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be able to travel  
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## FOREWORD

On 21 May, Montenegro ached in one of the most difficult tests in its recent history. By a majority of its citizens' votes, it revived the statehood independence, returned on the map of Europe and the world, but it also showed that it belonged to the club of civilised countries. Despite their pronounced differences, both blocks have leaded a moderate, tolerant campaign, which is one of the preconditions for a gradual reconciliation and unification of all resources to face new challenges in the future. A crucial one to come will be the European Union association process, which, except for a genuine readiness on the part of the Government to transform the system in accordance with EU norms, will require some form of national consensus, in order to prevent obstacles to arise in the implementation of some necessary, although potentially painful decisions. Both the government and the opposition have sent signals that this is possible, when in the Parliament they unanimously adopted Declaration of accession to EU.

Lest all remains just a proclamation, the key political leaders will have to prove in action that they are ready to rebuild Montenegro as a society guided by the rule of law, parliamentary democracy, and market economy, and as a state where the human and minority rights are given full respect, in every sense of that word. This entails the establishment of a system without privileges based on cronyism and affiliation with the centres of political decision-making, eradication of monopolies, further steps towards independent judiciary, resolute fight against corruption... In other words, a whole new image for the Government of Montenegro.

N.R.

## SUCCESS OF THE REFERENDUM ON INDEPENDENCE OF THE SMALLER PARTNER IN STATE UNION SM

# Montenegro is independent again

By a decision of majority of the citizens of Montenegro, after 88 years, Montenegrin statehood has been restored, and a message sent to Serbia that it will remain a brotherly nation and the closest neighbour.

On Sunday, 21 May, at the referendum deciding the statehood status, 55.5% of Montenegrin citizens voted independence – 230.711 of them, while 44.5%, which is 184.954 citizens, expressed their preference for a union. The turnout has been expectedly high – 86,49 %, which is 419.236 of a total of 484.718 registered voters.

The 55% threshold, presented by European Union as a condition on which Montenegro will be allowed to leave state union with Serbia was marginally surpassed. However, it showed that there is a clear majority of those supporting the dominant option in Montenegro. Probably because of a peaceful and tolerant campaign lead by both blocks on the eve of the referendum, which has shown that Montenegrin society is gaining in political maturity, the 21 May was not regarded as a "dooms day" that is going to change everything.

Congratulations from the capitals of the region and the world were quick to arrive right after the preliminary results were announced. The first to congratulate was the President of Croatia, **Stjepan Mesić**, his colleague from Slovenia **Janez Drnovšek**, Macedonian and Croatian Prime Ministers, **Vlado Bučkovski** and **Ivo Sanader**, and Foreign Relations Minister of SM, **Vuk Drašković**, whereas the President of Serbia, **Boris Tadić**, sent his felicitations two days later. He said he accepted the preliminary official referendum results, while the Prime Minister of Serbia, **Vojislav Koštunica**, said he will accept them once the final results are publicised.

"For Montenegro, Serbia will remain a reliable friend, and a political and economic partner. I am convinced that this will also be the attitude of Montenegro towards Serbia", said Tadić, adding that he will personally never allow anybody to erect walls and barriers between the two



states.

He announced to all the citizens of Montenegro living in Serbia that he will always stand up for their rights, and that he would, as President of Serbia, fight for the rights of the Serbian nationals living in Montenegro.

EU said it will absolutely respect the referendum decision of the citizens of Montenegro, pleading to all sides to accept the results of the vote.

US and Russia congratulated Montenegro on the successfully conducted referendum, and announced that they will respect the will of the citizens, inviting both Serbia and Montenegro to work together towards implementation of the vote results.

In a message to the public, the EU noted the assessment of the Bureau for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights that the referendum was conducted in line with all recommendations by OSCE, Council of Europe, and other international standards.

The EU declaration was joined by Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey, Croatia, Macedonia, Albania, and Bosnia and Herzegovina – all countries in different stages of EU accession, as well as by Liechtenstein, Ukraine and Moldova.

Regarding the results on the status of Montenegro, President and the Prime Minister of Montenegro, **Filip Vujanović** and **Milo Đukanović**, received congratulations yesterday coming from the President of the Presidency of BiH, and the president of the Council of Ministers BiH, **Sulejman Tihić** i **Adnan Terzić**, as well as from the presidents of Macedonia and Albania, **Branko Cvenkovski** and **Alfred Mojsiju**.





photo: VIJESTI

by dr Judy Batt

The visa regime is one of the most frustrating areas of EU policy for most people concerned about the future of the Balkans. It is plainly in contradiction with the EU's professed foreign policy priority of accelerating the 'Europeanisation' of the Balkans by promoting people-to-people contacts across the EU's common external frontier, and between former Yugoslav peoples divided by the new borders erected in the wars of the 1990s. Among the most depressing findings of the widely-praised 1995 report of the International Commission on the Balkans led by Giuliano Amato was that young people from the region – those most enthusiastic about the European perspective – are those who find it most difficult to visit the EU. It is truly shocking that some 70 per cent of students in Serbia, for example, have never been outside their country.

EU visa policy is driven not by EU foreign policy objectives, but by the member states' Interior Ministers, who are plainly worried by illegal migration, the spread of international criminal networks, and the more recent threat of international terrorism. But the visa regime is not an effective policy response to these problems. Much illegal migration is driven by high demand for cheap and flexible labour in western Europe's over-regulated economies. Any police expert will tell you that international criminals have never been deterred by visas – such ruthless and resourceful characters do not

## Europe's visa regime is not the way to stop immigration and crime

waste time queuing for hours outside EU consulates. As for terrorism, most of those involved in the recent outrages in New York, Madrid and London were already legally within these countries, and even worse – some were their own citizens.

EU Interior Ministers' worries are not without foundation, but meanwhile sensationalist media coverage over several years has generated widespread alarm among EU citizens. Thus the removal of internal border controls among EU Schengen member states in 1995 was greeted not as a welcome advance in freedom but as a new source of insecurity. Then 9/11 and the London and Madrid bombings further heightened the sense of threat. At the same time, a prolonged period of very slow economic growth and high unemployment in some states led people to conclude that the EU was failing to deliver the economic security they had expected. Hence the rise of 'Euroscepticism' in many EU countries, which led French and Dutch voters to reject the EU's new Constitution in 2004. Since then, the EU has lapsed into a period of introspection and has lost its sense of purpose.

The rigidity of member states on the question of the visa regime is one unfortunate reflection of that trend. The EU has been very slow to begin 'exploratory talks' on visa facilitation, a limited concession that would apply only to some specific groups (such as students, business people and NGO activists). At least the EU has not halted these talks with Serbia and Montenegro now that it has called off the SAA negotiations in May. To be realistic, a rapid change of visa policy for the region is not on the horizon, unless the West Balkans states can do something really substantial to change

their negative image in EU public opinion.

What can Western Balkans countries do to prove themselves ready for accelerated liberalisation of the visa regime? They need to take very seriously the EU's concerns about organised crime and corruption. The key to tackling international crime is not the visa regime but close cross-border cooperation among police services. EU member states themselves do not find this easy, and it is even harder for security forces in the Western Balkan states, so recently still at war with each other. It requires sustained political commitment to build trust. This puts the spotlight on the need for each country to prioritise security sector reform, for which substantial external EU technical assistance is available. The Austrian EU Presidency has devoted special attention to this area.

Unreformed security institutions are more than ineffective – they can even pose a direct threat to the state and vital national interests, as the case of Serbia shows particularly starkly (both the assassination of Prime Minister Djindjic in 2003, and the long-running failure to arrest ICTY indictees). Corruption within Balkans security forces, and their direct involvement in trafficking in drugs and human beings makes it quite unthinkable for cooperation to develop with their EU counterparts. In the absence of such cooperation, the EU's Interior Ministers will continue to argue that the visa regime, clumsy and unsatisfactory an instrument that it is, must remain.

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WHEN WILL THE CITIZENS OF MONTENEGRO BE ABLE TO TRAVEL WITHOUT VISAS TO EU MEMBER STATES AND OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRIES?

# Queuing due until the state shows reliability and EU mercy

Even the biggest optimists are not expecting the citizens of Montenegro to be able to travel without problems to EU, USA, or other highly developed countries in any recent future, warn experts.

Considering all of the conditions for the liberalisation of visa regime, some 20% of the citizens of Montenegro currently holding passports will have to collect ample documentation and face a series of other problems when applying for visas in the next few years.

Certain categories of the population, however, may cherish some moderate optimism, namely the businessmen, scientists and students, NGO activists, journalists, sportsmen, etc. as some intensive negotiations with EU are due to begin, regarding visa privileges.

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, in charge of the consular matters, Mr **Dragan Sekulović**, says it is realistic to the negotiations with EU on two parallel and "inseparable" agreements – on visa privileges and readmission, should start by September. He added that, after the referendum, these negotiations will be conducted separately for Serbia and for Montenegro.

According to him, "relaxing" of the visa regime and readmission should not be confused with the notion of liberalisation of the visa regime.

"Liberalisation is a process that takes time. You must change the legal framework, adopt a national strategy, action plans and implement all of

that. Only at the very end, you will be allowed to begin negotiations on liberalisation, which is in essence a political decision to abolish all visas. In the meantime, we will have some privileges regarding certain categories of the populations", states Sekulović.

