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*Views from
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CRISIS

While the world leaders and the biggest economics brains are trying to solve the riddle of a way out of the global financial crisis after which, it seems, the world will never again be the same, the executive and monetary authorities of Montenegro keep telling us there is no reason to worry.

Their messages do not seem to be based on economics.

Almost every bank in Montenegro is a branch of those European banks that have already felt the impact of the global crisis. If these banks were to suspend, the real estate market, and thus the construction industry as the key engine of the Montenegrin economy would soon collapse.

Not to mention the fact that recession fears may well make these few percents of Western tourists who come to Montenegro reconsider their summer holiday plans. Another question is the impact of Đukanović's decision to recognise Kosovo on the influx of Serbian tourists.

Government's reassurance that everything is under control is only credible if we assume that the capital coming to Montenegro is perfectly indifferent to the global crisis, as it exists outside of the official channels.

What a fortune for Montenegro in the midst of the global turmoil!

A few days ago French ambassador to Montenegro **Bernard Garancher** suggested that Podgorica should postpone its application for EU membership for a few weeks.

One reason is that the EU is now busy solving the financial crisis. Therefore, Montenegro and the Western Balkans are not the top of Brussels' agenda. This could mean that now Paris, later Prague and perhaps even Stockholm will just keep shifting our request for candidacy from one drawer to another.

So the financial crisis could delay the European integration process in Montenegro, and that would have quite an impact on all spheres of life, including the economy.

Not everything is under control and there is plenty of reasons to worry. **V.Ž.**

European Commission Representatives in the Parliament (25 September) – Representatives of the European Commission (EC) Delegation in Podgorica will attend meetings of the parliamentary Committee for International Relations and European Integrations, said the president of this body **Miodrag Vuković**. After meeting the head of the EC Delegation in Podgorica, **Leopold Maurer**, Vuković said that the presence of EC representatives at the Committee meetings will help to raise the level of work in this parliamentary body.

Government sends Brussels its views of progress (3 October) – The Government has submitted the Appendix to the annual Report on the Progress of Montenegro in 2008 to the European Commission, which will issue its Progress Report on 5 November. Secretary of the Secretariat for European Integrations **Ana Vukadinović** said the Report covers the period from October 2007 to 25 September 2008, and follows all activities undertaken in order to fulfil the political and economic criteria, European standards and progress in general.

Government recognises Kosovo's independence (9 October) – Foreign Affairs Minister **Milan Roćen** said the Government was unanimous in its decision, after "taking into account the prevailing attitudes of key international players, EU and NATO members, and their conclusions that a move like this will be an important contribution to security and stability in the region and its progress in integrations".



Anniversary of SAA (15 October) – Montenegro marked the first anniversary of signing the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA). Deputy prime minister **Gordana Đurović** announced that Montenegro will apply for a candidate status by the end of the year, because its achievements so far testify to its readiness to begin the second phase of European integrations.

Romania ratified SAA (15 October) – Romania is the tenth country to ratify the Stabilisation and Association Agreement between Montenegro and EU.

Saving the banking sector (17 October) – The Council of EU ministers accepted the bailout plan for the banking sector undermined by the global financial crisis. The plan contains guarantees for inter-bank lending and capital injection. French President **Nicolas Sarkozy** said the EU wants to hold a summit next months where it will discuss reform of the global financial system in order to avoid such crises in the future. He said that "no bank should ever again be left unsupervised".

Application on hold (20 October) – Ambassador of the Republic of France in Podgorica **Bernard Garancher** said Montenegro has "good background" for the status of the EU membership candidate and that Interim Agreement is being "efficiently implemented" but added that "EU now has many unsolved problems, mostly with regard to the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty and France believes that Montenegro should delay its application for another few weeks". Reacting to his statement, Đurović reiterated that Montenegro will submit membership application "soon".

WHAT IS WRITTEN IN THE PROPOSAL FOR THE LONG-AWAITED LAW ON THE PREVENTION OF THE CONFLICT OF INTERESTS OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Government to rely less on morality

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A public official found to be in the conflict of interests will be fined with 250 to



by Danilo Mihajlović

1100 euros, and can also be forbidden to work as a public official or civil servant for four years from the date of suspension.

