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Findings of the EC Progress Report on Montenegro
— critique without bite

Interview

Professor of philosophy at the
University of Zagreb Žarko Puhovski

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Foreword:

Balance and Iceland



Vladan Žugčić

In the 2014/2015 Enlargement Strategy European Commission (EC) reminded Montenegro of the balance clause which enables the EU to stop negotiations on other chapters if progress on the rule of law, chapters 23 and 24, is lagging.

It is true that the clause is no novelty – it was set in the negotiations framework between Montenegro and EU in line with the new approach to negotiation. It is also true, however, that the Commission, famous for weighing its every word, would not have mentioned it without reason.

Prime Minister **Milo Đukanović** responded by noting that a candidate country can also interrupt its negotiations with EU, citing the example of Iceland (which had halted negotiations due to disagreement over fisheries, having successfully closed chapters 23 and 24).

“A candidate country has the right, like Iceland did, to say: “Excuse me, but I don’t like this company any more”. This, I would say, is the essence of a partnership process such as the process of accession negotiations between EU and candidate countries. This is not something that should be waved as a threat, especially not against Montenegro”, Đukanović said. He noted that Croatia also had to halt negotiations for a while, probably referring to EU’s demand that Croatia should deliver to ICTY the generals accused of war crimes.

If we add his statements that the EU should really create a more generous financial framework for the Balkans as the rule of law cannot be separated from economic development, Đukanović may just be on his way to acquire the title of a eurosceptic prime minister in the international circles.

Unfortunately, it is a fact that the EU has no longer the same magnetic power in the Balkans it had before the outbreak of the financial crisis, and that the tensions with Russia are eating away at its foreign policy sway.

Still, Montenegro is not Iceland.

EC and the EU member states have already noted in the Strategy that Montenegro is far behind on its commitment to fulfil 84 benchmarks for chapters 23 and 24. The deadline is the end of next year.

Calendar

- 08 October **Corruption remains a serious problem** / In its 2014 Progress Report, European Commission (EC) notes that Montenegro has made “some progress” on chapter 24, whereas on chapter 23 the progress has been “uneven”, and the “limited” advances in anti-corruption policy continue to pose the greatest difficulties for the country, including in the areas of “high level corruption and the systematic use of the power to seize and confiscate assets”. The Commission concludes that Montenegro has made progress on chapters on intellectual property, science, education and culture, consumer protection and healthcare, and foreign security and defence policy.
- 08 October **EC warns that negotiations with Montenegro could be stopped** / EK je upozorila Crnu Goru da EC warned Montenegro that negotiations could be stopped if progress on rule of law issues continues to lag behind the overall pace of negotiations with EU. The warning appeared in the 2014/2015 Enlargement Strategy paper: “The Commission is determined to ensure an overall balance in negotiations. Progress under chapters 23 and 24 will need to be made in parallel with progress in negotiations overall. The Commission recalls the existence of the ‘overall balance’ clause of the negotiating frameworks and the possibility of stopping negotiations on other chapters if progress on rule of law issues lags behind”. Head of the unit for Montenegro in DG Enlargement **Dirk Lange** said that at the moment there was no initiative to activate this clause.
- 09 October **Đukanović: Montenegro could be like Iceland** / Prime Minister **Milo Đukanović** said he was not afraid of EU stopping the negotiations, as it had warned in the Enlargement Strategy. Đukanović added that a candidate country could also decide to halt negotiations, citing the example of Iceland: “A candidate country has the right to say, like Iceland did – ‘sorry, but we don’t like this company any more’. I would say that is the essence of a partnership process such as the process of negotiations between the EU and the candidate countries. This is not something that should be used as a threat, especially not against Montenegro”.
- 23 October **A billion euro to connect the Balkans** / European Enlargement Commissioner **Štefan Füle** said the EU was ready to set aside up to a billion euro from pre-accession funds to assist projects that would interconnect countries of the Western Balkans, in addition to some 10 billion euro in loans from international financial institutions by 2020.
- 28 October **Bogdanović: EC doesn’t see that our municipalities are more efficient** / The Mayor of Cetinje **Aleksandar Bogdanović** criticised the EC Progress Report, saying that Brussels had failed to recognise the efforts made by local governments to date. At the IV meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) of Montenegro and EU he objected to the reports’ findings that no progress had been made to strengthen transparency, efficiency and accountability at the local level.
- 31 October **The Government admits it is far behind on its commitments** / In the first three quarters of this year, the Government of Montenegro adopted fewer than half of draft laws it had planned under its Programme for Accession to EU for 2014-2018. According to the latest report of the Government, 155 laws and regulatory acts had been adopted, whereas 188 remain pending.

Economy – a key enlargement pillar



By: Štefan Füle

How had economic governance become one of the key pillars of our enlargement policy?

First, we have lived through a major economic global crisis. Over the mandate of this Commission, we have seen major changes in the European Union's economic governance. Since the aim of enlargement policy is to help you (Western Balkans countries) to prepare for the European Union membership, it is essential that we share with you the very important changes that are taking place at European Union level. The new process we are proposing – involving a credible reform programme and an enhanced surveillance with the European Union – is inspired by the European Semester process, a mechanism of regular economic monitoring for EU member states. Second, the Commission does not yet consider that any Western Balkans country meets the economic accession criteria, in terms of functioning market economies or having the capacity to cope with competitive pressures and market forces within the Union.

Third, we want to enhance economic policy-making capabilities in the Western Balkans to boost competitiveness and growth and job creation. As outlined in the Enlargement Strategy Paper we are inviting all countries in the accession process to start the new process by preparing the National Economic Reform Programmes. The first part of the programme is not new to most of you: it is an enhanced version of your already existing programmes. The really new element is in the second part of the programme, entitled "Sectoral structural reforms to promote competitiveness and growth". We expect the West Balkan countries to present the ongoing and planned national policies and a limited number of flagship reform measures in key sectors that directly contribute to competitiveness and growth.

Allow me to add four more reasons for our decision to increase the focus on competitiveness as part of the new process.

First, the economic challenges in your countries are great. Fiscal consolidation alone will not be enough – you need to prepare a more comprehensive and convincing domestic reform agenda. You need to be able to demonstrate that you are serious with your plans to improve the know-how to serve your economy and that you are capable of smart investment which enhances competitiveness and creates jobs. One of the lessons of the recent crisis is that countries need to enhance their own competitiveness.

Second, a convincing national economic reform programme with an enhanced surveillance procedure with the European Union will send a strong signal to

investors that a good business environment is a national priority.

Third, our new approach puts a specific emphasis on wider stakeholder involvement. The national economic reforms need to be coordinated. They need to be agreed across a wide range of ministries, not just the Ministries of Finance and Economy. They have to be supported with adequate budget funds. Wider consultation – involving national parliaments, regional and local authorities, social partners and civil society – will ensure ownership and facilitate implementation of reform measures.

Fourth, a credible and relevant economic reform programme will provide a solid basis for economic dialogue with the European Union.

The regional dimension is also relevant in this process. As many of the Western Balkan countries face similar challenges, some economic dialogue should take place in the regional fora. I believe that there is a positive dynamic now in motion after the successful Berlin Summit in August.