As for the readmission, Sekulović believes this to be an easy part of the work, as Montenegro already has "abundant experience" in this field.

"So far we have signed separate agreements on readmission with a number of EU member states. The basic principles are clear. EU insists that you should take back all of your citizens, and from the standpoint of our legislation, that is undisputed. Second principle that Brussels demands is that you should also take



Dragan Sekulović

back all of the citizens of third countries who have arrived to EU across your territory, because, in a way, it is your fault that they are there. Related are the costs of repatriation, and finally there is the issue of the so-called "re-integration" of these people. We have some experience already. The milk factory in Berane, for instance, was built on the donations by the government of Luxembourg, that returned a number

## ALL OF OUR TROUBLES

A month ago, in Brussels, there was a meeting of experts from S&M and EU regarding illegal migration, readmission, visa systems and its tentative relaxation, border control and organised crime.

**Dragan Sekulović**, who participated in this conference, says that they agreed with EU experts on "99% of the issues listed as urgent problems for our citizens in the visa procedure".

"The first problem is the behaviour of the local staff. Nowhere, in no Schengen document is it written that the local staff should decide on who gets the visa. In practice, it is them who end up eliminating some 50% of the applicants. The next problem is making appointments by phone, then come tourist agencies, variations in requirements per country, and high costs of visas. Finally, there is the issue of documentation, and the "job certificate requirement" is a good example of this. Although there is a single form (M3) that is quite enough to prove the employment status, citizens are usually asked for three different documents. Occasionally, the foreign countries may even make certain demands which are against our laws", explains Sekulović.

He added that these problems have been noted by Brussels, and that there is already a proposal for an EU law defining visa requirements for non-member countries, which would help in overcoming of these difficulties.





of our citizens", says Sekulović.

Afterwards, he explains, we can take up the visa problem.

"In terms of timing, it depends both on us and on the EU. Our responsibility, first of all, is to adopt certain legal regulations. We have already solved that one – all the laws have been prepared and they will soon be adopted. They include laws on asylum, foreigners, identity cards, a proposal for biometric passports on which there will be a public tender in May, a law on borders that has already been passed in the Government... Therefore, this normative side is almost complete", adds Sekulović.

Later on, he says, these laws will still have to be implemented.

"Finally, you come to the point where people respect you, where they say 'well, you have fulfilled these standards', or 'you should still do this or that' and there is a possibility that someone will say: 'all right, now we go into the liberalisation'. In any case, this is a process, and I do not expect it to be completed soon", explains Sekulović.

As a very good example of changes which will have to come to Montenegro if it wishes the visa

applications to become any simpler for its citizens, Sekulović mentions the transformation of the Chamber of Commerce, in order to provide genuine, valid guarantees for the businessmen.

As it is, the citizens of Montenegro remain in a kind of "ghetto", because without visas they can only travel to Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Albania and Bulgaria. Once Bulgaria becomes an EU member, the list of "free access" countries will become even shorter.

Other countries where the citizens of Montenegro do not need visas are Byelorussia and Azerbaijan, whereas for Russia and Ukraine an invitation letter or a hotel reservation

is sufficient.

The rest of Europe is surrounded by a Schengen Agreement barrier which is difficult to cross, and this is true also for those countries that have not signed the agreement (e.g. Great Britain, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland) but have visa requirements which are almost identical to those for the countries signatories of Schengen. Among the other strong fortresses are the USA, Canada and Australia.

On the other hand, Montenegro has no visa requirements for any of the EU countries, or for the nationals of former Yugoslavia, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Russia, Albania and Ukraine.

Secretary General of the European Movement in Montenegro, Mr **Momčilo Radulović**, explains that certain structures in Brussels show "very little understanding" for the problem of visas.

"Domestic forces promoting European integrations have very little support when it comes to the visa regime. This is a great barrier for us, because it is very difficult to explain to our citizens how come that we want to join Europe, and we still have such a visa regime. It is a matter of unwillingness among certain structures in Brussels to understand how important the abolishment of the visas would be for our citizens", says Radulović.

According to Radulović, Brussels is still ridden with a completely

## WHAT IS SCHENGEN?

The Schengen Agreement was signed in 1985 by Germany, France, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands in the town of Schengen, Luxembourg.

These states agreed to gradually abolish internal border controls and to introduce free movement for all of theirs, as well as citizens of other EU member states.

In 1990, the five countries signed the so-called "Schengen convention", which, in the same year, was joined by Italy, then Spain and Portugal (1990), later on by Greece (1992), Austria (1995), and in 1996 by Sweden, Finland and Denmark.

Even though they do not belong to the EU member states, Iceland and Norway had acceded to this agreement, thus becoming so-called "Schengen countries".

unfounded angst of the "polish plumber" syndrome – a fear that huge numbers of people will leave the Western Balkans flooding the EU countries and stifling their labour markets.

"This turned out to be a completely wrong theory – it didn't happen with the last EU enlargement and it wouldn't happen now. It is just that many people aren't ready to leave their countries, and some countries, such as Montenegro, really would not make a difference with the size of their population", says the Secretary General of the European Movement in Montenegro.

The fault of the Montenegrin government, on the other hand, is the lack of agility in border control and the existence of old documents which are easy to fake.

"I hope that the process of visa applications will soon become easier for Montenegro. I sincerely hope we can soon have technically valid documents with higher reliability, that the system of border control and the pre-

vention of the trafficking in human beings will be improved, that our cross-border police will become more efficient, that we will establish stronger ties with the Interpol and Europol, and that, in this way, credibility of our state institutions and structures will raise, paving way for the relaxing or even completely abolishing the visa system", underlines Radulović.

Another problem bothering the citizens of Montenegro is the fact that, of the 16 consulates and embassy offices in Podgorica, only the Greek and the Italian consulate issue visas. In addition to a 35 euro visa fee, the citizens have to pay a mandatory insurance, photographs, various certificates... Plus the trip to Belgrade, costing you between 30 and 140 euros, depending on the means of travelling, the final amount for a visa adds up to some 400 euros, which is quite a sum for the Montenegrin economic standards.

A while ago, Brussels delayed its decision on raising the visa fees for

Western Balkans from 35 to 60 euros (which was announced for January). It was France to propose this raise, hoping to use the money to finance the introduction of new biometric documents, which is currently in the process. Sekulović says he believes this can still be further delayed until 2008, if Montenegro starts negotiating the visa privileges early in September.

Among the factors persuading Brussels to delay this raise in visa prices was a joint petition by the European Movement in Montenegro and its partner organisations from Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, and Serbia, also supported the European Movement in Brussels and its president, Mr **Pat Cox**, former president of the European Parliament.

Perhaps the biggest problem for both Serbia and Montenegro is the fact that their citizens, also varying from one country to another, are frequently found among the applicants for asylum.

"Most of the asylum seekers are Albanians from Kosovo. This is something that gives a bad image to both Serbia and Montenegro", says Sekulović.

He said that the Government of the Republic of Montenegro does not have precise information on the number of Montenegrin citizens asylum seekers, as this is classified as "security information" not available in the host countries.

As Montenegro, Sekulović claims these are mainly the so-called "economic refugees".

He believes that an independent, internationally recognised Montenegro, being a very small system, could sooner fulfil the strict Brussels requirements for visa privileges and liberalisation. However, he warns: "The act of the proclamation of the independence is not going to solve these issues on its own, however, it can speed up the process as it will finally be in our hands".

## WELCOME TO AFRICA

Unlike travelling to Western democracies, visits to other countries are less of a problem for the citizens of Serbia and Montenegro.

In order to visit interesting tourist destinations in Central and South America, such as Cuba, Dominican Republic or Argentina, it is enough to pay 10 dollars at the entrance or exit.

For a visa to Brazil, 20 dollars and an invitation letter, hotel reservation, plane ticket, or a bank account certificate are quite sufficient.

Situation is similar in the African states. For Tunisia and Kenya, visas are issued at the border, while in Egypt it costs 10 euros only if you arrive by plane. Crossing the border of the land of pyramids in any other place is free. In Turkey, you can get a visa while entering and it costs 10 euros.

The Chinese visa is free of charge, and it is enough that you present a return ticket and a hotel reservation. Japanese visa costs 20 euros, but you also need a letter by a guarantee, job certificate and a return ticket reservation in order to gain access to the country of the rising sun.

Although it is a general rule that SM citizens find it relatively easy to get visas for the African, Asian or Central and Latin American countries, where they need them at all, exceptions still exist.

For a Mexican visa, for instance, it is necessary to prove that in the last 12 months you had at least 2.000 US dollars on your account, and waiting for a note of welcome from that country can take as much as 45 days. This is, however, due to the fact that most of the asylum seekers arrive to the United States of America from Mexico, and such rigid rules serve as a pre-emptive measure of protection.

Vladan ŽUGIĆ



## WHAT IS EXPERIENCE OF BULGARIA AND ROMANIA REGARDING LIBERALISATION OF THE VISA REGIME

# Six years of haggling with Brussels

In the matters of visa regime, 2001 was the key year for Bulgaria and Romania.

This is when Brussels finally abolished visas for these two countries, and prior to that, the governments in Sofia and Bucharest had to get very serious about fulfilling the demands and standards of European Union.

The preceding years were marked by heated public debates, as the citizens of Bulgaria and Romania faced numerous problems when applying for EU visas – from endless queues to complex documentation procedures to unfriendly staff in EU embassies.

