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Border disputes may slow down the progress of Montenegro and other West Balkan states towards EU

Interview

Media analyst and freelance journalist
Dragoljub Duško Vuković

Challenges in the EU

Syriza shakes the Union



Foreword: Syriza and hypocrites



Vladan Žugjić

What should we call the panicked reactions in Brussels and other European centres of power to Syriza's victory in the Greek elections, while the same have only voiced timid criticism of **Viktor Orbán's** autocratic rule in Hungary? What should we call the carefree comments on the strengthening of right wing forces in Denmark, France... compared to their reactions to the victory of left-wing Syriza?

And how exactly should we understand congratulations from the Montenegrin Prime Minister **Milo Đukanović**, declared one of the 100 most powerful politicians in the world by *Independent*, to Syriza's leader **Alexis Tsipras**? As protocol?!

How should we understand the enthusiasm of Montenegrin opposition for Syriza's victory, as they go from defeat to defeat without a thought spared for their own responsibility? As a complex? While they spring up to the first note of any nationalist tune, Tsipras worked to solve country's socio-economic problems and overthrew domination of a few oligarchic families and a two-party system that had Greece in their hands since 1974.

The word is hypocrisy.

The development of political relations in Europe, from the end of the Second World War to the fall of the Berlin wall and USSR, indicates that communism and socialism, theoretically designed as societies of equals, are ideologically closer to south Europeans. In France (**Francios Hollande** did not support Syriza for no reason) and Italy, right wing parties held on to power until the fall of the Iron Curtain, thanks to the help from the USA and the fear of the Soviet boot stomped on the necks of Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968, accompanied by economic stagnation of the East compared to the West. The Allied forces got rid of communists in Greece after the fall of fascism, although they were the key force of resistance.

The potential exit of Greece from the Eurozone will not harm the EU, as its share of EU's GDP is barely 2%. Syriza is seen as danger to the dominant neoliberal concept of the Union. Today Syriza, tomorrow Podemos in Spain, then who knows what next... The EU is founded on the principles of solidarity and equal opportunities.

Tsipras does not look like a hypocrite. And, although he set the negotiation bar on debt restructuring with the EU very high, it doesn't look like he will lower it so much as to get himself dirty.

If nothing else, Syriza is a sobering slap in the face for the EU's and Balkans' elites.

Calendar

- 1 January **Latvia to chair the EU** / Latvia took over the presidency of EU from Italy, emphasising as its main priorities increased competitiveness and efforts to ensure EU's energy independence.
- 6 January **Enlargement policy based on the principle of conditionality** / According to the programme of the upcoming Latvian presidency, during its time at the helm of the EU Latvia will manage the enlargement policy in line with the principles of conditionality and individual merit of candidate countries, as measured by their achievements in fulfilling the tasks set by the EU. The document, which only contains a few lines on enlargement, also notes that Latvia recognises the strategic importance of enlargement and will work to advance current negotiations with Serbia, Montenegro and Turkey.
- 15 January **Government plans to spend most of the 270 million from the EU on the rule of law** / The new EU support programme allocated EUR 270.5 million to Montenegro – 10% more than in the previous seven-year period, said the chief negotiator **Aleksandar Andrija Pejović**. According to him, the Government will spend these funds through eight budget lines, out of which the majority, or EUR 52.3 million, will be invested in the rule of law, and EUR 47 million on the improvement of democratic ambient.
- 20 January **Improvement needed in practice, not just in action plans** / Progress in negotiations between Montenegro and the EU has to be accompanied with visible results in practice, and it should not be limited to the mere adoption of action plans and strategies, warns the draft Resolution on Montenegro of the European Parliament, recently debated in the EP's Foreign Affairs Committee.
- The draft encourages swift continuation of the accession negotiations with Montenegro, provided that reforms are pursued and implemented, and concrete results delivered regarding the rule of law. The document, prepared by the rapporteur for Montenegro, **Charles Tannock**, expresses concerns over deteriorating situation in the field of media freedom, the politicization of state administration, limited progress in the fight against corruption, that still threatens the stability of democratic institutions and the rule of law, as well as over the excessive influence on judiciary, especially with regard to the appointment and promotion of judges and prosecutors.

The EU and the Western Balkans need to commit to dialogue



By: Zhikica Zach Pagovski



By: Nesti Gjeluçi

"I used to care, but things have changed" says a Bob Dylan song. Surely he was not referring to the Western Balkans' integration into the European Union, but those words could describe the feelings of both sides. It is safe to say that the Western Balkans still have an interest in joining, just like the EU still has an interest in providing incentives for the Balkan countries to join. But for progress to be made, the EU will have to redefine its core values, and the Balkans countries will have to confront the hard truths of their history and avoid a repetition of past mistakes.

In the recent past, joining Euroatlantic institutions and alliances like the EU and NATO was almost a given. After the fall of communist governments in Eastern Europe, these institutions meant prosperity and progress, which was achieved EU enlargement's carrot-and-stick approach. As the principal post-war peace and integration project on the continent, the EU has long been a magnet for many countries. However, due to the European economic crisis and its political, social, and economic impact on the newly accepted countries, the waters are muddier now.

Jean-Claude Juncker, the new president of the EU Commission, has stated that the Union will not add new members in the next five years. He downsized the EU Directorate General for enlargement to focus more on the EU neighborhood policy. This aroused concerns many among Balkan countries about their prospective paths to EU membership.

More recently, **Vladimir Putin's** Russia is exerting its influence in multiple ways, which could make the choice less clear for some Balkan countries. From Russian flag parades in Montenegro to Putin's visit to Serbia and the plan for the South Stream gas pipeline, Russian influence is growing in Southeast Europe. How serious this influence is in terms of providing an alternative for Balkan countries remains to be seen, but Hungary's example of democratic backsliding is not encouraging. In the face of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, Europe has a renewed chance to redefine what it stands for and reaffirm its commitment to its principles. Those values that lead to freedom, prosperity, and human dignity are under threat. Young democracies like those in the Western Balkans need clear incentives that would lead them towards a society based on respect for human rights and rule of law; otherwise, Western Europe risks losing them again.

The name dispute between Greece and Macedonia

continues to obstruct Macedonia's EU accession. The Greek impasse risks destabilizing Macedonia domestically because of its mixed ethnic composition and political polarization. The case of Bosnia and Herzegovina is also complicated by strong divisions along ethnic lines. Kosovo is unable to move much further toward accession due to the pending independence dispute with Serbia. Montenegro is probably the Balkan country closest to accession, but it has hit stumbling blocks of EU criticism of Podgorica for slow progress in fighting organized crime and corruption.

The EU needs to understand that these countries are made up of people who are still trying to reconcile with their past, and that the EU – for better or worse – is part of that past. The EU should actively promote the culture of dialogue and civic discourse in this region – the kind of dialogue that leads to reconciliation and forgiveness of past wrongs. Both the public in the region and Euroatlantic institutions need to see that the Balkans have moved on from the bitter ethnic and religious hatred that led to ugly wars not so long ago. Petty conflicts such as those arising out of soccer matches need to be nipped in the bud through civic dialogue so that concrete policy decisions can open the path to cooperation between the EU and the Balkan countries as well as among the Balkan countries themselves.

The region must strengthen the cultural norm of being open to civic dialogue, both internally and with the EU. Meanwhile, the EU has to be clear that it can offer a model for such fruitful dialogue. Imposing economic, institutional, and political standards is critical, but behind each of these components are people who remain either culturally unprepared or politically unmotivated to foster such an environment. The EU has to recognize that these countries are slowly recovering from painful interethnic wars and an authoritarian communist past that has seriously corroded their ability to reconcile. But also, both the EU and non-member Balkan states need to acknowledge that some things have changed and demonstrate that they still care, because all of their futures are at stake.

The authors are development and partnership officers for civil society in the Washington, DC office of The German Marshall Fund.