We have an ambitious timetable ahead of us. We look forward to receiving the first National Economic Reform Programme by the 31 January 2015. After submission of the programmes, we plan to have the Commission's assessment missions in February/March. After the assessment is completed, the Commission will hold meetings with each of your countries in April next year to discuss our proposed country-specific guidance. After that we will also consult with the European Union Member States to ensure they also have ownership of the key recommendations.

Credible and relevant national economic reform programmes will be supported by targeted IPA assistance. This means there are more resources and better targeted to deal with that issue. In this process, we also count on the involvement of international financial institutions. We have already had discussions with the IMF, the World Bank, the EBRD and the EIB on how to involve them and how they could support you in this process.

This work on the economy will be a key pillar in the enlargement process going forward. The work you have already done in this region – despite all the obstacles and challenges – was what actually pushed us to come up with programmes on how to ensure that the benefits of the enlargement process are felt by the citizens already before you are able to join the EU.

Excerpts from the speech by the former European Enlargement Commissioner at the 6th Ministerial conference for Western Balkans in Belgrade

EC Progress Report on Montenegro 2014

Critique without bite

By: Svetlana Pešić

Montenegrin Government could breathe a sigh of relief after European Commission (EC) published its 2014 Progress Report. Although the report contains sharper criticism than its predecessor, EC and the EU member states will allow negotiations on chapters 23 and 24 to continue. The threat of freezing negotiations gave real shivers to the Government, as a number of EU member states had expressed dissatisfaction with Montenegro's record on organised crime and corruption.

Nevertheless, the final report of the Commission finds that Montenegro made "some progress" on chapter 24 (justice, freedom and security) while in the area of chapter 23 (fundamental rights and judiciary) the progress was judged to be "uneven". "Limited" progress in the area of anti-corruption was singled out as the biggest problem for Montenegro.

"Increased efforts are needed with regard to the development of a solid track record of investigation, prosecution and final conviction in corruption cases, including high-level cases, and the systematic use of the power to seize and confiscate assets. Cooperation between the prosecution and the police in pre-trial investigation remains to be improved. The impact of anti-corruption measures so far has been limited. Corruption remains prevalent in many areas and continues to be a serious problem", states the Report.

The document, compiled by EU experts on the basis of numerous reports, from those of the EU member states' embassies to Montenegro to the Government, local and international civil society organisations and others, stresses that Montenegro needs to make serious efforts to address the high level of politicisation in the civil service and to ensure merit-based recruitment and promotion. It also maintains that the capacities of existing institutions in the area of prevention of corruption need to be strengthened to take a more proactive approach, already prior to the start of operation of the new anti-corruption agency.

The EC notes that there has been some progress

It is important that the Report notes a decline in the quality of relations between the Government and civil society. Tensions in this year had escalated farther than ever before. The kind of treatment meted out to the critically minded representatives of the NGO sector has not been seen in this region for years, and is rather reminiscent of completely different, totalitarian regimes", says Daliborka Uljarević

in the area of judicial reform, but that key reforms of the recruitment, promotion and disciplinary systems for judges and prosecutors are still pending. It also adds that Montenegro needs to step up its efforts to fight impunity for war crimes, and effectively investigate, prosecute, try and punish war crimes in line with international standards. EC also finds that the Montenegrin courts take "a rather formalistic approach" to war crimes investigations, and repeats its conclusion from the previous year that no charges of command responsibility, co-perpetration and aiding and abetting have been brought so far.

On the other hand, the Commission finds that Montenegro had made progress on chapters on intellectual property, science, education and culture, consumer protection and health, foreign security and defence policy, as well as on the protection of rights of LGBT community.

Minister of foreign affairs and European integration, **Igor Lukšić** said that the EC Progress Report objectively demonstrates that Montenegro had made progress in key reform areas, and that



Igor Lukšić

it continues to lead the region in European integration process.



Daliborka Uljarević

Daliborka Uljarević, executive director of Centre for Civic Education (CCE) says, on the other hand, that the Report is useful in raising questions that have been at the forefront of concerns of the non-governmental sector for years, such as legislative failures or poor record in the prosecution of war crimes. According to her, it is also important that the Report notes a decline in the quality of relations

between the Government and civil society, adding that tensions in this year had escalated farther than ever before. “The kind of treatment meted out to the critically minded representatives of the NGO sector has not been seen in this region for years, and is rather reminiscent of completely different, totalitarian regimes”, Uljarević warned.

She faults the Report for failing to mention the Anti-Discrimination Council, as the dismal performance of the Council this year stands in stark contrast to the previous years’ praise by the Commission, which at the time noted that discrimination had been placed high on the political agenda, so much so as to merit direct involvement of the Prime Minister in the work of the Council. This year, the Prime Minister

stepped down from the office of the president of the Council.

She added that for the third year in a row the Commission singled out urban planning, education, public procurement and healthcare as areas that are most affected by corruption. “If they have to repeat it for the third time, it is unsurprising that their assessment has become harsher, as there is clearly no political will to tackle these problems”, Uljarević said.

Slaven Radunović, MP of the Democratic Front and president of the Committee for European Integration does, however, believe that this year’s report is much harsher than the previous one. “The EC finds what the citizens of Montenegro already know: there has been no significant progress on chapter 23. With regard to the rule of law the situation is worse than last year, given the events surrounding recent changes of some electoral



Slaven Radunović

The balance clause – a yellow card for Podgorica

The EU could freeze negotiations with Montenegro in other areas if the country falls behind on its commitments for chapters 23 and 24. The message comes from the EU’s Enlargement Strategy paper for 2014/2015, which covers all countries that aspire to EU membership. Among them, only Montenegro has opened negotiations on chapters 23 and 24.

“In line with the new approach, the Commission is determined to ensure an overall balance in negotiations. Progress under chapters 23: judiciary and fundamental rights and 24: justice freedom and security will need to be made in parallel with progress in negotiations overall. The Commission recalls the existence of the ‘overall balance’ clause of the negotiating frameworks and the possibility of stopping negotiations on other chapters if progress on rule of law issues lags behind”, warns the Commission. “This will require political will to move beyond rhetoric to tangible results”, adds the papers. It also notes that rule of law continues to be the key challenge for most countries in the accession process, especially with regard to improvements in the functioning and independence of judiciary.

At the presentation of the Report, head of unit for Montenegro in DG Enlargement **Dirk Lange** said that the balance clause exists in the framework for negotiations with Montenegro and that it could be activated in the future, but that there is no initiative to do so at the moment.

laws”. Radunović notes that Montenegro only garnered praise in technical aspects of chapters that hold no political weight.

“Lack of measurable achievements in the fight against organised crime and high level corruption, lack of systematic implementation of financial investigations or the instruments of seizure and confiscation of assets, inefficient prosecution of the “audio recording” affair, lack of trust in the electoral process, lack of readiness to prepare an effective law on political party finances to prevent misuse of public funds for political purposes, pressure on the media and the need to make the media more professional... all these objections are expected, says **Azra Jasavić**, MP of Positive Montenegro.