Throughout the process, which, according to the experts spans the period from 1995 to 1999, the political elites were very critical of Brussels, bashing its "discriminatory" attitude towards their citizens, and the abolishment of visas came to be one of the top foreign policy priorities.

At the same time, there was a real danger of the surrounding states, such as Czech Republic or Hungary, which already made some progress towards EU, introducing visas for the citizens of Bulgaria and Romania.

In 1999, European Commission began accession negotiations with Romania and Bulgaria.

In the following year, the Bulgarian government forced a few steps towards the achievement of European standards – issuing new, expensive identity documents, passports and driving licences and toughening the border control.

However, no signs of encour-



agement came from the EU headquarter, and the Bulgarian ruling party threatened to withdraw from the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe. Fortunately this never happened in the end. Brussels posed an additional problem for Bulgaria in requiring that it imposes new visa regimes for Yugoslavia, Macedonia, Russia and Ukraine, as the EU feared that this state might become a hotbed for illegal emigrants. The official Sofia opposed this move, as most of the tourists on the shores of the Black Sea arrive from Russia and Ukraine, while most Bulgarians take the route across Serbia when travelling to Western Europe.

In the end, Bulgarian authorities had to introduce visas for Russians and Ukrainians, while the relations with Serbia and Montenegro are still visa-free. Macedonians do not need visas either.

The Council of Ministers of Justice and Home Affairs EU adopt-

ed a decision to abolish visa regime with respect to Bulgaria on April 10th 2001, and according to this documents Bulgarians can stay in the Shengen zone for up to 90 days a year.

This, however, didn't end all trouble for Bulgarian authorities. Almost immediately afterwards, Brussels threatened to reconsider its decision as, according to EU, Bulgaria did not do enough in terms of eradicating crime.

Eight months later, Romania too was taken off the "black list".

Although the ruling parties in both Romania and Bulgaria tried to present this event as their own achievement in the next election campaign, contemporaries say that only after 2003 the citizens of Bulgaria and Romania became fully aware of their possibilities for travelling without barriers.

v.ž.

DR RADOVAN VUKADINOVIĆ, PROFESSOR AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAGREB,  
ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF THE EU ACCESSION

# Montenegro has the luck of being tiny

In order to join EU, Montenegro will have to put its judiciary in order, to intensify fight against crime and corruption, and to be transparent in the opening up to the foreign capital and individuals coming to purchase property in Montenegro. These are the EU requirements that come as a package, and they are followed by the demand for reorganization of economy, agriculture, fisheries... – said for *EIC Bulletin* Dr **Radovan Vukadinović**, professor at the University of Zagreb and expert in the field of European integrations.

## ● What are the advantages and disadvantages of Montenegro in the process of European integration?

The advantages are evident, as in the adage "small is beautiful". Being small, it is relatively easy to transform, there is, of course, the question of cadre, in all of our countries, management-oriented cadres, people that not only have certain diplomas and qualifications, but can be effective in terms of dealing with these new challenges.

It is likely that Montenegro will have that problem for a few years still, until its home-made teams, which are still at school and preparing, will be ready. There is also a problem of the citizens becoming anxious about the invasion of foreigners buying property in certain areas, which is our trouble as well. The prices of real estate will probably soar, something that is already being felt in Croatia. I believe that, somehow, Croatia can serve as an

excellent example to you, of all that will, hopefully, come to happen in Montenegro as well.

## ● Which, according to you, are the benefits of EU accession?

One useful thing is that EU is willing to help – it is sending teams of experts to coordinate this process and demonstrate how certain countries have progressed. Another thing is the availability of funds. When you have the possibility to secure certain assets, you can then conduct the necessary reforms, you can somehow reorganise your judiciary...

Whether everything will then become different is another question, it is still difficult to say, even in Croatia. Observing these ten new members, it is evident that none of them has become any worse off, all of them are making progress, receiving more investments and most of the population is satisfied with their new EU status. I would not say you can expect some dramatic leaps forward and some general euphoria, but it is reasonable to believe that the country will be set onto the right track and therefore proceed towards better life.

## ● Does "euroscepticism" exist in Croatia?

It does, and, in a way, it is justified. It happened in other countries as well, in the beginning you had this great euphoria in the Baltic countries, in Slovakia, even Poland. As soon as the talk of limitations and conditionality set in, things changed. Let us not forget that accession to EU means firing a number of state officials,



Radovan Vukadinović

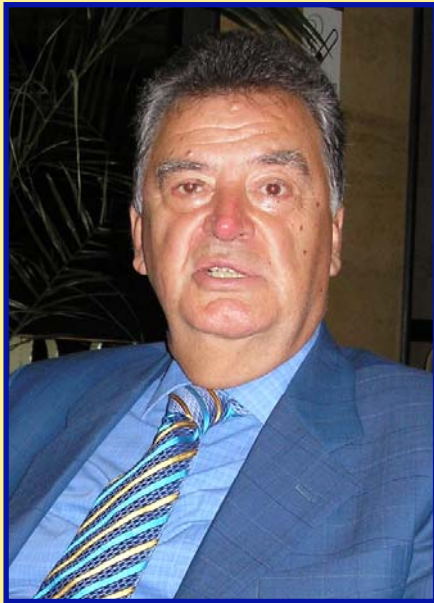
because state administrations in all of these countries are too cumbersome. It was the same with the Baltic, with Poland and the Czech Republic, tomorrow it will happen to us, than perhaps to you, that's one of these things that people feel straight away.

Secondly, nobody is saying that wages, pensions etc. are going to rise, things will stay the same – sometimes some prices go up, some go down. When European Union finally starts looming large on the horizon, than of course we begin to understand what it really means. At the beginning, we had some 85% of the population in favour of EU – today we are less than 50%.

Sometime in June, we will decide whether Croatia will require a referendum vote in order to join EU and NATO. I am confident that, if referendum really took place, we would have a majority in favour. However, it is evident that people are sceptic, afraid, confused...Let us also say that a lot of people know hardly anything about it, that information is sporadic, one time we hear about great suc-



## IT'S GOOD TO LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF NEW MEMBERS



● How long do you think the association process will take for Croatia or Montenegro?

That is a very difficult prediction to make. Recently the Irish prime minister visited Croatia, and he was saying that, in Ireland, 45% of the people have a university degree. In Croatia, this figure is 7.3%. I don't know about Montenegro, but let's say that, for the moment, we are probably the country with the lowest rate of university education in EU. This is potentially a decisive factor, because in that state, we are hardly in shape to compete with our neighbours. Naturally, it is difficult to expect that our managerial class will be able to match Europeans on all fronts. Therefore, we are looking at one

long process which must begin at home.

I always repeat that it is not the Croatian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integrations that will join the EU – it will be the entire country, with all of its parts, all sectors, all provinces and all counties, all cities and all villages. We cannot just consider Zagreb that has a fraction of the managerial cadre which is ready, and not think about all of the other parts, who are definitely lagging behind.

Now, if this holds for Croatia, which is still more developed than Montenegro, you can imagine that Montenegro is going to have problems, it will be a process, something that keeps on going and now the only question is how well organised you can get to shorten these deadlines.

I think it is a very good thing, and a good lesson for Montenegro, to use the experience of other small countries. There are already the Baltic states, Malta, Cyprus, Slovakia. Thus, there are some five or six countries which are tiny, which were not even particularly developed, and we should therefore use their experiences, learn from the way they negotiated and how they made adjustments. Then, we can prepare our own national strategy. This is what we are trying to do in Croatia, and that is something I would also advise to Montenegro. Montenegro will have Croatia to look up to, which is also a very good opportunity, because our conditions are very similar, our history as well.

cesses, than later about crises, like EU going down the drain etc.

● What do you think about the proposal for a free trade area in the Balkans?

In Croatia, we already have a free trade area within CEFTA (Central European Free Trade Area), and

CEFTA is something that has been widely accepted in this region. Soon, Romania and Bulgaria will leave this agreement and Croatia will be left alone in the Balkans, with Moldova. This initiative will be very important, especially for the European Union. Namely, the EU also wants the coun-

tries who are aspiring to become its members to demonstrate ability, willingness and desire to cooperate regionally. The Baltic countries had to cooperate, and the Visegrad group had to cooperate, and the countries of the Black Sea region also cooperate. Therefore, it is no special requirement for the Western Balkans, or the countries of the former Yugoslavia – it is simply a matter of preference that a certain region develops cooperation mechanisms. Because, if you're not able to cooperate with your neighbours, how will you cooperate with other countries, further away? This is something that was established through CEFTA. We will have the Western Balkans and Moldova, we will have the opportunity to create free trade, to establish a freer movement of goods, people and ideas, although some barriers are likely to arise. This is then something that creates special opportunities for EU accession, proving that we are ready for future partnerships.

● Before the referendum, some Belgrade official announced closing the borders and introducing passports. Considering the attitude of Brussels and the audacity of Belgrade to defy it, do you think passports and visas are really something that awaits us?

I think that is out of the question. It was probably just a part of the pre-referendum haggle. The official Belgrade has opted for Euro-Atlantic integrations. Fortunately, we don't have a single country in the area today opting against it. Therefore, even if it happened, you could expect very urgent reactions from Brussels. We had a meeting in Zagreb recently, where CEFTA approach was held up as an example, as a way to start abolishing all barriers in the region. Imposing visas, passports, customs checkpoints... I think that would not only be a slap to Montenegro, but also a challenge to Europe. Brussels would have to react straight away.

