

**FOCUS OF
THIS ISSUE**
How well is the Law
on Consumer
protection
harmonised with
EU regulations

INTERVIEW
The former General
Consul of the
Republic of Slovenia
in Podgorica,
Branko Rakovec,
nearly four years
of service in
Montenegro

ANALYSES

Hundred days in power of the
new Montenegrin Government –
what are the achievements in
the field of European integrations





FROM PAST TO EUROPE

Whoever thought that European integration is merely a matter of understanding, adopting, and implementing European standards should think again. That the long track to Europe may involve the need to face the past as well, and that this could be a challenge equally trying as the issue of facing nearly 100.000 pages of *acquis communautaire* is best illustrated by the example of "ever better" relations between Montenegro and Croatia, haunted as they are by the spectre of past wounds.

Soon after the January meeting of Montenegrin and Croat officials, where they agreed on economic cooperation in the area of European integrations (the first such meeting after the Montenegrin attack on Dubrovnik in late 1991 and the beginning of 1992), the media started to boil with rumours on war retributions for Croatia, and whether Croats will press charges against Montenegro in front of the international court, as they did with Serbia. And just when the officials tried to gloss over the past, to minimise its importance so that it would not, as they like to say, become an obstacle for the future, an avalanche of accusations exploded in both countries. In Montenegro, a good deal of the opposition stormed against the "traitors" who would felt that Croatia should maybe get something back, while some of the Croatian media ruthlessly attacked their Head of the Parliament, Vladimir Šeks, for his statement during the visit to Podgorica: that Montenegro was not guilty of aggression, but merely abused by the war machinery of aspirations for Greater Serbia. So when Šeks got back to Zagreb, he was forced to refresh his memory and remember that the Parliament of Croatia did indeed proclaim Montenegro an aggressor as well. He had not time to even mention cooperation with Montenegro in EU affairs: and even if he did, it would hardly tickle anybody's interest.

Taking a broader view on things, it does seem as if the murky past rose to claim its own, a past that cannot be delegated to history until the facts are established on who did what, whose fault was it and who should pay. And until those who have led Montenegro to conquer others' territories, as well as those who still believe that the name of the game was patriotism, do not look into the mirror, confess, and repent their crimes.

This is the only way to dispel the dark shadow of the war hovering over the neighbourly relations – a shadow that some hoped could be simply wished away, thereby concealing their own role in it.

N.R.

GOVERNMENT ENTERS THE SECOND PHASE OF COOPERATION PROJECT WITH FOSI ROM AND THE UNDP OFFICE ON THE STRENGTHENING OF ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITIES

1.9 million euros for better cadres



Signing the CDP

The new Government made its first important step towards the strengthening of administrative capacities for the process of EU association on 20 February 2007.

Deputy Prime Minister, Dr **Gordana Đurović**, **Sanja Elezović**, director of the Foundation Open Society Institute, Representative Office in Montenegro, and the permanent representative of UNDP in Montenegro **Garret Tankosić Kelly** signed together a document for "Capacity Development Program (CDP) for the state administration of the Republic of Montenegro – Phase II", worth 1.9 million euros, for the reform of public administration in Montenegro. The second phase of the programme will be implemented in the period 2007–2010. For 2007, the programme partners allocated 300.000 euros.

The Government of Montenegro, in partnership with the UNDP and the FOSI, first established the CDP in September 2003.

During the second phase, priority will be given to strengthening of administrative capacities for implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) and introduction of new coordination machinery and personnel at the centre of government. After the preparatory stage, the CDP will support a series of institutional and functional horizontal and vertical reviews, re-structuring and re-organisation in different key sectors of the state administration, as well as cutting across sectors.

The aim of the Programme is to help Montenegro harmonise various sectoral

approaches in order to facilitate implementation of SAA, which is to begin in the second half of this year.

According to the reports, the short-term priorities are the Central Government, Office for Sustainable Development and the Secretariat for European Integrations, as well as new responsibilities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the process of European integrations.

"This will help the Government of Montenegro and its institutions to smoothen the Montenegrin road to Europe", explained Đurović.

Sanja Elezović said that such programmes are being implemented in many other countries, from South America to Asia.

"We are helping transition countries to strengthen their capacities in order to facilitate their interaction with global institutions and regional integration processes. There is a general consensus in Montenegro that the future lies in European integrations, and our Foundation is ready to help", Elezović stated.

Tankosić Kelly emphasised that the strengthening of the administrative capacities is to be one of the greatest challenges for Montenegro on its road to EU.

"Our programme in this phase will therefore focus on the strengthening of the capacities of central government bodies – implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement and establishment of mechanisms for coordination and policy planning", he said.

N.R.



by Giovanni Grevi

Two years on from the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty in referenda held in France and in the Netherlands, the debate on the institutional reform of the Union is again at the forefront of EU politics and tops the agenda of the German Presidency. While it is early to say whether the reform process is back on track, it can be safely argued that the hibernation phase of the 'constitutional' debate has given way to a dense web of exchanges at all levels, including bilateral consultations undertaken by the German Presidency with all EU Member States to map out their respective positions.

Renewed momentum behind institutional reform reflects the broad, although not unanimous, acknowledgment that EU institutions need fixing and that the Constitutional Treaty included many significant innovations to make the Union work in a more efficient and accountable way. This message has been recently put across quite forcefully by the 18 countries that have already ratified the Constitutional Treaty, meeting in Madrid. Other countries, including the Czech Republic, Poland and the United Kingdom, show different degrees of reluctance to re-open the institutional debate, and notably to accept the Constitutional Treaty as a valid starting point to envisage the shape of reform.

With presidential elections due in France in April/May, the definition of the 'roadmap' to re-launch institutional reform will have to wait until the European Council meeting in June. Both

A VIEW FROM EUROPE

EU back on the track?

the top candidates in the French presidential race, however, have stated their support for introducing far-reaching institutional innovations, although presenting different recipes to achieve them.

Looking at the position of various key players at the European level, two options for reform stand out. According to some, the essential elements of reform included in the Constitutional Treaty need repackaging in a shorter, less ambitious document. Depending on the degree of ambition involved in carrying out this transformation, the envisaged result has been defined in different ways, from Mini-Treaty (including a range of innovations) to 'Nice Plus' (incorporating modest amendments to the existing Treaty of Nice). Opinions diverge on what should be salvaged as well, but most partisans of this option favour limiting the scope of reform to provisions of an institutional nature, such as the new permanent President of the European Council and the new Foreign Minister, rather than meddling with the reform of EU policies.

Others feel that a Mini-Treaty would be unworkable and also hardly acceptable. On pragmatic grounds, they argue that the Constitutional Treaty represents a fragile and complex compromise, achieved over two years of intensive debate. In short, nothing was agreed until everything was agreed. The attempt to pick and choose distinctive elements of the overall package would re-open all related issues and lead to the unravelling of the agreement, relegating meaningful reform to a distant future. On a political level, the opponents of the Mini-Treaty recall that the Constitutional Treaty has been ratified by 18 countries, representing the majority of the EU population, and that such a democratic achievement cannot be neglected. According to this side of the debate, the Constitutional Treaty should be essentially preserved, and enriched by new provisions and declarations addressing issues of concern to public opinion in different countries,

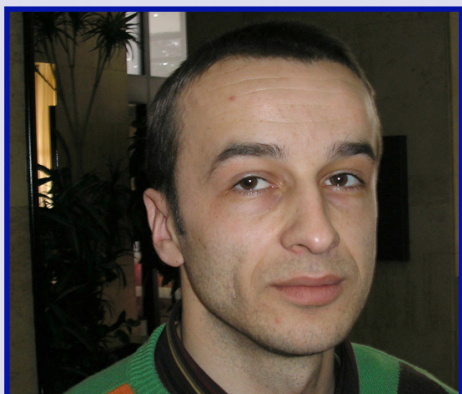
such as social policy or energy policy.

Taking a long-term view of this debate, the biggest challenge will not be to reach an inter-governmental agreement among the 27 but to sell any form of package of institutional reform to the public. The entry into force of institutional reforms at EU level requires unanimous ratification, and the question is whether some countries will still need, or choose, to call for national referenda on the issue. Another rejection could plunge the EU in a very serious political crisis. The prospect of a failure to achieve substantial reform has already led some observers to rekindle talk of integration at different speeds, whereby only those countries willing and able to push forward with deeper integration would do so, and the others could choose to remain in a sort of outer circle.

While this scenario seems rather far-fetched at this stage, it is crucial to regard the process of institutional reform not as a technical, legalistic exercise but as a highly political undertaking, whose success or failure will directly impact on key political choices. That is notably the case with a view to the enlargement of the Union to other countries, after Croatia. Beyond the controversial link between reform and enlargement, the extent of reform will affect the ability of the Union to perform as a strong international player. Accelerating global changes pose new common challenges to European countries, including at the economic, environmental and security levels. From this standpoint, the extent and direction of reform will send an eloquent signal as to whether Member States are willing to tackle these challenges together. Reform must enable the Union to deepen, expand, and play a global role.

The author is a Research Fellow at the European Union Institute for Security Studies based in Paris. In his article for EIC Bulletin he writes in a personal capacity.

HOW WELL IS THE LAW ON CONSUMER PROTECTION HARMONISED WITH EU REGULATIONS



by Vladan Žugić

After almost five years of announcements and preparations, the Draft Law on Consumer Protection should be finally adopted at the regular spring session of the Montenegrin Parliament. This would mark another step towards fulfilment of the numerous requirements set by Brussels in the "European Partnership" document, which contains a

If it were truly European it would have never worked

series of short and medium terms measures that a country should implement and based on which its progress towards EU will be assessed in the future.

However, the experts warn that one should not cherish any illusions that Montenegrin citizen will in the near future be anywhere close to having all the rights pertaining to the EU consumers. This Law, like so many other regulations in Montenegro that have been harmonised with the EU *acquis*, will have a hard time being effectively implemented.

Another obstacle lies in the level of awareness of an average Montenegrin citizen, who would rather suffer fraud than complain about it.

Consumer protection is an important item on the agenda of EU accession. EU began regulating this area already in the seventies of the last century, by establishing consumer rights to healthy and safe products, protection of economic interests, information, compensation and representation through non-governmental organisations. The Draft Law, submitted by the Ministry of Economic Development and currently in the parliamentary procedure, envisages high fines for retailers who fail to respect the rights of their customers, from 500 to 15.000 euros.

Customers will be able to direct all of their comments and complaints to an Arbitrage committee, which will be formed as a part of the Chamber of Commerce, and consist of 20 members from various fields of expertise. In case the arbitration between the customer and the salesman fails, the case will be forwarded to the court.

According to the new Law, Montenegrin consumers will have the right to safety, or protection against dangerous and contaminated products, so that in the case of poisoning someone will have to be held responsible.

They will have, among other, free access to information, right to compensation in the cases of false representation of product characteristics, or if the goods are of poor quality or the service is inadequate.

