



**USAID | MACEDONIA**  
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## PRESS RELEASE

### **MACEDONIAN AUTOMOTIVE COMPANIES SEIZE NEW EXPORT OPPORTUNITIES**

Macedonia's two biggest automotive parts producers, Vesna SAP and Ruen, will exhibit at the biennial Automechanika Trade Fair in Frankfurt, Germany, from September 14 – 19, 2010. Automechanika is the world's leading trade fair for the automotive industry, unmatched in size – with some 4000 exhibitors - and international participation. The USAID Competitiveness Project is providing support for Vesna SAP, producer of car batteries, and Ruen, producer of clutches, to participate.

Immediately following Automechanika, two other Macedonian automotive part producers (Te Te Plast and Ein Sof), together with a representative from the Automotive Cluster of Macedonia (ACM), will take part in the International One-on-One Automotive Suppliers event. Over 100 companies from 25 countries are registered for this two-day event, organized by BAIKA (Bavarian Innovation and Cooperation Initiative for the Automotive Suppliers Industry). Participants include well-known suppliers such as Bosch, Continental, Leoni and Webasto. During the 1000 pre-organized business meetings, each participant will have an average of 15 business meetings with partners of their choice.

Since the founding of the ACM almost two years ago, USAID has supported its market linkage program, in cooperation with the German organization, GTZ. "Our goal is for these activities to be continuous," said ACM Manager Vladimir Tevdov. "We put a lot of effort into promoting the Macedonian automotive industry at selected exhibitions and events because this is critical for building awareness of the opportunities the industry offers to potential European buyers as a "near shore" sourcing destination. Our first export orders are happening this year as a result of market linkage activities that have been in implementation since the instigation of the Cluster. The support we receive from donors like USAID is crucial for the success of this program."

The USAID Competitiveness Project works closely with Macedonian companies to promote international marketing activities. Over the last three years, this support to the automotive sector has helped 11 automotive companies to participate not only in four high profile trade fairs in Germany, but also in 63 pre-arranged meetings with others attending the fairs, thereby raising the profile of Macedonia's automotive sector. These critical networking opportunities have already resulted in the Macedonian companies identifying 15 new leads as well as four new buyers generating new exports worth 1.2 million euros.

#### **NOTE TO EDITORS:**

The American people, through USAID, have invested nearly **\$500 million** in Macedonia since 1993. USAID is implementing projects that increase investment, create jobs, reduce corruption and improve the quality of education in Macedonia. These initiatives support Macedonia's transition to a stable democracy and its successful integration into the European Union. USAID provides economic and humanitarian assistance in more than 100 countries. For more information please visit <http://macedonia.usaid.gov>.