EU Enlargement Commissioner **Štefan Füle** said Montenegrin citizens deserve to be able to rely on the swift, efficient and impartial administration of justice: “They deserve to live, work and do business in a corruption-free environment. They deserve a society where the rights of the vulnerable are protected, where the freedom of the media is respected, and where all accusations, for example relating to corruption and attacks against the media and journalists, are investigated thoroughly”.

Unexplained wealth won't be a crime, as there is no such standard in EU

The Government is not planning to criminalize illegal wealth accumulation, despite the EC's recommendations. EC Progress Report urges Montenegro to consider criminalization of illegally acquired wealth in line with the relevant UN Convention – i.e. to treat as a crime any significant increase in the wealth of public officials that cannot be explained by them.

“Ministry of justice takes a responsible stance towards every international commitment of the country. However, Article 20 of the UN Convention on corruption is an optional one, not binding, and it is up to every country to decide whether to criminalize unexplained accumulation of wealth”, said Ministry of Justice. Since unexplained wealth accumulation has not yet been criminalized by EU member states, the Ministry said that for the moment Montenegro will pursue the path laid out by the roadmap on preventive and repressive anti-corruption measures that had already been agreed on with the European Commission as part of chapter 23.

Fragile economic recovery

EC Report notes that the recovery of Montenegrin economy remains fragile due to weak domestic demand, a narrow production base, and a high dependence on the external environment. Montenegro's macroeconomic stability recorded some improvement and the economy recovered from the 2012 recession, notes the report. “However, several challenges hinder the efficient allocation of resources. The current-account and fiscal imbalances persist and domestic demand remains subdued as banks are not yet playing their intermediation role in the economy. Labour market conditions, as well as diversification and overall competitiveness are all still weak while key investments are at an incipient phase of development or delayed”, warns EC. Growth was largely driven by stronger activity in the construction sector, as well as by net exports fuelled by stronger external demand for electricity and for tourism services, but also by a sharp contraction of imports. Private and public consumption recorded some slight growth of around one percentage point in real terms. The EC notes that tourism continues to generate good results, but that external shocks from floods in neighbouring countries and from tensions between Ukraine and Russia cannot be discarded.

Professor of political philosophy at the University of Zagreb and a renowned political analyst, Prof. Dr Žarko Puhovski

EU is not particularly interested in confrontation with the past

» *What is your opinion on the events that ensued in Serbia, Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro following the incident with the drone and the alleged flag of greater Albania at the football match between the two national teams? Is that evidence that the Balkans are still far from what Brussels calls “stabilisation” and that behind these events there is a conscious strategy of some political and security structures?*

Much of the Balkans is relatively stable: Slovenia, Croatia, Bulgaria, Romania, even Greece. There remains the “black hole” created by EU when it allowed Bulgaria and Romania ahead of the line (and, more importantly, despite the accession criteria). This area is still quite unstable, both externally (with regard to borders) and internally. In this unstable environment every “incident” is a good excuse for trouble, although these are becoming more common also in the new, and even in the old EU member states, from Hungary to UK.

Across the former SFRY the interruption of the match led to a heightened hooligan syndrome, in a political context that was slightly more heated than before.

I don't believe in the omnipotence of “political and security structures”, I don't even believe that they have particular powers. It rather seems to me that they are falling behind the events (“provocations”) which they later try to “expertly explain” since they cannot claim responsibility for them. As for stability, it is first important to find what preconditions, primarily social, are required to ensure its sustainability, which is a question the EU regularly dodges.

» *Can we successfully accomplish the process of European integration and become a society with a Western*

Processing war crimes is important, in other words, primarily for the sake of moral hygiene of Montenegro as a community – everything else can occasionally be used as a form of tactical pressure on those in power. However the experience of Croatia suggests that such tactics can backfire – after the accession to EU, the attitude to Serbian minority has become much worse in Croatia.

system of values without first confronting the crimes of our past? Can Milo Đukanović, Svetozar Marović, Tomislav Nikolić, Aleksandar Vučić, Hashim Thaçi etc. turn their states into exemplary European societies?

Speaking first of all as a professor of political theory, I fervently hope that no one will ever again be able to “turn their state into a society”. Because that is by definition a totalitarian intention. A state, we keep forgetting, is there to serve the society, not to act on it pedagogically. Nationalists like (“our”) state to be a pedagogical authority which decides, among other, on the way we speak, act, behave, dress, in a word – live. But a country like that only has subjects, not citizens.

On the other hand, the overall process of European integration, which resulted in the EU, was framed as a substitute for the confrontation with the past. The idea was to replace any fixation on the past with economic development. Except Germany, which was forced into it by defeat, other EU member states did very little to confront their own pasts – colonial or otherwise. The EU as such is not particularly interested in confrontations with the past, and is not a good role model either.

Besides, compared to **Orban** and **Berlusconi**, our local chieftans are but apprentices, in everything including corruption. It would have been much better



Žarko Puhovski

if other, different officials were to win democratic legitimacy, but to put things realistically: can other politicians, besides those you named, effectively carry the integration process? (Un)fortunately, these processes will take at least another decade or more, so we can at least hope for the time to be on our side.

» *In its latest Progress Report the EC finds that that the Montenegrin courts “have a rather formalistic approach” to prosecution of war crimes, which has yielded no charges of command responsibility, co-perpetration or aiding and abetting. What is your opinion on this? Will Brussels and the EU member states forget about Montenegro’s failure to prosecute war criminals by the time we qualify for membership?*

Unfortunately, I am convinced that the “formalistic approach” will be enough once you get close enough to EU membership. You can learn as much from the Croatian experience. All the more so since we seem to be facing a return of the Cold War, where everything – including war crimes – will be judged first of all as ours (American) or theirs (Russian). If the next decade is to be marked by a return of geopolitical tensions (this time, it would appear, without the neutral and the non-aligned),



the “intelligence community” will become the key problem for Montenegro.

In other words, it is important to prosecute war crimes above all for the sake of the moral hygiene of Montenegro as a community – everything else is secondary, although it could occasionally be useful as a form of tactical pressure on those in power. However, the Croatian experience shows that such tactics can backfire. Since the accession to EU, the attitude to the Serbian minority in Croatia has worsened, as some on the right have realised that we are now in, Brussels

Return of the Cold War will affect “negotiations” with EU

» *How will the relations between EU and Russia, which is traditionally on good terms with Montenegro, Serbia and Republika Srpska, affect European integration of these countries?*

I am convinced, I repeat, that integration of these two states (as well as of other candidates) is a matter of not-so-near-future. Much can change in the world politics by then – it would be enough to remember how much has changed in just a few months after Maidan. Meantime, re-heating the Cold War will certainly affect accession “negotiations” – which are hardly that, seen that they rather resemble attempts to pass numerous exams before a committee of not always competent examiners. The rumours will still bring up the connections between the secret services and Russia, and NATO as the preliminary goal, although a number of important EU members remain outside of NATO and Malta abandoned the Partnership for Peace in the midst of its – successful – negotiations for EU membership. In other words, even the staunch geopolitical rhetoric should not interfere with negotiations. The real problems are elsewhere: in the necessity for these states and societies to undergo genuine change, but also in the fact that at present the EU simply lacks institutional capacities to absorb new members, and is under pressure to reinvent itself.



is a domestic political issue, there is no reason to fear them, so we can show our true faces.