N.R.

WHEN CAN WE EXPECT THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS EU TO AUTHORISE A NEW MANDATE FOR THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR SAA NEGOTIATIONS WITH INDEPENDENT MONTENEGRO

# Negotiations to continue already in June?

Although some predicted a prolonged period of the negotiations blockade, should the State Union Serbia and Montenegro be dissolved, Montenegrin association process with European Union, now that its statehood has been restored, might continue faster than expected, even by the most optimistic.

The European Enlargement Commissioner, Mr **Olli Rehn**, confirmed on 23 May, only two days after the referendum, that the European Commission will propose to the EU Council of Ministers to continue separate negotiations, aside from Serbia.

Rehn stated that negotiations with Montenegro can take from where they were halted.

"Montenegro now has an open European perspective, as well as Serbia, once the necessary conditions have been met, namely the cooperation with the Hague tribunal", said Rehn in a press announcement.

Noting that all official results indicate that the independence option has won, he emphasised that all sides should respect the results, and work together on strengthening a consensus based on European values.

Rehn will, in the context of further negotiations, meet the Montenegrin Prime Minister **Milo Đukanović** on 29 May in Brussels. Minister of European Integrations, dr **Gordana Đurović**, said we can expect the EU Council of Ministers to approve a new mandate to European Commission to continue negotiations on the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) with independent Montenegro already in June.

"European Commission is the one to propose the new draft Agreement and to ask for a mandate, addressing it to the EU Council of Ministers, who can



Gordana Đurović



Olli Rehn

approve the continuations of talks. This procedure, in case it is initiated right after the Brussels delegation returns to the headquarters after meeting us in Podgorica on 1 June, can last until the next meeting of the Council of Ministers. These meetings are usually held once a month, and therefore we could, already by the end of June, officially receive the approval", said Đurović.

She added that this would be a record deadline, reminding that a lot has already been agreed upon.

"We know what is left for us to do. Effectively, we are already working on it, and we are just waiting for an official approval to continue negotiations. In fact, the informal, technical communication is under way, and I believe we can very quickly make progress and draw closer to the final text of the agreement, to be signed in autumn", said Đurović.

She explained that up until now, all chapters of the agreement have been agreed upon, except for the seventh, which concerns justice and home affairs.

"We just didn't have a chance to talk about it. There is nothing controversial about it, we have accepted the text proposed by the EC and we only need to have a formal discussion about it. At the moment, we are focusing on the annexes, lists of various goods. We already finished more than 65% of the

work, and we can soon finish with the rest", estimated Đurović.

She added that the lists of goods define the dynamics of the gradual liberalisation of our market with respect to EU competition.

"Let us not forget that EU has already opened its market to our companies, abolishing customs, and now it is up to us to plan, according to our estimates, the dynamic of the opening of our markets for EU

goods – whether they can export goods to us at privileged rates, with zero customs. According to our current estimates, the period until the market has been completely opened will take at most six years", underlined Đurović, adding that, until then, Montenegro must focus on making its economy as competitive as possible.

"To be as ready as we can to match the competition from Europe, and to have some products that can be exported to the EU market", she explained.

According to her, the government team has never really stopped working on it.

"In the end of April, we attended a round of technical consultations in Brussels, and we got a lot of very concrete suggestions regarding further work on our annexes and proposals. We had quite intensive communication with different directorates throughout April and May, and yesterday we received an announcement setting the date for Advanced Permanent Dialogue for 1 June, in Podgorica, to deal with trade and customs policy. We expect that, by 2 June, we will have a special meeting dedicated to technicalities of the proposal for a new negotiations mandate", stated Đurović.

N.R.





by Nada Vojvodić

Creation of a united Europe began with the Treaty of Paris, establishing European Coal and Steel Community. Today, half a century later, the European family counts twenty five members, instead of the original six. Only eight European states are still left on the outside, and they, too, wish to join in. There are many reasons for this. Membership in the EU is a guarantee of peace, stability and prosperity. The EU itself is interested in bringing in the rest of the countries, in order to round up the process of unification. This is why they invest a lot of money in this region, helping other countries to conduct the necessary reforms and to find their way into full membership swiftly and painlessly.

The essence of the European integration process is not accession to the EU per se, for that will certainly happen in due time, depending on the speed of reforms we are supposed to accomplish. But the real goal we are heading towards is to embrace those values that a modern European society is based upon. These are freedom, peace, stability, democracy, equality and respect for human rights.

Because of that, our task is not one that could be completed

# Why do I want to be a citizen of Europe?

overnight. We need time. If we try hard, knowing what stands ahead and what we really want, our journey down that road will be faster, easier, and less painful. In the Stabilisation and Association Process we can benefit from the experience of the ten states that already joined the EU in May 2004. Their example can teach us how to tackle this process and how to fulfil all demands and obligations in the best possible way. We can also see how much these countries have progressed since they joined the EU. In this process, a developed mechanism of lobbying inside EU is very important, and we should pay great attention to it.

We must remember that, although acceptance into EU is often a political decision, in the final count, the success and the length of this process depends solely on us. We must be well prepared for this goal and all of our institutional capacities must be used to the maximum.

Joining the EU also requires strong regional cooperation which, in effect, is a preparatory step for accession to EU. Cooperation with neighbours is a bridge that we must cross in order to achieve better cooperation with other European countries. Together with other countries in the region going through the Stabilisation and Association Process, we should work towards the strengthening of our cadre capacity and towards regional coordination of the EI process.

For Montenegro, joining the EU is a strategic goal. It will offer us new development possibilities in all areas of social life. We are expecting the greatest progress to lie in the area of tourism and agriculture, and our

young people are bound to experience important consequences as well.

Accession to EU should boost employment, improve living and working conditions and develop human resources. EU states have developed cooperation with respect to the improvement of knowledge, exchange of information and good practices. EU contributes to enhanced quality of education and gives an impetus to the member states to cooperate further in this area. It stimulates mobility of students and teachers, improves cooperation between educational institutions, and incites exchange of information and experience regarding issues such as development of a common education system in all member states.

One of the main characteristics of EU, its basic value, is the unity in multiculturalism and multi-ethnicity.

Membership in the EU contributes to the development of culture in all member states, guaranteeing respect for their national, religious and regional diversity, while at the same time emphasising their common cultural heritage. The membership is a step towards the common goal of developing and strengthening democracy and the rule of law, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Association and Stabilisation Process is our preparation for that accession. Negotiation process so far was held according to the "twin track" model – separate negotiations for the State Union and for the republics. These negotiations have been interrupted, and we expect them to resume after the referendum on the statehood status of Montenegro. The



essence of these negotiations is the creation of a free trade area between Montenegro and the twenty five countries of the European Union. This will open up our market, and the adoption of the four freedoms (free movement of goods, capital, services and people) will facilitate faster economic growth. The Association and Stabilisation Agreement contains various commitments regarding the functioning of the markets, legal harmonisation, structural changes, which will gradually prepare us for the final accession to the EU. These negotiations should be concluded by the end of 2006, when we will be able to sign the SAA.

What does it mean, really, to be a citizen of Europe? Why do we all aim towards that goal? For me, being a citizen of Europe isn't only a matter of belonging to the European soil spatially, geographically, but also embracing the European system of

values – to think freely, without prejudice, stereotypes and the burden of history.

To be a citizen of Europe means to be open for all influences coming from the outside and to accept them without fear. It means to eliminate dismay before innovation and competition. It also means courage, and our young generations do have it. In the last few years Europe seemed so far away, and the dream of us becoming a part of that big family beyond the reach. Today everything is different. We have matured, as a society, became aware of our needs and aspirations. We know where our place is and what we should aim for. We have set up a goal, a task that we must fulfil. It will justify all of our work and effort and create better life for some future generations.

I look forward to the changes ahead. They are bringing the spirit of individualism and diversity, but also a sense of belonging to one big family.

I hope we will manage to bridge, with time, all of the artificial barriers erected to impede cooperation and understanding. We will abolish these barriers, even the hardest ones – those which are encrusted in our perception, values and attitudes. That will take up most of our time.

Only once we make that effort to change ourselves on the inside, and succeed, we will know we have reached the goal. If not, all of our efforts, regardless of the accomplishments they bring, will remain pointless. It does pay off, to work towards this goal, because it means having a political, legal, and economic system worthy of a true European country, it means being an equal member of the EU and its reliable partner.

*The author is an advisor at the Ministry for Foreign Economic Relations and European Integration. She attended the IV generation of the European Integration School.*



HENRIK H. KRÖNER, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE EUROPEAN MOVEMENT IN MONTENEGRO

# You have a good chance to soon become a modern country

Montenegro has very good chances to join European Union, says for EIC Bulletin Mr. **Henrik Kröner**, Secretary general of the European Movement and a Senior Consultant specialized in political affairs, with extensive experience in European economic institutions.

European Movement based in Brussels is a lobby association that coordinates the efforts of associations and private individuals desiring to work towards the construction of a united Europe. It was established already in the 1948 under the aegis of important political figures as **Winston Churchill**, **Conrad Adenauer** and **Francois Mitterrand**, and is directly responsible for the establishment of several institutions on the European level, such as the Council of Europe, the College of Europe in Brugges and the European Centre of Culture in Geneva. European Movement is a network of 41 national councils and 21 associate members in non-EU states, among which is the European Movement in Montenegro.