THE RESULT AS GOOD AS THE CAMPAIGN

The Consumers' Council in Slovenia, founded already in 1990, is very influential and manages to make the life difficult for all those who risk damaging the consumers. Its most recent action has been aimed at preventing the sellers from profiting on the conversion of tolar to Euro to increase the prices, which happened in almost every country that introduced Euro as the official currency.

Although the Euro was introduced in Slovenia on 1 January this year, the Consumers' Council started its campaign already in March last year, obliging the retailers in this sub-Alpean state to list their prices in both currencies. A few weeks ago, the Council publicly named in protest a certain baker who used the opportunity to increase the prices of his products, and in the meantime a real war is taking place in the media because of the parking prices which were doubled as a consequence of the conversion.

The Council does not shy away from attacking large retailers' chains, for instance with regard to selling detergent of dubious quality.

Similarly, Council representatives are present and visible in the Slovenian media, because of their campaigns which are both interesting and well founded.

The Consumers' Council is financed 50% from the state budget, which proves the government's commitment to its own citizens, while the rest is financed through donations.

Analysts point out that it is not realistic to expect that scepticism will plump down without the Government's explanation about the costs of the accession to the Union for the tax payers and what certain categories of the population are gaining with the membership.

Judging that after the law has been adopted the rights of consumers will finally be protected, director of the Centre for the Protection of Consumers (CEZAP), **Olga Nikčević** says that the draft law has been to a large extent harmonised with EU regulations, particularly so as the drafting process has been assisted by experts from Slovenia and Hungary.

However, she adds that in certain segments this document could be more in line with EU standards.

"I mean first of all tourist services and loans, although both categories have been partially addressed by this draft Law. Considering that tourism is a strategic branch in Montenegro, some issues, for example complete visit arrangements would have merited greater attention. Even if that issue is then resolved by another law, an EU tourist is unlikely to study our entire legal codex in order to resolve some dilemma or ask for compensation. As for the loans, there are often fraudulent clauses hidden in these articles. Customer can easily disregard these clauses while taking a loan, as they are likely to have tiny fonts or to be in footnotes, and we should also remember that people in our country usually ask for loans only when they are in dire straits, and all that matters is to get the money now. This issue ought to have been more precisely defined by this law", Nikčević says.

As for the other regulations which do not seem to entirely fit EU regulations, Nikčević explains that it may in fact be positive, as it reflects realistic conditions in Montenegro and it is unlikely that the law could be implemented at all if it had all the EU criteria inscribed in it.

"I am not an optimist regarding the implementation of the Law. It is enough to just look at the amount of time it took, for various reasons, to even reach the hands of MPs. What, then, could be expected from the implementation?", asks the director of CEZAP.



She said that lately the consumers have been complaining less about the quality of products and

their labels, and much more about the behaviour of "Telecom" because of its service bills, and especially about "Electrodistribution" firm, judging that the amounts on the January bills are outright "robbery".

As an "extreme example of the lack of respect and protection for consumers", Nikčević describes a case in Nikšić, where the state water supply company had cut the water off in an entire building because some individuals refused to pay their bills".

"The water supply company has no right to deprive of water both those who did and those who did not pay the bills. They have no right to deprive of water even those who did not pay their dues, they can only take them to court", argues Nikčević.

Olga Nikcevic considers that the situation is identical in the cases

EU DIRECTIVES TELL YOU EVEN WHERE TO PUT THE PRICE

The Basic Court in Zagreb rejected two years ago a complaint by a company that provides house heating systems against two persons who since 1995 refused to pay their heating bills.

In the statement of grounds for the verdict, the court explained that, according to the standards, the company was obliged to provide an average temperature in the house of 15°C.

The accused provided a proof showing that they had complained to the company on several occasions that the temperature in their apartment was only 7°C, with around -17°C outside, and that the heating company did nothing to fix the problem.

The court therefore concluded that the accused were not obliged to fulfil their financial obligations.

This is only one example of the consumers' protection with a courtroom epilogue that can be found at the website of the Croatian Association for Consumers' Protection (HUZP).

The Law on the Protection of Consumers was adopted in 2003 in Croatia, although due to various shortcomings it was amended almost every second year since.

In the beginning of this year, the Croatian government forwarded to the Parliament the new draft of the law on consumers' protection which has been judged by HUZP as a worse option than the existing one. HUZP submitted its opinion and comments to all parliamentary groups.

One of the objections concerned the clause stating that the prices of products need not be exhibited on the product itself, as it is enough if they are placed on the right shelf. "Why did the government propose a regulation which is against the EU directive?" asks HUZP in a letter addressed to the parliamentary groups.

where Electro-distribution company cuts the electricity for those households that have unpaid bills pending.

"By some internal regulations of their own, they can decide to cut off electricity to consumers who fail to settle their bills within seven days from the date they receive them. However, the question is whether their regulations comply with some higher legal acts. According to our interpretation, Electro-distribution has the right to deprive a consumer of electricity only after he or she loses the case in court and verdict becomes enforceable. We will therefore look for a qualified lawyer to resolve such questions", explains the director of CEZAP.

In addition to this, most consumer complaints referred to a certain line of products under the brand "Rainbow".

"Their promoters are aggressive, and one could say that they even abuse consumers and provoke their rage", she adds.

The new law will forbid "sale of



products by means of force, threat and disturbance of consumers, which undermine their freedom of choice". The forbidden aggressive behaviour of salesmen includes increasingly frequent visits to private homes despite of consumers' protests, product offers

by means of telephone, fax, e-mail and other forms of communication without consumers' assent.

Nikčević does not agree with some opinions that CEZAP is not active enough. Judging that the media should take on a more active role in educating consumers, Nikčević explains that big companies and monopolies obstruct their media activities.

As a confirmation of her words, she cites the example of "Telekom" that within two days managed to block their media campaign aiming to inform the ADSL users that their rights have been infringed. The media owner simply did not wish to confront a company which spends such large amounts on advertising.

The director of CEZAP disagrees with the suggestion that Montenegrin citizens have not been adequately informed about their rights, which until now were defined by other laws.

"Education is a permanent work. People here would rather accept and suffer fraud than protest against it. It is necessary to motivate the citizens, to raise their awareness, and this is likely to be a difficult job", Nikčević concludes.

MONTENEGRIN CONSUMERS DO NOT TRUST THE STATE

Every third citizen in the sample of a thousand respondents from nine Montenegrin municipalities claims that his or her consumer rights are not at all protected, while a little more than a quarter thinks that the protection is only partial.

According to this public opinion poll, which was conducted by CEDEM two months ago, less than 10% of the respondents believe that their rights are their rights are sufficiently or entirely protected.

Analysis by CEDEM shows that a majority of consumers' complaints, more than 36% concerns inadequate service, which is 10% higher than last year.

However, the analysis also shows that the quality of service as such was not diminished, but that the criteria of the consumers rose. The trend is positive, because, as the analysis claims, without clear standards and requirements of the consumers their situation will not be improved.

One of the conclusions of the CEDEM research was that consumers are acquiring the habit of regularly checking the labels on the products, as only 4.1% of the respondents said that they have never done it.

More than a half of the respondents think that the issue of consumers' protection is a responsibility of inspection agencies, but less than 4% have ever contacted them on their own initiative. CEDEM believes that these results indicate lack of trust in the state organs whose legal responsibility is to protect the consumers.

HUNDRED DAYS IN POWER OF THE NEW MONTENEGRIN GOVERNMENT – WHAT ARE THE ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE FIELD OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATIONS

Waited for SAA, got Đukanović

On the occasion of appointment of the new Montenegrin government, on 11 November 2006, PM **Željko Šturanović** announced that, after the statehood status has been resolved, the only measure of success will be "our ability to adopt and implement European best practices and experiences". After hundred days that his cabinet has been in power, the period which expired on 18 February, there are still no signs of Montenegrin progress in that respect. No great progress should be necessarily noted in the mere three months, but the question is whether the Government and the authorities in general gave any convincing hint of their willingness to effectively implement the policies set forth in PM's expose.

Furthermore, there are rising dilemmas as to whether the deputy PM for European Integrations, Prof. Dr. **Gordana Đurović**, will receive adequate support by other Government members and whether she will be able to count on their absolute commitment.

For, less than two months after the election of the new cabinet, former PM and President of the ruling Democratic Party of Socialists, **Milo Đukanović**, stirred old doubts that the ruling structures might oscillate between two prospects – one, characterised by the ambition to speed up the pace of integrations, and the other, more or less suggesting to slow down, wait and see whether the whole thing is in our interest or not. In other words, whether the process might have come too rapidly and endangered the interests of local lords.

This is one possible interpretation of the New Year's article by the head of DPS Milo Đukanović, in which he says:

"The government should not blindly follow all the instructions of the Brussels administration, applying their blueprints automatically and without the necessary analyses in order to prove loyalty to Europe. Brussels does not expect us to do that either – which is best illustrated by the example of the new EU members, who all chose to apply models which seemed appropriate for their national interests and economic structure. It is mistaken to conceive of European integrations as of obedient adoption of numerous directives, laws, standards, believing that such a process does not allow the state to adjust them to its own specific interests".

Compared to Šturanović's statement, Đukanović's message appears as a reaction to



the Šturanović's description of his cabinet as "a Brussels government".

"The national public opinion symbolically dubs the new Government a "Brussels government", which is an excellent summary of its strategic orientation and programmes for the following four years. To avoid all confusion – we will intensify efforts to fulfil the requirements of the European agenda, because this is in the interest of all Montenegrin citizens, not because Brussels or anyone else is pressuring us to do it from the outside. Of course this is a carefully channelled process, where we respect and adopt EU regulations in order to get closer to the membership criteria – and in this process we can count on further comprehensive EU assistance and partnership. This is our understanding of the two-fold nature of our European perspective", Šturanović said, on the occasion of assuming the office.

Deputy PM, whose competence and good intentions have so far merited only praise from all sides, could thus possibly find herself between the devil and the deep blue sea, facing potential obstacles from various directions. Asked to give an assessment of the Government's achievements in the first 100 days, she shortly replied:

"Montenegrin Government is a good team facing many challenges. Many issues have been positively resolved, but most of the work is yet to come. Especially in the field of European Integrations".

In the first 100 days she has done everything she could – the fifth and final round of technical negotiations on Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) was concluded in early December; Secretariat

for European Integrations was established, and the work began on the drafting of an Action Plan for implementation of recommendations of the European Partnership, adopted on 22 January meeting of the Council of EU. In the meantime, Secretariat for European Integrations organised several seminars for the state employees in charge of EU affairs, dedicated to writing project proposals for IPA programme and developing cross-border cooperation focused on the local level. In mid-January, government representatives met European Commission envoys in Podgorica to discuss implementation of IPA programme, and a Protocol on cooperation on European Integration related issues was signed with the Government of Croatia. According to unofficial sources, Croatia also agreed to allow Montenegro access to 30.000 pages of translated European regulations free of charge.