<http://blog.gmfus.org/2015/01/26/the-eu-and-the-western-balkans-need-to-commit-to-dialogue/>

Nationalist bickering and border disputes threaten to slow down the progress of Montenegro and other states of Western Balkan towards EU

Borders that distance us from the EU



By: Svetlana Pešić

Analysts agree that disputes over borders can affect the progress of Montenegro and other Western Balkans states towards the EU, as they stoke latent nationalism from which the region has not yet recovered. Besides, as some of them point out, a part of the Balkan elite is fine with nationalist disputes, because they allow them to ignore socio-economic problems as well as the question of reforms of the rule of law, which are of key importance for EU membership.

Although the perpetrator was never uncovered, the appearance of a drone carrying the flag of Great Albania last autumn in Belgrade, during a football game between national teams of Serbia and Albania, has led to a shouting match between the Serbian government and Pristina, but also to stone-throwing attacks on facilities owned by Albanians in Serbia. Because of the drone, hooligans in Podgorica threw stones at the Albanian embassy. A protest was recently organised, gathering about 300 people, to protest the visit from Kosovo's head of foreign affairs **Hashim Thaçi**. The event was supported by the Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC) and by some opposition parties that, to make the paradox even bigger, advocate integration into EU. Soon afterwards, the question of demarcation between Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina was suddenly raised, drawing renewed attention to the question of demarcation between Montenegro and Croatia at Prevlaka. Coincidentally or not, depending on who you ask, in response to the events in Podgorica, the embassy of Montenegro in Priština was also stoned a few days ago, during the protests by the Kosovo's opposition parties. If we add to this the reactions to the return of **Vojislav Šešelj** from the Hague, disputes between Belgrade and

There is a clear inverse relationship between intolerant nationalism and Euro integrations, says Zoran Stojiljković, professor at the Faculty of Political sciences, University of Belgrade.

Zagreb, the situation the Balkans seems more heated than it has been in a long while. *"Normalisation of relations, regulation of conflicts and disputes and regional cooperation are the (pre)conditions of further progress of Montenegro and other states of the region towards the EU, their chosen political destination. The EU unequivocally seeks pacification of conflicts, and the procedure for accession of a new member state, which requires consensus of all member states, creates clear additional restrictions. On the other hand, the nationalist rhetoric is flammable, and in our region it can never remain within the borders of one state. The conclusion is clear – there is a clear inverse relationship between intolerant nationalism and Euro integration", Zoran Stojiljković, professor at the Faculty of Political sciences, University of Belgrade told European pulse.*



Zoran Stojiljković

The example of Slovenia and Croatia shows if the dispute cannot be solved through direct negotiations, the countries should request arbitration or mediation of an international court. Neither of those solutions need imply deterioration in intergovernmental relations. The worst case scenario would be to delay resolution of the problem, allowing its corrosive effect to spread, says foreign policy commentator Boško Jakšić.

Even though during the last two to three years some politicians, Bosnian intellectuals and bishop of SOC **Grigorije** publicly expressed their views that Sutorina should belong to BiH, it was expected that in a few weeks the parliaments of the two states will formally adopt the Agreement on demarcation. Then the representative of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) in the House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH, **Denis Bećirović**, tabled a motion for a resolution on Sutorina which demands that this legislative body should declare the proposed agreement on the state border between

BiH and Montenegro "unacceptable, unfounded and damaging". Parliamentary Assembly of BiH decided that a constitutional legal commission should start a discussion on this issue by 27th February, although the conclusions of Badinter Arbitration Committee clearly state that the borders of SFRY republics will become state borders of the newly created states.

Foreign policy commentator from Belgrade, **Boško Jakšić**, points to the territorial dispute between Slovenia, as a member state of EU, and Croatia, which at the time was not yet part of this elite club. That dispute slowed down the accession of Croatia to the EU because of the conditions imposed by Slovenia.

Although that particular example was not mentioned, **Milo Đukanović**

and **Igor Lukšić**, Montenegro's Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs respectively, pointed out that Montenegro, which is far closer to accession than BiH, cannot be slowed down on its way to EU because of Sutorina. "Regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations are not just the essential part of the process of EU integration, but also an integral part of Progress report, that the European Commission regularly issues, and that is why the role of the EU is significant in the entire region. Regardless of the fact that these disputes have no potential nowadays to escalate into possess armed conflicts, they still influence the pace of integrations. The example of Slovenia and Croatia shows that if the dispute cannot be solved in direct negotiations, the countries should request arbitrage or mediation of an international court. Neither of those solutions need imply deterioration in intergovernmental relations. The worst case scenario would be to delay resolution of the problem, allowing its corrosive effect to spread," Jakšić pointed out.

Geopolitics analyst **Blagoje Grahovac** says that AVNOJ borders and the Dayton Agreement are the two founding elements of BiH and that there cannot

Montenegro may not be able to influence EU's politics and priorities, but it can influence the character, dynamics and success of reforms and its socio-economic development, as well as the quality of relations with its own neighbours – and it should commit to them fully. Of crucial importance here is the readiness of public institutions and political powers to forge a broad consensus around these issues, says Branko Lukovac, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro.

be a third one. Those who raised the question of Sutorina are aware that the AVNOJ borders and the Dayton Agreement guarantee the unity of BiH, and their sole goal is to preserve the regime by lobbying in this manner. There is also the danger that EU, Brussels and Washington administration will reject these goals, which is why this can become an obstacle to further progress towards EU, Grahovac warned.



Blagoje Grahovac

According to the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro, **Branko Lukovac**, the conflict over Sutorina in some parts of BiH is above the effect of internal political rivalries in the country – one more in a series of inner conflicts among political forces, an attempt to win over part of the public and gain political. "Public institutions and political actors in Montenegro should not allow themselves to be drawn into this or to jeopardise good neighbourly relations, which could only benefit some ill-intentioned groups. In that sense, I don't think it was necessary to make the political and diplomatic show of the appointment of Montenegro's ambassador to BiH" Lukovac said. Lukovac believes that Montenegro does not have serious border problems with its neighbours, and that they, as such, should not slow down the progress of Montenegro towards EU. "When I say that, what I have in mind is the status of only serious and definitely unresolved border problem with Croatia – Prevlaka, which is still governed

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Boško Jakšić



Branko Lukovac

by the Temporary Agreement of 2002. In the past 12 years, there were no problems with the implementation of that Agreement. Either way, the two governments agreed to seek out a definite solution, either through bilateral negotiations between the two states, or by entrusting the decision to the International court of justice in The Hague."

According to him, there are no grounds or apparent intensions of Croatia using its EU membership to force a solution or to slow down the process of negotiations or Montenegro's progress towards EU membership. *"Have the Croatia and Slovenia had such temporary agreement regarding the demarcation on sea in the gulf of Piran, there would have been no possibility of blocking negotiations and Croatia's progress towards the EU membership"*, Lukovac said. He explained that despite the rather favourable state of Montenegrin relations with its neighbours, the pace of genuine reforms in the country, overall situation in the region, new approaches to the EU enlargement policy towards the Western Balkans, as well as other regional and global problems and priorities, can slow down the process of negotiations and with that prospects of Montenegro's membership in next 5-10 years. *"Regarding the question of EU politics and priorities, Montenegro may not be able to influence them, but it can influence the character, dynamics and success of*

reforms and its socio-economic development, as well as the quality of relations with its own neighbours – and it should commit to them fully. Of crucial importance here is the readiness of public institutions and political powers to forge a broad consensus around these issues", Lukovac said.