In the interview for EIC Bulletin, Mr. Kröner described his impressions of the current economic situation in Montenegro and his perceptions of its future development.

"Economically, stabilisation and association process will bring many benefits. I was at a meeting with your minister of European Integrations, and saw your country's figures. It seems like you have managed very well the budget that



Henrik H. Kröner

was so far allocated for Montenegro. You have very few debts, and that is important. It means that you are free to spend the money where you really need it. It's just like in a household – if you have to pay the bank, you cannot use money for other things, and you cannot get credits", emphasised Kröner.

Mr. Kröner explained that economic stability is one of the key tools for improving Montenegro's position in the negotiation process.

"It is very important that you have followed the stability criteria, because inflation is the most socially dangerous thing, as the poor people and the workers suffer the most. Managing to keep low inflation is the best social policy you can imagine".

He said that the unilateral trade liberalisation stipulated in the

agreements accompanying the Association and Stabilisation process opened great opportunities for Montenegro. "This was one of the strengths of Europe in the past, and already now Montenegro is profiting from it – on a daily basis. It will take a while until ordinary citizens feel these benefits – in the modernisation process, with privatisation, the state must devise policies to help the poor adapt, to help the labour market adapt to the new rules. But in a modernised country, and that would be very quickly, everybody will be profiting from it. It is good to start early – promoting competition, modernisation. The longer you take, the poorer you will get. You should use the challenge that comes with the criteria of this process to create a brighter future".

According to Kröner, Montenegro has a fair chance to advance very quickly despite the fact that some experts are warning about its lack of appropriate administrative capacities. "If you have a responsible government, and you negotiate well, you will get huge aid from the European agencies and European Commission. They are really willing to help you overcome all problems. If there is will, and a wide agreement, then you can do anything. You don't need huge administration to modernise yourself – as a matter of fact, it can only make things worse. You don't have that problem", concluded Kröner.

Vera ŠĆEPANOVIĆ

## INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE, THE NEW EU MODEL FOR SUPPORT TO THE WESTERN BALKAN COUNTRIES

# All money in one basket



by Vladimir Vučinić, MA

The Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) is a new European Union instrument for financial support to the countries of the Western Balkans, founded upon the European Commission proposal of 29 September, 2004 for a Regulation establishing the IPA. The beginning of the implementation of this instrument is set for 1 January, 2007 once the European Parliament and the Council have adopted the Financial perspective, i.e. the EU budget for the period 2007 – 2013.

IPA will replace all the current programmes of support – PHARE (pre-accession instrument for Central European countries), ISPA (Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-Accession), SAPARD (Special Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development) and the pre-accession instruments for Turkey, as well as CARDS (an instrument offering "development assistance" to third countries, counting the western Balkan states among the beneficiaries). In the draft of the new Financial perspective for

the upcoming seven years, European commission proposed that IPA receives some 12.919 billion euros (1,4 billion euros in 2007 up to 2.235 billion euros in 2013). However, it is possible that this sum will be changed in the process of the adoption of the Financial perspective, and that it will not be in this amount.

Aiming to simplify and coordinate the assistance, the main goal of IPA is to rationalise the pre-accession funds, concentrating them under one framework, both for the countries candidates and for those who are potential candidates.

Even though all the assistance is pooled within the same programme, this new instrument distinguishes between two groups of countries, in order to be able to focus on specific problems, as well as differences,

regarding administrative, programme and management capacities of states beneficiaries. Consequently, the countries are grouped either as potential candidates (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro) or candidates (Croatia, Turkey, Macedonia), which defines the scope and focus of the assistance.

The European Commission considers this distinction useful in terms of its aim to gradually transfer the assistance management competences to the states beneficiaries, parallel with the strengthening of their institutions. It means going from a centralised system of assistance management where the European Commission plays the key role, to a decentralised system where institutions of the country beneficiary will manage the EU assistance themselves. In that sense, the assis-

## GOVERNMENT NEEDS SKILLED ADMINISTRATION

In line with the IPA requirements, the Government of Montenegro adopted in April the Information on the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA), defining the institutional framework for the management of funds in the Republic of Montenegro. In accordance with this document, each ministry appointed an officer who will be in charge of aid coordination, thus forming a permanent working group at the Government level.

However, bearing in mind that the management of EU funds is a complex and demanding process, Montenegro will have to ensure that there is sufficient number of trained civil servants to undertake the EU programme management. Montenegro will have to provide long-term training in programme preparation, implementation and monitoring, and to prevent its qualified cadre from abandoning the service. The instrument for building and strengthening of institutions – i.e. Twinning project in partnership with Slovenia and France, as well as cooperation with countries in the region also involved in IPA, can enhance further training of administration, providing the necessary skills, contributing to the strengthening of the basic institutions for the management of EU assistance.

Consequently, even though IPA will represent a great challenge for Montenegro, it will enable it, by building both institutional and administrative capacities, to assume responsibility for the management and implementation of EU assistance, preparing Montenegro, once it becomes a member, to efficiently implement all EU programmes.



## IPA REQUIRES NEW INSTITUTIONS

As a potential candidate state, Montenegro will participate in IPA, which will replace all the current means of EU assistance. Montenegro, in accordance with its status, will have access to the first two components of IPA, so that the aim, the amount, the application procedure and the monitoring of the implementation of the IPA programme will remain very similar to the current, existing programmes for project financing prescribed under CARDS. Except for IPA, Montenegro will also be able to use macro-financial assistance, and in the case of emergencies in the region, it will also have the support of the EU stability instruments.

In the previous years, European Agency for Reconstruction was in charge of the assistance funds management. In the period 1998–2005, it had some 109 millions euros at its disposal for the assistance from EU funds, whereas in 2006, around 18 millions were earmarked for this purpose. Closing down the CARDS support programme, which should be done by the end of this year, ends the mandate of the European Agency for Reconstruction.

Consequently, IPA will require a more substantial participation of the Montenegrin institutions in the management of funds, which should gradually enable them to take over this task completely, once all the necessary conditions have been met (when the system is sufficiently de-centralised). For a more efficient assistance management, we will have to establish new institutional frameworks, develop strategies (e.g. Strategy for decentralisation, Multi-annual indicative document) and operational programmes in Montenegro.

The basic institutions, which are essential in decentralising the management of the funds in order to enable the Montenegrin state to assume this responsibility are: a National aid coordinator – who will coordinate programming, distribution, priorities, monitoring and evaluation (a direct replacement for the European Agency for Reconstruction); National fund, headed by a National Authorisation Officer, through which the assistance will be channelled to the beneficiary country, a Central financing and contract signing division, lead by an officer for programme authorisation and high officers for aid programmes, who will be in charge of the funds management and the implementation of activities within different ministries.

tance will be aimed at the strengthening of the democratic institutions and the rule of law; reform of state administration, focusing on further decentralisation; economic reforms; protection of human rights and basic freedoms; civil society development and regional and cross-border cooperation...

There are five components to the implementation of IPA: Transition Assistance and Institution Building, which is a continuation of PHARE, or national CARDS; Regional and Cross-Border Cooperation – a follow-up to the regional component of CARDS programme; Regional Development, which aims at preparing these countries to use EU funds, i.e. the European Fund for Regional Development, as well as the Cohesion fund; Human Resources Development – preparation

for the participation in the European Social Fund; and Rural Development, which prepares the countries for the implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy and the relevant provisions of *acquis communautaire*.

In accordance with their status, the potential candidate states will use funds from the first two categories, while the candidate states can participate in all five components.

Considering that, in the potential candidate states, the EU funds are managed in a centralised manner, the European Commission justifies this division arguing that the latter three represent preparation for the structural funds – funds available to the EU members, that require appropriate, decentralised structures for the programming and financial management.

Consequently, different IPA components apply to different countries with varied levels of accessibility.

This division should not cause a gap between candidate countries and countries potentially candidates, but should help them progress from the status of a "potential" to becoming a candidate state by focusing on the specific needs of each beneficiary. IPA will aim at the strengthening of administrative, technical and management capacities of the potential candidate countries, leading to further decentralisation of the fund management mechanisms, paving way for future progress in the process of European integration for these countries, and preparing them for the commitments accompanying the EU membership.

Should any of these states acquire the status of a membership candidate in the meantime, the Council can, on the proposal by Commission, by a qualified majority vote, move the state from the group of the potential candidates to the candidate country group, opening up the access to other three assistance components. However, it should be noted that this may not entail an automatic increase in the amount of support, although it is a clear sign that a country has made a step ahead towards further decentralisation of the assistance management, and is now ready to take up this responsibility.

The Regulation also contains a clause allowing for suspension of the assistance. If a candidate country shows a lack of commitment to the basic principles or obligations of its partnership with EU, or if the progress in the fulfilment of these conditions is too slow, the Council can, if so instructed by the Commission, by a qualified majority vote make the adaptations it considers necessary to the assistance envisaged in this Regulation.

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION PREPARED A PAPER ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE, DISCUSSION IN THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL NEXT MONTH

# Bureaucrats to meet a citizen's agenda for EU



Jose Manuel Barroso

Following the euphoria caused by the accession of ten new countries from Central and Eastern Europe and the initial success of the European Constitution proposal in several member states, Brussels is deliberating on the final document dedicated to the future of Europe. Majority decision of the citizens in France and the Netherlands last year to reject the Constitutional Treaty, partly understood as a reaction to the feeling of alienation among the citizens with respect to "eurobureaucracy", caused the leaders of EU to put both feet on the ground and decide how the EU should proceed.

