

Annex 1

Timeline of the changes in the setup of the monetary instruments of the NBRM and selected supervisory decisions adopted in the period 2013 - 2017

January 2013

- A Decision amending the Decision on the reserve requirement (adopted in November 2012) came into force, allowing reduction of the reserve requirement base of banks for the amount of new loans to net exporters and domestic producers of electricity, as well as for the investments in debt securities in domestic currency without a currency clause, issued by the aforementioned companies. This decision fully exempts the banks from allocating reserve requirement for liabilities based on debt securities issued in local currency with an original maturity of at least two years. The Decision will apply throughout 2014, after which, depending on the results, the need for further application will be reconsidered.
- A Decision on reducing CB bill interest rate was adopted to cut the policy rate from 3.75% to 3.5%. At the same time, the interest rate on seven-day deposit facility and on overnight deposit facility was cut from 2% to 1.75% and from 1.0% to 0.75%, respectively.

March 2013

- A Decision on credit risk management was adopted, which applies from 1 December 2013.

July 2013

- A Decision reducing CB bill interest rate was adopted to cut the policy rate from 3.5% to 3.25%. At the same time, the interest rate on seven-day deposit facility was cut from 1.75% to 1.5%.
- A Decision amending the Decision on reserve requirement was adopted, which reduces the reserve requirement rate for banks' liabilities in domestic currency from 10% to 8% and increases the reserve requirement rate for liabilities in foreign currency from 13% to 15%. In addition, the amendments stipulate a reserve requirement rate of 0% for banks' liabilities to nonresident financial companies with contractual maturity of over one year, as well as for all liabilities to nonresidents with contractual maturity of over two years. A rate of 13% still applies to short-term liabilities to nonresident financial companies in foreign currency with contractual maturity of up to one year. To maintain the reserve requirement in denars and in euros relatively stable, the amendments increase the reserve requirement in euros that is fulfilled in denars from 23% to 30%.

October 2013

- A Decision amending the Decision on banks' liquidity risk was adopted. This decision reduces the proportion of time deposits assumed to outflow from banks, from 80% to 60%, and applies from 1 December 2013. This amendment makes more room for long-term bank lending to the real sector.

November 2013

- A Decision amending the Decision on reserve requirement was adopted, which exempts the NBRM from paying reserve requirement remuneration (previously, this remuneration equaled 1% for denar reserve requirement and 0.1% for euro reserve requirement). The Decision is being applied since 1 January 2014.
- A Decision on CB bills was adopted, which introduces a methodology for determining the potential demand for CB bills. In accordance with the established mechanism, if there is a higher demand than the potential across the overall banking system, banks that bid higher amounts of their own liquidity potential will be required to place this difference in seven-day deposits.

February 2014

- A Decision on reducing interest rate on seven-day deposit facility from 1.5% to 1.25% was adopted.

April 2014

- A Decision amending the Decision on the methodology for determining the capital adequacy was adopted, introducing two amendments in the current decision that are expected to contribute positively to the credit support of the commercial banks to the corporate sector. Namely, with this Decision (and in accordance with the amendments to the new EU Regulation no. 575/2013 on prudential requirements for credit institutions and investment companies), performance guarantees or warranties that guarantee completion of works, stand out as items with low-intermediate risk, and therefore take lower conversion factor (20%), instead of 50% as it has been so far. That would mean that in the calculation of capital adequacy, smaller part of these off-balance sheet items would be treated as balance sheet items, which could affect the improvement of capital adequacy and encourage lending to the corporate sector. There is another innovation motivated by the international practice of establishing funds by low-risk entities (central governments or multilateral development banks) whose main goal is funding development projects. These projects are mostly funded through one or more commercial banks, which also contribute funds by dividing the exposure into a defined ratio between the bank and the fund or by providing guarantees or other similar instruments used by the fund (warranty provider) to guarantee coverage of part of the credit risk in the event of default by the debtor. In order to cover these cases, this decision also introduces a more favorable regulatory treatment of the funds established by one or several central governments, multilateral development banks or public institutions. These funds will take 0% risk weight, and the requirement will be that the funding is executed by payment in stakes, i.e. on-balance sheet and off-balance sheet activities to be covered by the fund's equity.