» What is the best model, in your opinion, that could ensure that this process will provide justice to the victims?

I am convinced that the most effective model is the one advocated by the initiative for RECOM (Independent Regional Commission for documenting facts about the victims of war crimes and other serious violations of human rights committed on the territory of former SFRY between 1991 and 2001). That would not yet give the victims justice, but it would constitute an important step in that direction: a step that would prevent dehumanisation of victims as mere numbers and give them at least a name and recognise the circumstances of their suffering. Criminal proceedings can never cover more than a fraction of crimes and their perpetrators, and it is likely that, as the time passes, they will eventually fade away. Two things are important here: that after “our” war, or wars, there were some convictions also on the winning side – which is probably the first time in history; and that our next task, a far more important one, is to shame ideologies, mythologies etc. that led to these crimes. This to me seems to be important not only for the victims and their families, but also for the future.

» Do you agree with the general external perception that things have turned for the worse in Croatia, from the economy to the Cyrillic script street signs in Vukovar, since the accession to EU? What is the reason for this?

I do agree that the accession to EU was understood by a large segment of the political spectrum as something like high school graduation, upon which we should celebrate our newly acquired “maturity” by binge partying, because we’re now free to do as we please. Šešelj’s criminal remarks only added fuel to the “national decisiveness” in speech. At the same time, nobody cared to remember the behaviour of our own public after the return of the convicted war criminal **Dario Kordić**, nor that the fantasy of “Serbian Vukovar” is but vicious nonsense – a nonsense, however, founded upon the kind of nationalistic waffle that in other circumstances had led to hysteria over the “molestation of Vukovar with Cyrillic alphabet”.

As for economy, Croatia joined the EU in a moment which was unfortunate both for Croatia and for EU. This, however, is a complex of problems that will have a positive solution for most of the citizens only after a significant delay.

V. Žugić

10 billion for Croatia by 2020



European Commission adopted a Partnership Agreement with Croatia which sets the terms of Croatia's spending of over 10 billion euro from the EU structural funds in the period 2014-2020. The funds are intended to enable Croatia to attain sustainable growth, strengthen its competitiveness and create jobs alongside greater social inclusion and attention to environment. Out of these, two billion are slated for rural development and another 252.6 million for development of fisheries and the maritime sector. However, Croatia won't be able to draw on these funds immediately, due to complex financing procedures.

After 6 years, Ireland starts anew



Ireland unveiled its first expansive budget since the collapse of the Celtic Tiger economy six years ago. This year's "growth budget" was preceded by seven years of austerity that took 30 billion euros annually, or nearly a quarter of previous domestic demand, out of a shell-shocked economy, reports AP. Measures unveiled in the 2015 budget will increase spending and tax breaks by a combined 1.2 billion, including a plan to build 6,700 state-funded homes for the poor as Ireland seeks to stimulate even more tax-driving growth. The only new tax will be another 40 cents on a pack of cigarettes, raising their average price to 10 euro. Finance Minister **Michael Noonan** told lawmakers as he forecast that his budget blueprint would boost Ireland's 2015 growth to 3.9%, above previously forecasted 3.6%.

Ireland also sought to shore up its international image by announcing plans to end a corporate accounting rule that permitted hundreds of U.S. multinationals with European bases in Ireland to shift their non-American profits between two Irish-registered companies and avoid tax. Noonan declared that the tactic called the "Double Irish" would be outlawed for new applicants from January 1 2015, while existing beneficiaries – among them scores of global pharmaceutical and technology giants including Apple and Google – would have until the end of 2020 to find different shelters.

Europe faces shortage of health workers



Europe faces a growing demand for care due to the ageing population that coincides with the increasing age of the health workforce. The gap between available supply of workers and projected demand for care is growing, unless policy action is initiated to counterbalance this trend. The shortfall of health professionals in the EU is estimated by the European Commission at up to 1 million by 2020. East-west and south-north migration has contributed to alleviating the problem for some western and northern European countries, but patterns of health professional mobility are changing and often unpredictable, experts told the European Health Forum Gastein.

For instance, data from Austria show that approximately a mere 60 percent of medical graduates of the class of 2013 are working as doctors in Austria. Many have moved abroad: in 2013, around 2,700 Austrian doctors were working in Germany. There are many factors behind a healthcare worker's decision to migrate: in addition to higher income, there are also opportunities for a better career, better education for the children etc.

13 European banks fail the stress test



The European Central Bank (ECB) says that 13 of Europe's 130 biggest banks have flunked an in-depth review of their finances and must increase their capital buffers against losses by 10 billion euros. The ECB said 25 banks in all, or every fifth, were found to need stronger buffers. The 25 banks need a total of 25 billion euros to strengthen their capital reserves. The greatest problems were found with the banks in Italy, Greece and Portugal. The test was much more rigorous than in 2011 and 2010, when even some of the banks that appeared sound at the test had to be bailed out shortly afterwards, ECB said.

Media as the mirror to the state and society



Piše: Svetlana Pešić

On 15 October 2014, in cooperation with Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), Centre for Civic Education (CCE) organised a panel discussion on media freedom and the role of media titled “**Media as the mirror to the state and society**”. The aim of the conference was to analyse the situation with regard to freedom of expression and media through the lens of the European Commission Progress Report on Montenegro for 2014.

Daliborka Uljarević, executive director of Centre for Civic Education opened the panel with a reminder that the “*Montenegrin media scene, with all its numerous violations of journalistic ethics, accurately represents the limits of democratic process and capacities of Montenegro in its negotiations with EU. Journalistic calling is a dangerous one in Montenegro, if you belong to the media which is known for openly criticising ruling structures*”. Uljarević stressed that negotiations are helping Montenegrin society to face its problems more clearly, and added that “*we must realise that nobody will come from Brussels to fix our quagmires. We have to fight ourselves for a democratic environment in which the media, as well as the critical organisations within the non-governmental sector, will be able to do their job secure in the idea that the state will protect them fully.*”



Representative of EU Delegation to Montenegro **Patrick Schmelzer** from the Section for Public Administration reform and the media, said that the European Union will monitor the way in which Montenegro fulfils the required conditions. “*For Montenegro to progress on chapters 23 and 24, the EU must be convinced that Montenegro has secured freedoms of media and*

expression. We will monitor the work of institutions in this area and demand tangible results. We are ready to support Montenegrin institutions to fulfil these commitments”, Schmelzer said.

Nikola Marković, president of the Commission for



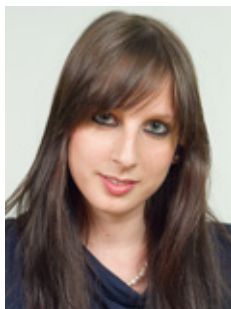
monitoring of institutions responsible for investigations of cases of violence against journalists and deputy editor in chief of daily “Dan”, warned that two thirds of reported cases of violence against journalists were never resolved in court. “*Including the murder of Duško Jovanović and beating of Vijesti’s journalist Tufik Softić. The negative environment for journalists is fomented by the government, above all the Prime Minister Milo Đukanović. Until this is resolved, we can’t speak of full media freedom in Montenegro*”, Marković said.