Alida Vračić, director of research centre "Populari" from Sarajevo, believes that the question of borders should first and foremost be separated from nationalist disputes, their context and potential consequences. *"The question of borders and disputes over issues such as Prevlaka and Sutorina, are in a way a natural continuation of the process of independence of the states formed by disintegration of former Yugoslavia. The existence of open questions is nothing out of the ordinary, but, in that context, it is much more important to know how to approach their solution. Has the scientific and academic community been involved, have the right sources been consulted or are we just talking about political games aimed to gain rights over some imaginary goals? The maturity of the society in which we live, that aspires to join a much larger community (EU), is, among other things, shown in that way. In short, disputes, arguments, interpretations, are not inherently bad – on the contrary, but only if conducted in a mature and clever manner with meaningful goals"*, Vračić explains.



Alida Vračić

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Vračić warns that, on the other hand, purposeless nationalist demagoguery is pulling us back into the past: *"The talk about greater Albania, greater Serbia, as well as the current issue of war crimes have been slowing down the reform processes in the region for years. After the turbulent 1990s everybody understands that there can be no maximum demands, and that all of us will have to learn to how to discuss, search and accomplish things in a smart and constructive manner."*

Media analyst and freelance journalist
Dragoljub Duško Vuković

Instead of upward, we are headed downward

» *How would you describe the state of the media scene in Montenegro?*

I would describe the state of the media scene in Montenegro as - a state of decline. When I say that, I think of the decline of professional and ethical standards, a decline of standards among those working in the media and a decline of thrust in journalism among the citizens. This, of course, does not mean that any of this used to be particularly high in the past, but the problem is that the imperative of the historical moment was to go up, not down - **Dragoljub Duško Vuković**, a media analyst and independent reporter told *European Pulse* in the interview on the occasion of the Day of Journalists of Montenegro - 23 January.

» *What is the reason for this state?*

There is number of reasons for being in this state, and prosperity should not be expected any time soon. Some of these reasons can be found in the current political, economic and social environment and that context is limiting and affecting badly the mass media in general, and particularly journalism. The main media are, mostly, directly or indirectly controlled by the ones



Dragoljub Duško Vuković

who have been in power for too long, and who want to preserve it at all cost, or by the ones who have been opposing that government for too long and inefficiently. Both sides mostly approach the media from the perspective of their own interests, whereas the public interest is of

It is my impression that deterioration of the state of the Montenegrin media scene coincides with reduction or complete termination of material or intellectual support from Europe to the local media and media professionals.

secondary importance to them. This state of affairs is not suitable for the development of responsible, professional journalism, nor for articulating and undertaking some serious emancipating efforts in media. Unfortunately, there is not a single medium of any influence that would be primarily focused on serving the public interest, on seeking to emancipate the residents of this so called environmental state of Montenegro into self-aware citizens who would take theirs, and the fate of the society, into their own hands.

» *Where do you see the solution, and how does the Government see it? What will be the result of divisions in the Montenegrin media scene?*

The problem is not the fact that the media scene is divided. We should not all think the same, nor should all the media be in some blissful harmony. All should, however, respect the basic professional and ethnic standards and, when it comes to journalism, primarily be in the service of public interest. In the middle of the last decade we have laid the grounds for one positive trend - a set of modern media laws was adopted, and a common centre for the education of journalists and other media professionals was founded, thanks to financial aid from foreigners (Institute for the media). A modern school of journalism was established and a single Code of Conduct for Montenegrin journalists was adopted. And instead of further building on that foundation,



they began to squander it. One of the ruins was also a once unified self-regulatory body, which later was supposedly resurrected as a mockery – the so called Media Council for Self-Regulation. Of course, the solution lies in the reconstruction of the once solid foundations, but I am afraid that this is not possible given the current state of the Montenegrin society and the media scene.

» How do you explain the fact that Serbia is more closely observed by the EU and OSCE than Montenegro when it comes to the freedom of expression, although Montenegro has the majority of its media under control of those in power, and is still struggling with a high number of unresolved attacks on journalists and media property, and with financial pressures on disobedient media and their journalists?

I am not sure that the things are really as your question implies, but it is a possible point of view. If this is the case, it might as well mean that we in Montenegro have lost the importance of being the "positive example" in the region and that the foreigners have given up on us and left us to deal with our own misery. It is my impression that deterioration of the state of Montenegrin media scene coincides with the reduction or termination of material or intellectual support from Europe to the local media and media professionals.

» To what extent is the situation on the global stage, in which the EU and the international organisations that could in principle put pressure on the national authorities have been preoccupied with their own problems – the economic crisis, Ukraine, ISIL, now

As Montenegro, and the entire region, lack authentic critical mass to reverse negative trends, it is natural to count on help from side factors. I am afraid that such help won't be available to the extent and with the force we would require. At the first sight, it could seem unsettling, but it could also have an encouraging effect.

Syria – dangerous in the long run for the freedom of expression in Montenegro and the Balkans?

Since Montenegro, and the entire region, lacks authentic critical mass to reverse negative trends, it is natural to count on the help from outsiders. I am afraid that such help won't be available to the extent and with the force we would require. At the first sight, this could seem unsettling, but it could also have an encouraging effect. As long as you look back and expect from others to save you, you are prone to underestimating your own potential and capabilities and do not develop them. The sweetest and most sustainable freedom is the one we have won for ourselves.

» What do you have to say about the terrorist attack on "Charlie Hebdo" and the fact that journalists are increasingly targets of terrorist organisations or conflicted parties?

In a world that struggles under the influence of an economic, social, political and moral crisis and is witnessing a growing number of conflicts, violence, anger, fear and lack of perspective, nothing is surprising, not even the fact that someone would walk into a newspaper office and kill a dozen people. The massacre that took place in the offices of the satirical weekly "Charlie Hebdo" is a terrifying illustration of the current state of the world. I hope that this is not a prelude to worse things to come, but I fear that this might be the case. Journalists are easy targets because their line of work renders them unprotected and easily available. Unfortunately, precisely this line of work also makes them into attractive targets, not, it seems to me, because of what they do, but because of what they stand for.

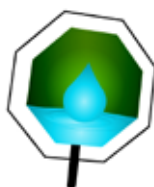
V.Žugić

Hangovers cost EU 155 billion euro



The hangovers of employees after holiday celebrations take a high toll on the European companies and society. According to a report prepared by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) from Toronto for the European Commission, the social costs attributed to alcohol in Europe are estimated at EUR 155.8 billion per year. Experts point to numerous consequences of excessive consumption of alcoholic beverages, but also to the fact that the EU has not adopted a new strategy for the fight against the consequences of alcohol. Every EU citizen above 15 years old drinks an average of 12.5 litres of pure alcohol every year, or almost three drinks a day, which is more than twice the world average, according to the World Health Organization report for 2012, *EurActiv.com* reports. A study done for the travel website *lastminute.com*, that included 1.500 persons in the UK shows that about 25% of the employees of the company work less than four hours on the day following Christmas celebrations, while 20% call in sick.

Irish sick and tired of paying for water



The announcement of charges for tap water in Ireland in 2015 has widespread dissatisfaction and protests in the country. Several protests were organised in autumn, and the last one, in December 2014, drew between 30.000 and 100.000 protesters, depending on the source. This outcome was unexpected, seen that Ireland had implemented tough austerity measures for several years without any resistance from the preparation. Water charges are part of a package of measures stipulated by the terms of the bailout extended to Ireland by the EU and IMF. Even when factoring in all the discounts, the Irish will have to pay EUR 0.89 per cubic meter of water, which is the lowest price in the EU. Until now, the supply of tap water was financed from general taxes, and was delegated to local authorities. The task will from now on be overseen by a semi-public company Irish Water. The discovery that this

company had paid hefty fees to the consulting firms and distributed bonuses to its employees has further angered the Irish people. Political columnist **Gerard Howlin** pointed out that the wave of discontent surprised the authorities, after six years of peaceful acceptance of austerity measures that until now had saved them EUR 30 billion. He believes that it can lead to collapse of the ruling coalition in the upcoming elections planned for 2016.