September 2014

- In order to further channel banks' excess liquidity to the non-financial sector, in September the NBRM revised the mechanism for transfer of the demand for CB bills, which is above the banks' potential into another instrument, i.e. seven-day standing deposit facility. According to these changes, for the seven-day standing deposit facility that banks are obliged to allocate if

on the CB bills auctions they demand an amount higher than the potential¹, an interest rate of 0% is determined. For the other assets that banks will voluntarily place into a seven-day standing deposit facility the regular interest rate will apply.

September 2014

- The National Bank of the Republic of Macedonia Council adopted the Decision amending the Decision on the reserve requirement, which extends the application of the non-standard measure for reduction of the base for the reserve requirement of commercial banks for the amount of new loans extended to net exporters and domestic producers of electricity. The main objective of the Decision is to provide further support to the two systemically important sectors of the economy. The current implementation of this measure has generated positive effects on the dynamics of lending and thus the overall economic growth, contributing to a reduction of the cost of funding of companies from both sectors, although with lower intensity than the potential. In such circumstances, and given the data that indicate some uncertainty about the pace of lending to the corporate sector in the next period, this Decision envisages continued application of this non-standard measure until 31 December 2015.

October 2014

- A Decision on reducing the interest rate on overnight deposit facility from 0.5% to 0.5% and on seven-day deposit facility from 1.25% to 0.5% was adopted.

March 2015

- A Decision on reducing the interest rate on overnight deposit facility from 0.5% to 0.25% and on seven-day deposit facility from 1% to 0.5% was adopted.
- The National Bank Council adopted the Decision amending the Decision on CB bills, which introduces a new manner of establishing the bids of banks at the auctions of CB bills. According to the Decision, the amount of supply of individual bank is calculated by applying its appropriate percentage share in the total supply of treasury bills, reduced by the amount of past due CB bills of the Macedonian Bank for Development Promotion AD Skopje. In order to ensure operational efficiency in conducting auctions of this type and greater transparency toward banks, before the auction the NBRM shall inform the banks on the maximum offer that can be submitted by each bank. This opportunity for setting the supply of banks is expected to stabilize the demand at the level of the amount offered, which eliminates the need for calculation of potential demand and subsequently it repeals the obligation for mandatory seven-day deposits for banks when demand at the auction exceeds the potential demand.

April 2015

- A new Decision on the credit of last resort which, besides the current possibility of approving credit of last resort to banks against a collateral of debt securities, foreign currencies and banks' claims on the National Bank, introduces the possibility of extending this credit also against pledging banks' claims on customers. This modality of the credit of last resort is planned to be activated if the bank does not have debt securities and foreign currencies. The Decision specifies the types of claims that are acceptable for the National Bank as collateral for the credit of last resort.

¹ For the method of determining the potential demand for CB bills see the Decision on CB bills, Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 166/13).

June 2015

- The National Bank Council adopted preventive measures for managing capital flows of the Republic of Macedonia to the Republic of Greece. Preventive measures pertain to restriction of capital outflows from residents of the Republic of Macedonia (natural persons and legal entities) to Greek entities based on newly concluded capital transactions, but not to a restriction of the outflows based on incoming payments for capital transactions already concluded. These measures limit capital outflows only to the Republic of Greece and to entities from the Republic of Greece (such as outflows for founding of a company, investing in securities, investing in documents for units in investment funds, investing in investment gold, financial credits, long-term loans, etc.) but not to block or in any way to impede current and future commercial operations with entities from the Republic of Greece. Current transactions remain free. Also, in order to maintain the security of foreign investors regarding the exercising of their rights to their property in the Republic of Macedonia, outflows based on realized dividends have not been restricted either. Furthermore, in order to secure the funds that domestic banks have in the banks in the Republic of Greece, Macedonian banks are required to withdraw all loans and deposits from banks based in the Republic of Greece and their branches and subsidiaries in the Republic of Greece or abroad, regardless of the agreed maturity. However, in order to allow smooth functioning of payment operations for the transactions that are not prohibited, an exception to this requirement has been made for the funds on the current (correspondent) accounts with those banks. Existing prudential and supervisory measures and limits for banks to investments in securities including Greek securities are supplemented by explicit ban on all residents to invest in Greek securities. Those are temporary protective measures, introduced to prevent the threat of any significant outflows of capital from the Republic of Macedonia to the Republic of Greece to cause significant disturbance to the equilibrium in the balance of payments and undermine the stability of the financial system.