This is the novelty in the draft

Law on the prevention of the conflict of interests of public officials proposed, rather reluctantly, by the Government two weeks ago.

European Commission (EC) reports as well as those of other relevant international institutions have been emphasising the need to change the existing law on the conflict of interests for the last two to three years.

Council of Europe (CoE) experts have last pointed out the shortcomings of the existing law in September, demanding that GRECO (Group d'Etats Contre la Corruption) should



Vesna Ratković

be incorporated in the draft law, but the cabinet of Milo Đukanović decided not to follow their suggestions too closely.

The draft neglects, for instance, GRECO suggestion to freeze all salary payments to public servants until they submit a property report. Members of the Commission for Inquiring into Conflict of Interests, according to the draft, will not have immunity and the value above which a gift to a public official will be considered state property will remain unchanged at 50 euros.

Nevertheless, the draft appears as significant improvement compared to the existing law.

The law on the conflict of interests has been adopted in 2004. In the meantime, two attempts by the ad hoc parliamentary groups supported by the civil sector failed to bring any change, as they were opposed at the plenary both by the ruling coalition MPs as well as by a part of the opposition.

This concerted resistance is possibly the best proof of the sensitive nature of this law, which is one of the most important elements of the anti-corruption legal framework.

RATKOVIĆ: SO FAR IT WASN'T BAD EITHER

Director of the Directory for Anti-Corruption Initiative Dr Vesna Ratković said that the new law will remove "certain shortcomings" which became obvious in this area.

She adds, however that, with regard to transparency, the existing law also merits certain praise.

"The current law enables every interested citizen to, via the website of the Commission for the conflict of interests, learn about the entire property inventory of public officials. Such a level of transparency is unheard of in most countries of the region", said Ratković for the European Pulse.

She added that the legal framework in this area has so far been positively and effectively implemented.

"Bearing in mind that this is a relatively recent law, adopted only a few years ago, and that before that it was not part of our legislation, we ought to see its implementation and the achievements in this area so far in a very positive light", Ratković said.

She believes that GRECO's recommendations have been entirely incorporated into the new draft so as to, as she said, remove all shortcomings and contribute to greater efficiency in terms of transparency of public administration.

"The circle of people that qualify as "public officials" has been more precisely defined, and the Commission for the conflict of interests now has broader competences, which means that in the future this institution can be even more active in this area", she said.

Ratković emphasised the importance of sanctions envisaged by the new draft, and which have been completely lacking from the existing law.

"I believe this part of the law will greatly influence its implementation, by allowing the Commission to react more quickly and exercise concrete restrictions over those who fail to comply with the law", she said.

Government's rationale for proposing the new law explains that three years since the Law on the conflict of interests was adopted have been "sufficient" to identify problems in its implementation.

The executive reminds that certain public officials have failed to respond to the decisions of the Commission, even when the conflict of interests has been clearly established, and that currently envisaged sanctions for the violation of this law (proposal for suspension, the right to make the decision public) have, "in spite of having certain moral weight", failed to bring concrete results.

"Such outcomes suggest the existence of shortcomings, gaps and loopholes... Considering Montenegro's international commitments and recommendations made by the United Nations, European Union and Council of Europe regarding fight against organised crime and money laundering, and especially the recommendations of GRECO, the Government has incorporated the relevant international standards in the proposal of the new law", states the accompanying rationale.

The Commission for the investigation of the conflict of interests, according to the draft, will be able to verify the authenticity of the property reports made by public officials, who will be obliged to report all changes in the value of their property within 15 days if the change is greater than 5 000 euros. The current limit is 2 000 euros.

According to the Government's proposal, the six-member Commission is appointed by the Parliament, whereby the "appointed head and members of the Commission can be persons whose expertise and moral standing testify to their impartiality and conscientiousness".

If this law is adopted, the Commission will lead the administrative procedures and adopt decisions on the violation of the law, issue



opinions on the existence of the conflict of interests, ascertain the value of gifts...