EU members to decide independently on GMO



With a new regulation to be implemented in the spring, the EU is on the way to allow its member states to decide independently whether to restrict or ban cultivation of crops containing genetically modified organisms (GMO). After banning GMOs, the member states will be able to invoke the protection of environment, agriculture or socio-economic policy even if Brussels should approve of the cultivation. Opponents of the GMO have greeted the new regulation while the proponents have attacked it, arguing that it undermines the single market.

On the 13 January, the European Parliament adopted a new directive on GMOs, scheduled to come into force in spring 2015, after being approved by the European Council. The GMO directive was first proposed in 2010, but there has been a delay because of disagreements between the member states. GM crops are widespread in both Americas and Asia, while in the EU they are grown in only five member states. Monsanto corn MON810 is currently the only GMO being grown in the EU, mostly in Spain and Portugal, but also in the Czech Republic, Romania and Slovakia. GM potato "Amflora" was banned in the EU by court decision in 2013, after being approved by the European Commission.

In addition to countries that already cultivate GMOs, the UK and the Netherlands also support its introduction. The most severe opponents are the France, Germany, Luxembourg and Austria, as well as Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Poland and Italy, all of which have adopted measures to protect themselves from GMOs.

Region in the crossfire of great powers

European ramp for Russia in the Balkans

The US and its allies have partially returned to the strategy of "cold war" in Europe. As part of the efforts to use sanctions to isolate and weaken Russia and its interests on the continent, above all through great pressure from Washington, the project for the South stream pipeline was halted, with Serbia and Bulgaria paying the highest price. Analysts from both sides of the Atlantic have arrived at a similar conclusion, and now the EU made it clear that the Russian-Turkish pipeline project "Turkish stream" is equally "unfeasible". The pipeline would supply gas to the EU via a gas node on the Turkish-Greek border, thereby practically replacing Ukraine as a transit country for gas to Europe, as Moscow considers Ukraine to be unreliable.

In the EU, the opinions are divided on whether Europe is capable of finding a timely replacement for the Russian gas, should Russia realise its threat of redirecting delivery from Ukraine to the "Turkish stream", or whether Russia can find a new market for that gas if Europe does not want it. Great hopes are placed in the pipeline projects from Azerbaijan and Cyprus and Israel and the Azerbaijani president **Ilham Alijev** was recently in Berlin to discuss the plans with the German Chancellor **Angela Merkel**.

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US intelligence agency Stratfor maintains that that the Washington is going back, politically and militarily, to the "cold war" strategy. Analysts from both sides of the Atlantic as well as diplomats in Brussels, think that Russia is slowly losing its influence and economic positions in the Balkans.

losing its influence and economic positions in the Balkans. The last few days saw a veritable American diplomatic offensive on Central and South European countries, and leading politicians from Germany, the UK and a few other European states have visited Serbia and Bosnia, where the government of the president of Republika Srpska **Milorad Dodik** is seen as one of the Russian strongholds, maintained despite hopes that he might lose the elections in October last year. The Americans promised Croatia to build a liquid gas terminal on Krk island, in order to find new routes to supply Europe. NATO stressed its determination to do everything in its powers to help Montenegro meet the conditions for membership this year, after insisting that Podgorica should remove all supporters of the established connections to Russia from the ranks of its intelligence services. Bulgaria, a key location in this game, was visited by US State Secretary **John Kerry** who told the audience in Sofia that "he knows how the people in Bulgaria are worried about the consequences of termination of the South stream pipeline", which is why the US is "determined to help their government". Kerry promised to find new sources of energy to alleviate Bulgaria's dependence on Russian gas. To that end, the US Export-import bank will offer support, and the US company VestingHouse will build a new reactor in the Bulgarian nuclear power plant Kozloduy, instead of the Russian Rosatom with which Bulgaria had already signed a contract. Analysts in Brussels speculate that the new Bulgarian government of **Bojk Borisov** had fully "turned to West".

It is clear that the German leadership, regardless of the disagreements over the sanctions on





Russia within the ruling coalition, believes that effort should be made to “anchor” Serbia and countries of the Western Balkan into the EU integration process, irrespective of the actual date of accession. The analysts in Brussels think that Chancellor Merkel is right when she says that the Russian influence and activities are “not just about Ukraine, but also about Moldova, Georgia, and if this continues, we will have to think about Serbia and other countries of the Western Balkans”. In relation to this, the German weekly *Spiegel* cited a classified document from the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs which notes that by using “military cooperation and gas supply” Moscow “seeks to tie Serbia closely to itself.”

In the meantime, Russia finally gave up on building of pipeline South stream and Serbia suffered the cost and will now have to look for new sources of energy. **Wilfred Martens** of the Brussels-based Centre for European Studies notes that this scenario was inevitable for several reasons, tactical as well as geopolitical.

US agency Stratfor believes that Russia is losing the race with the European Union, especially in the Balkans, in Serbia and Bulgaria. The see an important reason in the Russia’s weakening financial strength and in Moscow’s withdrawal from the construction of the South Stream, which was expected to benefits Bulgaria and Serbia most in terms of energy security as well as revenues. “Serbian Prime Minister **Aleksandar Vučić** said that Kremlin’s decision to abandon South Stream is the price of a war among great powers”, Stratfor writes.

In a comprehensive analysis, Stratfor notes that Washington is going back to the “cold war”

It is clear that the German leadership, regardless of the disagreements over the sanctions on Russia within the ruling coalition, believes that effort should be made to “anchor” Serbia and countries of the Western Balkan into the EU integration process, irrespective of the actual date of accession. The analysts in Brussels think that Chancellor Merkel is right when she says that the Russian influence and activities are “not just about Ukraine, but also about Moldova, Georgia, and if this continues, we will have to think about Serbia and other countries of the Western Balkans”.

strategy, among other because NATO has been feverishly preparing for the possible deployment of larger troops “in case of a threat of Russian aggression” and has begun to distribute weapons, armoured vehicles and logistics from Baltic to the Black sea: in Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, Romania and Bulgaria.

Add to this the opinion of the American Heritage Foundation that “the Balkans remains an area of instability in Europe... due to sectarian divisions, crumbling economies, huge unemployment, endemic political corruption.” Heritage, whose analysis also contains a reference to the view of the Austro-Hungarian Minister **Benjamin Kállay** that the Balkan states should be kept divided to be ruled, believes that “Serbia is Russia’s stronghold in the Balkans”.

“Russia supported Serbia’s opposition to Kosovo’s independence, as well as Kosovo’s independence in order to justify its moves in Crimea, South Ossetia and Abkhazia”, Heritage claims, and concludes that “now is not the time to let Russia stand in the path of Balkans’ progress towards Europe”, but that “it is in the US’ highest interest to keep the Balkans on the path to the transatlantic community of nations.”

Source: *EuroActiv/Beta*

Chapter 25: Science and research



Dr Mladen Perazić

The importance of chapter 25 - Science and research is reflected in the fact that the EU recognized the importance of the impact of development and implementation of scientific and technological achievements on the development of economy and society in general. This connection was especially notable during the last few decades, and science, as an area that creates new knowledge, has been gaining importance in the preparation of strategies for development of the European society.

EU's activities in the area of science and research are defined by Chapter 19 of Treaty on the EU. Article 179 of the Treaty states that the goal of the EU is to strengthen scientific and technological basis of European economy, with the aim of increasing its competitiveness and efficiency. Hence, the EU promotes mutual cooperation between the sectors of economy and science and research and stimulates science and research and technological development projects, both in the firms' development centres and in the universities and research institutes in order to ensure better synergy. To that end, the EU supports development of science and research and development projects in firms, universities and research centres, as well

as their mutual cooperation. It also supports cooperation with third countries and international organizations in the field of science, research and development, as well as expansion and use of results of research and development activities conducted in the EU, alongside firm support to education and mobility of researchers inside the Union.