On request of the heads of states and governments, who, after the referendum failure in France and the Netherlands called for a period of "reflection", the European Commission has prepared a paper on the Future of Europe, to be discussed by the European Council in June.

This document contains some of the basic conclusions from the "period of reflection", taking into account the "Plan D" (Dialogue, Discussion,

Democracy), aiming to revive public discussion on the national and European level.

It also lists a number of necessary steps for the future period of discussion on the future of Europe.

"The Union needs to go further: through a policy driven agenda which addresses the expectations of EU citizens", said the President of the European Commission, **Jose Manuel Barroso**, at a press conference following the adoption of the Commission paper on the future of EU.

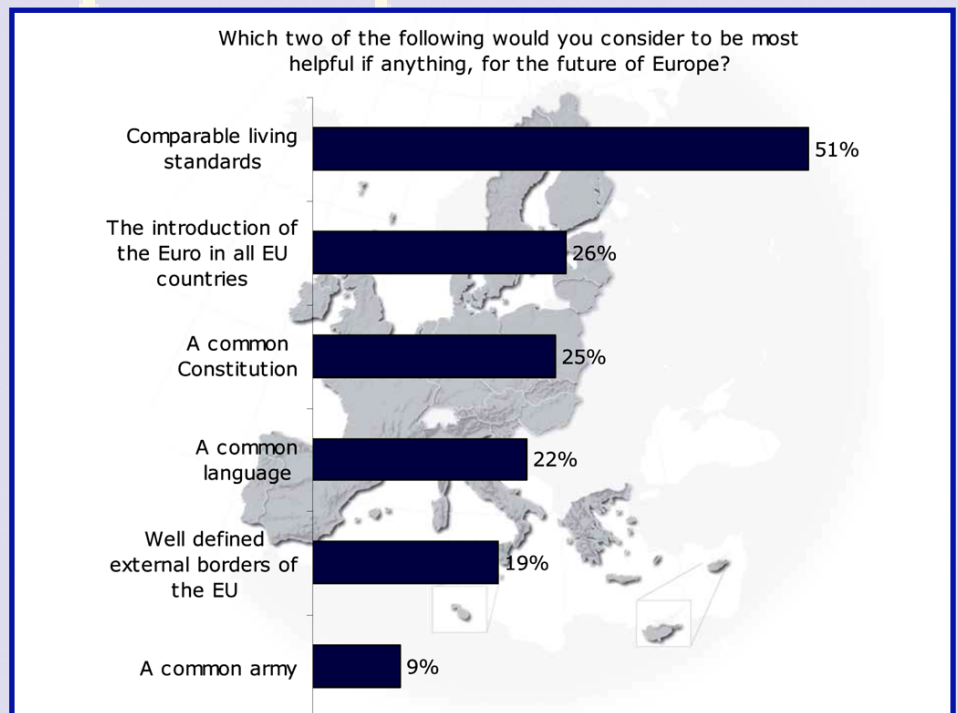
This agenda proposes 12 initiatives, centered on the single market, solidarity, accessibility and sustainability, security, enlargement, role of the EU in the world...

"The single market has brought huge benefits to Europe's citizens. Just recently, we have had to take up the issue of roaming fees, leveling the tariffs

of mobile networking. However, there are still barriers which restrict citizens' access, opportunity and choice, in areas as diverse as energy and banking charges. Citizens also say they want greater solidarity and support to help them adapt to the challenges of globalization", said Barroso.

Reminding that citizens expect modern solutions such as the "Globalisation Adjustment Fund", the President of EC emphasised that citizens are concerned about "not having full access to the rights they enjoy under the existing treaties, rights such as the right to live and work anywhere in Europe, rights to social protection and so on..."

To respond to these concerns, the EC announced the launching of an agenda for solidarity and access together with the single market review, and explore the possibility of developing an





## SOCIAL WELFARE THE TOP PRIORITY FOR CITIZENS

**E**urobarometer surveys show greater optimism about the direction in which things are going at the European level. Almost 40% of Europeans consider that things are going in the right direction in the EU in comparison to the national situation.

On the contrary, if 43% of Europeans think things are going in the wrong direction in their own country, they are only 27% to state the same in the EU.

The European Union has a positive "image". It is above all perceived as democratic (67%), modern (67%) and protective (54%). However, close to one in two respondents considers it to be technocratic (49%) and inefficient (43%).

Although about half the respondents (49%) consider that membership of the European Union is positive the fact remains that certain criticisms are levelled at the lack of political and cultural integration at the European level.

According to Europeans, peace among all Member States (60% of citations) and the single market (56%) are the most positive achievements of European unification.

For Europeans, the element which is perceived to be of most importance for the future of Europe is by far, comparable living standards (51%), followed then by the introduction of the Euro in all Member States (26%) and a common Constitution (25%). The latter remains true for 29% of the French and 32% of the Dutch.

The elements that could most strengthen the feeling of being a European are a "European social welfare system" (32%), a European Constitution (27%) and the right to vote in all elections in the Member State where citizens live (21%).

In different policy areas, related to social, environmental, political and security issues, a majority of Europeans call for more decision making at the EU level.

Areas where the EU already has good records should be reinforced (e.g. the promotion of democracy and peace in the world, cooperation in research and innovation).

47% regard globalisation as a threat to the national employment situation (a fear particularly felt in France and Greece, 72%) while 37% hold the opposite view (77% in Denmark).

The enlargement of the EU is something positive for 55% of Europeans. For 61%, it means improving the influence of the EU in the world.

"entitlement" card, which would enable every European citizen to be aware of their existing rights.

As for the concerns over security, the Paper notes that people are asking for "more Europe" in order to combat terrorism and organised crime, knowing "that the efficient answer to these challenges is the European answer".

"We want more effective action. Action to combat crime, fight terrorism and deal with trafficking in persons and offences against children. We want closer cooperation between police forces, customs authorities and judicial authorities (e.g. a European evidence warrant). We cannot wait for another

terrorist attack before we have effective joint action across Europe to fight terrorism", said Barroso.

As for the enlargement, the European Commission believes "it has been one of the greatest successes of the EU", even though "at each enlargement there have been doubts".

"But each time the EU has emerged stronger and more confident. The starting point of our future approach is that we must honour existing commitments. At the same time, we must respond to questions about the pace and scope of development", said Barroso.

As the very first step, according to Commission, EU leaders should adopt a

political declaration obliging them to engage and to deliver, which should be signed by the Member States but also the Commission and the European Parliament.

"Citizens have made it clear that they don't want an institutional debate for institutional sake. They want an institutional debate for policy progress. It offers an opportunity for a policy agenda to move Europe forward, through a Europe of Results. A new phase of commitment to Europe must begin: The Commission is ready to take up the challenge of invigorating the citizens' Europe" announced Barroso.

As a complement to the Commission's paper, there was a public opinion poll analysing the general morale of European citizens at the moment and identifying their worries and expectations for the future of Europe.

A special Eurobarometer was published on 5 May 2006, and it shows that, according to EU citizens, comparable living standards, followed by the introduction of the Euro in all Member States, and a common Constitution are elements which are of most importance for the future of Europe.

The expectations of further development of Europe remain stable in relation to the key issues, such as: fighting unemployment, protection of social rights and economic growth. These are main results of two special Eurobarometer surveys conducted in February and March 2006.

**Margot Wallström**, Vice-President of European Commission, responsible for Institutional Relations and Communication Strategy, said that the results testify that citizens want a strong Europe.

"There is a feeling of solidarity and a need for common solutions. The EU is associated with security: from social security, security against terrorism and crime, security in health, living and environmental conditions to job security. The EU is expected to harness globalisation, bring solutions in terms of peace, democracy, living standards as well as research, innovation and economic performance. This should be the foundation of the EU policy agenda, which will help reinvent and renew the EU ahead of its 50th anniversary", said Wallström.

## EUROPEAN POLICY OF THE LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES' CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION



by Emil Kriještorac

# Montenegro becomes a part of the Adriatic Euro-region

tralisation, is to promote cross-border cooperation, establishment of the euro-regions and city-twinning.

It was precisely at the initiative of Mr Giovanni di Stasi, president of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of CoE, that the parliament of Kotor made a decision, in December 2005, to establish a twin-city relationship with Campomarino. The City Council of Campomarino already made a similar decision on September 30th 2005.

Twinning, which is a common name for partnership between cities, has a tradition in Europe reaching back for more than half a century. The basis for this partnership, as well as the form of it has been changed with time, while the strengthening of the integration processes in Europe, together with the reinforcement of the local communities and their authorities in the process of economic development of Europe contributed to the rising importance of the twinning.

This parliamentary decision of the city of Kotor will allow for implementation of various cooperative activities between Kotor and Campomarino, primarily in the area of culture, social and economic affairs, but also in other, wherever common interests may arise due to similarities in the geography and history of these two cities.

Another important step for both Kotor and Montenegro in general is their connection to the Adriatic Euro-region, established on the first session of the Temporary Adriatic Council in Pula, on April 22nd 2005 under the auspices of the Council of Europe. The second meeting was held in Venice on February 6th, dubbed Conference for the Raising the Adriatic Euro-region Initiative, where Montenegro signed the Declaration, alongside with the cities of Bar and Kotor.

