

# European pulse

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Europol joins negotiations  
between EU and Montenegro



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Alexander Otroschenkov,  
political activist from Belarus

## analysis

Beginning of EU negotiations as  
part of the DPS electoral campaign

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Italy is sucking the  
energy out of Balkans

Foreword: **From Brussels to London**

Vladan Žugić

Throughout July, the Government embarked on a failed campaign ahead of parliamentary elections to take all credit for the Council of EU's decision to begin negotiations with Montenegro. At the cocktail he organised to celebrate the occasion, Prime Minister **Igor Lukšić** sneered that this decision must have really wounded "some" from the civil sector and the media, forgetting that if it weren't for those "some", their pressure and capacity, Montenegro would be probably far behind in the European integration process. He also "forgot" to mention the pains of the Swedish minister of foreign affairs **Carl Bildt**, who mentioned Montenegro as the main problem in the Western Balkans with regard to organised crime and corruption, just a day before the fateful decision on the opening of negotiations. If anything like that was mentioned by a Serbian official, the former and the future ministers of foreign affairs Milan Roćen and Nebojša Kaluđerović would be quick and eager to withdraw the third secretary of our embassy in Belgrade to show their protest. But the Government was not built on principled policies. So instead of the Government, the one to respond to Bildt was the man from the shadows. The head of DPS **Milo Đukanović** explained that Bildt must have been misinformed by Belgrade. He also explained that disinformation is the reason France and Netherlands had qualms about opening the accession talks with Montenegro, even if before that half of the Government worked to convince us that our country had no difficulties at the Council of EU. By late July, the government realised it cannot convince the public that there would be no negotiations without them, and that everybody knows that some influential EU members think that Montenegro has a serious problem with crime and corruption. To make up for it, half of the Government headed to the Olympic Games in London to cover the blemishes with pre-electoral medals.

**Calendar**

- 01 July **Cyprus takes over EU presidency** / Cyprus took over the six-month presidency of EU from Denmark, a sizeable challenge for this small island state. Cyprus also recently became the fifth EU member to ask for help from Brussels and the international monetary institutions. Its first task is likely to be coordination of complex negotiations over the new European budget for the period 2014-2020. There are also fears that Cyprus' presidency will heighten the tensions between Brussels and Ankara, as well as between Ankara and Nicosia.
- 06 July **Negotiations change the people** / Negotiations between Montenegro and EU will change people's habits and bring better life to all citizens, said the Prime Minister Igor Lukšić at the Croatia Summit in Dubrovnik.
- 07 July **EU members need evidence** / The main goal is that by the end of negotiations Montenegro will be able to demonstrate to EU member states its ability to successfully combat organised crime and corruption, and show it is a state ruled by law", said the head of the Montenegro unit in the European Commission **Dirk Lange** and added that "he finds the strengthening of administration equally important".
- 18 July **Kaluđerović replaces Roćen** / The Parliament of Montenegro appointed **Nebojša Kaluđerović** as the new Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integrations, to replace **Milan Roćen**. Roćen resigned from office with the justification that he wishes to leave on a high note, after Montenegro began the elections with EU.
- 24 July **How to cooperate with Europol** / At the informal meeting with the Minister of Justice and Home Affairs of Cyprus, Montenegrin Minister of Justice and Human Rights **Duško Marković** negotiated the mode of cooperation between Montenegrin institutions and Europol.
- 26 July **Government appoints working groups for Chapters 5, 25 and 26** / The Government appointed working groups for negotiations with EU on Chapter 5 – Public procurement (to be led by deputy Minister of Finance **Ana Ivanović**), Chapter 26 – Education and Culture (led by deputy Minister of Education and Sports **Mubera Kurpejević**) and Chapter 25 – Science and Research (led by Secretary of the Ministry of Science **Smiljana Prelević**).



## A long and challenging road



Jelena Džankić

The author is a research fellow at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies of the European University Institute.

The last days of the Danish Presidency of the Council of the EU brought about the start of accession negotiations with Montenegro, the smallest of the post-Yugoslav states. The process was officially launched on 29 June 2012, mere six years after the country opted for independence from the short-lived State Union of Serbia and Montenegro. In December 2011, the EC established that Montenegro met the necessary benchmarks for opening the accession negotiations. The Council, however, was not convinced, and as a prelude to its recent decision, it urged the country to improve the independence of its judiciary and strengthen the fight against corruption and organized crime. Both of the issues that the Council placed an emphasis on have been identified as long-standing issues in Montenegro's transition. In addition to these challenges, which appear as the primary concern in the context of Montenegro's accession, the tiny Balkan state will have to overcome a number of challenges in order to enhance its capacities to become a fully-fledged member of the EU. One of the largest challenges may be the economy. While the high degree of foreign direct investment (FDI) helped the country's euro-based economy to boom in the first years after independence, the financial crisis had a profound effect on the financial sector. The sharp decrease in FDI, coupled with companies with flagging business over the past three years, international borrowing to solve domestic issues in order to score short-term political points, and the public debt that has doubled since 2006 are all causes for concern. In addition to the economic issues, political and societal realms are still deeply scarred by the division that peaked in the pre-referendum – the question of whether Montenegrins were a separate nation or a subgroup of Serbs. Although in Montenegro there has been no overt conflict as a result of this divide, issues such as the national anthem, coat of arms, minority rights, etc. still feature as unresolved political matters. Yet, while it is certain that the EU accession process will prove to be both a challenge and a deeply transformative process to Montenegro, the power of conditionality has already had positive effects in this small country. Montenegro is bound to comply with the accession requirements, and all of the political actors in this country are aware



that the relationship with the EU is one of a large asymmetry. However, the understanding of this fact also generates an interesting set of bargaining leverages among political actors, particular in those situations when a broad political consensus is required to comply with the accession requirements. In the case of Montenegro, this dynamic has been particularly manifest in the relationship between the government and the opposition on those issues where a simple majority was insufficient to bring about legal change. The most vivid example of the understanding of this asymmetry is the political negotiation that preceded the adoption of the new Election Code in late 2011, stipulated as one of the conditions for opening the accession negotiations. It is likely that such political bargaining, which shows the political polarization in Montenegro will continue in the course of the negotiations. Meanwhile, the Montenegrin people dream about the EU as the Promised Land, but hardly grasp the degree of changes required in the light of accession and the costs that they are likely to incur. The people are far less aware than the country's politicians that knocking on Europe's door will require strength and commitment. And the reward for that is just hope: hope that, by the time Montenegro is ready 'to join the club', the EU will still be willing and ready to absorb a young, small Western Balkan state.

*The article was originally published by the university blog EUROPP of the London School of Economics, <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/>*

## What to expect from Europol in the course of screening for chapters 23 and 24

### The phrasing is veiled, but the message is clear



Tina Radulović

European Police Office – Europol – was asked to compile a special report on organised crime in Montenegro in the next few months.

The news broke out after the June meeting of the Council of EU, which recommended opening of accession talks with Montenegro.

“The Council calls on Europol to submit a report on the situation regarding organised crime in Montenegro and asks that the European Commission take the Europol report into account in the conclusions of its screening report”, says the text of the conclusions from the Council meeting,

This makes Montenegro the first candidate country to be examined by Europol already at the screening stage for chapters 23 (Judiciary and fundamental rights) and 24 (Justice, freedom and security).