The goals of the promotion of science and research are laid out in the Lisbon strategy, particularly in the part that stipulates the goal of allocating 3% of GDP for research and development. In order to foster efficiency and cooperation in research, development and innovation, in 2000 the European Commission proposed the creation of the European Research Area. The goal was to reduce the waste of energy and resources, as nearly 80% of public science and researches is conducted on the national level. To this end, the Commission aims to foster:

- *creation of European research market*, or free area for the circulation of knowledge, researchers and technology in order to strengthen cooperation, stimulation and competitiveness and better allocation of available resources,
- *restructuring of the European approach to research* with better coordination of research activities and policies on national level and
- *development of mutual European policy towards research*, that shall not only relate to financing of research activities, but it will also take into consideration all aspects of other national and European policies related to research.

EU's *acquis communautaire* in the field of science requires member states to take measures and implement necessary activities in order to establish the European Research Area, as well as to secure the implementation of framework research programme. The *acquis* in this chapter does not require transposition of EU rules into the national legislation.



Creation of appropriate strategic documents and adoption of a legislative framework in this created the possibilities for further development and improvements of science and research in Montenegro. The law on scientific research, which came into force on 6 December 2005, was aligned with the primary sources of EU's law for the area of science and research (Treaty on European Communities). Issues relevant to the field of science and research have been regulated by Chapter 8 of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (Cooperation), as well as by Article 112 (Cooperation in the area of research and technological development).

The body in charge of science and research in Montenegro is the Ministry of Science. For the purpose of involving science and research community in the development of strategic guidelines for development of science, a Council for science and research was established to provide support to the Ministry in advancing the field of science and research, analyzing the current situation and achievements, providing expert advice to the Government and etc. Additionally, the Council is to prepare annual strategies for science and research activities. Other entities active in the field of science and research are development centres of firms, higher education institutions, science and research institutes and the Montenegrin Academy of Arts and Sciences, whose work is regulated by special law.

Ministry of Science invests great deal of effort to promote development of the science sector and in that sense it has provided support to the research communities by offering information and advice on the international science cooperation programmes, especially the EU FP7, COST and EUREKA programmes. Initiatives from Montenegrin research teams that are involved in current European COST actions have been accepted. Activities of the new framework programme HORIZON 2020 are also closely monitored. Furthermore, project "Higher Education and Research for Innovation and Competitiveness" (HERIC) has been approved, with the goal to strengthen quality and relevance of higher education and research in Montenegro, through reform of systemic financing and securing the quality of higher education and strengthening capacity for research and development. Ministry has also offered a large number of tenders for bilateral, scientific and technological cooperation. In 2011, Montenegrin government conducted a feasibility Study for the establishment of performance centres and a feasibility Study on establishment of a science and technology park in Montenegro. Ministry of science issues annual tenders for co-financing of national scientific-research projects.

The existence of licensed scientific research institutions in Montenegro, including three universities, constitutes an excellent academic and technological support to the creation of

With Montenegro participate in all EU's science and research programmes after the accession?

Montenegro will have to make additional efforts to strengthen human resources and infrastructural capacities to ensure effective participation in framework research programmes and integration into the European Research Area. Montenegro began integration into the European Research Area ERA. It appointed observers to most administrative bodies of ERA, as well as to the European Research Area Committee. Montenegro also participates in the Seventh framework programme for research FP7. Montenegro is not involved in nuclear research, nor was it required to join the EURATOM's Framework program. The main obstacle to adequate participation in the EU programmes will be lack of experienced researchers, insufficient number of researchers in the institutions, lack of experienced administrative staff and inadequate and obsolete equipment.



performance centres and technologic parks as significant components of market oriented technological development and knowledge-based economy.

Efforts invested in the recent years to improve the overall state of science and research sectors in Montenegro, have been made in response to the observation that despite the high number of activities science and research have been underrepresented in Montenegro. According to the study Montenegro in the XXI century, in the era of international competition only 1 462 persons are employed by research and innovation institutions - about 0,88% of all employees in the country. There are approximately 300 students in PhD programmes, 40% them in social sciences, 37% in medical study programmes, 15% in engineering and 4% in natural sciences. The study found that the share of citizens with tertiary education in the population aged between 25 and 64 has increased to 9.5% (compared to the EU 27 average of 22.5%). There are 0.16 PhD theses per 1000 citizens aged 25-94 defended every year, whereas the EU average is 1.5%.

In consequence, science and research are characterised by weak infrastructure and insufficient research staff, few research articles in international journals and a negligible number of patents and innovations. In the economy sector research and development is neglected, and 90% of research staff in Montenegro is employed by

higher education institutions. The global average is 60-70% in the economy, 10% in public laboratories and 20% at universities. Insufficient investment in science results in modest competitiveness, marginal international reputation and sporadic presence in the economy and public life. Despite respectable individual achievements, Montenegrin science and research sector still misses continued public and financial support, especially from the private sector.

By signing the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA), Montenegro committed to cooperation with the EU to promote cooperation in civil scientific researches and technological development, on the basis of mutual benefit, resource availability and access to other party's programmes. The Agreement stressed that cooperation will involve primarily the sectors of high priority, related to research development acquis. Bearing in mind the activities undertaken during recent years to promote and improve the state of science and research in Montenegro and the results achieved, problems during negotiations in this chapter are not expected. Montenegro has harmonized its strategic objectives with the main EU commitments in this sector.

However, it should be noted that in order for science, research and innovation to have a more significant impact on sustainable development in Montenegro, the approach to financing researches and innovations needs to be better regulated. More investment into science, education and technology is necessary, both by the state and by the firms, because a quality science and research system is a precondition to successful development of the whole society.

Will the victory of the far left in Greece lead to a turnaround in EU's economic policy?

Syriza shakes the EU

Left-wing Syriza swept over 36% of the vote in the Greek snap elections, in a victory that has already been hailed as “historical”. Although Syriza is a relatively new player on the Greek political scene, its popularity has been growing rapidly for some time, due to its opposition to the EU-imposed austerity. The election results have hence stirred much unease among Greece's creditors – and a lot of enthusiasm among leftist parties in other European countries, who hope Syriza's victory will prompt a turning point in EU's economic policy.

Syriza's leader **Alexis Tsipras** insists that the new government will put an end to the austerity in Greece. The party vowed not to engage in coalition talks with parties that were involved in or supported austerity, and the new coalition government was forged, somewhat surprisingly, with Independent Greeks. A right wing and fervently nationalist party, the Independent Greeks have little in common with Syriza, apart from their staunch opposition to reforms demanded by the EU and the International Monetary Fund.

The early elections have in fact been precipitated by another stand-off in November 2014 between Greece and Troika – the EC, European Central Bank and the IMF. Adding to the irony, the last year had started well for the government of the former Prime Minister **Antonis Samaras**. The country had just returned to bond markets after a four-year exile, it had reported a primary budget surplus after decades, and there were signs of an economic recovery.

If only the EU officials had been more lenient

But years of getting the economy “in line” had cost the Greek citizens dearly: after several years of reforms, and repeated wage and pension cuts, unemployment still stood at over 25% percent, and anemic growth had actually led to an increase in debt-to-GDP ratio – from 108% in 2008 to over 170% in 2014.

With the public clearly fed up with the never-ending austerity, at the Troika demanding further pension reform and tax hikes to ensure a balanced budget in 2015, the Samaras government tried to use the card of improved budgetary performance to make an early exit from the unpopular bailout

Podemos leader, Íñigo Errejón, said that “the policies of unjust and ineffective cuts have been defeated by citizens – despite the campaign of fear. Blackmail has not succeeded in Greece... It will not triumph in Spain either”. German leftist Die Linke leader, Katja Kipping, wrote that Syriza's victory marks the beginning of a “European Spring.” Even Francois Hollande warmly congratulated Tsipras

programme. But talks with creditors didn't go well. The IMF and EU said Athens needed to find cost-cutting and revenue-raising measures for an extra 2.5 billion euros to ensure a balanced budget in order to qualify for the final tranche of 7 billion euros in aid and liberate itself from a permanent regime of monitoring of its restructuring efforts. The Greeks, on the other hand, claimed that just 500 million would have been enough to balance the budget. With no resolution, opposition at home soon forced a no-confidence vote and an early election. The EU authorities may yet regret this early intransigence.