The procedure to decide on the existence of a conflict of interests can be initiated by the Commission itself, institution where the public official in question performs his or her function, the body responsible for appointments to this function, other state or local body or any legal or private person.

Commission's adopts the decision verifying whether the public official in question has violated the law in act, deed or through inaction, in a closed meeting without external

participants or public, within 15 from the date the procedure has been concluded.

The defendant can appeal for reconsideration of the decision within eight working days.

If the Commission establishes the existence of a conflict of interest, it ought to inform the institution employing the public official in question and the institution responsible for appointing him or her, to initiate the dismissal procedure.

Should the Commission at any point of the process suspect that the public official in question has committed a crime, it is entitled to

PANTOUFLAGE OR REVOLVING DOORS

Ratković especially emphasised the clauses concerning pantouflage, i.e. "revolving door" practices: a series of restrictions for public officials who wish to join the private sector.

She explains that this part of the law was also modeled upon GRECO recommendations, and stipulates that a public official cannot represent the interests of a legal or natural person before the institution he or she used to work for, for one year after he or she ceases to perform this public function.

Similarly, a former public official cannot do management or auditing work for the legal person to which he or she had previously been linked through supervision or control, for one year after he or she ceases to be in office, and the same restriction applies for establishing business partnerships with the institution where the public servant in question used to be employed.

On the other hand, according to the draft law, the owner, i.e. the founder of an enterprise when assuming a public office ought to transfer within 15 days his or her management rights to another legal or natural person to whom he or she is not related.

A public official must not give information, directions and orders to the person to whom he or she has transferred these rights, states the draft law.



immediately inform state prosecutor, which represents the continuation of the current legal solution.

"Commission's decisions on the existence of a conflict of interests will be published on its Internet website, and in the media. The Commission is also to submit a report on its work to the Parliament, when necessary, and at least once a year".

It is stated that any public official who, before assuming the function, does not resign on the previously held function as president of member of the management of supervisory board, executive director or management in an enterprise should pay a fine of 275 to 1100 euros.

The same fine, according to the new law, is applicable in the case of the official who, among other, accepts money, securities or precious metals without reporting it to the Commission or who fails to submit accurate report of his or her property, as well as in the case of the official who does not transfer his or her management rights in a public enterprise, other enterprise or institution to another legal or natural person to whom the official is not in any manner related.

"The fine represents a certain line of risk for public officials who fail

to comply with the provisions of this law. Crossing this line also means exposing oneself to public judgment. This provision ensures that the regional magistrate court can pro-

It is beyond any doubt that the adoption of this law will once again be met with different judgments and its implementation with sizeable difficulties, but it is also indisputable that with time its consistent application will create coherent practice for the evaluation of the work of public officials in the future and contribute to their greater accountability

nounce the fine, which act, in accordance with the current legal arrangements, ensures the execution of the sanction", states the rationale.

According to the draft, public officials are persons directly elected, appointed, nominated or confirmed by the Parliament, or appointed by the President of Montenegro (or by the ambassador of Montenegro or head of the consulate of the Republic of Montenegro abroad).

Persons considered public officials are also those selected, appointed, nominated or agreed upon by the Government – deputy ministers and secretaries of ministries, heads and deputy heads of administrative bodies, director of the Agency for Economic Restructuring and Foreign Investments, president and members of the Council for Electronic Communications and Post, director

of a fund founded by the state, president and members of the Commission for the control of public procurement procedures, president and members of executive bodies, as well as directors of public enterprises and other enterprises, public institutions, regulatory bodies or other legal persons established by or whose management is appointed by the Government.

Functions covered by this definition are also the president and members of the Judicial Council, judges and presidents of courts, president and members of the Council of Prosecutors, deputy state prosecutor, as well as persons appointed by or approved by the parliament or the president of the Capital City, Royal Seat or municipalities.

A novelty compared to the exist-

ing law is the provision stipulating that the request of a public official of opinion identifying the existence of conflict of interest will remain "confidential".

The Commission will make this opinion public in extraordinary cases when the public official in question fails to act upon its opinion.