For this, Montenegrin authorities can “thank” the Swedish foreign affairs chief **Carl Bildt** who threatened to block the beginning of negotiations with Montenegro because of its problems with organised crime, especially money laundering. On Bildt’s insistence, the Council decided to involve Europol, whose reports are secret and closed for the public. In a short excerpt from the 2011 report made public by the Europol, Montenegro was mentioned in the context of international drug trafficking, and the harbours of Bar and Zelenika were singled out as locations where the narcotics coming from EU are reloaded to be sent back to the Union. Europol’s report will be part of the European Commission’s progress report on Montenegro and of the screening report for chapters 23 and 24, but it remains unclear how they are to be incorporated. It is possible that Europol will simply provide EC with hints about narcotics, trafficking, money laundering

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etc., or submit its written observations, more or less diplomatically phrased, but it is also possible that they will be removed from the public reports and transmitted to the Montenegrin authorities via diplomatic channels.

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“Based on prior analyses, Europol’s experts usually already know which areas the country should focus on. After their visit to the country, they try to make the best possible analysis of the



situation on the ground, in order to formulate accurate conclusions and suggest solutions”, Kos explained.

Europol’s suggestions vary, depending on the kinds of problems they encounter.

“I was in the team which negotiated Slovenia’s entry into Europol. At the time, we identified as a major problem protection of personal and secret information. Consequently, we focused most of our expertise and energy on this area”, Kos said.

Croatia, which is to join the European family in 2013, did not have to deal with Europol in the course of screenings and negotiations. Director of the Agency for eradication of corruption and organised crime (USKOK) **Dinko Cvitan** explains that the EC experts came to discuss the problems with the relevant ministry of the Croatian Government and heads of police units.

“Issues concerning that form of cooperation, as well as international recommendations were communicated and resolved in the course of personal discussions, and later through written reports among these actors”, Cvitan said.

Nicović doesn’t expect the official report to contain the names of people from politics or the criminal world on whom the Europol already has some intelligence. “Individuals might be mentioned in the internal communications with the Montenegrin Government, or in personal contacts between Europol’s and EC’s officials with the authorities. The version that reaches the public will be a lot more abstract”, Nicović said.

Police analyst **Marko Nicović** thinks the official report will only contain diplomatic phrases, while the actual tasks will be conveyed to the Montenegrin authorities by European officials and Europol experts in direct communication. According to him, the report will simply emphasise the importance of preventing corruption, reducing the influence of political structures on judiciary, and demonstrating tangible achievements in the fight against organised crime. Most probably, the Europol will ask for greater control of maritime roads and harbours, and some parts of the report could concern eradication of nepotism, or warnings about family members of certain high officials who have contacts with business and criminal circles, Nicović added. He doesn’t expect the report to contain the names of people from politics or the criminal world on whom the Europol already has some intelligence.

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He also expects the discussions between EU experts and Montenegrin officials to touch upon activities of suspicious enterprises. “By that I mean primarily those whom they suspect



of corruption, or those which involve members of criminal groups”, Nicović said. According to him, Europol will be especially concerned with liquidations, i.e. with unresolved murder cases. “Reports on Montenegro have so far been very general, because the country is at the start of the accession process to EU and NATO, and since the ruling elite has been the same for the last 20 years, it is in the interest of the international officials not to disturb the balance of powers until we join the Alliance and the European family of nations. Otherwise, it would mean that the process would suddenly bring harm to the current ruling circle, and there are good people in every such group. They should not bear the costs of others’ actions, and they should be given a chance, which is exactly what the European community is doing”, Nicović concluded. He added that the degree of

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cooperation between Montenegro and Europol depends on the country’s accession to EU. “Once Montenegro joins the EU, it undertakes the obligation to cooperate with other police forces and there won’t be any compromises. This is also when Montenegro will have to face the task of professionalizing its police force”, he said.

## Europol

Established by the Treaty of Maastricht in 1991 as the Europol Drugs Unit, Europol began operations in 1994. With time, it acquired jurisdiction in various other areas of criminal activity.

In July 1999, the agency changed its name to Europol (short for European Police Office), with competencies ranging from illegal immigration to terrorism, trafficking in human beings, child pornography, car smuggling, and various forms of financial fraud. Since January 2002, Europol is also responsible for all forms of international crime cited in the annex of the Convention on Europol, which is ratified by all EU member states.

Unlike the national police forces, Europol has no executive power – no right to arrest people or to conduct independent investigations.

Drago Kos warns that the citizens often have a wrong impression of Europol. “The public often thinks this is a police organisation in charge of arresting people. I’m afraid this is completely wrong, although the same impression guides the decisions of those who ought to be cooperating with Europol”, Kos said. He explained this was an organisation whose approach was based on analysis and cooperation. “Members of Europol or those who wish to become members, or those bound to it by some form of agreement have to cooperate with each other: exchange information on criminal and corruption networks, their movements, etc., which in the end should result in arrests, which are executed by the national police forces based on the information collected by the Europol”, Kos explained.

Europol is financed from the contributions by EU member states, and its headquarters are in the Hague.

The ruling coalition used the beginning of negotiations between EU and Montenegro to call early elections. Was it a miscalculation?

## Both victory and defeat will leave a bitter taste



Neđeljko Rudović

European Council's decision to begin negotiations with Montenegro could accelerate internal political processes and for the first time in a decade make the elections in this tiny former republic of Yugoslavia exciting. Determined to take all credit for the opening of negotiations and capitalize on this success, the ruling DPS-SDP coalition scheduled early parliamentary elections for 14 October. Although the ruling parties are convinced of their superiority, it might be that for once the opposition will muster enough power to challenge them and at least position itself as a serious opponent in the post-election period. Given its dismal performance so far, even that would be a major success. Should the political course initiated by **Andrija Mandić** and **Nebojša Medojević** together with the young, uncompromised people from the newly established Positive Montenegro continue as it is now, **Đukanović** might soon be forced to either hand over most of the power to others, or end up in the opposition. Aware of the DPS-SDP calculation, the opposition wasn't content to quietly wait for another humiliation at the ballots, but instead made the step that has been in the cards for almost 10 years but was never brought to fruition – they brought back into the game the former head of Montenegrin diplomacy, **Miodrag Lekić**. Lekić, now a lecturer at an Italian university, was in the early 1990s the only declared Montenegrin and advocate of Montenegro's independence in the pro-Serbian government of Milo Đukanović. Lekić also garnered sympathies of the pro-Serbian voters in 1999, during the NATO bombing, when as the ambassador to Rome he went onto the most popular TV shows in Italy to campaign against the international intervention. Today, Lekić is making daily rounds to rally public figures and thus expand the Democratic Front. The backbone of the Front are in fact Mandić's New Serbian Democracy and Medojević's Movement for Changes, which in the former elections together secured some 15% of the vote. Only the Socialist People's Party under the leadership of Srđan Milić won a little more than that. The biggest opposition party, however, has no serious intention for not to join the Front, and some of its factions are suspected of wanting to enter a coalition with the ruling parties. Milić is currently retreating, Lekić is running strong,

but perhaps the greatest achievement so far is the reconciliation between Mandić and Medojević, who swallowed their pride and let Lekić take the leadership of the Front. Preliminary polls indicate that this move has a good chance of bringing back to the ballots the abstinent who have long given up on both the government and the opposition. Democratic Front has also managed



to win over some leaders of the civic protests orchestrated by **Vanja Čalović**. In the meantime, the former NGO activist and environmentalist **Darko Pajović** is doing the grassroots work and seemingly growing into the next big player on the Montenegrin political scene. According to the polls, his Positive Montenegro, founded in May 2012, already has some 8% of the vote, also thanks to the support of some intellectuals who hold dear the ideals of Montenegro's statehood and independence. The final outcome is anybody's guess, and it is no secret that Đukanović and his loyal ally Krivokapić will do everything to keep absolute power and avoid the fate of **Ivo Sanader**. Sanader, who was only whispered to have been involved in some shady deals promptly ended up in the defendant's box as soon as Croatia neared the end of negotiations with EU. Should anything similar happen in Montenegro, Đukanović's reputation will make him the number one customer of the public prosecutor. No wonder he finds it extremely important to keep his power unchallenged. Yet he might have miscalculated: by the looks of it, the opposition will be giving him some sleepless nights in the weeks to come.