As for earlier promises, SAA was not concluded by the end of February, and the problem turned out to be the Directorate of Customs, which is allegedly not sufficiently trained to be able to control origin of goods, as well as the lack of an independent agency to control competition policy. Deputy PM Đurović announced an immediate response to these issues and organised a training for customs officers, conducted necessary preparations for the establishment of a competition agency, and pushed for adoption of a new draft of the law on wines, which the EC representatives also insisted on. The government now expects the SAA to be concluded by mid March.

N. RUDOVIĆ

THE FORMER GENERAL CONSUL OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA IN PODGORICA, BRANKO RAKOVEC, NEARLY FOUR YEARS OF SERVICE IN MONTENEGRO

The costs of reforms are awaiting you, even if you do not choose the path to EU

Slovenia considered the possibility of not joining the EU, and then it turned out that one tiny Slovenia in a big Europe cannot develop on her own. The costs of complete autonomy of a small, relatively underdeveloped European economy, if we compare them to the costs of the old EU member states, would be too great to bear, says in the interview for *EIC Bulletin* **Branko Rakovec**, the former General Consul of Slovenia in Podgorica, after nearly four years of service in Montenegro.

He emphasised that the road to EU requires significant expenses because of the need to strengthen administrative capacities and to establish institutions necessary for the process of EU accession. However, these are the costs of reforms that Montenegro would have to implement in any case.

"Besides, you will receive financial support for it from the EU. These are essentially clear issues – moving towards the market economy, parliamentary democracy, rule of law..."

● **When you speak to the Montenegrin officials, do you get the impression that their real goal is to create the rule of law?**

I can answer that question in affirmative, but we will be able to see soon enough what the time brings. My impression might be wrong, I may be right, but I cannot tell for sure.

I only hope that the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU will be concluded soon. This is a good thing, and I hope that Montenegro proceed at the same pace. Afterwards, in the negotiations with EU, it will soon enough become



clear what really goes on in Montenegro and whether there is any genuine commitment to the rule of law, because Montenegro will have to implement profound reforms in some areas.

● **What did Slovenia win, and what did it lose by joining the EU?**

I do not think that we lost much. First of all, we are talking about costs which are actually the costs of transition, and which we could not avoid, with or without European integration. Our Eurosceptics protested because we delegated a share of our sovereignty to the institutions of the European community – they feared that Slovenian language may be in danger and so forth...and Slovenian is today one of the official EU languages. Just open the EU website and you will see it written "Slovenščina". Finally, we are now members of the European monetary union, and we have a Euro with our own symbols...

I believe that the European road,

simply because it is so well defined, will be easier for you too.

● **What were the greatest obstacles for Slovenia on the road to EU?**

First of all, administrative capacities, and here we can draw a parallel with Montenegro. It was the standard reproach for us too – you will not make it, focus on the capacities – and perhaps it was for the best because we really invested a lot and we reaped significant successes in a very short period.

This is a problem for all the small states, because with 640.000 citizens you ought to complete the same work as Poland with its 40 million. You will have to work very hard on creating cadres, and even institutions.

Secondly, market liberalisation was a problem for us, because we just exited the former SFRY socialist system with all of its legacies. Companies had to adjust to the EU standards in order to become competitive, we relied on several most important companies, such as Gorenje, that were capable of pushing Slovenian development forward, and then we finally made it to the last stage of development.

Here the things are different; your market is today is much more open to the competition on European level.

● **How did you solve the problem of weak cadre potentials in the public administration?**

We were lagging behind for objective reasons, because we fought for international recognition for an entire year. We were behind the EU candidate states – Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, which all

signed their European Agreement (a predecessor to SAA) in 1992, and we only got there in 1994.

It began with a few people at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who in the end created the State Department for European Integrations which in our government always occupied a central place, although it was not lead by a minister, but by a secretary of state.

Experts in the field of European integrations remained on their job throughout these 12 years. Through permanent education, we trained some 150 experts, who soon proved their abilities to confront the challenges posed to us by EU.

● **What was your understanding of Milo Đukanović's statement that Montenegro should not follow blindly the EU instructions, but that we should adapt them to our own interests?**

The reader is immediately struck by a question – what does it mean, is this in favour of or against EU? I believe and I want to believe, when one reads the entire article, that this was not said in the context of distancing from the road to EU. I understood his words as a warning of the importance of strengthening the administrative capacities – in other words, that Montenegro should be ready to defend its own interests. First of all, then, Montenegro must be able to recognise its interests, to have people who are capable of recognising them, and then to clearly define these interests and defend them successfully in negotiations with EU. This is a legitimate concern of every state.

This is how I understood it, and I believe that it was also said like that, but once again – the future will show whether some other intentions were in the game. I do not believe in the future of Montenegro outside of EU.

● **Generally speaking, if you compare what the government, the opposition, and the civil sector do, how would you assess the European perspective for Montenegro?**

I want to be an optimist, and I honestly believe in it. I think the reform of the judiciary would be the

DURING OUR PRESIDENCY, WESTERN BALKANS WILL BE THE PRIORITY

● **Foreign Affairs ministries of Slovenia and Montenegro signed a memorandum on cooperation. What are the concrete benefits of this cooperation?**

I would like to emphasise that Slovenia and Montenegro are two friendly states which in the last few years established excellent bilateral relations. Slovenia supports Montenegro, and other countries of the Western Balkans, on their Euro-Atlantic road: genuinely and sincerely, both out of belief and out of our own interest.

Last year there were a few significant events happening in this line. First we signed a memorandum on cooperation between the Foreign Affairs ministries of Slovenia and Montenegro. Based on that, a group of young diplomats has already come to Slovenia for a training, mostly regarding consular work. This practice will be further developed. Similarly, the Government of Slovenia formed a Centre for European Perspective (CEP), an important organisation financed at the moment by our Government, but is also likely to apply for the EU funding. I think that you can certainly draw further benefits from CEP, and it is well known that its first programme was dedicated to Montenegro. Representatives of your MFA visited Ljubljana, studied diplomatic skills...

You know that Slovenia will preside over the EU in a year from now, in the first half of 2008. CEP will be working intensely with Montenegro, because one of our top priorities will be to assist the countries of the Western Balkans on their road to Euro-Atlantic integrations.

Finally, Slovenia will be sponsoring representative office of Montenegro in the seat of the military wing of NATO, in Mons. We were invited as a "new NATO member state" to assist those countries which have joined the Partnership for Peace towards the end of last year.

The assistance to your representative in Mons will combine expert, logistic, as well as financial support.

In conclusion, I would also like to mention that the Secretariat for European Integrations is currently implementing a CARDS programme "Institutional capacity building regarding the European Integration Process". The financial support for the program came from the European Agency for Reconstruction, and is conducted by representatives of the French government, with Slovenian government as a junior partner.

first priority, and it is also related to the fight against organised crime and corruption. You can successfully overcome the problem of administrative capacities, just like we did. With a help of good organisation, I am sure that you will be able to find the right way around it.

● **According to you, why is there no political party or non-governmental organisation in Montenegro that publicly opposes the accession to EU?**

This is only strange at the first sight, but I would tell you that perhaps it is not so strange, because of a few simple facts. At the very beginning of European integrations, we

had no eurosceptics either, because we did not really know what Europe will bring. Once we found out, and when it turned out that European integrations might bring some, at least in the short run, painful consequences, everything change. In the region of Slovenia where I come from the textile and the apparel industry collapsed, and that had negative effects on the lives of the citizens, and, logically enough, the first Eurosceptics appeared. The European road in Montenegro is still at its very beginning.

N. RUDOVIĆ

The stock market of sins gone by

by Brano Mandić

However ruthless, the power of capital manages, if only for a brief moment, to lift the politics out of mere speculation with empty words. With cash on the table, all interpretations wither away, and politics returns to its essence: a war of instincts, a mute strategy game, reminiscent of a late round of poker in a Podgorica casino.

The Parliament, the Government, and the Judiciary become mere decoration in that moment, when the decision is made to murder someone. If it happens thirty three times, and the state still turns a blind eye, than the State becomes the prime suspect. What does a State which refuses to find murderers? Collaborates with crime out of interest, protects interests behind the trigger. Since we have been informed about the priority interests of the official Podgorica, we can say that the victims have been sacrificed on the road to European and Euro-Atlantic Integrations. With my apologies to the families of the victims, which they recently failed to get from the MPs of the Democratic Party of Socialists when they gathered in front of the Parliament building.

A modern corruption machine, a trance of lawlessness and a ritual of media castration. The entire decoration of the "years of disentanglement", began a further, although it now dresses a different coat: nationalism is out, it obviously fails to yield cash, although **Andrija Mandić** keeps announcing new profits from the US of A. For money is a good thing even in the announcement. One should, therefore, always think about the money and the people in whose hands its power resides, whether we speak about the European Integration or we sit silently in front of our electricity bill – which in the end is one and the same thing. To follow the trail of money is the first lesson of journalism, even if it happens to be as dangerous as sticking your finger into an electric circuit.

It is enough to throw a glimpse of light on the stock market to realize that the money is into integration too, if not in one place, then certainly in one closed little circle. Another textbook example: the very brother and best friend of the president of the strongest party are also brilliant stock markets speculators. Economists, capitalists, businessmen... are pushing the politicians out of the headlines. Businessmen are influential, warn the newspapers, but they do not tell you who gets influenced. The answer requires some serious investigation, and reopens the old wound: why is there no research journalism in Montenegro? Nobody was ever imprisoned or taken to the court because of an article in the newspapers or a TV statement – which could be a simplified definition of this long-awaited genre.