The Adriatic Euro-region is made up of the regions of Puglia, Molise, Abruzzo, Marche, Emilia Romagna, Veneto and the autonomous region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia in Italy, joined by the cities of Kopar, Izola and Piran in Slovenia, counties of Istarska, Primorsko-Goranska, Ličko-Senjska, Za-

darska, Šibensko-Kninska, Splitsko-Dalmatinska, Dubrovačko-Neretvanska, and the Hercegovačko-Neretvanski canton in Croatia, and finally by the Republic of Montenegro and the Republic of Albania. This Euro-region encompasses altogether some 22 million inhabitants in the area of 229.028 km<sup>2</sup>.

The economy of the Adriatic region makes up a strong economic system of this part of Europe and the world. Economic potential of the above regions is based on the size of their markets and the high rate of exchange with the rest of the world. Added up, gross domestic product of the regions of Adriatic amounts to some 5.1 billion euros. This number indicates that the level of economic power of Adriatic region is on pairs with the rest of the European Union.

The city of Campomarino belongs to the province Campobasso in the region of Molise, on the coast of the Adriatic. The region of Molise includes two provinces – Campobasso and Isernia, altogether counting 135 cities and 317.000 inhabitants.

Cooperation between local and regional authorities can be varied in content and intensity, and so is the number of partner cities joining these processes. With the fall of the Berlin wall cooperation between the local communities of the East and the West has been intensified, giving the event of twinning an occasional political flavour. However, regardless of the form of the local governments' cooperation, it is essentially aimed at protecting European citizenship and developing the sense of identity, which is one powerful boost towards economic development and democratisation of societies. Bearing this in mind, the article 130 of the Law on Local Governments of the Republic of Montenegro provides for free cooperation with local communities in other countries, in order to "achieve common goals and join the international and regional networks of local governments".

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

The importance given to the local and regional authorities in Europe, their development and cooperation, is best demonstrated by the existence of institutions such as the Committee of Regions of the European Union and the Council of European Congress of Local and Regional Authorities.

The EU Committee of Regions was established in 1992 by the Treaty of Maastricht as a representative body for EU member states' local and regional governments, currently numbering 317 members. The basic task of this institution is to coordinate the EU decision-making process with the special interests of European regions, which is to say the interests and expectations of EU citizens on the local level. Both the Commission and the Council of EU are obliged to consult the Committee when drafting proposals for the decisions regarding local communities.

The Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities is an institution established within the Council of Europe framework in 1994, as an advisory body, replacing the previous Permanent Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe. The Congress is made up of two parts: Council of the Local Authorities and Council of Regions, gathering 315 delegates (SM has 7 delegates), representing nearly 200 000 local and regional authorities from all the countries members of the Council of Europe. One of the key functions of the Congress, aside from providing assistance in the reforms of the system of local governance and decen-



## INTRODUCING THE EU INSTITUTIONS

# Committee of the Regions



From a Committee session

Committee of the Regions was established by the Treaty of Maastricht, in 1994, in an attempt to answer several growing concerns in the EU. One of the key problems was identified as a matter of governance, which, since the beginning of the EU, was supposed to be based upon the subsidiarity principle – requiring all decisions to be taken on the lowest possible level, in order to avoid excessive centralisation and bureaucratisation of the European apparatus. The second issue was to legitimise EU in the eyes of its citizens – to create a common European identity – a process which, in the years preceding the Treaty of Maastricht, underwent significant crises. Between the Europe of Nations advocated by certain member states and the somewhat utopian Europe of Citizens, the 80's were marked by the revival of the idea of a Europe of Regions, which could bridge the national borders while still relying on some existing, functional authority structures within EU. Through a network of regional governments, EU institutions would become more visible and more accessible in the everyday life of European citizens.

Committee of the Regions is an EU advisory body, conceived as a forum for local and regional authorities to pool their interests and address common proposals and recommendations to the EU decision-makers. On the other hand, it also functions as a coordination body for the implementation of certain EU decisions on the local level.

The Committee consists of 317

members from all EU states, usually local politicians or mayors, elected for a 4-year term. They represent various forms of local and regional constituencies, including regions, provinces, counties etc. The number of representatives per country is roughly in proportion with its population, the maximum being 24 (Germany, UK), and the minimum 5 (Malta). President of the Committee is Michael Delebarre, representative of the Nord-Pas-De-Calais region in France.

The EU treaties oblige the European Commission and the Council to consult the Committee of the Regions in all decisions reflecting on the local interests, namely the economic and social cohesion, trans-European infrastructural networks, health, education and culture, as well as the employment policy, social services, environmental protection and transport. In all other areas, the Committee is free to demand consultation at its own discretion.

The Committee organisational structure includes six Commissions, responsible for preparation of advisory opinions, recommendations or studies, which are forwarded for the adoption at the plenary session of the Committee before addressing them to the relevant institution. The Commissions are: Commission for territorial cohesion (COTER), Commission for economic and social policy (ECOS), Commission for sustainable development (DEVE), Commission for education and culture (EDUC), Commission for constitutional issues and European governance (CONST), and Commission for foreign relations (RELEX). Recently, the latter has opened a working group dealing specifically with the Western Balkans.

Committee of the Regions has issued a call for applications for a six-month period (February–July 2007) paid traineeships. All interested can find the application form together with all relevant information at the [http://www.cor.eu.int/en/presentation/contact\\_us\\_traineeships.htm](http://www.cor.eu.int/en/presentation/contact_us_traineeships.htm)

Vera ŠČEPANOVIĆ

## NON – GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS IN EUROPEAN UNION

### THE CIVIL SOCIETY CONTACT GROUP

Fight against discrimination, environmental protection, social inclusion, public health... these are only a few examples of fields where European integration has had an increasing impact on citizens' daily life over the last two decades.



Elodie Fazi

Set up in 2002, the EU Civil Society Contact Group brings together seven large rights and value based NGO sectors (environment, social, development, women, culture, human rights and public health). The Contact Group is for sure one of those alliances that might seem the moon (as is the rest of Brussels) for many NGO activists.

Yet, rather than adding one layer to the complex European NGOs' scene, the Contact Group aims to build bridges, pool resources between NGOs that too rarely have the opportunity to work together. Informal structure (with a two people secretariat and a rotating chair), it helps different NGOs families get to know each other, share information and make their voice stronger on the numerous issues that affect them across their sectors of activities.

The Contact Group has facilitated participation from European and national NGO activists in the constitutional process and coordinated common campaigns. This led amongst others to the inclusion in the Constitutional Treaty of a specific article acknowledging participatory democracy (article 47);

- It has organised meetings, briefings and training sessions at European and national level (focusing in particular upon the new Member States and acceding countries) to facilitate debate about how NGOs can participate in the EU debate and increase trust for joint work;
- In July 2006 we will publish a study on how NGOs can better engage in the European policy-making process.

At a time of strong debate around NGOs' missions, other priorities for the CSCG in 2006 are to develop and support an enabling environment for NGOs. We will thus closely follow crucial debates such as the "transparency initiative" which aims to regulate lobby in the EU and the different developments of the EU strategy against terrorist financing, which puts a particular focus on NGOs regulation.

Website: [www.act4europe.org](http://www.act4europe.org)  
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Elodie Fazi  
Coordinator of CSCG

# Topčagić in Montenegro



From the panel

**D**r Gordana Đurović, Minister of Foreign Economic Relations and European Integration of the Government of Montenegro, and **Osman Topčagić**, Director of the Directorate for European Integration in the Council Ministers BH, spoke at the panel discussion "Western Balkans and European Integration", organized by Centre for Civic Education, Centre for Development of Non-Governmental Organisations and European Movement in Montenegro with the support of FOSI ROM and hosted by the Faculty of Economics in Podgorica.

"Without an enlargement to encompass the Western Balkans, European Union won't be complete" stated Topčagić.

"Real progress in this process will depend on our own work. The future of the Western Balkans is in EU, which is acknowledged every day by the European representatives", he

added, reminding of the key EU conditions: cooperation with the Hague tribunal, police and public administration reforms, single market...

"We can and we should cooperate more regionally", emphasised Topčagić.

According to Đurović, independent Montenegro is just the right framework for EU accession.

"Montenegro was already organized well within the borders of the State Union. We created a network for European Integration, established cooperation with key partners, won a partnership with Brussels, adopted legislation, now we are facing the challenge of harmonization. In Montenegro, a significant core is being formed to responsibly take up the process of European integration. Relations among the countries of the Western Balkans in the period to come must become even stronger", said Đurović.



Organisers at the celebration

## Celebrated 9 May, Day of Europe

**O**n 9 May, Podgorica hosted celebrations dedicated to the "Day of Europe", organised by the European Movement in Montenegro. On this occasion, the citizens had an opportunity to learn something about EU, and to join an all-European fest. Partners in this celebration were the European Agency for Reconstruction, municipalities of Podgorica, Pljevlja and Budva, and the Ministry for Foreign Economic Relations and European Integrations.