August 2015

- The National Bank Council adopted the Decision on amending the Decision on reserve requirements that reduces the reserve requirement rate for the bank liabilities to natural persons in domestic currency with contractual maturity of over one year from 8% to 0%, with these liabilities obtaining the same treatment as the liabilities with maturity over two years, for which rate of 0% since 2012 has been applied. Having in mind that the amendment releases the banks from the reserve requirement for the natural persons' denar deposits with maturity exceeding one year, this measure is expected to have adequate influence toward larger supply of denar savings products with stimulative interest rates.
- The National Bank Council adopted the Decision on amending the Decision on CB bills that envisages adjustment of the mechanism of participation at the CB bills auction of the National Bank, where the main criterion will be the individual share of the banks in the total liabilities in domestic currency without currency clause of the banking system. With these amendments, the National Bank continues to support the natural persons' savings in domestic currency and on a longer run, which creates room for the banks for active credit support to the private sector.

December 2015

- The Council adopted the Decision amending the Decision on the methodology for determining the capital adequacy, introducing measures to slow the growth of long-term consumer loans. The measure increases capital requirements for banks on long-term consumer loans with maturity equal to or longer than eight years. Thus, the risk weight for claims on consumer loans with a contractual maturity equal to or longer than eight years, increases from 75% i.e.

100% to 150%. To avoid major shocks in the market of consumer lending, yet the growth rates to be reduced to a moderate level, this measure is aimed only at newly approved long-term consumer loans, i.e. loans with maturity equal or longer than 8 years approved after 1 January 2016. At the same time, this decision introduces higher capital requirement (risk weight of 75%) for the increase of overdrafts and credit cards in relation to 31 December 2015. The aim of this decision is to prevent the possibility of changeover to this type of borrowing as a result of the measure to decelerate consumer loans. Also, this Decision facilitates the access of legal entities. Namely, the capital requirement for guarantees issued by banks is reduced, which guarantees payment based on a certain business relationship of the client and banks' claims backed by commercial property that meets certain conditions. This way allows banks to allocate lower amount of capital for credit and guarantee operations with legal entities, including small and medium enterprises, which can cause reduction in the cost of banks and therewith, of clients for this type of operation.

- The National Bank Council adopted the Decision on amending the Decision on credit risk management, which requires starting from 1 January 2016, and by June 30 2016 to write-off all claims that have been fully booked for more than two years, and where the bank has identified and fully covered the credit risk of default at least two years before. According to the existing regulations, banks are required to fully reserve claims where the client defaulted at least 1 up to 5 years if there is a specific collateral, and the new measure requires from banks to write them off two years after their full provisioning. In addition, banks will still be allowed and required to take actions to collect these claims, although they are written off. The measure does not incur additional costs for banks since claims which are fully provisioned are written off, at least two years before.
- The National Bank Council decided to extend the application of the non-standard measure to reduce reserve requirement base in denars of commercial banks for the amount of newly approved loans to net exporters and domestic producers of electricity for two more years, until the end of 2017.
- On 29 December 2015, the Decision on introducing special protective measures adopted by the National Bank Council on 28 June 2015 due to the debt crisis in Greece at that time, ceased being valid. The measures were adopted to protect against any disruptions in the balance of payments or the stability of the financial system of the Republic of Macedonia due to any significant capital outflows from Macedonia to Greece. They were temporary for a period of up to six months, with a possible extension of their application. The protective measures served their purpose and prevented major capital outflows from the Republic of Macedonia, yet not disturbing the business of domestic companies with Greek companies. They delivered equilibrium in the balance of payments and stability of the domestic banking system. The situation in Greece has been stabilizing for quite some time. The lenders continued to financially support Greece, which, in turn, pledged to apply economic and social reforms, and austerity measures. Therefore, after the expiry of six-month validity period of the protective measures on 28 December 2015, since 29 December 2015, this decision is no longer in use.