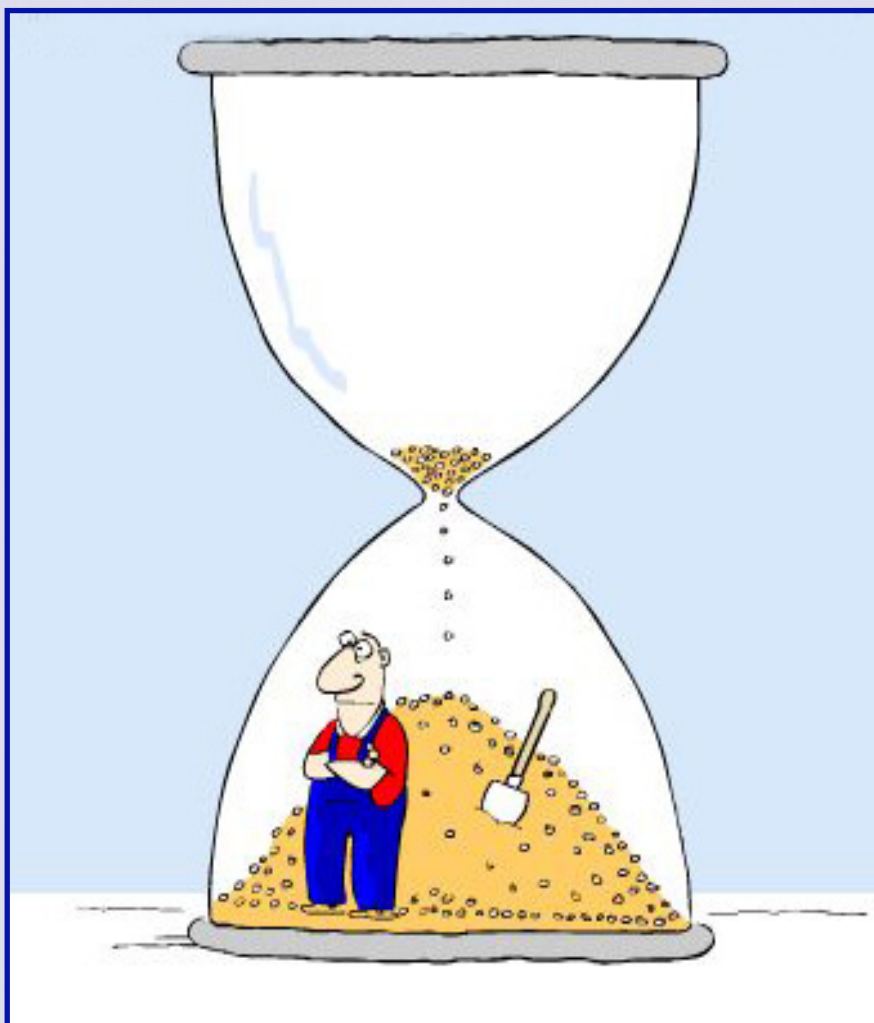
Of course, no one expects the murders in Montenegro to be resolved by some don-quixotic neurotic from the obituary & crime section of the daily press. At this stage of civilization, media can only serve as a playfield for someone's political will. Rather oppo-

site to the mythical memory of the Watergate, cool heads remember that **Bob Woodward** and **Carl Bernstein** were only journalists-on-duty when "Deep Throat" decided to ring up the headquarters of the Washington Post. In a sad translation: if we want journalism in Montenegro, the circle of capital needs to be broken and the zipper let lose splitting open the big money suitcase. Some call it a rift in the Democratic Party of Socialists, but such thinking only leads to a vicious circle of newspaper reports long deprived of all meaning. The best of readers bow before the glittering nonsense of a profession called party port-parole, abandoned by all motivation to get to the core of societal ills, or to even skim through a newspaper. Let us say that journalists are those on whom all eyes are now fixed, seen that with 40 opposition MPs the citizens need **Vanja Čalović** to represent them before the government's electricity counter. However, in order to be able to blow into the deadly trumpet of his craft, a journalist must be protected by a contract tying him to at least one power



centre (in decent, orderly state, this is usually the state) if he or she wishes to strike another. All in order not to become a moving target for some lower primate with an iron pole, who, unfortunately, keeps the ambush by the European path.

Delivery pains of the Montenegrin public speech, from PCNEN blog to street petitions, anxiousness on the other side of the Dictaphone, denials and reactions, serials documenting confessions of the beaten... are all just specks of dust. And maybe a signal to the overlords of the information business that a solid infrastructure is on the horizon, so that they can perhaps even try to market some of it.



when the State Prosecutor **Vesna Medenica** admits that she actually trusts judges... those are, once again, only specks in a larger, European mosaic. To make it complete, Podgorica hosts a visit by the old HDZ partisan **Vladimir Šeks**, who explains that Montenegro was in a state of trance when it decided to expand its coast northwards. How many people died in the campaign on Dubrovnik? The reporter should never forgive himself not to have posed this question to gentlemen Šeks and Krivokapić. The public has the right to know the mathematics of forgiveness, even if at the closing lines of the news report, as

Information market, with all of its risks, can be more profitable than an oil pipeline. Why else would the foreigners rush to buy an "opposition" newspaper and a "pro-government" TV station? And why would the newspaper articles follow the stock market, and the other way around?

On the other hand: why should an innocent man be murdered, or an old man cruelly beaten? Because these are years of dangerous life and one should expect a war to break out between at least two centres of power, without whose competitive centrifuge, paradoxically enough, there would be no democracy.

In this story, European Union is only a boring fetish and as such, by definition, merely a figment of imagination. It is far enough to be manipulated without a weapon licence, with shots coming from all positions and oppositions, and with low chances of the target ever being missed. For all the above mentioned reasons, this epic obsession with

an administrative revolution, European as it may be, is doomed to a debacle of meaning reducing it to a commonplace. The citizens will not find out, busy this year as they are with new opportunities (harmonised with Eurovision standards!) to vote for the best song this year. Referendum will be taking place on Sunday afternoons via SMS, and the decision on joining the NATO can be once again left to the wiser heads.

Decision making mechanisms remain shrouded in mystery, although one can vaguely discern them happening with the help of the gong operated by the President of the Parliament. Whenever **Ranko Krivokapić** decides to declare a Parliament vote void, or when **Vojin Đukanović** decides that Tara is a river only for romantics and the immature; or when **Predrag Bošković** finds that his MP status sets him too high to bow to the mothers and sisters of the murdered, or when **Milo Đukanović** suggests that Television IN should introduce live coverage of NBA games, or

when a soothing voice informs you that 18.000 children die of hunger daily.

A DPS port-parole would say that such observations can only come from a prisoner of the labyrinths of past, and he would be very right about it. He would also say that a law on lustration is not possible, and that would be an even greater truth. Such visionaries are to be sent today on study pilgrimages to Brussels (like they once were to Kumrovec), to be stuffed with piles of pro-European phrases. And then, when we get a mature generation of experts on the promised legislative, headed by **Miodrag Vuković**, they can take on the role of apostles. The local European narrative anyhow resembles religion – nurtured by the archetype of a promised kingdom and the holy secret of the cause. With favourable credit lines for the repayment of sins, should anybody remember them.

The author is a journalist of the daily newspaper "Vijesti".

ALTHOUGH IT WAS CREATED IN 2001, THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OF MONTENEGRO IS NOT FULFILLING ITS BASIC PURPOSE



by Emil Kriještorac

Economic and Social Council, as a unique forum for constructive dialogue between workers and employers regarding the crucial economic issues in the society is an essential ingredient of social tradition of all developed European Union countries. Montenegro has attempted to establish a similar forum, but all efforts have so far remained on paper.

In the Progress Report of Montenegro for 2006, European Commission placed a special emphasis on the issue of social dialogue in Montenegro, first by stating that "Economic and Social Council, established by a government directive in the beginning of 2001 is the first structure created in order to promote social dialogue", but emphasising that "the interested parties do not consider it to be independent, impartial, and reliable form of representation". It is also noted that "the Government should continue with its plan to upgrade the Economic and Social Council, by creating a law on Economic and Social Council that would resolve the existing weaknesses".

At the last years' visit to Montenegro, representatives of the

Without independent trade unions there can be no improvement

International Labour Organisation (ILO) urged the Government of Montenegro to "take the necessary steps for the establishment of a genuine economic and social council, as is envisaged in the Labour Law". They emphasised that it is crucial to promote the essence, and not the form, if one wishes to engage seriously in negotiations on EU accession".

It was also noted that in Montenegro "there is not genuine social dialogue, and there will not be, unless the trade unions and employers in the economic and social council become fully independent". ILO representatives, who only spent a few days in Montenegro, quickly realised that social dialogue does not exist and that the Council is only an empty institutional shell incapable of articulating the interests of workers, employers, and administration.

The first Civil Society Forum of the West Balkan countries, organised by the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) on 27 and 28 March 2006 in Brussels hosted representatives of both the Union of Employers and the Trade Union Federation of Montenegro. It was concluded that the ESC of Montenegro does not function, and that it remains sheer formality.

A similar conclusion was reached at the meeting of the Employers Union and Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Montenegro on 26 July 2006, when they agreed on a tripartite basis for drafting a law on Economic and Social Council, in order to give this institution the importance it realistically deserves. To this date, 12 ESCs were formed, but the importance of the institution as such remains unrecognised. Conclusions from the meeting state that "the current ESCs exist only formally, but in most cases they simply do not function".

In Montenegro, these councils are indeed only a formality, revealing the obvious intention of the authorities to deprive this institution of all meaning, feigning dialogue, which is evidently conducted only in closed circles of the ruling structures, and only among its key figures: the Government, the Chamber of Commerce, and the "independent" Montenegrin union, lead by several decades already by the same person – **Danilo Popović**.

However, the Montenegrin Trade Union is also known for its record in



EESC headquarters

maintaining "trade union monism in Montenegro", which makes them "a unique example of it in the world", as they proudly announce on their own website. This is not the only thing in Montenegro that happens to deviate from the rest of the world, but, unlike the Montenegrin TU, we usually refrain from being too proud of them.

Economic and social councils are a prominent feature in all developed countries of EU. They are usually formed on a tripartite basis, consisting of an equal number of representatives from the Government, employers, and trade unions. As regards the European Union, European Economic and Social Committee was created already by the Treaty of Rome, which in 1958 established the European Economic Community. The Treaty of Nice stipulated that the number of EESC members cannot be higher than 350. Within the EU-15, the Committee consisted of 222 members, and before the accession of Bulgaria and Romania there were



Montenegrin representatives at an EESC meeting

317 members. The number of members is decided according to the size of the member state, and are appointed by the Council of EU upon recommendation by member states, for a period of 4 years. Once it joins EU, Montenegro could have up to 5 or 6 members, which is the number currently assigned to Malta, Cyprus, and Luxembourg.

The members represent various sectors of the civil society which within the Committee are divided into three groups: Employers, Employees and Others. EESC has an advisory role in the legislative procedure, with the Treaty stipulating the

areas where the Committee must be "consulted". It is important to note that EESC on average issues some 170 recommendations or opinions per year, of which 15% on own initiative. All opinions are then forwarded to the Parliament, the Council and EC, and are subsequently published in the Official Journal of EU.

One of the key goals of these Councils is to enhance communication between employers and employees, which makes them a unique forum for constructive dialogue on current economic problems facing the EU. In Europe, the task of these councils is to improve industrial relations, define priorities for economic and industrial development, attracting investment, raising productivity and the quality of workers' lives, while in Montenegro they are considered to be just another form of manipulation of the citizens and workers, and a simulation of "transplantation of good practices" from Europe to Montenegro.

Taking into consideration the current situation, one must ask how the Government of Montenegro communicates with IMF, the World Bank, the EU, and all other international organisations interested in the economic and social perspectives of Montenegro, and how their decisions are made. It is particularly interesting to see how the Government adopted the Privatisation Programme and who was consulted in the process of drafting its annual plans. The same goes for the strategic documents on development in various spheres of industry. After all, those are the questions which concern all the citizens of Montenegro, and most of them are either workers or employers.

The author attended IV generation of the European Integrations School. He is a high official of the People's Party.