Tufik Softić, a journalist for daily “Vijesti” and weekly “Monitor” said it will be essential to examine the connections between parts of criminal groups and the police, security services and government leadership. He also described two attacks on his person, none of which has yet been fully processed by the relevant authorities, which forces him to live under constant police protection.

Gordana Borović, representative of the Media council for self-regulation (MCS) said the Council had recently met with representatives of OSCE and media which are not part of MCS (Vijesti, Monitor, Dan) in Vienna. “*We reached the agreement to start joint work on the new Code of Conduct*”, she said.

The discussion was attended by a large number of representatives of the media, national and international organisations, foreign embassies to Montenegro, students and interested citizens. Among the participants was also **H.E. Gudrun Elisabeth Steinacker**, ambassador of Germany to Montenegro.

Chapter 22: Regional policy and coordination of structural funds



By: Chiara Gaia Iascone

According to EU acquis, chapter 22 mainly consists of frameworks and regulations which apply directly, without having to be transposed into the national legislation. They set the rules for planning, approving and implementation of structural funds, cohesion funds and programmes that reflect territorial organisation of each member state. These programmes are pre-agreed with the European Commission, and their implementation is the responsibility of member states, in which they must abide by the EU legislation as a whole, including rules on public procurement, competition and environment. The member states must have in place the institutional framework and the adequate administrative capacities to ensure programming, implementation, monitoring and evaluation in a solid and economical manner from the point of view of management and financial control. EU's regional policy includes financial support to restructuring projects in the countries and regions in need, with the aim of diminishing developmental gaps and strengthening

competitiveness of local governments.

A broad range of literature testifies to the advantages of cooperation for the recipient states and their membership of EU. It is without doubt that the new member states will also be able to profit from EU assistance in the areas of technical capabilities and financial support.

Article 3 point 3 of the consolidated version of the Treaty of EU states that the European Union shall promote economic, social and territorial cohesion and solidarity among member states. Article 158 of the Treaty of Nice further stresses the importance of promoting overall development through EU policies aimed at strengthening economic and social cohesion.

Specifically, the Community aims to reduce the gap between the levels of development of different regions, promote growth of less developed regions, including rural areas, through development of infrastructure, agriculture etc.

The target areas are those with the regional GDP lower than 75% of EU average, measured in purchasing power parities. The criteria refers to eligibility for the EU structural funds, whereas the Cohesion funds are already available to the regions whose GDP is less than 90% of the EU average.

Looking at the EU member states after the last big enlargement, we can see that a small state like Malta was allocated 571 million euro through the structural funds (made up partly from European Regional Development Fund and partly from European Social Fund) and 284 million euro through the Cohesion Fund. Bulgaria, on the other hand, received 6 853 billion euro, while the Czech Republic got 26.7 billion.

Looking at the map of funding allocations for the period 2007-2013, it is evident that the bulk of resources had been allocated to the new member states, although a number of less developed regions in the West European countries still receive sizeable funding. Spain and Italy, alongside Poland, are the countries that benefit the most in financial terms from the EU cohesion policy.

It would be naive to think that the EU only





offers financial assistance out of charity. Its aim, in fact, is to channel support to the less developed regions and countries in order to strengthen their competitiveness, in a visible and measurable way and in the name of European solidarity.

As for Montenegro, the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) which allocated 235 million euro to Montenegro for the period 2007-2013 constitutes a preliminary to the structural and cohesion funds.

At the moment, Montenegro has access to IPA components I and II, whereas access to components III and IV requires accreditation with the decentralized accreditation system (DIS) which allow more independence in allocation and monitoring of IPA projects. To accomplish this, a candidate country must establish administrative capacities and legal frameworks to ensure it can deal with the future commitments. Essentially, implementation of these funds is the responsibility of the recipient country.

Structural and cohesion funds have two models of financing, and the general commitments and preconditions are listed in the Council Regulation (EC) no. 1083/2006 from 11 July 2006. Only EU member states are eligible for this method of financing.

The procedure involves a series of steps with regard to structural funds. First, a country has to be divided according to the NUTS classification (nomenclature of territorial units for statistical

purposes) and the funding is allocated at the NUTS II – level, i.e. at the level of subnational regions.

In other words, as it begins accession negotiations with EU, Montenegro has to prepare a temporary NUTS classification for the future allocation of funds. In the case of Croatia, the country was divided into three units at the NUTS II level. It is also necessary to set up adequate administrative structure in order to ensure better management of the funds. One of the requirements for all candidate countries is to prepare a National strategic and orientation framework, a document that lays the ground for a pragmatic, long-term approach to cohesion policy, in line with the plans and strategies of other countries. Croatia, for example, appointed an IPA coordinator in the Office of the State Secretary for strategy and management of EU funds. The same Office was given the task to prepare the national strategic and orientation plan, and the responsibility to coordinate structural and cohesion plans in the future. **Aleksandar Andrija Pejović, Montenegro's** Chief Negotiator with EU, was appointed the national IPA coordinator on 2 March 2012.

In order to implement the funds and successfully manage them, it is key that state and local government bodies should develop adequate administrative capacities. As in the case of Croatia, there are some dimensions on which further efforts are needed. Regarding legal framework,



the country is expected to develop multi-annual budgets, provide co-financing at local and national levels, and ensure that the selection and implementation of chosen projects take place in accordance with the general principles of EU law (e.g. on public procurement, gender equality, competition and environment).

The institutional framework must encompass all institutions covered by the General Regulations on structural and cohesion funds. In this context, it should be stressed that the rules on the allocation of funds and their implementation, monitoring and evaluation are all regulated by the said framework. Moreover, it will be necessary to recruit qualified personnel

that have been trained to conduct the programming process. In addition to implementation, monitoring and evaluation, sound financial management must also be ensured.

It would be unrealistic to talk about the amounts Montenegro could get upon its accession to EU. In the case of Croatia, the impact of accession on the budget through cohesion funds is only assessed in a later phase, while the results of impact assessment are presented together with the financial framework for the completion of negotiations. Article 33 of Croatia's Accession agreement states that "an amount of 449.4 billion kuna (current prices) will be reserved for Croatia in the framework of structural and cohesion funds in 2013. One third of this amount must come from the cohesion fund".

Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance was activated for Montenegro when it signed the Framework Agreement on IPA (15 November 2007), an instrument for testing Montenegro's capacities for successful management of EU assistance funds. Soon afterwards, Montenegro began the work on accreditation of the Decentralized implementation system (DIS). So far, the country has demonstrated the ability of its institutions to access IPA funds, as far as it concerns applying for the funding, project writing and establishing cooperation with civil society organisations, non-governmental organisations and cross-border partners. Nevertheless, administrative and institutional capacities at the national and local levels must be strengthened if the country is to make the most out of developmental chances offered by an adequate use of IPA and the ability to draw on the cohesion funds.