May 2016

- At the regular meeting of the NBRM's Operational Monetary Policy Committee held on 3 May 2016, it was decided the interest rate on CB bills to be increased by 0.75 percentage points, from 3.25% to 4%. The decision to tighten the monetary policy is a reaction to the increased demand for foreign currency and pressures on banks' deposit base, which were entirely due to the deteriorating expectations of economic agents, caused by the unstable political situation in the country. Thus, the change in the interest rate is a response to the action of factors of non-economic nature.

- The National Bank Council adopted the Decision on reserve requirement, which increased the reserve requirement rate for banks' liabilities in domestic currency with FX clause. The measure has been aimed at further encouraging the process of denarization of deposits in the domestic banking system. Given the negligible market share of these liabilities in the banks' balance sheets, the changes are exclusively for further maintenance of low propensity of the economic agents for placing this type of deposits in domestic commercial banks.
- In order to maintain and increase deposits in the domestic banking system, the National Bank Council reviewed and improved the terms for placing foreign currency deposits of domestic banks at the National Bank and adopted the Decision on foreign currency deposit with the National Bank of the Republic of Macedonia. Accordingly, starting from 13 May 2016, the banks can place foreign currency deposits at the central bank at higher interest rates compared to the current negative interest rates that prevail in the international financial markets. It is expected that this measure will contribute to reduce the cost of domestic banks, which would accordingly contribute to higher interest rates on the deposits of their clients, domestic legal and natural persons.

October 2016

- In the regular meeting held on 25 October 2016, the NBRM's Operational Monetary Policy Committee decided not to offer additional foreign currency deposits that banks would place in the NBRM.

December 2016

- At the regular meeting of the NBRM's Operational Monetary Policy Committee, held on 13 December 2016, the Committee decided to cut CB bill interest rate by 0.25 percentage points, to 3.75%, and to increase the supply of CB bills at the 14 December auction from Denar 22,000 million to Denar 23,000 million.
- The National Bank Council adopted the Decision on amending the Decision on the methodology for determining the capital adequacy. This Decision is part of the compliance process of the domestic regulations with the reforms of the international capital standard Basel 3, as well as with the provisions of the European Regulation 575/2013 on prudential requirements for credit institutions and investment firms, in the part of the structure of the banks' own funds. The most significant amendments relate to the strengthening of the quality of own funds, both in terms of their structure and in terms of the criteria that should be met by certain positions in order to be a part of the banks' own funds. In this context, the own funds continue to be divided into Tier 1 and Tier 2 capital, **but the new Decision changes the structure of the Tier 1 capital, which is divided into Common Equity Tier 1 capital and Additional Tier 1 capital**. The Common Equity Tier 1 capital includes capital positions with the highest quality (equity capital and reserves) which are fully and readily available to cover risks and losses during the bank's operation. The new own funds component, the Additional Tier 1 capital, includes instruments which, among other things, contain a clause for their transformation into instruments of the Common Equity Tier 1 capital or for their write-off on temporary or permanent basis (reduction in the value of their principal), if the so-called critical event occurs. **The amendments to the Decision on the capital adequacy replace current restrictions in terms of size and ratio of individual elements of the own funds with the statutory prescribed minimal rates for the Common Equity Tier 1 capital, Tier 1 capital and own funds**, i.e. 4.5% for the Common Equity Tier 1 capital, 6% for the Tier 1 capital and 8% for the own funds of the risk-weighted assets. Thus, the greatest importance is given to the Common Equity Tier 1 capital positions (shares, reserves, retained undistributed profit), as capital positions with the highest quality.