Political activist from Belarus Alexander Otroschenkov  
on the Eastern Partnership and parallels between our two countries

## No country for smart people



Political activist and journalist from Belarus who was twice arrested and convicted for his activities, **Alexander Otroschenkov** says that while the EU has little interest in his country and another five members of Eastern Partnership, it actually cares about the Western Balkans.

"It seems to me the EU is very interested in the Balkans, for various reasons. In the past the Balkans was the locus of many tension, and incorporating these countries into the European processes guarantees stability. On the other hand, Belarus, for instance has a nuclear power plant. We all know what a nuclear power plant means, constructed in the times of dictatorship, without any public control and at the very border of EU. Only the EU doesn't realize what it means", Otroschenkov said.

**» Are you satisfied with the content of the Eastern Partnership? How much is Belarus working on further integration with EU?**

The Eastern Partnership is weakening, but it would be senseless without Belarusian partici-

I don't know about your country, but I know that in Belarus there is a sort of "organisation" within the establishment whose members sense the intelligent people like wild beasts and hunt them down, not allowing them to do anything

pation. Lukaschenko isn't interested in complex arrangements, the government has lost all interest in the Eastern Partnership. The civil society is active in the scheme, but it is hard to achieve any results without government's involvement.

**» How would you compare Belarus and Montenegro, since these are the only two countries in Europe which never had a change of government since the fall of socialism?**

This is a huge tragedy. This is not something serious politicians do.

When Lukaschenko came to power, he was an already formed product of the communist society. A new generation grew up, the structure of economic relations change completely... The international relations also changed, but Lukaschenko remained frozen in the 1970s.

This is very dangerous: these people understand everything through a prism of personal loyalty.

**» Montenegrin rulers are biologically young...?**

Lukaschenko isn't old either, he is only 58. He was 38 when he came to power. This is not a question of age, but of education and openness to new ideas.

I don't know about your country, but I know that in Belarus there is a sort of "organisation" within the establishment whose members sense the intelligent people like wild beasts and hunt them down, not allowing them to do anything, and such people simply fall out of the system.

We can see it every day, when an official says something stupid. In fact, whenever an official





opens his mouth, the result is a scandal and laughter. When young, talented people realize that there is no change and that they don't stand a chance they try to leave the country. When Lukaschenko was first elected I was 13, now I am 31. Many of my friends have left.

**» Part of the political public in Montenegro believes that the government is only willing to concede changes under the pressure from EU and Washington, but my impression is that this pressure is much milder than we would like it to be. What is your opinion on this?**

I understand the problem very well, because international pressure is one of the few ways to influence President Lukaschenko.

First of all, we should realize that if the people really want changes, they will come. I wouldn't lay much hope with Washington, because they don't sit in Montenegro and they can't fly in like Superman and do everything for you. In fact, Montenegrins should do 99% of the work, and it's best if Brussels stays out of it. Belarusian opposition gets many words of support from Brussels, plenty of handshakes, joint photos, they say they have given hundreds of millions to support the opposition, but the truth is that nobody saw that money. When the election time comes, they always side with Lukaschenko.

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## Political prisoner

During the electoral campaign of 2010 Otroschenkov was the port-parole of the opposition candidate **Andrei Sannikov**. He was arrested after the elections, sentenced to five years in prison for rebellion, and then released. After Lukaschenko's victory he wrote for the website "Delfi" on the mass protests where the demonstrators called for the elections to be annulled because of fraud.

Otroschenkov was arrested once before, in December 2010, when he was accused of "organizing and participating in mass rebellion". The court ruled that Otroschenkov was "part of the rabble which tried to enter the Government building by force". After the trial, which only lasted two days, on 2 March 2011 he was sentenced to four years in prison. He was released on President's decision alongside another ten political prisoners..



### A monument to EU

Grants from the EU have helped to create approximately 34,000 jobs in the least developed parts of Poland over the last five years.

Most of the jobs were created in the countryside and the smallest towns in less developed regions. According to last year's figures, the EU funds have helped increase Polish GDP by 6% between 2004 and 2010. The effect of the EU structural funds is obvious to the naked eye in all corners of the country. To express their thanks, the citizens of Wroclaw, in South-Eastern Poland, erected the first monument to EU funds.



### Viagra, the smugglers' favourite?

EU member states' customs intercepted some 115 million fake products last year, a 15% more than in 2010, said European Commission. Among the confiscated fake goods the majority are pharmaceuticals (24%), packaging materials (21%) and cigarettes (18%). Most of the fake goods still come from China, but Syria is a new name on the list of originators of such products, mostly as a source of fake CDs and DVDs. According to the Commission's report, the value of confiscated goods is almost 1.3 billion euro, compared to 1.1 billion in 2010. Among the counterfeited pharmaceuticals the most popular are diet pills and Viagra, but painkillers, anti-depressants, pills against insomnia and anti-biotics are also common.

### Depressed Germans on the Greek beaches



The smaller party in the German ruling coalition – the liberal FDP – suggested that the German citizens should be given holiday vouchers if they decided to spend their summer in Greece. In the interview to the daily "Bild", the Liberal MEP Jorgos Chatzimarkakis explained that: "The terrible summer we're having in Germany is making people increasingly depressed" and that "some kind of State bonus to encourage people to travel to Greece could be the beginning of a European stimulus package". So far there were no reactions to this eccentric idea, which according to the FDP should also include other South European destinations. Instead, the German media are buzzing with figures from the latest report of the Greek Tourist Association, according to which the number of visitors from Germany decreased by 25 to 30% this year. So far the Germans were the most numerous visitors in Greece – 2.24 German citizens spent their holidays there in 2011.

### France to lower taxes on fuel



German government has no intention of lowering the excise taxes in order to rein in the fuel price hike. Paris, on the other hand, opted for a "modest" and "temporary" discount. Growing fuel prices in Europe are explained by the global oil price hike, as well as by the effect of the debt crisis on the value of euro. According to EC, the average share of excise tax in the fuel prices in EU was 55% for Eurosuper 95 and 48% for diesel. According to the Commission, the price of one liter of the Eurosuper 95 was between 1.28 euro in Romania to 1.83 in Sweden, and of diesel between 1.28 in Luxembourg and 1.77 in Sweden and UK.

Tax solutions to the EU countries' budgetary problems

## The rich should share the cost of the crisis



The rich should also shoulder part of the costs of the crisis. But how? Many EU countries have responded with creative tax solutions

year. Thanks to the new tax, Italy could cancel the sale of government bonds.

In Spain a great number of municipalities raised the property tax by 10% already in the beginning of the year, resulting in a revenue increase by a billion euro. The tax exempts the Catholic Church, although taxing the Church would yield another 1.5 billion euro.

In Greece, the mechanics of the real estate tax are entirely obscure. Association of Property Owners calculated that Greece has some 40 different taxes on property, but only a handful are ever collected. The government has recently cut through this problem by declaring a flat tax linked to the electricity bill, which amounts to a few hundred euro per household every year.

