harmonized with the *acquis communautaire* were adopted.

The head of the second sector of operations of the EU Delegation to Serbia, Martin Klauke, said that state aid, as part of the Negotiating Chapter 8, which refers to competition policy, is one of the most difficult areas for harmonization with the EU *acquis*, which is much more important for effective implementation.

Klauke called on all authorities across the region to take advantage of the regional forum because “it has already been shown that the exchange of experiences and knowledge between institutions in the region is very effective and important for all.”

The leader of the project Support to the State Aid Control Commission, Radmila Mihić, pointed out that the public sector, due to the challenges facing the world, the Covid-19 pandemic, has a special weight in choosing policies and strategic goals.

“Financial instability, the fight for a healthy environment, health care are just examples of areas in which public authorities must act. That action must be justified, effective and in the interest of the citizens. And that is why there are rules on state aid. Good state aid is an instrument to ensure the economic security of citizens and the development of society as a whole,” said Mihic.

From 2000 until today, the EU has donated more than 3.6 billion euros to Serbia, and these funds have been used to support development, quality of life in the spheres of civil

protection, flood protection, education, environmental protection, health care, consumer protection, culture, the rule of law, local development, migration, civil society and the media, social inclusion and sport, Danas reports.