Controversies over the appointments of the new European Commission

Green light for the 'last-chance' Commission



By: Vera Šćepanović

The newly elected president of the European Commission **Jean-Claude Juncker** managed to win support for his new Commission from the European Parliament, with a great dealing of charm and a few last-minute policy tweaks. Parliament's largest three groups, the European People's Party (EPP), the Socialists & Democrats and the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) broadly voted, with 423 in favour, to support the proposed new 28-strong executive. 209 MEPs rejected the new team, most of them from the Greens, the European United Left and Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy groups. The Conservatives and Reformists abstained.

Speaking to MEPs ahead of the vote, Juncker warned that his Commission represented the "last chance" to win back citizens' trust. "Either we succeed in bringing European citizens closer to Europe, or we fail," he told MEPs. "Either we manage to dramatically reduce unemployment, or we fail. Either we give a perspective to young Europeans, or we fail," Juncker said.

The confirmation was a big victory, as Juncker's proposed college faced protests and resistance from all sides. Following the first round of hearings of commissioner candidates in the beginning of October, the Parliament expressed

The worst performance by far was that of the Slovenian candidate Alenka Bratušek, who was rejected by the parliamentary committee for energy and environment by a vote of 112 to 13 with two abstentions. According to the MEPs, Bratušek had failed to show a mastery of her portfolio

its reservations over as many as one third of the candidates, and the present commission is a result of multiple compromises struck in the course of last month.

The worst performance by far was that of the Slovenian candidate **Alenka Bratušek**, who was rejected by the parliamentary committee for energy and environment by a vote of 112 to 13 with two abstentions. According to the MEPs, Bratušek had failed to show a mastery of her portfolio, and was widely ridiculed as a "commissioner who nominated herself" during her brief tenure as a prime minister in the Slovenian caretaker government. Bratušek was forced to resign and was replaced by **Violeta Bulc**, who had only recently joined the new Slovenian government. Despite her lack of experience, Bulc received parliamentary approval, but was given the less prestigious transport portfolio while the responsibility for energy union went to Slovakia's **Maroš Šefčovič**.

Hungary's candidate **Tibor Navracsics**, who was nominated to run Education, Culture, Youth and Citizenship portfolio, also faced parliamentary rejection due to his record in a government accused of attacking civil rights. Navracsics was eventually allowed to stay on as a commissioner, but the responsibility for citizenship was moved from his portfolio to that of the Greek commissioner for home

Similarly controversial was the nomination of the former Spanish minister of agriculture, Miguel Arias Cañete, to the post of a Commissioner for Energy and Climate change. Cañete and his family have long had close ties to the Spanish oil companies, and he has been described by the Spanish newspaper El País as always being on the edge of the conflict of interests



affairs and migration, **Dimitris Avramopoulos**. Similarly controversial was the nomination of the former Spanish minister of agriculture, **Miguel Arias Cañete**, to the post of a Commissioner for Energy and Climate change. Cañete and his family have long had close ties to the Spanish oil companies, and he has been described by the Spanish newspaper *El País* as always being on the edge of the conflict of interests. More than half a million people have signed an online petition against his appointment to the Commission. Cañete survived the vote in the Parliament, as the Socialists decided to support his nomination in exchange for the European People Party's endorsement of France's **Pierre Moscovici** for the Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs. Moscovici, in turn, was severely "grilled" by centre-right and liberal MEPs who challenged him for presiding over lax fiscal policy as France's minister of finance and doubted that he is the right man to ensure fiscal discipline across EU. The bargain between the Socialists and EPP ensured that both men remained in the job, but the Greens still insisted that the portfolio for sustainable development should be taken from Cañete and moved under direct responsibility of the Commission's first Vice President. Political

Political considerations were also key to the appointment of the UK Commissioner Jonathan Hill. Hill's connections to the city of London led one of the MEPs to liken his appointment to the portfolio for financial services to "letting a fox guard the henhouse".

considerations were also key to the appointment of the UK Commissioner **Jonathan Hill**. Hill's past activities as a lobbyist and his connections to the city of London led one of the Green MEPs to liken his appointment to the portfolio for financial services to "letting a fox guard the henhouse". However, given UK's tense relations with the EU, a rejection of the UK nominee was considered to be politically unwise.

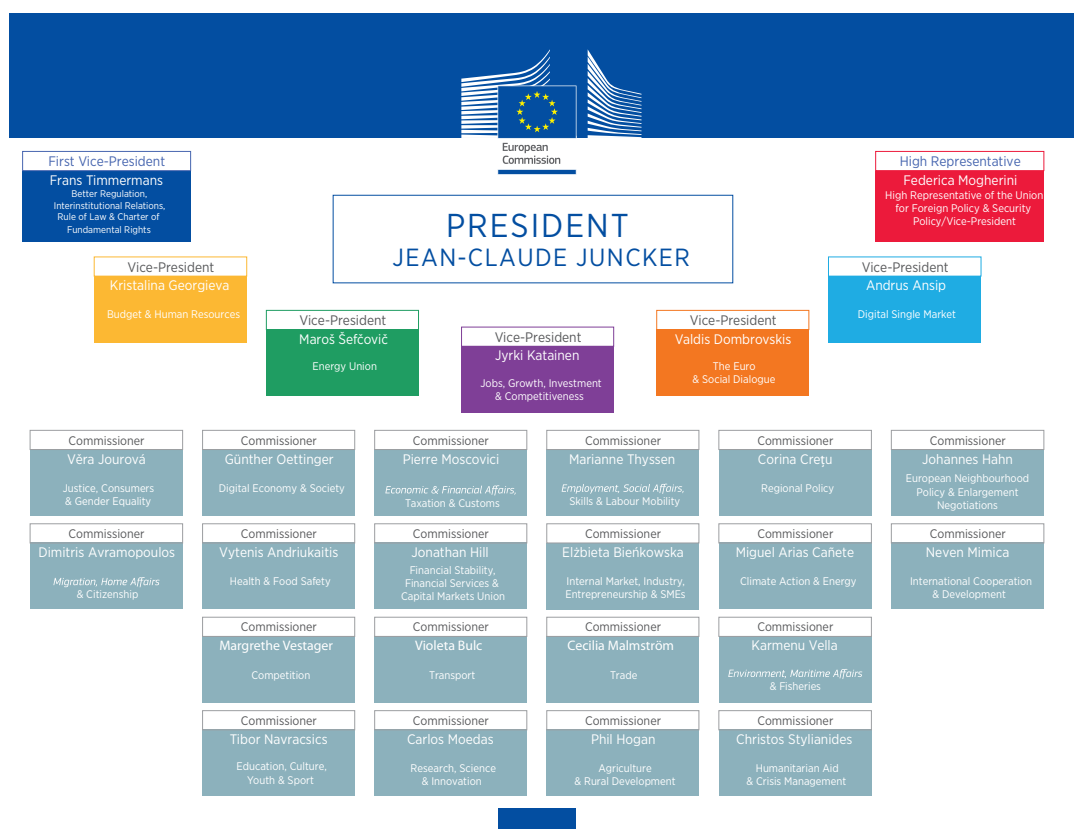
Controversial nominations were not the only problem the Parliament had with the new Commission. Juncker had decided to "shake up" the Commission by rearranging portfolios in a way that sometimes combined policy domains in a way that some parties found unacceptable. To ensure Socialists' support, Juncker had to reassign the responsibility for pharmaceuticals days before the vote, moving it from the industry directorate of the Polish Commissioner **Elżbieta Bieńkowska** into the charge of the Commissioner-designate for Health, **Vytienis Andriukaitis**. Left-wing MEPs also protested against the division of economic and social responsibilities into different portfolios, but Juncker assured them that the newly appointed Vice-President for the Euro and Social Dialogue will ensure coordination between the two. To those worried about the conservative leanings of the new Commission, Juncker also promised a €300 billion investment programme aimed at boosting growth and jobs in the EU will be presented before the end of the year. However, it is unclear at present how the scheme will be financed.