Tsipras' winning speech had already declared Troika “a thing of the past”. “Greece has turned a page. Greece is leaving behind destructive austerity, fear and authoritarianism. It is leaving behind five years of humiliation and pain”, he said. Tsipras argues that the Greek public debt is not viable, and has asked for its restructuring. One of his first moves in office was also to halt privatization of the port of Piraeus, as well as of the Public Power Corporation of Greece (PPC). The previous government had planned to spin off part of PPC to liberalise the energy market under a privatisation plan agreed under the EU/IMF bailout and raise funds for debt repayment. The new coalition also announced that it will reinstate public sector employees judged to have been laid off without proper justification and announced rises in pension payments for retired people on low incomes.

Likely imitators and greetings from France

For many citizens in highly indebted European countries, Syriza's victory signals a big change from the “no alternative” austerity policy. Other leftist across Europe are hoping to replicate its

British Prime Minister David Cameron warned that the Greek election would raise economic uncertainty across Europe, Chairman of the European People's Party Manfred Weber said that European taxpayers are not willing to pay for the campaign promises made by Tsipras, and the EC President Jean-Claude Juncker said that EU will continue to support Greece, but that Athens must stick to the promises

success. In Spain, the newly formed party Podemos, which is leading the polls, celebrated Syriza's victory, announcing that "Greeks finally have a government, not a Merkel envoy." Podemos leader, **Íñigo Errejón**, said that "the policies of unjust and ineffective cuts have been defeated by citizens – despite the campaign of fear. Blackmail has not succeeded in Greece... It will not triumph in Spain either". German leftist Die Linke leader, **Katja Kipping**, wrote that Syriza's victory marks the beginning of a "European Spring." Even **Francois Hollande** warmly congratulated Tsipras, emphasizing similarities between his Socialists and the Greek left.

Criticism from Germany and Brussels

But other reactions were far from positive. In the run-up to the Greek elections, the European Commission broke all customs of non-interfering in the internal politics of the member states, and openly supported the candidate of the centre-right. British Prime Minister **David Cameron** was one of the first EU leaders to react on Twitter to Syriza's victory, warning that the Greek election would raise economic uncertainty across Europe. Chairman of the European People's Party **Manfred Weber** called Syriza to fulfill Greek austerity and reform commitments and only then "Europe will stand in solidarity with Greece." Weber said that European taxpayers are not willing to pay for the campaign promises made by Tsipras. In somewhat more conciliatory terms, **Jean-Claude Juncker** said that Europe will continue to support Greece, but warned that he expects Athens to stick to the promises made to its partners.

Greeks, on the other hand, insist that the current terms of debt repayment cannot be continued. Newly-appointed Finance Minister **Yanis Varoufakis** said negotiations would not be easy, but he expected they

would find common ground. However, instead of having a showdown between Greece and Europe, he is hoping to build a coalition with other countries that have been pressing for change of course in Europe from rigid budget orthodoxy. Varoufakis had already set up meeting the finance ministers of France and Italy. For its part, France has ruled out straight cancellation of Greece's debt, about 80 percent of which is held by other eurozone governments and multinational organisations such as the IMF. However, Paris has said it would be open to talks on making Greece's debt burden more sustainable and Tsipras is soon expected to meet President Francois Hollande to discuss the options.

Other European Union leaders disagree, and have warned that a debt reduction for Greece would be against eurozone rules. At best, they are willing to discuss a new schedule for debt repayments, but insist that Greece must stick to the rules. "We will not forgive loans but we are ready to discuss extending the bailout programme or maturities ... But this will not change the fact that Greece must continue economic reforms," said Finnish Prime Minister **Alexander Stubb**. The chairman of the group of eurozone finance ministers, Jeroen Dijsselbloem, struck a similar note, saying there was very little support in Europe for writing off Greek debt. The sharpest response came, as usual, from Germany, whose chancellor has led calls for budgetary rigour. Germany's EU Commissioner, **Guenter Oettinger**, said a debt restructuring for Greece would send the wrong message to other countries in the eurozone. "If we cut debt for Greece, that would give the wrong signal to Portugal or Ireland, Cyprus or Spain," Oettinger said. The International Monetary Fund also said Greece could not demand special treatment for its debt. The existing €240 billion Greek bailout programme expires on February 28, and Syriza officials have previously said their government's first priority would be to ask lenders for a few months of time so both sides can discuss their positions from scratch rather than picking up from where the previous government left off. It remains to be seen whether the new Greek government can forge an alliance with other EU member states, or whether it will be coaxed to follow the old rules by the international financial institutions.

Source: EurActiv

What are your human rights and how to protect them?



"The more people are unequal in their traits, the more it is necessary to endeavor to treat everyone equally".
Tolstoy

Furthermore, the brochure provides an overview of responsible institutions such as the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms, the Constitutional Court, the European Court of Human Rights and the Human Rights Committee of the United Nations.

Electronic edition is available at: http://media.cgo-cce.org/2014/12/cgo-cce-prirucnik_ljudska-prava.pdf

Prepared by: Vildana Ljuković

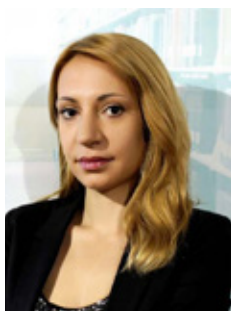
As part of the project *"Fast Forward Human Rights!"*, Centre for Civic Education, in cooperation with the Civic Initiatives from Belgrade and with support of the EU Delegation to Montenegro, published a brochure *"What are your human rights and how to protect them"*, written by **Marijana Laković Drašković**.

The brochure offers a wide range of information on the human rights the state guarantees to all its citizens, but also about rights that are additionally guaranteed to members of national minorities and other ethnic communities, persons with disabilities, women, as well as children.

The publication highlights issues of definition of the concept of discrimination and personal characteristics, the legal framework, practical circumstances in which discrimination can occur, as well as what citizens should do if they find that they have been discriminated against.



Equal opportunities for all media in Montenegro



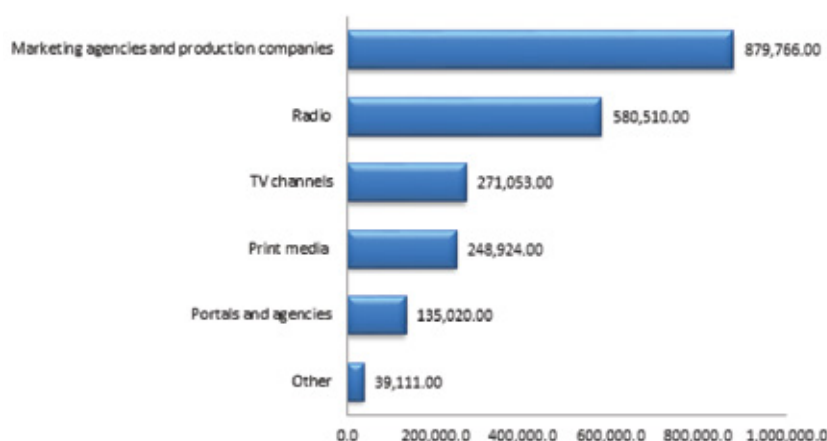
By: Ana Vujošević

Within the framework of the project *'Equal opportunities for all media in Montenegro'*, implemented by the Centre for Civic Education (CCE) with the support of the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through the German Embassy in Montenegro, a research on public spending in media sector in Montenegro during 2013 was conducted. The objective of the project was to contribute to raising of the awareness on accountable spending of money from Budget of Montenegro through the indication on relations that Montenegrin public sector has with the media, in terms of money allocation on different grounds. Public sector, under the Law on budget of Montenegro, encompasses state bodies, municipalities (local self-government units), independent regulatory bodies, legal persons, public institutions and economic societies in which either state or municipalities have the majority in ownership share.