EU KNOWS THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

Although they deal with similar issues, one should differentiate between EESC and the Committee for Employment and Social Issues of the European Parliament that was established by a Council directive in 2000, based on the Article 30 of the Treaty on EC. In the same year, the Committee for Social Protection was formed as a support unit for cooperation between the European Commission and Member States in modernising and improving the legislation on social protection. It is also worth noting that in the sphere of social issues, the structural funds play an important role – especially the European Social Fund, which is considered to be the most important financial instrument for the improvement of social policy on the EU level. The aims of the Fund are to support in the long term the European Employment Strategy, to simplify administration, and to support activities and cooperation on the local level. A good example is the EQUAL initiative, aimed at fighting against discrimination and inequality of the employed and the persons seeking employment. In this context, the role and influence of the social dialogue is of paramount importance – in the EU, it is considered to be the best tool for modernisation of the contractual relations, adjustments in the organisation of work and creating the balance between flexibility and security.



by Boris Marić

I don't know. What does it mean to be a citizen of Europe? Should it be some kind of privilege, something good, something that we should look forward to happening to us? To be a citizen, that already sounds nice. That should instantly take away the bur-

Why do I want to be a citizen of Europe?

den off the backs of labourers and students, farmers and artisans, professors and peasants, housewives and postmen...As citizens, we all start feeling the blessings of the civic rights and freedoms, our integrity and our stable existence will enable us to be better and more just people...the difference between belonging to the constitutive or minority nation will cease to matter, and we will all be a part of one fair and more affluent society...Why do I want to be a European farmer? Why do I want to be a European student? Why do I want to be an entrepreneur, a child, Esmeralda, a sportsman, or a bum of Europe? Perhaps we should draft a

Manifesto of European integrations, born out by our indestructible political minds with pacifist inclinations, to cite one recent award?

I must admit that I do not want in the least to be a citizen of Europe. My opinion is that the European administration has become too cumbersome, and overly bureaucratised. That much too often the united Europe resorts to rotten compromises and in the name of pragmatism supports problematic governing structures of certain countries. Imperialism at work in the guise of the American foreign policy of war is most frequently supported, even through military participation, by the European states.

Our standard and vision of the status imported hundreds of thousands of second-hand European cars which are today among the key polluters of the environment. As a consequence of the pressures by European administration, we have adopted series of laws which pay no heed to the real needs of the time and space to which they are being applied...

What am I really trying to say? That it seems to me that somebody is trying to sell European integrations as an ideology, as an ideological concept promising us a better future. Perhaps somebody is too well aware of the fact that people in Montenegro assume that joining the European family simply entails better and more secure life, but remember that those same people until very recently believed that the right formula was called state socialism, and until very recently national chauvinism. Those same people exchanged, in less than two decades, dozens of different, good and bad convictions: national,



religious, party-oriented, state-engendering... and the same people are still afraid to react to the real issues as real citizens.

It is nice to hope to become one day a self-assured citizen of Europe, and I already explained that I do not share these hopes, but I also hope that Montenegro will become a state that respects those human standards which at this moment we tend to identify as "European". I want the standards that would define how many courtyards should a primary school have, how much of the green area should be in each quarter, whether the "spider" can take away your car because you parked it wrongly if a parking does not exist, I want the minimal wage to raise and to be proportionate to the consumer basket...

I want this to be said, perhaps first of all by standards that somebody else whispered from above, but that sooner or later our society too realises that we need a lot of work, knowledge, good will, personal integrity, courage – to face ourselves and to admit that we can find very little motivation to fight for what in this moment we tend to dub "a better, European future", realising detrimental effects of various privatisations, recognising the damage to the environment, consequences of disastrous management of our public enterprises which for a little while still remain under state ownership... However, we do often find enough motivation to channel an ocean of energy into fruitless discussions on



various gossip and other tales from the criminally productive circles, while not knowing whether our individual-collective agreement in our own firm has been adopted and in all ways harmonised with the sectoral one, and whether our trade union representative ever informs us on the processes which are bound to impact our labour, legal, and existential status.

I know that Europe too has its problems, but I also know that ours are still much bigger, and I want to be a citizen of Montenegro who would promote the values to be recognised as reasonable and progressive wherever the citizen happens to find him or herself. Should the tricky tendency for the adoption of European standards

continue for a while, alongside the fact that I am still seeing various figures with Audi 8 who managed to succeed in these shady times, together with retired ladies selling cigarettes on the sidewalks of Montenegrin cities, and with a sharp memory of all that we have been through in the last 17 years, I wish all the young, capable, strong, courageous... to become citizens of Europe, and literally so. I am personally not hoping for it, because I have lived here for so long and I still hope that an ever greater number of socially conscious and knowledgeable will remain to fight for European standards, sincerely dedicating their efforts to stabilisation and association, but first of all to establishment of the rule of law and social security, but also to the civic awareness and conscience which entails a great deal of courage, in order to make this place Europe.

When that happens, because it is after all inevitable, I will find it most important in that entire story to remain an inhabitant of Montenegro and the Balkans... I will then be able to say that the society has adopted a healthy way of thinking, not an ideology of a brighter future, because a brighter future does not exist as such, there is only commitment which sets one free, and that is not much. That is just all.

The author attended I generation of the European Integrations School. He is a legal advisor of the Parliamentary group of the Movement for Changes.

DR ALEXIS VAHLAS, SENIOR POLITICAL ADVISOR TO NATO AND ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ROBERT SCHUMAN IN STRASBOURG

Do not worry about the EU's future just keep on working on yourself

You should not waste your time on speculations about the future of EU, on whether the enlargement fatigue is growing stronger or not – you should be ready to join the EU as soon as possible, with the next enlargement wave of, for instance, West Balkan region. It is possible for the countries of the Western Balkans to be accepted into EU in the next five to six years – says Dr **Alexis Vahlas**, senior political advisor to NATO and associate professor at the University of Robert Schuman in Strasbourg.

Almost every month, Vahlas regularly visits Montenegro as a member of the Twinning programme for the strengthening of administrative capacities of Montenegro, organised by France and Slovenia.

In the interview for *EIC Bulletin*, Vahlas said that he does not believe the predictions of EU demise that recently surfaced in the Montenegrin media.

"EU may lose some members in the future, we cannot entirely exclude this possibility. I believe, and I already wrote about it, that certain members may decide to withdraw from EU, but I would not bet on the dissolution of EU", Vahlas emphasised.

He is convinced that EU possesses sufficient absorption capacities to accommodate for a few more members.

"You may be the 29th or 32nd member, but that does not change much compared to the present 27. It does not change the nature of EU. The enlargement from 15 to 25 changed the nature of the EU, but with the switch from 27 to 32, it is a matter of nuances. EU can enlarge from 27 to 32 within the existing system. Therefore, do not overestimate the problem of absorption capacities in light of the unfavourable public opinion in the EU, which is a consequence of failure of Constitutional Agreement, Vahlas said.

He is against the system of collective enlargement. According to him, each country should be considered for accession based on individual merit.

"Up to this point Montenegro have been doing well, but this is no reason to slow down now. You ought to strengthen your capacities. Do not wait for the others: try to get the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) as soon as possible. Montenegro is almost ready to conclude the SAA, and I believe that this will happen very soon", Vahlas emphasised.

According to him, Montenegro should not wait for Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina to join her on the road to EU.

"My answer is a definite no. This is a race, and you should not wait for others. The goal of Montenegro should be to follow closely into Macedonian footsteps, and to grab forward as much as possible – not to wait for the rest. It is up to Montenegro to work, to pressure the European Commission and to say: We are ready", Vahlas recommends.

He finds it difficult to assess the level of administrative capacities in the government agencies at the moment, as "the level is constantly changing, and for the better".

"On the one hand, it is typical for a small country to lack cadre, because of its limited experience compared to bigger states. On the other hand, looking at the people who are working on the issues of European integrations, such as the Deputy PM **Gordana Đurović** or **Ana Vukadinović** – I am an optimist, since at the top of the process are people who are both very active and competent. This is important, you need a good engine to pull everyone else", Vahlas explains.

However, he warns that on the broader levels of administration one finds certain basic shortcomings, such as the lack of knowledge of foreign languages.

"In every agency, there is perhaps one person that is competent and well acquainted with the process of European integrations, but these are lonely cases. You have a lot of good will, many young people who are new and willing to



work, but my question is: how long will they stay, will they perhaps move into the banking sector in six months or so. This is primarily a question of wages. The Government of Montenegro will have to find a solution to this problem", Vahlas said.

He explains that "the situation is too bad, but the administrative capacities must be further strengthened by new people who would be permanently in charge of EU negotiations. Frequent changes of cadre are not good in this field".

"All the key challenges in Montenegro are tied to the question of administrative capacities, rule of law... Montenegro has a lot of work ahead. There are some advantages, you have significant potential in tourism, you are not handicapped by large agricultural complexes...there is a political consensus regarding EU accession, relationships among all national communities are good, which is a great advantage considering the recent history of wars in the region.

Montenegro scored many points by gaining your independence peacefully, and all the issues with Serbia have been easily resolved", Vahlas stated.

He emphasises that for the EU it is very important that Montenegro has an open and constructive approach to the issue of Kosovo.

"We all know that this is not easy for Montenegro", Vahlas said.

N. RUDOVIĆ

WHAT DOES EU EXPECT FROM MONTENEGRO ACCORDING TO THE FIRST EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP?

Implement anti-corruption strategy

Upgrade the capacity of customs to correctly apply the rules of origin of goods; make the necessary adjustments to the Montenegrin trade regimes, to render them compatible with the future EU agreement; establish a legal framework and administrative capacity for active consumer and health protection in line with EU policies; implement an effective public procurement regime in line with EU principles; ensure full transparency of procedures, regardless of the value of the contract concerned, and non-discrimination between Montenegrin and EU suppliers...

These are some of the requirements of EU listed in the European Partnership for Montenegro.

This comprehensive document was adopted by the Council of Ministers in early January 2007 in Brussels. It represents a list of tasks to be implemented by Montenegro in the short (2 years) as well as medium term (3 to 4 years) in order to get closer to European standards.

As the EIC Bulletin already reported last month, this is the first such document since Montenegrin independence, and it EU recommendations for Montenegro, including the adoption of a new Constitution in line with EU standards, de-politicisation of judiciary and public administration, strengthening of the structures working on European integration, amendments to the Law on the Conflict of Interests, upgraded fight against corruption and organised crime, transformation of RTM into a public service...

Drawing on recommendations by ODIHR, EU also insists on de-politicisation of the election administration, as well as its improved functioning, especially with regard to announcement of results.

"Codify election legislation, establish rules for media coverage of campaigns and introduce rules guaranteeing transparency for the allocation of seats in line with European standards; set up a transparent framework for campaign financing" states the Partnership.

Further recommendations concern establishment of an adequate framework on the Constitutional level for the protection of the rights of minorities, as well as implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan for the integration of Roma people, including refugees.

"Enhance implementation of anti-corruption strategy, especially by securing adequate financial and human resources strengthening operational capacity of law



From a Council of Ministers session

enforcement bodies", emphasizes the European Partnership document.

Montenegro should also upgrade administrative capacities of Ombudsman and ensure that his recommendations are implemented.

"Continue to implement the decentralisation process and upgrade the capacities of municipalities. Ensure continuous training for judges, prosecutors and court support staff. Provide guarantees to strengthen the autonomy and efficiency of the prosecution system, including in relation to budget issues. Strengthen the office of the prosecutor for organised crime", states the document further.