The pressure to strengthen coordination among overlapping portfolios while still accommodating representatives of all 28 EU member states also



gave rise to a completely new structure of the Commission. In addition to the post of the First Vice President, Juncker's "right hand" - the popular former Dutch foreign minister **Frans Timmermans** - the new commission will also

have six vice-presidents who will be in charge of overseeing and coordinating the work of the other twenty directorates. It is still unclear how this structure will work out in practice, however - the clusters of portfolios are not strictly delineated and many of them fall under responsibility of several vice-presidents, depending on the policy area. Bulgaria's **Kristalina Georgieva**, the new Commissioner for Budget and Human Resources, will thus be overseeing the work of all directorates; **Andrus Ansip**, the Estonian Commissioner responsible for Digital Single Market has twelve directorates attached to his portfolio, Slovakia's **Maroš Šefčovič** in charge of Energy Union has thirteen, Lithuania's **Valdis Dombrovskis** (Euro and Social Dialogue) has twelve, and Finland's **Jyrki Katainen** (Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness) eighteen.



The Commission's vision for the Western Balkans in the new Enlargement Strategy

Public administration reform a precondition for successful EU negotiations

In October this year the European Commission published its annual Enlargement Strategy paper, alongside progress reports for each of the countries in the accession process. This year's strategy continues with the changes in the enlargement process that had been laid out in the last two years: the greater emphasis on the rule of law, with priority accorded to chapters 23 and 24, and with greater efforts to strengthen economic governance and improve competitiveness of the region.

This year also brings another novelty: the decision to better integrate public administration reforms in the region into the overall accession process. According to the Commission, public administration remains weak in most enlargement countries, with limited administrative capacity, high levels of politicisation and a lack of transparency. Strengthening the functioning of democratic institutions also requires sound electoral processes and proper functioning of parliaments, including constructive and sustainable dialogue across the political spectrum. The Commission also believes that more should be done to foster an enabling environment for civil society organisations, in order to enhance political accountability and promote deeper understanding of accession related reforms.

Public administration reform will be integrated into the enlargement process through 'special groups on PAR' modelled after the sub-committees of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA). Although there is no specific acquis chapter covering public administration as such, the Commission believes public administration reform to be essential for the success of the overall process of negotiations. Some of the key issues will be addressed through relevant chapters - notably public procurement, financial control, judiciary and fundamental rights, taxation and economic and monetary policy - and in the context of inter-governmental conferences where this is important for acquis implementation. Special groups have already met in the case of Albania, Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro, with the aim to advance the strategic framework for public administration reform, policy development and coordination, public service and human resources management, accountability, service delivery and public financial management.

The Commission is also strengthening its support to

The enlargement countries will be asked to submit National Economic Reform Programmes. For its part the EU will provide more guidance for reform priorities and better targeted IPA funding. The Commission believes that improving economic governance in the enlargement countries is also of importance for maintaining support for enlargement within the European Union.

improving **economic governance and competitiveness in enlargement countries**. The EC believes this is key to addressing concerns of citizens in a persistently difficult economic environment, with high unemployment and low investment. This new approach is particularly important in relation to the Western Balkan countries since none of them is yet considered to be a functioning market economy. There will be an increased emphasis on structural reforms which are sectoral in nature. The enlargement countries will be asked to submit National Economic Reform Programmes. For its part the EU will provide more guidance for reform priorities and better targeted IPA funding. The Commission believes that improving economic governance in the enlargement countries is also of importance for maintaining support for enlargement within the European Union. According to the Strategy paper, the key economic challenges in the Western Balkans are strengthening fiscal consolidation by reducing budget deficits and implementing credible public sector reforms; strengthening public financial management, including revenue administration and collection, budget formulation and execution, accounting and reporting, and external oversight; addressing the high burden of non-performing loans; restructuring and improving governance of state-owned enterprises; improving the business environment, including the digital economy; improving energy and transport networks and increasing connectivity; establishing functioning labour markets, including sufficient flexibility, addressing the informal sector, improving the employability of workers, and better aligning education and skills with labour market needs.

2014 has also seen the launch of the new Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II). Through IPA II, the

EU will provide €11.7 billion for the period 2014-2020 to support the enlargement countries in their preparation for accession as well as regional and cross-border cooperation. IPA II increases focus on priorities for EU accession in the areas of democracy and rule of law as well as competitiveness and growth. IPA II also introduces a sector approach, incentives for delivery on results, increased budget support and prioritisation of projects. Large infrastructural investments can also count on the support of international financial institutions through the existing Western Balkans Investment Framework.

The Commission warns that the situation concerning **freedom of expression and media** is difficult in most West Balkan countries, and has even deteriorated in some countries in the past year, in terms of informal economic pressure on the media, lack of transparency of media ownership, procurement and government advertising, but also in the continuing violence and intimidation against journalists, with little success by the authorities in identifying and properly sanctioning perpetrators. The Commission will therefore continue to prioritise work on freedom of expression and the media in the EU accession

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process, which will include organisation of the third edition of the Speak-Up! conference, bringing together key stakeholders from the media, European Parliament, civil society and national authorities. Later this year, the Commission will award for the first time a prize for investigative journalism.

V. Šćepanović

Serbia struggles with economy and relations with Kosovo, Albania with conflicts between government and opposition

As regards this year's progress, the Commission finds that most enlargement countries have made some progress towards accession.

The Strategy stresses that the opening of accession negotiations is a turning point in the EU's relations with **Serbia**, but warns that Serbia needs to deliver on its reform priorities in a sustained manner as the pace of negotiations will depend on progress in key areas, notably on rule of law and the normalisation process with Kosovo. "New momentum needs to be generated in the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina in order to tackle key outstanding issues and open a new phase in the normalisation of relations", states the paper.

Albania was granted candidate status in June as recognition for its reform efforts and progress made in meeting the required conditionality. The country now needs to build on and consolidate the reform momentum and focus its efforts on tackling its EU-integration challenges in a sustainable way. Both government and opposition need to ensure political debate takes place primarily in parliament.

The initialling of a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Kosovo in July is a major milestone in EU-Kosovo relations. Now Kosovo needs to deliver on key reforms, in particular the rule of law.

The EU accession process with **the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** is at an impasse, and the EC warns that urgent action is needed to reverse recent backsliding, notably as regards freedom of expression and of the media and the independence of the judiciary. "There is an urgent need to find a negotiated and mutually acceptable solution to the name issue. Government and opposition should take steps to restore political dialogue in parliament", Strategy warns.