### Real estate tax

In France there is still little discussion about changing the real estate tax and raising the burden on the owners of villas. The main problem is that the property values have become obsolete.

In 2008 Italy abolished the tax on the property in which the proprietor lives, with **Silvio Berlusconi** making good on one of his main electoral promises. This year, **Mario Monti** reintroduced the tax, increasing the old tax rate to 60% and raising the rates on the second property. In this way, only in the first half of the year the Ministry of Finance collected an additional 9.5 billion euro in revenue, and expects to collect 20 billion by the end of the

### Taxes on wealth

France should manage to rake in another 4.3 billion euro this year by taxing extraordinary fortunes, 2.3 billion more than under **Sarkozy**. At the moment this tax only applies to wealth exceeding 1.3 million euro, but the government is planning to lower the limit to 700 000 euro. The legal threshold for the taxes on inheritance and gifts will also be lowered from 159 000 to 100 000 euro. In addition to this, banks and oil companies will be asked to pay additional taxes, resulting in a revenue of 500 million euro.

Spain abolished its wealth tax in 2007 but reintroduced it in 2012. The tax applies to the wealth exceeding 700 000, exempting up to 300 000 in value on property of residence. The tax



rate ranges between 0.2 and 2.5%. The revenue so far was less than one billion euro. Apart from the real estate tax, Italy doesn't tax wealth. Monti's government undertook a symbolic action to tax luxury goods, by introducing a tax on yachts longer than 10 metres. The annual tax on such a yacht starts at 400 euros and goes all the way up to 25 000 for yachts longer than 64 metres. Tax on luxuries also applies to automobiles, and to bond deposits. The three combined taxes are expected to yield around two billion euro per year.

## Income tax

Depending on the country, the efforts to raise the revenue from income taxes are focusing either on combating tax evasion or on raising the top income tax rates.

France applies different taxes to different types of income. Annual incomes over one million euro will be taxed at 75%, which is expected to result in between 200 and 300 million in revenues. The law will only come into force next year. In the meantime, the government raised taxes on options and free shares usually issued to the company management, from 14% to 30% for companies and from 8 to 10% for the owners of shares. There are no estimates on the expected income from this measure. Italy, on the other hand, is focusing on combating tax evasion. Every year the country loses between 120 and 150 billion in this way, and the most common way is for companies to report very little income. By abolishing the bank secret the government hopes to collect at least 11 billion every year. Tax evasion is a burning problem in Greece, with the state losing around 60 billion every year. Around 30 billion is lying frozen because of extended court processes, and there is no obvious solution on the horizon. In Spain, the income tax ranges between 24% and 45%. Since the beginning of this year there is also a "solidarity top-up" between 0.75 and 7%, which should allow the state to collect another 5.4 billion per year. The 7% rate applies to incomes

over 300 000 euro. Even with the top-up, Spain is well below its onetime taxation approach: until 1999, the highest income tax rate was 56%.

## Squeezing the buck out of the masses

Budget cuts and value added tax hikes have the heaviest impact on the poor and the middle classes. Italy raised its VAT from 20 to 21%, hoping to rake in another 5 billion into the budget. There are plans to raise the tax again in October, to 23%, a measure which the government is trying to avoid by slimming the budget even further. Out of the budget cuts and tax increases in the 2011-2012 period, Italy is trying to save 200 billion euro. Spain raised its VAT from 18 to 21%, and expects this measure to yield 7.5 billion euro in revenue. At the same time, the parliament adopted a comprehensive austerity package. Only in 2012 the central government is hoping to save 27 billion euro, with the regions adding another 18 billion through education and health cuts. The savings measures have especially hit the public employees, pensioners, unemployed, persons with disabilities and the sick. Greece lowered the wages by 20%, both in the public and the private sector. The VAT was raised to 23%, even on the basic food products. The state was hoping to increase the revenues by a billion euros through this measure, but these expectations were disappointed as the revenues fell even further because of the deepening recession. Only France had so far managed to spare the ordinary citizens, and has not even raised the VAT. Holland's government cancelled the raise that was planned for the 1 October, overruling the decision made by the previous government. On the other hand, it also abolished the tax and contributions breaks on overtime worked, recently introduced by the government of Sarkozy.

*By: Balmer & M. Braun & R. Wandler & J. Papadimitriou (TAZ)*

## Social policy the top concern



Željka Četković

The author is a programme associate in the Centre for Civic Education (CCE).

In a 2008 handbook by Konrad Adenauer Foundation, "What should everybody know about European Union", at some point, it says: "It is a fact that the European citizens have become so accustomed to the advantages and achievements of Europe that they take them for granted and don't even realise how exceptional they are".

A degree of scepticism and occasional doubts aside, the citizens of EU enjoy certain benefits they would never have if their countries decided to build their futures outside of EU. Similar doubts in EU's power also exist in some parts of the Montenegrin public, but I firmly believe that once Montenegro reaches its long dreamed goal, the people will be delighted with the chance to become accustomed to all those advantages the EU considers normal and takes for granted.

Of all advantages of EU, I would like to focus on the social dimension of the single market, and the attention given to the issue of unemployment.

The European Social Fund has been helping many unemployed citizens, especially younger ones who lack the necessary qualifications required by the labour markets. There are special retraining programmes for long-term unemployed, but also employment programmes for youth under 25. The Fund also works with the particularly vulnerable groups such as women, seasonal workers etc, to secure adequate workplaces.

I hold this dimension of the EU market to be extremely relevant for Montenegro, with its tiny labour market. As a future citizen of EU, it is very important to me to know what me and my country mates won't be left to our own devices, because the European Union takes care even of those who cannot keep up with some of its standards.



Another less known but no less important area is the EU environmental policy. With globalization, even the human environment cannot be properly preserved and protected by separate efforts of individual countries. Montenegro's example is among the most glaring – in spite of having declared itself an eco-state, and in spite of all local efforts in that direction, it is undeniable that we are unable to solve the problems which are part of a much larger system. In that sense, Europe offers a much better alternative. Already in 1972 the European Community had the Action Plan for the Protection of Environment, which put the accent on the prevention of damage to environment. This only goes to show that EU by now has substantial capacities to tackle the problems of air and water pollution, climate change and extinction of life species at a much higher level and in a much more efficient manner than individual countries, especially those outside of its system of regulations.

But in order to implement some policies, like the environmental ones, efficiently and effectively, the EU must have access to endangered areas, which are part of the problem. The environment might be a trite example, but it shows that the EU needs us at least half as much as we need EU.

CCE on the management of taxpayers' money

## How much do our MPs travel?



Damir Nikočević

Centre for Civic Education (CCE) developed the projects **“Public procurement projects: whom, how much and what are the Montenegrin taxpayers paying?”**, and **“To whom and to what purposes is the taxpayers' money allotted?”** as part of its Accountability and Transparency of the Government programme, in order to raise awareness and contribute to accountable management of the public money.

CCE managed to acquire the information concerning the costs of official trips by the MPs, which show that overall the Parliament spent EUR 723.949,16 for this purpose in 2011. The MPs spent more in travel allowances for trips within the country than the entire Parliament, including expert staff, spent for travelling abroad. Montenegro is one of the smallest European countries, of the total territory of 13.812 square kilometres, and doesn't even have inland airlines that could

Information on all privileges and benefits which the MPs acquire when they join the legislative bench should be publicly available, so that the citizens can have a complete insight into their working conditions – which hasn't been the situation so far.

for overnight stay, travel expenses and daily allowances of the MPs within the country, for the purpose of participating in the Parliament's plenary sessions and meetings of the working bodies, as well as other related activities.