"It is beyond any doubt that the adoption of this law will once again be met with different judgments and its implementation with sizeable difficulties, but it is also indisputable that with time its consistent application will create coherent practice for the evaluation of the work of public officials in the future and contribute to their greater accountability", states the Government's rationale.

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

CROATIAN AMBASSADOR TO MONTENEGRO PETAR TURČINOVIĆ

Education is an important issue for EU

How important is education for EU? This is best illustrated by the fact that the European Union (EU) allocated 13.7 billion euros for the period 2006–2012 for a programme of life-long education available to all EU members and candidate countries, said the Croatian ambassador to Montenegro **Petar Turčinović** in the interview for *European Pulse*.

Turčinović, the former head of Croatia's working group for EU negotiations on education and culture, explained that the life-long learning programme was born out of the results of the Lisbon conference in 2000, when the EU set itself the goal of becoming the most competitive and most prosperous society in the world by 2010.

"However, during 2004–2005 it became clear that this was not the case. Something had to be done urgently, and this is when the EU decided that continuous education of



cation. The logic of EU is the following: education is not "forever" completed at school, it needs to continue in the workplace. If we fail to extend learning, others will get ahead of us, we will lose the advantage that we possess and which ought to be maintained.

During screening, is important that you give a realistic picture, with as much data as possible. Everything you fail to present properly at this stage will come back to you with revenge

its labour force is the only way to gain strategic advantages over other competitors. The logic was the following – China or India can base their development of cheap labour force, Russia has enormous oil and gas reserves, and these are their strategic advantages. USA, on the other hand, has probably the best research facilities and the most effective applied science departments... So the conclusion was that only education can make EU the number one and thus they increased the funding in this area", explains Turčinović.

● **What exactly is the life-long learning programme?**

Integrated life-long learning programme is a programme of adult edu-

100% of the funds that are theoretically available to it.

● **Could you describe the negotiation process in the area of education and culture, since this is usually one of the first chapters to be opened between the candidate country and EU?**

According to the political proclamations, Montenegro should receive the candidate status next year, and I am very much looking forward to it.

Negotiations are about changing oneself. Not the government or the parties, but the entire society.

There are 35 negotiation chapters, and the negotiations proceed in phases. It begins with screening: a candidate country delegation responsible for education goes to Brussels and together with the representatives of European Commission (EC) conducts the first, so-called explanatory screening. Montenegrin representatives will explain what your educational system looks like, with all the necessary data. It is important that you present a realistic picture, with as much data as possible. Everything you fail to present properly at this stage will come back to you with revenge.

The next is the second, bilateral screening. Montenegrin delegation goes to Brussels again and there the EC delegation explains to you educational arrangements within EU and the expectations Montenegro will have to meet in order to fit into this system as smoothly as possible.

Step number three is the Screening Report where EU compares the description you gave of your educational system to what it should look like in order to meet EU standards, also using secondary data from independent sources.

This is a very tricky part – you cannot present something black as

● **How much money was Croatia able to draw from this programme?**

The chapter on education was preliminarily closed on the 11 December 2006, and ever since we were eligible for the assistance from this fund.

Unfortunately, others were slow to follow the recommendations of our negotiating teams. All we had to do was establish one independent agency for life-long learning with 25 employees that would, in cooperation with Brussels, approve and allocate funding for projects.

We did not create this agency on time, and thus we got less money than we perhaps could have.

Still, at the moment there is not a single country that is close to using all

FACING THE TRUTH ABOUT YOURSELVES

- For countries like Croatia and Montenegro, how important is education in the European integration process?

We in Croatia always thought of ourselves as educated people, like everybody else in the Balkans, we are all so full of ourselves.

However, if you look at statistics you see that we have 8% of the population with University degrees.

My question is – how are we to contribute to the European goal of being the best, most productive, most creative...if we only have 8% highly educated people, compared to some EU countries where the ratio is 40%.

Or, how can we change our production orientation flexibly, enter new product areas, earn and make profit on the European and world markets if we have 2% of people participating in the life-long learning programmes, while the European average is 10%.