January 2017

- At its regular meeting held on 10 January 2017, the NBRM's Operational Monetary Policy Committee decided to cut CB bill interest rate by 0.25 percentage points, to 3.5%, and to increase the supply of CB bills from Denar 23,000 million to Denar 25,000 million.

February 2017

- At its regular meeting held on 14 February 2017, the NBRM's Operational Monetary Policy Committee decided to cut CB bill interest rate by 0.25 percentage points, to 3.25%, and the supply of CB bills to be unchanged, at the level of Denar 25,000 million.
- At the regular meeting of the NBRM Council held on 27 February 2017, several decisions arising from the amendments to the Banking Law from October 2016 were adopted, for compliance with the Basel Capital Accord, the so-called Basel 3, as well as with the relevant European regulations. Pursuant to the amendments to the Banking Law made in October 2016, the banks are required to maintain adequate amount of capital to cover the so-called capital conservation buffers. The Law prescribes four capital buffers: (1) capital conservation buffer maintained at 2.5% of the risk weighted assets; (2) countercyclical capital buffer which can be up to 2.5% of the risk weighted assets, and more depending on other systemic factors/indicators, (3) capital buffer for systemically important banks which ranges from 1% to 3.5% of the risk weighted assets, and (4) systemic risk buffer which can range from 1% to 3% of the risk weighted assets. Pursuant to the provisions of the Banking Law on this basis, the Council adopted the following decisions:
 - The Decision on the Methodology for Identifying Systemically Important Banks, which prescribes the manner of identifying the systemically important banks, i.e. the banks the operations of which are important for the stability of the entire banking system. In addition, the amount of the capital conservation buffer that the systemically important banks should meet depending on the level of system importance, has been set. Also, the Decision on the Methodology for Developing Recovery Plan for Systemically Important Banks, that requires systemically important banks to submit a Recovery Plan to the National Bank, was adopted at today's session.
 - The Decision on the Methodology for Determining the Rate of Countercyclical Capital Buffer for Exposure in the Republic of Macedonia. This capital buffer aims to limit the risks arising from high credit growth, so it is introduced in case of high credit growth, on the basis of prescribed criteria.
 - The Decision on the Methodology for Determining the Maximum Distributable Amount, envisaging restriction of the bank's earnings distribution, if it fails to maintain adequate amount of capital buffers. The capital buffers can be covered only by the highest quality capital positions, i.e. Common Equity Tier 1 capital.
 - The Decision on the Methodology for Managing Leverage Risk, which is a standard of the Basel Capital Accord, Basel 3, and the European banking regulations, which introduces the leverage ratio, as a correlation between the capital and activities of the bank. Banks in RM register extremely low indebtedness, and the purpose of introduction of this standard at the international level was protection against possible excessive borrowing by banks, in terms of satisfactory level of capital adequacy.

March 2017

- At its regular meeting held on 14 March 2017, the NBRM's Operational Monetary Policy Committee decided to increase the supply of CB bills from Denar 25,000 million to Denar 30,000 million.

July 2017

- At its regular meeting held on 11 July 2017, the NBRM's Operational Monetary Policy Committee decided to reduce the supply of CB bills from Denar 30,000 million to Denar 27,500 million.

August 2017

- At its regular meeting held on 8 August 2017, the NBRM's Operational Monetary Policy Committee decided to reduce the supply of CB bills from Denar 27,500 million to Denar 25,000 million.

December 2017

- At its regular meeting held on 21 December 2017, the NBRM's Council decided to continue the application of the non-standard measure for reducing the base of reserve requirement in denars of the commercial banks for the amount of newly approved loans of net exporters and domestic producers of electricity for two additional years.

March 2018

- At its regular meeting held on 13 February 2018, the NBRM's Operational Monetary Policy Committee decided to cut CB bill interest rate by 0.25 percentage points, to 3.00%, and the supply of CB bills to be unchanged, at the level of Denar 25,000 million. Furthermore, the Committee decided to reduce the interest rates on 7-day and overnight deposit facilities by 0.20 and 0.10 percentage points, respectively (to 0.30% and 0.15%, respectively).