Montenegrin media scene is pluralistic. Data of the Agency for electronic media indicate that there are 20 TV channels, 55 radio stations, 6 dailies and 3 weeklies in Montenegro. However, this sector is characterised by deep inner polarisation, which limits the economic and political independence of media. Moreover, even though there are no visible mechanisms of direct censorship and control of media by the state, due to limitations prescribed by Constitution and media laws, there is room for so called *soft* censorship, which implies the practice of influencing the media reporting by putting financial pressure on media outlets, regarded as the opponents of Government or its policy, and on the other hand, awarding media and individual journalists who report positively on the work of Government.

The CCE research, conducted from February till December 2014, covered 251 public sector bodies, while on the other hand, research mapped 129 subjects, physical and legal persons, to whom, on the grounds of providing services of advertising, marketing or other specialised services from this area, money was deposited in 2013. Out of 251 institutions which were asked to provide these data based on Law of free access to information, 169 or 67,7% of them responded positively, while the number of bodies that had costs on these grounds was 98 or 39%. Total amount of payments to media (printed, TV, radio, portals, news agencies, marketing agencies, production companies and other related subjects), by 98 bodies from sector in 2013 amounts 2.196.739,00 EUR. Having in mind that the given amount consists 39% of costs of public sector bodies, that were subject of research which had costs on those grounds, it could be assumed that the total amount could be significantly higher if the information were available for other public sector bodies.

Out of this amount, 248.924,00 EUR or 11,33% was allocated for print media, whereas 271.053,00 EUR or 12,33% for TV channels (including international and regional), then 580.510,00 EUR or 26,42% for radio stations, 135.020,00 EUR or 6,15% for news agencies and portals, and for marketing agencies and production companies 879.766,00 EUR or 41% was allocated. For items that fall under the category of 'other' total of 39.111,00 EUR or 1,73% was allocated, or in total 2.154.384 EUR. The difference compared to total review presents itself due to public bodies that submitted total amounts, whereby they did not specify to whom and on which



Cross-section of total investments per category in EUR terms by the structure of service providers

grounds they paid means, which is why these cannot be a part of chart.

Majority of funds, by all public sector bodies, earned «Pobjeda» 134,340.00 EUR or 59% of total allocated funds. More precisely, it should be noted that until recently the state had ownership share in this daily in the amount of 84,7%, thus directly violating the Law on media for years. The state further financed this media through the aid instrument in total of 5.748.170,00 EUR. On top of this, the Ministry of finances paid 5.6 million EUR in 2014 for loans that «Pobjeda» had in two commercial banks, and during 2011 and 2012 another 1.7 million EUR on behalf of activated guarantees by «Societe General Montenegro» bank, as well as that the Government, during 2013 assumed 2.8 million EUR of debt of that company for taxes and bonuses to employees, we come up with a figure that exceeds several dozen million euros. For the comparison, independent daily «Vijesti» have, in the same period, by all public sector bodies, earned 19.681.00 EUR or 9%, and they did not receive any deposits on grounds of state aid.

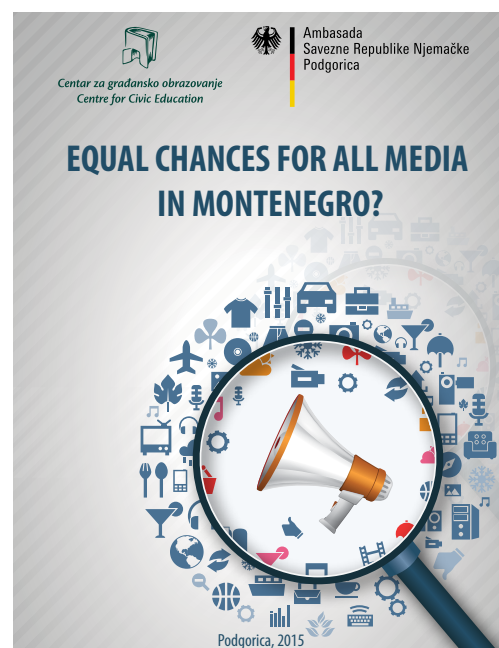
When it comes to TVs, most funds, by the public sector bodies, earned national public service RTCG - 74,511.00 EUR or 30% of total allocated public funds. In addition to that, during 2013, public service was financed with funds allocated from Budget of Montenegro in the amount of 7.468.449 EUR. Along the aforementioned, RTCG accounted as an extraordinary income an amount of 2.400.000 EUR, related to debts of RTCG assumed by the Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Finance. Therefore, total investments out of budget of Montenegro for the financing of public services, on these grounds are 9.848.449 EUR and account for 82,5% of total incomes. By comparing the presented information with commercial TV station «Vijesti», which is in second place on the account of revenues, with 36,279,00EUR or 13% of allocated funds by state bodies, and having in mind the inability of using the aforementioned benefits of commercial televisions compared to public service, the difference becomes clear regarding the manner in which these media are treated by the state.

In the area of portals, most funds, by the public sector bodies, got Analitika - 63,849,00 EUR or 48% of total allocated funds. Portals CdM and Vijesti follow

with much more modest earnings, which vary 5% in percentage out of total funds. Out of total funds allocated for radio stations, 76% was allocated to local radio stations Herceg Novi, Kotor i Berane, while first commercial radio station, found in fourth place, earned 11% of total funds.

Without a proper mechanism for the allocation of state aid to media, the distribution of these funds could potentially cause serious deviations in media market and jeopardise the functioning of one, or improve the work of other media on the grounds of discrimination which is contrary to EU competition policy. What is of particular concern is when public funds are used for such purposes. As tax payers, citizens have the right to know how public funds are being spent, as well as if the manner in which those funds are allocated affect the unbiased reporting of media on state bodies, or to what extent that allocation does or does not support media pluralism. In order to avoid the misuses, the allocation of state financial funds must be based on principles of transparency, with the application of public procurement rules. Also, financial allocations of public state bodies, through advertising and marketing in media, should be based on clear criteria, and this must not be subject to arbitrary assessment by state officials, as it was previously the case.

Complete research is available on <http://media.cgo-cce.org/2015/01/cgo-cce-equal-chances-for-all-media-in-Montenegro.pdf>.



Final conference of Fast Forward Human Rights!



As part of the project Fast Forward Human Rights! Centre for Civic Education (CCE) organised on 15 January 2015 a conference to publicly mark the end of the project, which it had implemented in cooperation with Civic Initiative (CI) from Belgrade with the financial support of EU through EIDHR. Speakers at the opening of the conference were **Suad Numanović**, Minister of Human and Minority Rights in the Government of Montenegro, **H. E. Mitja Drobnjč**, Head of the EU Delegation to Montenegro, and **Daliborka Uljarević**, executive director of CCE.

The first session, titled *Challenges to implementation of a modern concept of human rights* was introduced by **Zoran Pažin**, agent of the state of Montenegro before the European Court of Human Rights. The panellists were **Bojana Selaković** from Civic Initiatives, **Milorad Marković** from the Institute for Legal Studies

and **Milena Perović Korać** from Monitor Centre for Democracy and Media. The second panel, *Vulnerable groups and (in)visible human rights: the rights of persons with disabilities in practice* was introduced by lawyer **Marijana Laković Drašković**, and the panellists were **Milislav Korać** from the association "Our initiative", **Dejan Tmušić** from the Association of Paraplegics and **Dragana Tripković** from NGO ATA. The discussion on the topic Overcoming gender inequality in Montenegro: how far have we come? was opened by **Nada Drobnjak**, president of the Committee for Gender Equality in the Parliament of Montenegro, followed by contributions from **Olja Stojanović** from the SOS telephone for women and children victims of violence in Berane, **Hatidža Neljajm** from the SOS telephone for women and children victims of violence in Ulcinj, **Jovana Hajduković** from the Safe Women's House and **Ervina Dabižinović** from the Centre for Women and Peace Education ANIMA.