Bosnia and Herzegovina remains at a standstill on its European integration path. Following the elections, it will be essential for the country to speak with one voice, to tackle urgent socio-economic reforms and to progress on its European agenda.

On the other hand, implementation of certain reform commitments by **Turkey** has continued, such as the 2013 democratisation package, and steps have been taken towards a settlement of the Kurdish issue. However, there have also been grounds for serious concerns regarding the independence of the judiciary and the protection of fundamental freedoms. The Strategy stresses that opening negotiations on the relevant chapters on rule of law and fundamental rights would provide a roadmap for reforms in these key areas.

II NGO Fair

As part of the manifestation “XII Days of adult education”, organized by Centre for Professional Education, Education Bureau and Ministry of Education, Centre for Civic Education (CCE) participated in the 2nd NGO Fair for NGOs offering education programmes for youth and adults. The event took place on 20 October 2014 in the foyer of the cultural centre “Budo Tomović” in Podgorica.

CCE representatives presented the catalogue of educational programmes as well as numerous publications from CCE’s rich publishing activity. They also talked to the interested citizens as well as with the representatives of institutions who were interested in participating in the existing programmes as well as developing institutional cooperation and exchange of experiences between informal and formal educational systems.

Apart from CCE, another ten or so NGOs presented their educational offer. The fair was attended by interested citizens, representatives of the Government Office for cooperation with NGOs, Centre for Professional Education, Education Bureau, directors of secondary technical schools from the central, south and northern regions of Montenegro, Ministry of Education, Employment Bureau, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and other civil servants. The fair was organised as a joint activity of educational institutions and NGOs as part of the Action Plan of the Strategy of Development of Non-Governmental Organisations.



How to teach sensitive and controversial historical topics in former Yugoslav countries

On 3 October 2014 EUROCLIO held a presentation and training as part of its programme “*History that connects. How to teach sensitive and controversial historical topics in former Yugoslav states*”. EUROCLIO promotes responsible and innovative history teaching, based on multiple perspectives, critical thinking, mutual respect, as well as inclusion of controversial issues. The seminar served as a platform to launch the new package of EUROCLIO innovative teaching materials, titled “Once upon a time...we lived together”. The publication is the outcome of the project “How to teach sensitive and controversial historical topic in former Yugoslav states” (2011-2014) conducted as part of the programme “History that connects”. The publication contains 23 innovative model workshops dealing with some of the most sensitive and controversial issues of the regional history in the period 1900-1945. It contains contributions from teachers in all countries covered by the project (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia). The training was led by the authors of the publication, and its goal was to train history teachers, as well as representatives of civil society organisations, to apply some innovative methodological solutions in the classrooms and in the context of informal education programmes that deal with historical themes, with an emphasis of multi-perspectivity and critical thinking. **Petar Đukanović**, CCE programme coordinator, participated in the even on behalf of CCE.

Personal assistance – legal and normative framework and practice

Montenegrin Association of Youth with Disabilities (UMHCG) organised on 30 October 2014 a conference titled “Personal assistance – legal and normative framework and practice – where are we five years later?” with the aim of presenting the analysis of the situation with personal assistance in Montenegro in the last five years, and demanding implementation of international standards in draft regulations on the Law on social and child protection that is supposed to improve things in the field of personal assistance. The conference was opened by **Marina Vujačić**, executive director of UMHCG. Draft policy proposal for improving personal assistance services is the outcome of a two-month research conducted as part of the project “*For empowered and independent students with disabilities*”. Several years of experience have taught UMHCG that this field is fraught with numerous problems in the implementation of personal assistance services, namely: lack of familiarity and commitment to follow international standards in the implementation of personal assistance services by some public institutions and local government bodies, donors and service providers and the lack of permanent financial support for the implementation through the national and local budgets. **Petar Đukanović**, CCE programme coordinator and **Tamara Milaš**, programme associate, participated at the meeting on behalf of the Centre for Civic Education.

Equality and prevention of discrimination at work

Montenegrin Employers’ Federation (UPCG), International Labour Organisation (ILO), Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, as well as Ministry of Human and Minority Rights organised on 28 October 2014 a conference titled “*Promotion of equality and prevention of discrimination at work in Montenegro*” in Hotel Ramada in Podgorica. The conference was opened by: **Predrag Mitrović**, president of the Montenegrin Employers’ Federation, **Anne-Brit Nippierd**, representative of the Employer Affairs department in the International Labour Organisation, **Predrag Bošković**, Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, **Suad Numanović**, Minister of Human and Minority Rights and **Mitja Drobnič**, head of the EU Delegation to Montenegro. The participants presented the national and international regulation of the subject area, with the aim of assessing the current situation in Montenegro and drawing recommendations for the future in order to achieve equality, security and human dignity at work. It was emphasised that the principles of equality and non-discrimination should be at the basis of the value framework of every company. **Željka Četković**, CCE programme associate, participated in the event on behalf of CCE.

Long road to justice for the victims

On 25 October 2014 on Zagreb, on occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Centre for reconciliation with the past DOCUMENTA, the Centre organised a round table where it presented research on the needs of civilian victims of the war for 2013, and discussed their position and ways of compensating civilian victims of the war in Croatia and other post-Yugoslav states. The participants stressed that the members of victims’ families never received moral or material compensation for their losses. Their suffering was never recognised, the perpetrators were not punished, and the majority is facing numerous problems in claiming retribution. Montenegro’s experience was presented by **Daliborka Uljarević**, executive director for Centre for Civic Education (CCE).

A.V

Summer School “Citizens Resilience in Times of Crises”

The Summer School is open to graduate students as well as early career researchers throughout Europe and beyond with a specialized interest in participation and mobilization during periods of crises in different fields of study, including political science, political sociology, political communication, and political anthropology. It has no fees and will provide welcome drinks and a farewell dinner, academic materials, and the use of library, computing and internet facilities. Besides the LIVEWHAT project can offer 5 travel and accommodation grants of €700 each to selected participants. It will take place from 5 to 11 July in Florence, Italy.

Deadline: 15 December 2014

For more information about the application process please contact: livewhat.summerschool@gmail.com

NGO Resources - financial, human, personal

This Training Course is for 30 participants from Bulgaria, Germany, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Montenegro, Palestine, Poland, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine from 19 to 25 March, 2105 in Switzerland. The objectives of the course are as follows:

- » To provide the opportunity for organisations to meet and explore general needs of youth NGOs in Europe and its neighboring countries
- » To explore financial resources possibilities for youth work NGOs on both a local and international level
- » To explore strategies to increase the capacity of organizations through building their financial, human, and personal resources
- » To identify personal, professional and educational development opportunities that NGOs can provide for volunteers to ensure their long term cooperation and future employability
- » To discuss the similarities and differences related to NGO management in relation to the varying realities of the participating countries
- » To develop strategy plans that enable the participating organisations to reach their goal in terms of resources development in order to provide quality youth work in a regional, national and international level

Deadline: 12 January 2015

For more information, please contact: Oliver Schneitter, e-mail: oschneitter@gmx.ch, Phone: +41763389351

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