Of the said amount, EUR 34.726,23 was spent to cover the costs of hotels, EUR 28.105,90 of which for sojourns in the hotels “Montenegro” and “City”. In addition to the possibility of paid hotel nights, the MPs residing outside of Podgorica can hire an apartment, with the Parliament covering up to EUR 330 in monthly rent. According to the information available to CCE, the only MP using this option was **Suljo Mustafić** from the Bosniak Party, which makes him the least expensive MP within this category of expenses. With the arrival of the new secretary general the compensation and payment procedures have been improved. Compensation for travel expenses is now periodically transferred to the MPs bank accounts, whereas until June 2011 it was issued in cash. However, there is no control over the real place of residence of the MPs, i.e. of whether they really spend their entire term living at the address they registered and based on which they qualified for travel expenses and daily allowances, or whether they have some alternative lodgings in Podgorica.



raise the costs of travelling within the country. The Parliament of Montenegro spent EUR 388.243,13 to cover its MPs trips within the country. This amount includes compensation

President of the Parliament, deputies, heads of parliamentary groups and the president of the Administrative Committee have the right to an official vehicle. This means that they do not



otherwise qualify for travel expenses within the country, and the vehicles are maintained out of the budget of the Parliament's administration.

The total travel expenses by parliamentary party give the following cost ranking for travel within the country for 2011:

- » Democratic Party of Socialists - 112,210.25€
- » Socialist People's Party - 88,149.50€
- » New Serbian Democracy - 35,460.50€
- » Social-Democratic Party - 31,794.50€
- » Bosniak Party - 16,509.00€.
- » Democratic Alliance in Montenegro and Albanian Alternative - 7,610.00€
- » Movement for Changes - 6,958.50€
- » Croatian Civic Initiative - 5,933.50€
- » FORCA - 5,898.00€
- » MP club of the Albanian Coalition Perspective - 4,493.00€
- » Democratic Union of Albanians - 2,011.50€.

On the other hand, the Parliament of Montenegro spent EUR 335.715,03 in 2011 for travel abroad, out of which EUR 112.318,68 for flights, EUR 114.409,15 for daily allowances and hotels, EUR 118.467,80 for hotels, and EUR 7.141,45 for insurance and transport.

The following is the ranking of political parties according to the travel expenses and allowances for trips abroad in 2011:

- » Democratic Party of Socialists - 58,854.08€;
- » Social-Democratic Party - 40,474.93€;
- » Socialist People's Party - 38,267.02€;
- » New Serbian Democracy - 19,333.80€;
- » Movement for Changes - 10,060.53€;
- » Club of Albanian MPs - 3,504.44€;
- » Bosniak Party - 2,863.45€.

It is understandable that the MPs and employees of the Parliament of Montenegro should have all necessary means for work, including

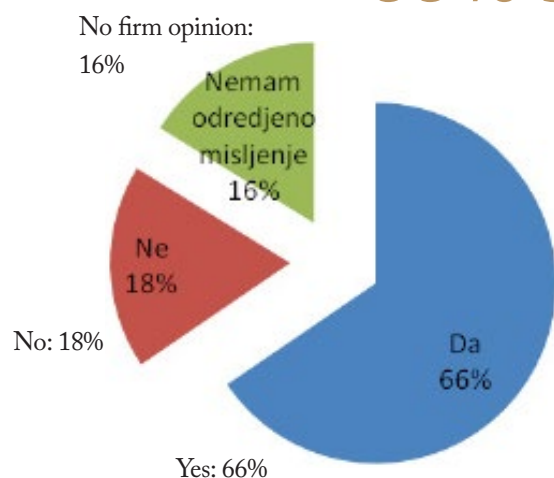


various allowances for the costs arising from their engagement in the Parliament. However, CCE believes that in this case all beneficiaries of the public money, and especially people's representatives, should handle this issue with maximum responsibility, bearing in mind the economic crisis and the limits of Montenegro's budget. In that context, especially the expenses for travel within the country should be reconsidered, as they seem to be entirely out of proportion with the real costs. Information on all privileges and benefits which the MPs acquire when they join the legislative bench should be publicly available, so that the citizens can have a complete insight into their working conditions – which hasn't been the situation so far.

CCE also proposes to institute the obligation of all MPs to do "fieldwork", i.e. to talk to the citizens to whom they should be accountable. The MPs themselves often stress that they are representatives of the people, although few of them have any substantial contact with the people outside of electoral campaigns. Also, CCE welcomes greater transparency of procedures for travel cost compensations, as well as the fact that the payments are now made via bank accounts.

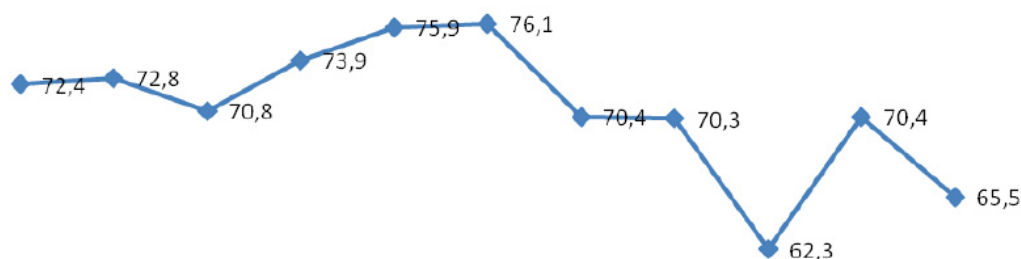
## Results of CEDEM's public opinion poll

## 66% support accession to EU



66% is still a very high level of support for EU membership, although lower than the 70.4% benchmark of December 2011. On the other hand, it is much higher than the record low from September 2011, when only 62.3% of the respondents supported membership of EU.

According to CEDEM's reports, EU enjoyed the best rating in Montenegro in the course of 2009. The results for September 2009 showed a record support for the accession process of 76.1%.



Oct '07   Feb '08   Jun '08   Nov '08   Mart '09   Oct '09   Oct '10   Dec '10   Sep '11   Dec '11   July '12

	November 2010	September 2011	December 2011	July 2012
<b>Government of Montenegro</b>	55,2	49,9	52,1	46,7
<b>President of Montenegro</b>	59,2	56,3	62,2	48,6
<b>Parliament of Montenegro</b>	48	44,1	43	36,7
<b>Judiciary</b>	45,5	47,1	44,8	41,8
<b>Police</b>	52,7	47,7	47,3	46,3
<b>Serbian Orthodox Church</b>	52,6	48,9	52,7	55
<b>Montenegrin Orthodox Church</b>	31,2	28,1	30,2	27,6
<b>Army</b>	55,4	44,9	46,8	42,4
<b>Political parties</b>	31,3	30	33,5	32,1
<b>Health system</b>	64,6	57,8	64,7	60
<b>Educational system</b>	66,8	59,7	63,2	59,4
<b>European Union</b>	59,5	49,9	53,1	49,5
<b>NATO</b>	35,8	30,1	33,1	33,3
<b>ICTY</b>	26,8	25,8	26,2	32,5
<b>Non-governmental organisations</b>	50,5	50,2	46,7	43,4

It would appear that the crisis of trust in EU, caused by its financial crisis, has spilled over to Montenegro. The part of the study concerning trust in the institutions shows 49.5% of the respondents declaring "high and generally high" trust in EU. This is nearly 4% less than in December, and 10% less than in November 2010.