It is also recommended that Montenegro should strengthen the administrative capacity of the Ombudsman's Office and ensure proper follow-up of the Ombudsman's recommendations.

"Continue to implement the decentralisation process and upgrade the capacities of municipalities. Ensure implementation continuous training for judges, prosecutors and court support staff. Provide guarantees to strengthen the autonomy and efficiency of the prosecution system, including in relation to budget issues. Strengthen the office of the prosecutor for organised crime", emphasises the partnership.

The EU also requires that Montenegro completes the establishment of the legal and institutional set-up required for an independent country including the signature and ratification of the international instruments to which the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro had adhered.

"Strengthen the overall legislative and control capacity of the Parliament in particular through the implementation of the

newly adopted Rules of Procedure. Strengthen the functioning of the Committee on European Integration and provide appropriate administrative and expert support. Continue the restructuring and privatisation process of publicly owned enterprises. Adopt and implement the law on insurance supervision. Continue efforts to promote adaptability and skills of the labour force, with full engagement of employers and trade unions in that process", states the document.

There is also an emphasis on the completion establishment of the legal and institutional set-up on standardisation, market surveillance, certification, metrology...

EU believes in the necessity of further alignment of customs legislation and procedures with the *acquis*. It recommends continuing with the modernization of the customs administrations in order to ensure a high level of administrative capacity and to fight against corruption, cross-border crime and fiscal evasion.

"Significantly strengthen the level of protection of intellectual property rights. Strengthen the regulatory and supervisory framework for financial institutions and markets, consistent with current EU practices, in particular concerning the banking sector. Adopt the food safety law, a law on animal welfare and a new veterinary law and strengthen the veterinary and phytosanitary services, including control and laboratory capacities. Finalise the fisheries strategy and upgrade the capacity of Montenegro to conduct a fisheries policy in line with EU standards, including those concerning international cooperation" states EP.

Further requirements regard development an overall environment protection strategy (water, waste, air), adoption of a Land Use Plan and the Sustainable Development Strategy as well as sectoral strategies – integrated coastal zone management, biodiversity, climate change.

"Strengthen the Agency for Telecommunications to foster competition in the market by applying the relevant legislation, in particular in relation to the introduction of the necessary competitive safeguards in the market. Ensure efficient implementation and coordination of the anti-money-laundering legislation and strengthen the financial intelligence unit", states, among other, the European Partnership.

N.R.

Southeast European Times

Labour markets and the effects of migration

With millions of Romanians looking for work abroad, the country is having hard time filling vacancies in some sectors, notes economist and former Romanian Finance Minister Daniel Daianu.

by Daniel Daianu

Labour markets in the new EU member countries can puzzle an outsider. Whether the unemployment rate is low (around 5.5%, as in Romania), or high (above 15%, as in Poland), sectoral labour shortages are being felt throughout the economy. And consequences can be quite severe.

How is it that shortages can coexist with surpluses — unemployment — so visibly in market economies? A historical look at the economic policies of transition economies might help untangle this paradox.

For many years, the rise of wages in transition economies was influenced by a key provision in the agreements signed by governments with the IMF. Specifically, public sector wages were not supposed to grow by more than a certain rate annually. The rate determined how many people had to be laid off in order to raise salaries for public sector employees. Clearly, a trade-off was at work here.

The provision operated also as a benchmark for collective bargaining sessions between firm owners and workers in the private sector. The root issues were fear of large budget deficits and the need to combat inflation and unsustainable external deficits. In recent years, however, the situation has evolved markedly.

In Romania, two major features of the economy explain wage dynamics. One is the share of the private sector in GDP formation, amounting to over two-thirds. This presumably diminishes the leverage that public sector pay has on the functioning of the overall labour market. Now that Romania has joined the EU, it may be that the dominant social model in the bloc — where trade unions are more powerful than, say, in the United States — will have a strong influence.

A second feature is massive migration. According to some estimates, more than two million Romanians work abroad, mostly in EU member countries.

This migration explains why the unemployment rate is so low in Romania, even though industrial restructuring is taking its toll. There are cities and areas in Romania where unemployment is almost nil, and employers have a very hard time filling available positions.

Upward pressure on wages is an unavoidable effect of the steadily falling unemployment rate. Labour shortages are intense in certain sectors such as con-



struction. Bechtel, a leading American firm and a major contractor in Romania, recently complained about such shortages. And this case is not unique.

The fact that migration reduces the overall unemployment rate and puts upward pressure on the average wage level is not surprising. But there's more to the story. In transition economies, a phenomenon tends to occur which is, ironically enough, reminiscent of the command system: simultaneous shortages and surpluses. A leading Hungarian economist, Janos Kornai, wrote a groundbreaking book explaining how the command system is inherently prone to this problem, because of its inability to allocate resources efficiently or achieve price equilibrium in market economies the coexistence of large shortages and surpluses should not be the rule of the game; rather, it indicates market rigidity due to various factor.

One cause, much debated in the literature and verified in practice, is the capture of jobs by insiders. This causes some people — as the French call them, "les exclus" — to remain outside the

labour market circuit. Higher unemployment can also arise because of powerful shocks, such as sharp rises in the price of energy. The oil crisis of the 1970s, for instance, engendered "stagflation" in western economies.

It is noteworthy that surpluses and shortages can co-exist at largely different rates of unemployment. Unlike Romania, Poland has a high unemployment rate. Yet construction companies in Poland, as in Romania, complain about the lack of skilled workers. For the period 2007–2013, the Polish transportation ministry has allocated around \$38 billion in the sector. But many worry that the lack of manpower could severely delay this ambitious construction programme. This, in turn, would slow down the pace of modernizing hard infrastructure.

An uninformed observer might see no cause for worry. In the long run, after all, aren't markets supposed to allocate resources where they are mostly needed? In fact, the reality is more complicated. People do not acquire new skills easily or readily.

In reality, things are more complicated since people cannot acquire new skills and know-how easily, rapidly. Even when the market demands such skills, there can be a lag time before the labour force is able to provide them. The difficulty of adjustment is a common denominator in many transition economies.

Meanwhile, for the first time, Eastern European labour markets are beginning to exert pressure to admit immigrant workers. Rising labour scarcity is being seen in various fields, in conjunction with considerably superior GDP growth rates (as compared to Old Europe). It is perhaps not coincidental, then, that Poland and the Baltic countries have opened their markets to Bulgarian and Romanian workers, without any restrictions.

The article is taken from Southeast European Times



by Denis Romac,
Glas Slavonije

European media regulation on hold

Journalist associations are ringing the alarm bells: media pluralism in Europe is in danger, due to increasing concentration and widespread domination of tycoons.

According to EUobserver, which specializes in European affairs, Brussels' administration has recently published a paper on media pluralism in EU member states, in response to pressures from the European Parliament and non-governmental sector on the European Commission to finally turn its attention to giant media conglomerates, frequently linked to the centres of political power, that control large portions of the national media markets.

In Italy, for instance, the situation is such that the European MPs already in 2004 rose in protest against the inadmissible marriage between media and politics. The former PM of Italy and a known media tycoon Silvio Berlusconi spread his control to almost all TV stations in the country. Although the situation in Italy is an extreme example, MPs of the European Parliament are aware of the fact that media concentration and its links to politics are a widespread European trend, and they are urging the commission to introduce measures and directives to protect media pluralism.

However, their initiative was met by strong resistance in Brussels. The European Commission is reluctant to become engaged in such sensitive field, and its reaction will have to wait for another study, which is supposed to clarify the facts regarding the state of media pluralism in the EU members, especially concerning the variety

of local conditions in different countries and large discrepancies in the set of regulations governing the media. The EC will therefore define its response in a document expected only in 2008, where all the facts regarding the pluralism of the media should be stated. In the meantime, the EC announced that the issue is an open process, and that it has no intention of creating extreme or unnecessary measures. Brussels' attitude was, naturally, received warmly by most European publishers, who were rather satisfied, especially after the initial signals suggesting that the European Commission could undertake certain measures to limit their market and cross-border expansion.

The EUobserver relates the immediate response by ENPA, the European Newspapers Publishers' Association, who argue that there is no need for unified European legislation in this field, as every country has its own rules for regulating media market issues. Unique European regulations could only make the situation more complicated, disregarding national specificities. And if they did take these specificities into account, the supranational European regulations could only end up being vague and general. However, in the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) the opinions are rather the opposite. They demand urgent action against the growing media monopolisation, warning the responsables in the European Union that cross-border expansion of media concentration represents a unique European phenomenon of a recent vintage. Their proofs are rather convincing: certain

companies based in Western Europe already control large shares of the markets in Central and East European Countries, from Slovenia to Croatia and Serbia, as well as Bulgaria, Romania, and other former communist countries. The issue of their ownership has, therefore, long ceased to be an exclusively national concern.

Multi national companies operate on the national level, steadily increasing their media shares and concentrating enormous powers in their hands, usually under the circumstances of weak or non-existent public control. The only solution to prevent monopolisation therefore lies on the supranational and European level, in harmonising the existing confusion of regulations in European countries and establishing at least the minimum of regulations to control the rules of media ownership. The IFJ has been trying for more than a decade to force the European Commission into action – it is obvious, however, that the issue will still have to be left on hold for some time. If the future study turns out to be an incentive in the right direction, the IFJ will support it wholeheartedly, especially the expected comprehensive approach to the problem on the Europe-wide level. However, this influential journalist organisation doubts the readiness of Brussels to face the challenge of political influence in public media services. They have a good reason to worry: it is enough to look at the EC record in resolving the problem during Berlusconi's rule. The scoreboard is close to nil.

The article is taken from H-alter

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION STRUGGLES TO IMPROVE THE DEMOGRAPHIC PICTURE OF EU

Striking the balance between family life and work

While the EU leaders and the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Security ponder over Iran, Middle East and Kosovo, the European Commission is working on a strategy that would solve seemingly less important, but as a matter of fact crucial issues. One of these issues is the demographic structure of EU and the concerns over the ever decreasing numbers of active workforce, caused by low rates of demographic growth.

Commission communication of the 12 October 2006. The Commission urged the member states to take the necessary steps for the promotion of demographic renewal, to undertake initiatives that would help the citizens to find a balance between work and family life, to promote employment, establishing conditions for more jobs and longer working lives.... all in order to prevent a negative demographic trend.

"The relevant reforms of employ-

ment, education and training policy already under way will have to be expanded to improve employment opportunities of senior citizens. Strategic importance should be given to increasing the rate of participation of men and women aged over 55. This will require far-reaching reforms to remove incentives for early exit from the labour market and to encourage the employment of senior citizens", warns the EC.

Another area of concern regards integration of immigrants, as well as devising a common policy on legal immigration, that would focus on labour migration, in order to satisfy demand in certain sectors of the labour market.