The goal of the project *Fast Forward Human Rights!* Was to strengthen the role of civil society in fostering human rights and democratic reforms in Montenegro, and to support peaceful reconciliation of group interests as well as consolidation of political participation and representation of citizens. More specifically, the project sought to advance monitoring and protection of human rights in Montenegro through a more active and intensive participation of civil society organisations. *Fast Forward Human Rights!* Also aimed to provide direct support to civil society organisations at various stages of development by distributing funds for project implementation in local communities, strengthening their capacities to successfully implement projects in line with European rules, and ensuring continuous consultations during the course of these projects. In this way, organisations which are not yet direct beneficiaries of EIDHR in Montenegro have acquired knowledge and skills on human rights and human rights advocacy, as well as on the management of EU-funded projects, which constitute the potential sources of financing in the future and a possible way of ensuring financial sustainability of their programmes. The closing conference was a way to present the key results of the project to the public, with a special focus on the rights of some of the most marginalised groups, in order to bring together all activities encompassed by the project, including monitoring and analysis of current legislation and institutions in charge of human rights in Montenegro, as well as providing recommendations.



The organisers also awarded certificates to a group of young journalists who attended a training on *development of monitoring techniques for cases of human rights violations in Montenegro*. **Awards for the best articles on human rights in 2014 were also handed out for the first time**, with the first prize going to **Ivan Čadenović** from "Vijesti" for the article *Misery, toil, and half of Demo's bun*, the second to **Tina Popović** and **Mila Radulović** from "Vijesti" for the article *Vlabović plagiarized 2/3 of her thesis from foreign authors*, while the third prize was shared between articles *Why are the workers of Metalac starving* by **Milena Perović Korać** from "Monitor", *A memory that never fades: case Štrpci* by **Zoran Radulović** from Monitor" and *Case numbers changed to conceal the length of court proceedings* by **Mitar Rakčević** from "Dan".

Ambassador Pejović visited European Café



On 19 January 2015 Centre for Civic Education (CCE), with support of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, began implementation of the *European Café* project, by inviting the State Secretary for European integration and Chief negotiator Ambassador **Aleksandar Andrija Pejović** to speak with representatives of civil society about the accession process of Montenegro to the EU.

In an informal environment, under the main topic, "*The role and significance of NGOs in EU accession process*", the focus was on the results achieved in 2014 and the challenges for 2015; the results, possibilities and limitations of NGOs in working groups for the preparation of negotiations; as well as about possibilities of co-financing of NGO projects contracted through the EU programmes.

Executive director of CCE **Daliborka Uljarević** stressed that the project *European Café* aims to establish informal communication of civil sector representatives with decision

makers from Montenegro, EU and member states on the accession process, and announced that through this form the CCE will continue to strengthen dialogue about the process of European integration of Montenegro.

Ambassador Pejović welcomed the organization of the *European Café* as a platform for quality exchange of opinions, initiation of issues of importance for the accession process of Montenegro to EU and finding mutual answers and solutions to potential challenges on the European path. When it comes to cooperation with civil society, chief negotiator underlined the importance of their involvement and contribution that provide negotiation structure with knowledge and expertise possessed by their representatives.



Monitoring the work of parliamentary committees

Centre for Civic Education (CCE) has begun systematic monitoring of a number of committees of the Parliament of Montenegro, whose jurisdiction covers topics of interest for CCE. Thus, on 23 January 2015, **Nikola Đonović**, CCE programme coordinator monitored the session of the Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration, which discussed the proposals for the Law on Public Prosecution and Law on the Special Public Prosecution. Furthermore, on 26 January 2015, the Legislative Committee discussed a number of draft laws, including the Draft Law on Amendments of the Law on Inspection Affairs, and the meeting was monitored by **Tamara Milaš**, CCE programme associate. Committee on Education, Science, Culture and Sports met on 27 January 2015, and committee members were presented the Study on cooperation with scientists from diaspora; Report on implementation of the strategy of cooperation with diaspora and action plan for the period 2011-2014, and Information on implementation of the project of Innovative-Enterprise Centre "Technopolis" Nikšić. The session was monitored by **Snežana Kaluderović**, CCE programme coordinator. Committee on European Integration met on 28 January 2015, adopting the Report on the Committee's work for 2014 and Work Plan for 2015, and this session was monitored by **Jelena Nedović**, CCE project assistant.

NGO Representatives meet Minister of Interior of Finland

During her official visit to Montenegro, Minister of Interior of Finland **Paivi Rasanen** met with the representatives of the NGO sector **Daliborka Uljarević**, executive director of Centre for Civic Education (CCE), **Vanja Čalović**, executive director of MANS, **Zlatko Vujović**, Chairman of the AB of CEMI and **Jovana Marović**, coordinator of research at Institute Alternative, with whom she discussed key challenges in the negotiation process with special emphasis on chapters 23 and 24 - Judiciary and Fundamental Rights, and Justice, Freedom and Security.

Project writing for EU funds

Within the framework of the project SPEED UP, organized by NGO Juventas and SOS Hotline for Women and Children Victims of Violence Podgorica, in cooperation with the EU Delegation to Montenegro, a one-day session, was held on 20 January 2014 in Podgorica, focusing on funding of civil society organizations from European funds. This session was continuation of the training "*Project proposals writing and project cycle management*", based on which the participants created their own project proposals. **Romain Boitard**, EU Delegation to Montenegro representative, presented priorities of EU financing and provided a number of tips on how to write successful project applications. As trainers, **Biljana Zeković**, **Boško Nenezić** i **Ivana Vujović** analysed in detail the work of participants. **Željka Četković**, programme associate, participated on the behalf of Centre for Civic Education (CCE).

A.V

Conference “Being a citizen in Europe”

The 2015 bEUCitizen Annual Conference will include a two-day international and interdisciplinary conference (29–30 June) open to both participants in the bEUCitizen research project and external scholars. The Conference, entitled ‘Being a citizen in Europe’, is divided into four thematic streams, addressing different aspects of European citizenship, its historical development, the rights that European citizens have within the present-day European Union and the multiple legal, practical and other barriers they still face in exercising these rights, depending on their capacity and their status. We welcome scholarly papers on the themes addressed below. We are particularly looking for analyses and critical assessments from scholarly disciplines such as history, sociology, political science, law, philosophy, and economics, as well as for interdisciplinary papers, combining two or more of the aforementioned disciplines. Abstracts, which should be no longer than 500 words, need to be submitted by 28 February 2015, and must be sent via the online form available on the Conference website. The organizing committee will select conference contributions before 15 March 2015. A full paper must be submitted by 15 May 2015. The 10 best submissions based on abstracts of PhD students will receive a reimbursement of maximum 500€ for travel costs and hotel fees. Venue: Zagreb (Croatia), 29–30 June 2015.

More information on: <http://www.beucitizen2015.eu/>

Prague Summer Schools 2015

Prague Summer Schools are seven-day academic programmes designed to bring together undergraduate and graduate students of various nationalities and academic backgrounds to enjoy their summer holidays in the unique academic and cultural environment. Prague Summer Schools (PSS) are organized by the Schola Empirica, Prague based NGO and Educational Institution accredited by the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. The Schools will take place from 4 to 11 July 2015, in Prague. Deadline: 31 March 2015

More information on: <http://www.praguesummerschools.org/about-us>

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