

**The 7th meeting of the Cooperation Committee of the CARDS 2002 Regional Project –  
*Industrial and intellectual property rights* has been held**

The Cooperation Committee of the CARDS 2002 Regional Project – *Industrial and intellectual property rights* meets periodically in order to discuss and agree on project working programmes. The beneficiaries of this three-year project are the so-called Western Balkans countries, i.e. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia and Serbia and Montenegro, and the implementation of the project in a total value of 2,25 million Euros started in July 2003. The project is implemented by EPO in cooperation with partner organisations (OHIM and WIPO).

The meetings of the Committee are held each time in one of the beneficiary countries so the host to this 7th meeting held on 7 July 2006 in Durrës was Albania, i.e. the Albanian Institute for Patents and Trademarks. The Delegations of the countries sitting in the Committee are constituted of representatives of national offices for intellectual property, therefore representatives of the Office attend these meetings regularly. Apart from the Delegations of the beneficiary countries, the meetings are also attended by representatives of the European Commission, the project operational management team and representatives of the organisations implementing the project (EPO, OHIM, and WIPO).

At the initiative of the European Commission the project has been extended to last until December 2006 and the accent in the last year of implementation has been shifted from educational activities to promoting expert cooperation between the countries of the region. Based on that, information has been exchanged at the meeting on development of intellectual property rights in each of the countries during the first semester of 2006, and at the initiative of the organiser of the meeting the Delegation of the Office also presented the National Strategy for the Development of the Intellectual Property Rights System in Republic of Croatia 2005-2010, which has been assessed as a positive example for the drafting of future similar strategies in the countries of the region. The final 8th meeting of the Committee is foreseen to be held in November in Sarajevo.