"Budgetary consolidation is necessary in order to guarantee social security and equity between generations in the long run. Increasing the participation rate in employment of all age groups is an effective tool for increasing the government revenue without increasing the rates of taxation", state the EC.

Waves of migration from the new EU members to Ireland and United Kingdom in 2004 considerably contributed to alleviating shortages in the labour market.

According to EC, the average number of children per woman is low, at 1.5 children for EU-25, well below the replacement rate of 2.1 required to stabilise the population size in the absence of immigration. A limited increase of 1.6 is projected for EU-25 by 2030.

"The decline in fertility in recent decades followed the post-war baby boom which is today causing the bulge in the size of the population aged 45 to 65 years. The gradual progress of the baby-boomers towards retirement age will lead to a substantial increase in the

CHILDREN WILL COME, BUT THE YOUNG COUPLES NEED SECURITY

The EU Member States can prevent demographic decline or react to the falling birth rate, which for some of them is reaching a worrying level. These reactions are both necessary and realistic – necessary because surveys show that in all EU countries couples would like to have more children, and realistic because international comparisons underline the effectiveness of family and other policies consistently implemented by some countries over a period of time to create conditions supportive of those who wish to have children, says the EC analysis.

One of the overarching concerns is to diminish the inequality in opportunities offered to citizens with and without children. Similarly, the goal of every policy is to ensure universal access to assistance services for parents, in particular for education and care for young children, and to offer better opportunities to both men and women for lifelong learning and for balancing their private and working lives.

"Furthermore, the most recent analyses of the fall in the birth rate emphasise the substantial impact of the rise in the age at which women have their first child, reflecting the growing reluctance of couples to have children. These analyses emphasise the need to enable young people to enter the labour market and to improve their living conditions. In addition, effective gender equality policies make it easier for parents to consider if and when to have children", explains EC.

According to them, the key concerns are improvement of access to accommodation, affordable and quality childcare and generally the work-life balance through flexible forms of work and new technologies.

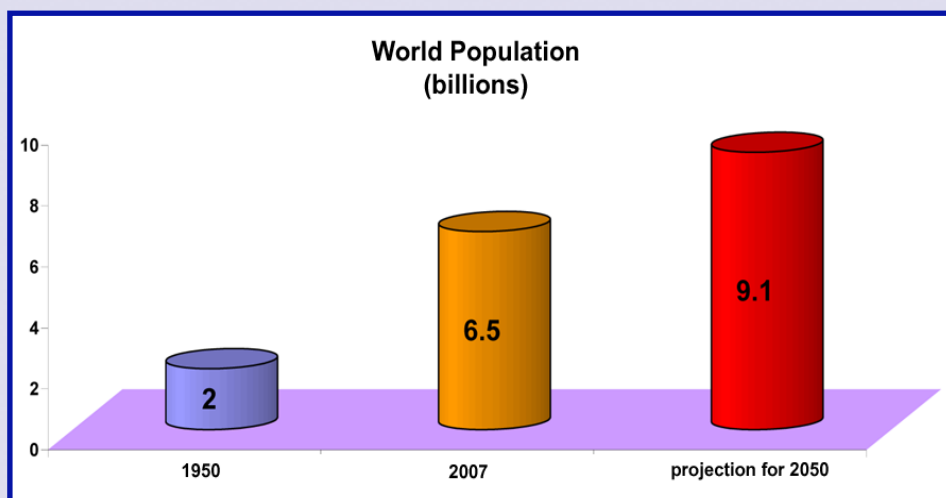
"We must also tackle child poverty, the extent of which remains worrying and also reflects the relative deterioration of the situation of families with children", warns the EC.

proportion of old people, who will need to be supported financially by a reduced working age population. This phenomenon will disappear, but not for several decades", warn European Commission experts.

Life expectancy has been steadily increasing, and will continue to rise by at least further 5 years by 2050.

"The projected increase would have its greatest impact on the older generations, so that Europeans reaching the age of 65 in 2050 can expect to live on average between four and five years longer than those reaching 65 today. This will lead to a spectacular increase in the number of people surviving to the ages of 80 or 90, leading to many of them spending several decades in retirement and reaching an age frequently characterised by infirmity and disability, although the proportion of people in poor health in this age bracket could fall", emphasises the EC.

According to them, regions with declining populations consisting mainly of senior citizens will face difficulties in supplying essential public goods and



services, such as health care, housing, urban planning, transport and tourism services, so that their environmental balance will also reflect the impact of an ageing population.

"Demographic change is also accompanied by profound social changes affecting the composition of families, particularly evident in the growing number of elderly persons living alone. The increase in the number of very old dependent persons also rises new problems of an economic,

social or even ethical nature", warns EC.

Following a worldwide population increase from 2 billion in 1950 to 6.5 billion today, the United Nations estimate that this growth will continue, albeit at a slower pace, to reach a population of 9.1 billion by 2050.

Around 95% of the overall growth of the population will occur in the developing countries, and the population of the 50 least developed countries is expected to double. The fastest growth will take place in Africa. As a result, the proportion of the worldwide population accounted for by the EU 25 will decrease. However, Europeans will not be ageing alone. Significant increases in the older strata of the population are also expected in India and China.

The European Commission claims that this will lead to increased global productivity, if developing countries can exploit the demographic dividend and integrate young working-age people into the labour market. This would create profitable investment opportunities for Europeans saving for their retirement.

"Immigration may temporarily help to reduce the financial impact of an ageing population when legally employed immigrants pay contributions into public pension schemes. On the other hand, economically active immigrants will also, over time, accumulate their own pension rights", states the analysis.

40 MILLION IMMIGRANTS BY 2050

Europe is already the host to major inflows of immigration from third countries. In 2004, the EU registered 1.8 million immigrants. Relative to the total population the rate of immigration in EU is higher than in US.

The European Union is likely to remain a popular destination for migrants over the coming decades. Eurostat's conservative projection is that around 40 million people will emigrate to the European Union between now and 2050.

As many of them are of working age, migrants tend to change the demographic structure, lowering the average age of the population. However, the longer-term repercussions remain uncertain, as they depend on the more or less restrictive nature of family reunification policies and birth patterns of migrants.

Despite the current flows, immigration can only partially compensate for the effects of low fertility and extended life expectancy on the age distribution of the European population.

As a consequence of this, the total population of EU will fall slightly, but will become much older. In economic terms, the main change will involve the size of the working-age population (15–64 years), which will decrease by 48 million between now and 2050. The percentage of older people will double by 2050, reaching 51%. Today, for each citizen aged 65 and above there are four persons of working age. By 2050, there will be only two.

N. RUDOVIĆ
V. ŠČEPANOVIĆ

INTRODUCING THE EU INSTITUTIONS

European Council



The European Council, colloquially also known as the EU Summit, gathers heads of states and governments of the EU Member States.

Formally and legally, the European Council is not an EU institution. It was established in 1974 at the Summit in Paris. The inaugural summit took place in 1975 in Dublin during Irish presidency over European Union.

Development of the European Council underwent several stages. The period of its constitution began in 1974, when this body was little more than periodical gathering of the heads of states and governments of the member states of European Economic Community.

After 1986 and the adoption of the Single European Act (SEA), European Council went into a stage of institutionalisation. SEA stipulates the composition of EC and requires it to meet at least twice a year. However, SEA does not yet define European Council as an institution.

The third stage of development, from the Maastricht Treaty until today, is characterised by continued exceptionalism of the European Council which remains outside the institutional structure of EU.

The importance of the European Council for the processes within EU lies in the overwhelming political significance of its decisions. In fact, EC is only entitled to make political decision, and has no legislative power. Its political influence was, however, affirmed by the Treaty of Maastricht. Under the provisions of the Treaty, the EC can, by a qualified majority vote, decide on whether a country meets the criteria for adoption of the sin-

gle European currency and accession to the European Monetary Union.

European Council has extensive powers in deciding on the accession of new states to EU. During the 1993 Copenhagen Summit, EC defined the well-known Copenhagen Criteria which must be fulfilled by any country aspiring to become a member of the European Union.

European Council plays a significant role in the EU foreign policy, where it decides on the general direction of EU relations and responses to the rest of the world.

General directions are not always implemented and respected, as could be seen on the occasion of defining the European attitude towards the US intervention in Irak, when the opinions were split among different EU members.

Meetings of the European Council are held twice a year, but can be summoned more often if necessary. EC should be distinguished from the Council of EU, which consists of ministers of EU member states, but also from the Council of Europe, which is a whole separate international organisation.

Traditionally, heads of states and governments of EU member states meet in the country which currently presides over the Council of EU. At the Summit in Nice, it was decided that in the future at least half of the summits should be held in Brussels. The decision was inspired by the EU enlargement perspectives, which were to increase the number of its members to 25, making frequent rotations of the seat of the Summit too expensive and complicated.

Until June 2007, the president of the European Council will be the German chancellor Angela Merkel. The role of the EC President consists in organising and presiding over the Summit. This position gives the President the *primus inter pares* status among other heads of states and governments.

More information about the European Council can be found at: www.eu.int/de/info/eurocouncil

Petar ĐUKANOVIĆ

NON – GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS IN EUROPEAN UNION



EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENTAL BUREAU (EEB)

EEB is a federation of more than 140 civic associations working on the protection of the environment in all EU countries and in the majority of candidate states, as well as in some neighbouring countries. Its members are active on the local, national, European and international level.

The goal of EEB is to protect and improve the environment in Europe and to offer it citizens an opportunity to actively participate in the fulfilment of this goal.

The EEB aims to promote knowledge and understanding of the current and potential EU environmental policies amongst the general public in the EU, mobilising the citizens for continuous improvement. The EEB therefore continuously develops and maintains close relations with its members, i.e. with the general public, and provides targeted services in information, co-ordination and representation. The EEB office in Brussels closely coordinates EU-oriented activities with EEB Members at national level around Europe. It also works in ad-hoc coalitions with representatives of other interest groups when appropriate.

The EEB has an information and press service and runs 12 specialised Working Groups of EEB members, produces position papers on topics that are, or should be, on the EU agenda and represents the Membership in regular discussions with European institutions.

In implementing its activities, EEB departs from the following concepts: sustainability is not only an issue of the environmental policy – it is also a matter of social, economic, and cultural dimension. Further, EU is the key player, even outside its territory. Finally, not all of the EE members have equal powers, and they differ in their strength, approaches and priorities.

Based on this, the EEB mission is to become an efficient instrument for visible improvement of the EU environmental policies and creation of sustainable development through effective integration of the environmental goals into horizontal and sectoral EU policies, as well as ensuring compatibility of these goals with effective strategies for their implementation.

The EEB has consultative status at the Council of Europe and the United Nations, and has working relations with the Commission of the European Union, the Economic and Social Committee of the European Union, and the OECD.

More information about EEB can be found at www.eeb.org.

Prepared by: Vučić ČETKOVIĆ

SUCCESSFUL GRADUATION OF V GENERATION OF EIS AND II GENERATION OF RESI

The best so far

Graduation ceremony for the V generation of the European Integrations School and II generation of the Regional European Integrations School based in Bijelo Polje was held on 18 February 2007 in Podgorica.