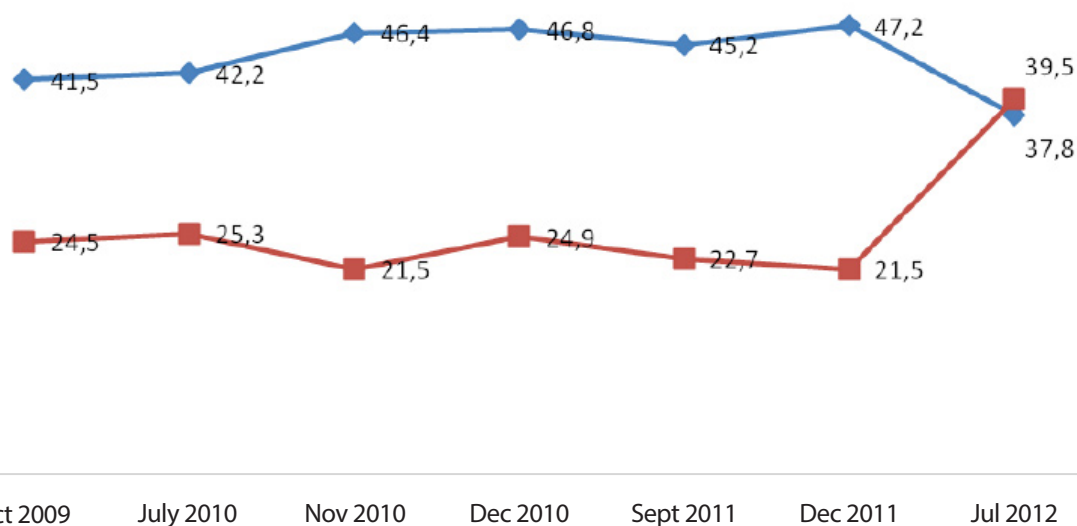
As for Montenegro's membership of NATO, the support is still low, at only 37.5. On the other side, 43% of the citizens are against joining NATO, while another 20% has no firm opinion on this matter.

However, compared to EU, the trust in NATO has not changed much over the last two years.

According to the latest poll, 33.3% of respondents reported high or generally high level of trust in the Alliance – 2% less than in December, but similar to the figures reported in the last two years.

As many as 39.5% of the respondents think that Montenegro is heading in the right direction, which is almost 8% less than in December last year. This figure, which reflects the overall mood in the society, is the lowest for the last few years, and is probably the result of economic crisis and social problems in the country.

At the same time, according to the poll, the percent of those who believe Montenegro is on the wrong track has increased from 21.5% in December to 37.8%.



CEDEM's research also shows that of all the institutions Montenegrin citizens trust the judiciary the least (41.8%), while the largest percentage has high or generally high trust in educational (59.4%) and health systems (60%).

V.Ž.



If the agreements on hydro power plants and submarine cables come to pass, Italy could cause energy instability in the Balkans

## Sucking energy out of Balkans



Dimitar Bečev

Italy could leave the West Balkan countries in the dark if the numerous energy agreements come to pass. The current plans envisage multiple hydro power plants, as well as a submarine cable between Tivat and the Italian coast. According to the report by the Bankwatch Network which monitors international financial institutions in Eastern Europe, and consists of a network of European environmental organisations, these agreements are highly controversial and in many ways out of step with EU regulations. According to the Bankwatch, Italy would profit from the exports of cheap energy and its firms wouldn't need to pay additional fees for the emission of polluting substances as long as the "dirty energy" is being produced outside of the EU borders. The report was published in late July, under the title "Partnership of unequals". The goal of the Bankwatch Network is to lobby the international financial institutions to only finance the environmentally sustainable projects. The organisation is mainly funded by the European Commission, European governments and foundations. Italy has big plans to import electricity from the southeast European countries, and it is receiving support from international institutions such as the European Commission and the EBRD to do so. While the deals being struck across southeast Europe are being hailed by their proponents as a great way to generate income from clean energy, independent media and civil society organizations across the region are less impressed, citing environmental damage, irregularities in the deals struck, and damage to the region's ability to meet its own renewable energy needs and reduce its CO2 emissions. Italy is not the only country involved in energy imports from southeast Europe. Almost all southeast European countries have declared their intentions to remain or become energy exporters, with destinations including Greece and central Europe. However the Italian case is currently attracting a great deal of attention because of the new greenfield infrastructure it would require and the lack of transparency of the deals struck so far. By 2020, according to its EU targets, Italy's share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption must reach 17 percent. By 2009 it had managed just 8.9 percent, claims the report. Part of this will be made up by imports of a total of 6 000

By 2020, according to its EU targets, Italy's share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption must reach 17%. By 2009 it had managed just 8.9%. Part of this will be made up by imports of a total of 6 000 gigawatt hours (GWh) from Montenegro and other countries linked to the Montenegrin supply network, starting from 2016, another 3 000 GWh from Albania also from 2016, and two years later another 600 GWh from Tunisia.



gigawatt hours (GWh) from Montenegro and other countries linked to the Montenegrin supply network, starting from 2016, another 3 000 GWh from Albania also from 2016, and two years later another 600 GWh from Tunisia. While the proportion of Italy's total renewables requirement may not be very large, for the small countries of southeast Europe the figures mentioned above are huge. The report points out that Albania in 2009 produced only 5 300 GWh of electricity, which means that Italy intends to import the equivalent of more

than 2/3 of Albania's production. This is all the more alarming when we consider that Albania is very reliant on energy imports, and that 2009 was a "good year" for Albanian electricity generation. At first glance, 6 000 GWh from other Balkan states does not look such an alarmingly high amount. Bosnia's electricity production in 2009 was 15 700 GWh, while Serbia's was 37 400 GWh. Montenegro produced around 2 700 GWh, and suffers from an electricity deficit. However, it is worth bearing in mind that both Bosnia and Serbia are currently very dependent on coal for electricity production. Of Bosnia's 15 700 GWh in 2009, 9 400 were from coal, while of Serbia's 37 400 GWh, 26 900 were from coal. "This means that as these countries attempt to make a transition to renewable energy and become subject to EU targets during the coming decades, exporting the electricity from their renewable resources may not prove to be such a wise idea" warns the Bankwatch. In addition, most of the planned projects for export so far involve hydropower. The International Energy Agency agrees that electricity exports to Italy involve risks: "This approach could lead to a drain of capacities (particularly peak hydropower) to the Italian market and create instability in the regional Western Balkans market". According to the Agency, electricity generation in the Balkans is already barely enough to cover domestic demand. Summer droughts have also reduced hydropower generation over the past few years. In winter months, high use of electricity for space heating in the Western Balkan region has led to increasingly high peak demand levels, adding major stress to the electricity systems. A further cause for concern is that Italy may in reality choose to increase the amount of imported energy, although not necessarily from renewable sources. Thus lignite plants such as Kolubara B in Serbia, which are supposedly planned for domestic consumption, may end up exporting energy to Italy. The Italian government has not yet been so transparent as to lay out a comprehensive plan regarding how it intends to import electricity from the Western Balkans and which generation facilities are involved. Montenegro has so far been at the centre of the plans, due to its importance in getting the electricity to Italy via an undersea cable planned to run from Tivat in Montenegro to Pescara in Italy. In December 2007 the representatives of the Italian energy transmission company Terna, and Montenegrin national energy provider, Elektroprivreda Crne Gore (EPCG), signed an agreement to start a working group that would examine this