Day of Europe fest began with a series of lectures in primary and high schools of Podgorica, and continued with central celebrations on the Republic Square. The gathered citizens were greeted by the Mayor of Podgorica, dr **Miomir Mugoša**, Mr **Reiner Freund**, Head of the European Agency for Reconstruction, dr **Gordana Đurović**, Minister of European Integrations and Mr **Momčilo Radulović**, Secretary General of the NGO European Movement in Montenegro. As a symbolical greeting for Europe, dr Đurović set off 500 helium-filled balloons on which the children have written their greetings and good wishes. After the opening speeches came the activity "Children draw Europe", where app. 150 kids from primary schools in Podgorica painted their vision of Europe. Later on, there was a chess tournament and football and basketball games between "Europe" and "Montenegro" teams.

Day of Europe Celebrations continued with lectures and manifestations in Budva, on 10 May and in Pljevlja, on 16 May.

## Training for young judiciary cadre

**F**rom 28 to 29 April, 2006, CEDEM organised a seminar in Ulcinj regarding implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights and Freedoms. This seminar, first of the two planned by the project, focuses primarily on the young cadre in the field of judiciary. Renowned Montenegrin

lawyers, judges of the High Court and Supreme Court, presented the meaning and importance of the European Convention on Human Rights and Basic Freedoms to their young colleagues, as well as the means of its implementation. The seminar is organised with the support of the Balkan Trust for Democracy.



## Visit of the European Parliament Delegation

Representatives of the European Movement in Montenegro, Centre for Civic Education and Centre for Development of Non-Governmental Organisations met on 20 May, 2006 in the office of EMiM, with Ad Hoc Delegation of the European Parliament for monitoring of the referendum in Montenegro.

Civil society representatives discussed with EP Delegation mainly on issues regarding the referendum process, but also development of democratic and society institutions in Montenegro after the referendum. Special attention was given to the cooperation of civil sector in Montenegro with relevant European institutions.

### CRNVO continues training for the management EU funds

The second module of the training for trainers in the field of management of projects financed through EU funds was held in Tivat, on 5 and 6 May, 2006. Participants (CDNGOs trainers, representatives of European Movement in Montenegro and Ministry for Foreign Economic Relations and European Integrations) worked on developing project proposals to fulfil the application requirements for EU funds. The specific focus was on issues of financial management. They were introduced to detailed rules of the budget realisation, including the management of finances, costs evidence, and reporting in line with the EU procedures. Lecturers at this module were Mr **Predrag Cvjetičanin** and Ms **Bojana Milićević**. The project is implemented by the Centre for Development of Non-Governmental Organisations, with financial support provided by the Foundation Open Society Institute, Representative office in Montenegro.

## FORUM OF EIS HOSTS SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL EUROPEAN MOVEMENT

### Future in an open Europe



From the forum

Within the Forum of European Integration Schools, Centre for Civic Education, Centre for Development of NGOs and European Movement in Montenegro with support of the Foundation Open Society Institute, Representative Office in Montenegro, organised at the Faculty of Political Sciences a panel discussion on "Perspectives of EU development" on 12 May 2006. The guest of the Forum was **Henrik H. Kröner**, Secretary General of the European Movement in Brussels.

In his lecture, Mr. Kröner spoke about the current situation in EU, or the so-called "period of reflection", following the debacle of the proposal for a Constitutional Treaty of EU, especially with respect to a trend of "recession" in European union, evident in the growing fear of immigration, drift towards protectionism in certain political circles, nationalism, resistance to future enlargements, and in general, the crisis of political legitimacy, equally on the national and EU level.

Kröner reminded of all the positive achievements brought by the EU since its beginnings, not only for its own citizens, but also for others. He noted that the EU transformed one contentious, partitioned post-war Europe into the biggest market in the world, with an enormous gross product and the biggest trade flow of 3.700 billion euros a year (US, Mexico and Canada together have barely 1.399 billion euros). "The secret of the EU eco-

nomic success", he said, "was in it being founded upon the common principles of justice and equality, protected by the European Court of Justice, but also upon some basic common values. European Union today is the biggest aid donor in the world, with 55% donations to poor countries coming from EU funds, and also the biggest food aid donor".

"In all, Europe, open an free, has served us well in the past few decades", said Kröner, adding that this must not be endangered by some narrow individual interest.

The period of reflection brought many initiatives, and it is realistic to expect that the new draft of the EU constitution will be presented soon. Further enlargement will not happen without such a document in place, establishing institutional basis for the functioning of an enlarged Union, he explained. According to Kröner, the failure of EU Constitution is an expression of crisis of national politics in many member states, rather than consequence of a lack of trust in EU.

"We must explain to our fellow citizens the extraordinary transformative power that the prospect of EU membership has brought to so many countries in the surroundings. Economically, enlargement is a win-win situation for both the old and the new members, and that has to be understood. We must not abandon what we have achieved for reasons of unjustified angst", concluded Kröner.



From the round table

## European Perspective of the Western Balkan countries

On 10 May 2006, Ljubljana hosted a round table titled "The European Perspective of the Western Balkan countries", organised by the Information Office of the Government of Slovenia and the representative office of the European Commission in the Republic of Slovenia, as a part of the Day of Europe celebrations. Participants at the round table were representatives of non-governmental organisations from Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia and Slovenia, together with a representative of the Directorate for European Integration from BH. Representative from Montenegro was Mr **Stevo Muk**, director of CDNGO, who presented the current situation in the field of European integration in Montenegro and the potential consequences of Montenegrin sovereignty for the future dynamic of this process, as well as the perception of EU and the integration process among the citizens. He particularly emphasised the role and the results of NGOs in this area, although, according to him, the support of EU to the civil society in Montenegro has been "insufficient, inadequate and slow". He proposed that the EU support should be directed to programmes in those fields that are not financed by public funds, and to the establishment of mechanisms for a long-

term financial and program sustainability of the civil society.

According to him, civil society support should focus on the real needs of the society, identified in the process of participative consultations with organizations themselves, and not on the Government priorities. "The Government should not be allowed in this phase to become the mediator between the NGOs and European Commission, especially in the matters of financing for the NGO programmes", stated Muk.

Muk explained that the biggest problems in the European Integration process in Montenegro lie in the area of the rule of law and democratic capacity of institutions, with respect to the issues of corruption, organised crime, reforms and civic control of the security and police services, transparency and concentration of capital in the media, professionalism in the media and sustainability of the civil society.

Ms **Tina Čuček**, a journalist from Ljubljana, was the moderator at this round table, and the issuing discussion involved representatives of the Government and public administration of the Republic of Slovenia, non-governmental organisations, University, media.

## Montenegrin delegation soon in Brussels

Centre for Civic Education, Centre for Development of non-governmental organisations and European Movement in Montenegro with support of the Royal Norwegian Embassy, published an announcement on April 25th 2006, regarding a study visit to European Union, within the "Learn about EU personally" project. The earnestness of the wish of Montenegrin citizens to learn about EU is best illustrated by the fact, in the span of some 16 days, 142 candidates applied, among which 5 PhDs, 7 people with Masters' degrees, 97 with Bachelor degrees, a few high school students and 28 students.

Most candidates for the study visit to EU came from the government institutions and from among the student population (19,72% each), NGO activists (14,79%), entrepreneurs (9,86%), and those working for international organisations and local governments (7,04% each). Some 5% of the applicants came from the University and the media, respectively, 4,23% political party representatives, 2,11% came from the ranks of judiciary, and the least from among representatives of the trade unions and education.

CCE will, together with the project partners and donors, organise an interview with all candidates, and thereafter the selection committee will assemble a delegation consisting of 10 members that will have the chance to learn about the EU institutions in Brussels, and represent Montenegro in this visit.

The delegation will be received by the European parliament members, and attend a series of meetings in different Directorates of the European Commission, Council of the EU, European Economic and Social Committee, Committee of the Regions, as well as in the permanent missions of Austria and Finland, and a few leading non-governmental organisations in Brussels.

V.Š.



## FOR THIS ISSUE WE RECOMMEND:

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For more information, please visit the following web sites:

For European Studies:

<http://www.fdcw.unimaas.nl/mtec/>

For Public Health:

<http://www.fdgw.unimaas.nl/mtec>

Candidates need to apply for a scholarship through the web site of CROSS Agency ([www.cross-agency.nl](http://www.cross-agency.nl)). A hard copy of the application form should (also) be sent to the Royal Netherlands Embassy in the country of origin. For specific questions, please contact Mr. Diederik ter Haar by email ([crossonline@info.evd.nl](mailto:crossonline@info.evd.nl)) or telephone (+ 31–70–778 8139).

Applications for admission for the academic year 2006/07 should be sent before the 1st of July 2006.

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For the coming academic year 2006/2007, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs offers up to 40 full scholarships covering all costs of participation in one of the three MA programmes in European Studies (European Studies, European Public Affairs and Analysing Europe) at Maastricht University.

Website:

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SUMMER SCHOOL  
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Summer School Program is going to be focused on regional policy of the European Union, based on pre-accessing and structural funds. Main purpose of the School is to get the participants acquainted with the project cycle management, with particular emphasis on the projects eligible for the EU financing.

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light on those attending third or higher years of study. A limited number of full scholarships are available. Scholarship covers full program price excluding travel costs to Split.

Website: [www.efst.hr/studentskizbor/summer\\_school/indexen.htm](http://www.efst.hr/studentskizbor/summer_school/indexen.htm)

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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; Technical Editor: Blažo Crvenica

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EIC Bulletin can be downloaded at the [www.cgo.cg.yu](http://www.cgo.cg.yu)