European Integrations School is organised by a consortium of NGOs, consisting of Centre for Civic Education (CCE), Centre for Development of Non-Governmental Organisations (CDNGO) and European Movement in Montenegro (EMiM), with support of the Foundation Open Society Institute, Representative Office in Montenegro (FOSI ROM).

The School lasted from September 2006 to January 2007 and comprised 7 modules, which offered a wide spectrum of theoretical and practical knowledge in the field of European Integrations. In this period, renowned lecturers and experts from the country and abroad, representatives of diplomatic service and other guests introduced participants to the history, development and functioning of European integration processes, contemporary arrangement of European institutions, their influence on our society and perspectives for cooperation in this field. Aside from providing the information, the School offers insight into various forms of activism related to the promotion of the idea of European integrations as well as European standards and values. Representatives of the Governments of Montenegro and the republic of Slovenia actively participated in the last module, "Montenegro and European Union". 45 participants in total successfully completed this intensive programme, which included a final test at the end of the School, as well as papers on selected issues in EI.



ESI participants were officials of the national and local governments, representatives of judiciary and the prosecution, NGO activists, journalists, entrepreneurs, teachers, party officials and senior students in social sciences who demonstrated high levels of activism.

Speakers at the graduation ceremony were **Sanja Elezović**, director of FOSI ROM, **Stevo Muk**, executive director of CDNGO, **Momčilo Radulović**, secretary general of EMiM, and **Daliborka Uljarević**, executive director of CCE. Organisers emphasised that this generation has achieved the best results so far, according to the final exams, and announced continuation of the programme, as well as other related projects that capitalise on the potential within the existing network of ESI participants.

Special guest at the ceremony was **Martin Harvey**, representative of the European Commission in Montenegro, who congratulated participants and organisers on the successful implementation of the programme and the results achieved.

The programme, unique in the region, was so far attended by 173 participants. For more information of ESI, please visit www.sei.cg.yu.

PERSPECTIVES FOR ASSISTANCE TO THE WESTERN BALKANS

Civil sector is an important element of European Integrations

International conference on "Changing Conditions in West Balkan Countries – challenge for future cooperation with EU and Central East European states" was organised in Ljubljana on 26 and 27 February 2007. The conference hosted a large number of decision makers from EU, related regional organizations, representatives of the Government of Slovenia and civil sector activists from the region.

Representatives of the civil society from the region presented their views on the process of European integrations and way in which the process can be made most beneficial for the citizens of the Western Balkans. Special presentations of their cooperation and assistance programmes were given by the ministries of Foreign Affairs of Slovenia, Czech Republic, Austria, Slovakia and Hungary.

Montenegrin representatives at the conference were **Stevo Muk**, executive director of CDNGO and **Daliborka Uljarević**, executive director of CCE. Their contributions to the conference were in the framework of the working groups on European integrations process and Activating human resources in the civil society, as well as in the part of presentation of engagement and participation of civil sector in changes on the national level.

The conference was organised by SLOGA – Slovenian Global Action (Platform for development cooperation and humanitarian aid) and EU PLATFORM – Austrian EU platform for development non-governmental organisations, in cooperation with the Centre for European Perspectives, Austrian Development Agency and Slovenian MFA.

PUBLISHING



Human rights a precondition for European integrations

With support of the Norwegian Royal Embassy, CCE and CDNGO published the book "Human Rights in Practice", written by **Aleksandar Saša Ze-**

ković. The book was partially supported by the Ministry for the Protection of Human and Minority rights of the Government of Montenegro.

This publication is a compilation of selected researches, challenges, experiences and recommendations related to the issues of human rights, which makes it a useful research document on the state of human, mainly minority, rights in Montenegro. At the same time, it can serve as an indicator of the current situation and directions for development of human rights in the future.

The examples from practice and presented

cases of violations of human rights are an incessant reminder of the principles which are the foundation of European Union – freedom, democracy, rule of law, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The book is a contribution to identification of possible barriers for the creation of Montenegrin human capital, which in the EU stands for active participation in social and economic life, as well as struggle against marginalisation and poverty.

The publication speaks directly for the respect of human rights enshrined in the European Charter of Human Rights, adopted in Nice in 2000. It also emphasises the importance of overcoming the past heritage, bad habits and treatments and promotes building of a new image of a country that wishes to become a part of EU.

In the context of European integration of Montenegro, this publication represents practical material for understanding of the accession process and the criteria that must be fulfilled – functional

approach to democracy and development of its full potential, respect for the fundamental principles of EU and especially the political dimension of the Copenhagen criteria.

The book is a useful tool for decision makers, not only as a source of information, but also as a collection of lessons and conclusions for the formation and implementation of political strategies and decisions.

Finally, it is the intention of the author and the publishers of the book to contribute to strong, critical advocacy of human rights in Montenegro, in other words, to introduce a wide spectrum of readers at whom the message is directed to the need for understanding, deliberation and discussion on the state and perspective of human and minority rights under the current circumstances, as well as with respect to future challenges for Montenegro regarding the consolidation of its statehood and the process of European Integrations.

FOR THIS ISSUE WE RECOMMEND:

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
IN BULGARIA

Sofia, Bulgaria

Scholarship/Financial aid: full for selected students**Date:** annually**Deadline:** N/A or unknown**Open to:** students from the in-region countries

Admission to the American University in Bulgaria (AUBG) is based upon a student's academic qualifications. Unlike most state universities that are fully funded by government support, AUBG must rely on tuition, fees, gifts, and grants to provide the high quality faculty, library and technology resources, and modern residence halls. As a private university, AUBG is a more costly alternative to state universities. No one, however, should be discouraged from applying because of price.

The University provides financial aid based on both the academic merit and the financial need of the student. Financial need is determined through an analysis of the Financial Assistance Form and supporting documents submitted as part of the application packet.

University financial aid is available only to students from the in-region countries*. Out-of-region students who need financial assistance in order to attend AUBG should investigate bank loans.

For more information please contact:

Kristina Doneva, Financial Aid Coordinator,
Financial Aid Office, Room 109, American
University in Bulgaria, Blagoevgrad 2700, Bulgaria,
phone: (+359 73) 888 222, e-mail:
FinancialAidOffice@aubg.bg.

* 'In-region' countries include: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, FYROM (Macedonia), Moldova, Mongolia, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Montenegro, and the region of Kosovo, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

EUROPEAN SUMMER
SCHOOL 2007

Come to Prague and spend 10 days in one of the Europe's most beautiful cities examining the role and activities of the Central European countries in the EU with one of the Czech Republic's best think tanks. Attend the fifth year of our European Summer School.

The European Summer School 2007 (ESS 2007) "Central Europe in the EU: Old Europe – New Europe" focused on the role, activities and impact of the new member states from Central Europe (Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary and Slovakia) in the enlarged European Union. Participants of the ESS 2007 will learn and discuss about the political and economical challenges the new EU member

states are facing. The programme is intended for students who are currently enrolled in a college or university. To be considered for admission, you have to submit the Online Application Form.

You will be asked to paste the following documents into the spaces specified in the Online Application:

- Resume or curriculum vitae. Please check www.hr-dept.co.uk for a sample CV or resume.
- A statement-of-purpose not to exceed 500 words stating your reasons for applying to the School, and what you would like to gain by attending.
- The language of the School is English. Therefore, non-native speakers of English should provide a proof of English proficiency. It might be one of the following: the IELTS/TOEFL score, letter from an English professor or official certificate of completed English courses.

Final Application Deadline: April 30, 2007

For more information about the European Summer School go to

www.europeum.org/ess2007 or contact

European Summer School 2007**EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy**

Rytířská 31, CZ-110 00 Praha 1, CZECH REPUB-
LIC, Tel: +420 221.610.206-7, Fax: +420
221.610.204, E-mail: ess2007@europeum.org

EUROPEAN COLLEGE
OF LIBERAL ARTS

Berlin, Germany

Scholarship/Financial aid: based on demonstrated financial need**Date:** academic year 2007-08**Deadline:** 15 February 2007 and 30 April 2007

Open to: students with a special interest in philosophy, history, literature, political theory and the visual arts. The European College of Liberal Arts (ECLA) offers a one-year undergraduate program in the humanities. The academic year runs for nine months from early October to late June and is divided into three ten-week terms: Autumn, Winter and Spring.

The Academy Year program is an introduction to the theory and practice of interdisciplinary learning. A core curriculum in philosophy, history, literature, political theory and the visual arts is team-taught by faculty with background in these disciplines. The core course uses a lecture/seminar/tutorial format, and students learn through discussion in small groups, writing assignments and one-to-one tutorials.

The core course begins with the classic texts of ancient Greece and has a loosely chronological structure through the three terms, with particular focus on selected historical periods. Key authors who feature in the course include Aristotle, Dante,



Descartes, Dostoyevsky, Homer, Hume, Kafka, Kant, Kierkegaard, Machiavelli, Montaigne, Nietzsche, Pascal, Plato and Shakespeare.

Elective courses in a range of disciplines including art history, film theory, literary theory, music and performance art complement the core curriculum. Students take the core course (six credits), one elective course (three credits) and one foreign language (two credits). Students who have not mastered German are required to enroll in a German language class, while others may choose between French or Spanish.

The Seeing Berlin component of the program gives students and faculty the opportunity to explore together Berlin's artistic and architectural treasures. The program includes visiting the city's many museums as well as lesser-known public and private collections and galleries. In addition, faculty organizes visits to concerts, plays, films and lectures. A one-week study trip to Italy complements the Winter term's emphasis on the Renaissance. Students prepare presentations and lead some of the excursions in a practical exercise of the kind of learning in which they engage in the classroom. The comprehensive fee of 15.000 EUR covers tuition, accommodation and full board, the study trip, public transportation in Berlin, emergency health insurance coverage, books (on loan) and Internet access.

ECLA has a need-based financial aid policy and is committed to giving all applicants who qualify for admission a chance to enroll, regardless of their financial means. Financial aid packages vary in amount and are based on applicants' demonstrated need.

There are two application deadlines: **February 15th 2007** and **April 30th 2007**.

For further information contact the Admissions Office at admissions@ecla.de. For information about financial aid contact the Financial Aid Office at finaid@ecla.de.

Applications for the academic year 2007-08 are now being accepted.

EIC Bulletin is electronic magazine established within EIC programme, with the support of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.

The publisher is Centre for Civic Education.

EIC Bulletin is registered with the Ministry for Culture and Media as item No. 578

Editor in Chief: Neđeljko Rudović

Editorial Board: Vera Šćepanović, Daliborka Uljarević, Dragan Stojović, Vladimir Vučinić

Technical Editor: Blažo Crvenica; Language Editor: Milena Milunović;

English Language Editor: Maja Mugoša; Translation: Vera Šćepanović

Njegoševa 36 / I

Tel / fax: + 381 81 / 665 – 112, 665 – 327

E- mail: eicbilten@cg.yu

EIC Bulletin can be downloaded at the www.cgo.cg.yu