## An unusual source

Pljevlja may seem like a rather strange centre for exporting renewable energy as Montenegro's only thermal power plant is situated there.. However, once the infrastructure is built Italy may also be interested in importing dirty energy from plants like Pljevlja or Kolubara B in Serbia. This would not help Italy to meet its renewables quota but it may save Italian companies from having to pay for Emissions Trading Scheme permits for as long as the Western Balkan countries are not members of the EU. Pljevlja is also the centre of the already existing transmission infrastructure in Montenegro, and its location in the north of the country also makes it an ideal spot for transmitting electricity generated in Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly from the River Drina on the border with Serbia, and from Serbia itself. According to the report, the Serbian government had also signed a number of controversial agreements with the Italian government and Seci Energia S.p.A. agreeing to jointly develop hydropower plants on the Drina and Ibar rivers.

possibility. Ever since, energy projects in Montenegro have been saddled with controversies. Italian utility company A2A won a tender for shares in EPCG in a procedure that was criticised by a disqualified Greek competitor, while Terna was able to gain shares in transmission company Crnogorski elektroprenos (CGES), without a tender at all, due to a law passed especially for the undersea cable, warns the Bankwatch Network. The undersea cable construction project is also facing problems. The costs are mostly to be covered by Terna, with Montenegro to contribute approximately EUR 100 million. However, it is estimated that Italy will save EUR 225 million a year by importing cheaper energy from Montenegro and its neighbouring countries through the cable, while Montenegro hopes to earn EUR 10-40 million annually

*Izvor: EurActiv.rs*

What we need to know before we decide to join European Union

# EU for citizens



Direktive, uredbe, aquis communitare, Savjet EU, poglavlja, screening, ...Koliko građana Crne Gore, ali i većine država koje pretenduju da postanu članice EU ili onih koji su u EU, razumiju ili poznaju ovu terminologiju?

Suštinski, za život su bitna potpuno druga pitanja od poznavanja uglavnom nezaobilaznih birokratskih termina, kao ona o uslovima rada u EU, cijenama, veličini voća, vozačkim dozvolama, školama,... Zbog toga Evropski puls objavljuje odgovore na pitanja bitna za svakodnevni život, a koja bi građanima Crne Gore trebala da približe Uniju.

## Can pets travel abroad in European Union?

They can, if they have a European passport for pets, except to the UK, which has different rules about the entry of animals to its territory. The European pet passport is valid for cats, dogs and ferrets and needs to contain information about vaccinations. For other animals, national legislation applies. Transport of endangered species is subject to special supervision.

## How can one check if a certain producer applied adequate environmental standards?

“Ecolabel” is the EU certificate issued since 1992 to the providers of goods and services who comply with the environmental standards. Known as the “green flower” the label can be found on product packaging. The label has to be renewed every three years. The criteria that qualify a provider for the Ecolabel are extremely stringent, and derived from scientific research on environmental impact, from the extraction of raw materials to production, sale and disposal of the product. Ecolabel doesn't apply to the products related to food, drinks, pharmaceuticals and medical equipment.



## How strict are EU's sanctions against pollution?

Very. The European Commission demands that the member states transpose all EU directives on environment and implement them within the national jurisdiction. The directives contain detailed descriptions of activities that are subject to sanctions for violating environmental norms. Should the member states fail to implement the directives within the given deadline, the Commission can refer the case to the European Court of Justice, resulting in financial sanctions for the non-complying member states.





### How does EU protect the natural sources of drinking water?

Protection of ground and coastal water resources, and especially drinking water, is the basis of environmental protection in EU. In order to protect human health and ensure access to drinking water to all EU citizens, the Directive on drinking water requires all member states to monitor water quality via 48 microbiological and chemical indicators, conduct regular checks and inform the public about the quality of water. Every three years the member states should submit information on water quality to the European Commission, to be published on its website.

### What are the incentives for the use of solar energy?

EU's incentives for research and development of projects on photocells have been in place for more than 30 years. Between 2003 and 2006 the 6th EU Framework Programme for research and technological development allocat-

ed more than 100 million euro to solar energy research, and the trend continued under the 7th FP currently in place. Several EU directives have been adopted regulating the use of renewable energy sources. The directives date from 2001, 2003 and 2009 and recommend financing of such projects through structural funds. Today some 35 billion euro are spent every year in EU on renewable energy projects, including both national and EU programmes. This reduced the costs of solar energy production by 60% in the last nine years. EU is committed to increasing the share of renewable energy in total consumption to 20% by 2020.

### Do all member states recognize same-sex marriage?

Registered partnerships which can also be made between people of the same sex exist in Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Finland, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Hungary, Slovenia and UK. However, the rights and obligations contained in the institution of registered partnership vary between the member states.

### Is there such a thing as reduced years of service in EU? How much is an average EU pension?

Every EU member decides on its own age limit for retirement. The amount of pension depends on the contributions during the working years. An average pension in 2007 was between 3 000 euro per year in Bulgaria, Romania, Latvia, Letonia and Estonia, and 14 000 in Austria, Denmark, France, Luxembourg and Sweden. The minimum pension also varies depending on a range of factors such as inflation, standard of living, wage growth, gross national income... Reduced years of service are relatively rare in EU labour regulations, and high-risk jobs are usually compensated by higher wages and special insurance arrangements.

*Source: "101 question on EU's influence on the lives of citizens", published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integrations of Croatia – [www.mvpei.hr](http://www.mvpei.hr)*

## Marshall Memorial Fellowship in Montenegro

Once again Centre for Civic Education (CCE) hosted the participants of the American Marshall Memorial Fellowship programme, who visited Montenegro between 6<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> July 2012. Marshall Memorial Fellowship was founded in 1982, on the initiative of the German Marshall Fund in the USA with a goal of introducing the new generation of European leaders to the USA. The aim of the project is to allow for exchange of experiences, ideas and best practices between the US and Europe. Young leaders from US and Europe get a chance to experience the culture and the way of life on the other side of the Atlantic. The participants have formal and informal meetings with politicians, makers of financial and legal decisions and the renowned members of society from various spheres. The programme covers the US and 39 European countries, and is one of the most prestigious leadership programmes in the world, linking more than 2500 leaders from across the globe. Visits of the American Marshall Memorial Fellowship to Montenegro have become a tradition on the initiative of CCE, which hosted the first such group in 2008. This year's representatives of the AMMF were young leaders from various fields: **Luke Clippinger**, assistant state prosecutor and member of the Maryland State House of Delegates; **Jeremy Cole**, a major gifts officer for the US Fund for UNICEF in Atlanta, Georgia; **Keech Harris**, president of KHA Inc, a consulting firm for public health, headquartered in Birmingham, Alabama; **Emily Kuo**, chief consultant at MD Anderson Services Corporation, a nonprofit organization that operates within the University of Texas; **Roland McReinolds**, executive director of the Association of Carolina Farm Stewardship Association (CFSA), an association of organic farmers; and **Cecilia Retel**, senior director for public policy of the American Forum for Political Innovation and senior director for public policy at the Institute for the competitive workforce (ICV) American Chamber of Commerce. During their visit to Montenegro, the fellows got to learn about different aspects of Montenegro's economy and society by travelling around the country and talking to the people active in politics, business, NGO sector, media, etc. The delegation was also received by the President of Montenegro **Filip Vujanović**, who expressed his admiration for CCE's initiative in organising these important visits for already five years. In a long, open discussion President Vujanović talked to the fellows about economic and political situation in Montenegro, its integration perspectives and plans, relations with the neighbours and situation in the region. The visitors also had a chance to talk to the Secretary General of the Parliament of Montenegro **Damir Davidović**, as well as with **Aleksandar Damjanović**, president of the parliamentary group of the Socialist People's Party (SNP) and president of the Committee for Economy, Finance and Budget. Through the Marshall Fellowship Fund, CCE is developing cooperation with the most renowned organisations from around the world and broadening the circle of those who have an immediate knowledge of Montenegro and could, in the future, find ways to contribute to its further development.

## The role of the civil society in EU integrations in the region

On 19.07.2012 in Hotel Crna Gora coalition "Euroblok" organised a regional conference titled "*Civil Society Organisations and Monitoring of the European Integration Process in the Western Balkans*", as part of the project "*Empowering civil society to contribute to the accession and European integration process*". The project is being implemented by the European Movement in Montenegro (EMiM) in cooperation with the Monitoring Centre (CEMI) and Institute Alternative (IA) from Podgorica, and Centre for Economic Development (CED) from Sofia, with support of the European Delegation in Montenegro. The regional conference was opened by **Dawn Adie-Baird** on behalf of the EU Delegation to Montenegro and **Mirsad Bibović**, secretary general of the Montenegrin Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integrations, who both stressed the importance and the need for cooperation between the Government and NGOs in the process of European integration, and urged raising the existing cooperation to a higher level. Introductory words were followed by two panel discussions. The first, titled "*Current practices in monitoring of European integration process in the West Balkan countries*" featured presentations by **Maja Bobić** from the European Movement in Serbia, **Anelia Damianova** from the Centre for Economic Development in Bulgaria, **Lejla kablar** from the Foreign Policy Initiative of BiH and **Zlatko Vujović** from the Monitoring Centre of Montenegro. At the second panel discussion, "*Experiences and new models of cooperation between governments and civil societies of the Western Balkans in the process of European integration*", the speakers were **Damir Davidović**, secretary general of the Parliament of Montenegro, **Boris Marić** from Centre for Civic Education (CCE), **Lidia Dimova** from the Macedonian Centre for European Education, **Gledis Djipali**, European Movement in Albania, **Gordan Bosanac** from the Centre for Peace Studies in Zagreb, **Ana Novaković**, Centre for Development of Non-Governmental Organisations and **Jovana Marović** from the Institute Alternative from Podgorica. The panellists presented their experiences

in government-NGO cooperation as well as the obstacles they faced, but also offered the solutions for complementary involvement of the two sectors in the next stages of integration. They all stressed the importance of exchanging experiences and among the countries of the region, especially with regard to monitoring and reporting on the process of European integrations. **Ana Vujošević**, CCE programme coordinator, also represented CCE at the conference.

## Assembly of the Coalition “Achievements through cooperation”

On 07.07.2012 around 150 delegates of non-governmental organisations members of the Coalition “Achievements through cooperation” met in Podgorica. The meeting was chaired by **Nada Koprivica**, executive director of SOS Telephone from Nikšić, and the assembly agreed on the amended Statute of the Coalition to bring it in line with the new Law on NGOs. The assembly also adopted new regulations on the principles of organisation and functioning of the managing bodies, elected new leadership and adopted the programmatic and financial report. The novelty regarding the Coalition’s managing bodies is that the future members of the Board of Managers will also include representatives of the local committees elected by the organisations in their municipalities. **Milan Šaranović**, director of the Centre for Anti-Discrimination “*Ekvista*” was elected the new Chairman of the Assembly. **Goran Đurović**, head of the TACSO office in Montenegro, was re-elected as the head of the Managing Board. The assembly concluded that the Coalition will continue to lobby for development and improvement of the status of NGOs in Montenegro, and continue to improve their cooperation with public institutions. **Mirela Rebronja**, CCE programme coordinator, represented CCE at the Assembly. CCE was also elected as one of the organisations participating in Managing Board.

## The future of student activism in Montenegro

Between 4 and 7 July 2012 the Student Union organised a camp seminar at the popular “Niagara Waterfalls” in Podgorica, with the aim of empowering student population to participate in the decision making process in a more organised and effective manner. The seminar consisted of a series of presentations, workshops and film screenings tackling various issues in the field of student rights and civic courage. Among the lecturers at the seminar were **Daliborka Uljarević**, executive director of the Centre for Civic Education (CCE), professor of literature **Božena Jelušić** and Rector of the University of Montenegro **Predrag Miranović**.

## Social Democracy Week

Between 29.06 and 06.07.2012 Friedrich Ebert Foundation and Centre for the Study of Social Democracy (CSSD) organised the regional summer school “Social Democracy Week” at the lake Palić in Serbia. The school brought together 100 participants from social-democratic parties, NGO youth activists and representatives of trade unions from former Yugoslav countries with the goal of promoting the ideas and values of social democracy among the young, but also in order to train them in the applied political skill. The lecturers were selected among the experts, researchers and social and political analysts from the region, and included **Gordana Čomić**, deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Serbia; **Maja Sedlarević**, deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Vojvodina; **Dijana Vukomanović**, deputy President of the Socialist Party of Serbia; **Marko Karadžić**, human rights commissioner of the Liberal-Democratic Party of Serbia; **Daliborka Uljarević**, executive director of the Centre for Civic Education (CCE); **Žarko Puhovski**, professor at the Department of Philosophy of the University of Zagreb; **Aleksandra Joksimović**, president of the Foreign Policy Centre; **Slaviša Orlović**, professor at the Political Science Department in Belgrade; **Vladimir Pavićević**, professor at the Political Science Department in Belgrade; **Dušan Spasojević**, assistant lecturer at the Political Science Department in Belgrade; **Jelena Kleut**, assistant lecturer at the Department of Philosophy in Novi Sad; **Dragoljub Mićunović**, president of the Political Council of the Democratic Party and **Michael Ehrke**, head of the regional office of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. The lectures were organised as a series of discussions on various topics of importance for the development of the West Balkan countries, and included a number of workshops in the areas of teamwork, political communication, political campaigns, public appearance, leadership etc. **Željka Četković**, CCE programme associate, participated in the school as a representative of CCE.



## Paid Journalism/General Traineeships in EU Parliament

Paid traineeships are awarded solely to graduates of universities or equivalent institutions who are nationals of member states of EU or of an applicant country (Croatia, Iceland, Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro or Turkey). Their purpose is to enable trainees to supplement the knowledge which they acquired during their studies and to familiarise themselves with the activities of the European Union and, in particular, the European Parliament. Applicants for Robert Schuman scholarships, general option, must also demonstrate that they have produced a substantial written paper, as part of the requirements for a university degree or for a scientific journal. One of these scholarships, known as the 'Chris Piening Fellowship', may be awarded to a candidate whose paper was concerned particularly with relations between the European Union and the United States.

Applicants for Robert Schuman scholarships, journalism option, must also demonstrate professional experience as evidenced either by works published, or by membership of an association of journalists in a Member State of the European Union, or by a qualification in journalism recognised in the Member States of the European Union or in the applicant countries. Paid traineeships are awarded for a period of five months. The beginning of this traineeship is 1 March, 2012. The application period is from 15 August to 15 October (midnight). After filling in your application please print the summary and make sure that it is complete before submitting. Any incomplete applications will automatically be rejected.

To obtain further information, please contact the appropriate office for this traineeship, after reading the relevant rules:

European Parliament | Traineeships Office | PRE 03B026 | L – 2929  
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