All I want to say is that the negotiations process forces you to face some truths. These truths can be painful – in this case, you will have to kiss goodbye the stereotype of yourselves as a highly cultured and educated nation.

It is good to face these facts and to say – we have 2% in the life-long learning, and one Greece also has 2%, but that doesn't make it better, our goal is to have 10%.

white, for sooner or later it shows up again. It is extremely important to acquire credibility, to convince EC that your data is representative.

The EC Report is then sent for discussion to the working group in the European Council. They are supposed to assess to what extent the report is realistic – for instance, Montenegro has data on Roma children which is missing from the report, send it back, ask additional questions...Finally, the Council of EU decides whether Montenegro is ready to open up negotiations on education.

- So the negotiations have not started?

If all is well, the European Council decides that Montenegro is ready to open negotiations. If not, they give you a list of conditions to be fulfilled.

The Montenegrin working group then formulates a negotiating position, in this case for the area of education. You can consider you offering your position as the beginning of negotiations.. In the meantime, EC works on the formulation of a common EU negotiating position which must get the approval of the European Council. This is when the negotiations have formally started, with an intergovern-

mental conference conducting classical negotiations.

It happens that the EC simply says "we are satisfied with your position, it suits us, we can conclude this immediately". Or, they will tell you "you did a very good job, but are missing something, these are the additional

The most important thing for a country is to have its best experts, regardless of their political orientation, on the negotiating teams and working groups

requirements you must fulfil before we can close this chapter. Once you fulfil the requirements, we can conclude negotiations"...

So you have special requirements to open up the chapter, and also to close it. Earlier negotiations did not have that. It was enough that you promise to do something, but following the problems that came up, most of all with Romania and Bulgaria, they had to find a mechanism to ensure that the promises are fulfilled.

- This is the end of negotiations?

If you have fulfilled all the requirements, the next step is the preliminary conclusion of negotiations.

- What does preliminary mean?

It may happen that towards the very end of negotiations EU says – we

closed one eye on your education chapter, as well as chapters 3, 7, 12 and 16. You promised to do this in the chapters 17, 20 and 21 and you didn't do it, and thus we have to reopen education chapter. This, however, happens only in some extreme cases.

- What is the most important thing in negotiations?

The most important thing for a country is to send its best experts, regardless of their political orientation, to the negotiating teams and working groups. We have 2000 people in the negotiating team, 20–50 people per chapter. We picked the best experts in every area.

Second, the Government must stand behind these people. We spoke about education, and that is one of the easiest chapters, but when you come to public procurement, competition, judiciary and basic rights the Government is sometimes forced to make drastic moves in order to fulfil some requirements.

In Croatia, for example, shipbuilding is a huge issue for market competition. We have to privatise and

restructure some 5–6 shipyards...and the EU has to accept our government's plan, you can't just draw a plan and tell them your part of the work is done. Brussels has just accepted our government's programme regarding shipyards.

Or, if you look at judiciary and basic rights chapter – one of the requirements is to decrease the number of judges. I heard that Montenegro has more judges and courts than Croatia, in per capita terms the most in Europe.

If this is true, I can already tell you that the EU will be asking you to cut down the judicial apparatus in Montenegro.

V. ŽUGIĆ

WILL THE RECOGNITION OF KOSOVO SPEED UP MONTENEGRO'S RAPPROCHEMENT WITH EUROPEAN UNION

Many unanswered questions



Did the Montenegrin Government receive any assurance that its strategic goals – member-



by **Nedeljko Rudović**

ship in the NATO and the European Union (EU) – will be more easily attained after the 9 October recognition of Kosovo's independence? Do we have a single ally among the influential EU members, ready to lobby for Montenegro? Was there any coordination with Brussels at all before they made the decision that threw Montenegro into a political turmoil which may well result in another boycott of the Parliament?

These are all questions without answers that spring up in reaction to the events that followed recognition of Kosovo by the governments of Macedonia and Montenegro, and which suggest that the EU leaders did not warm up to Podgorica and Skopje by a notch after 9 October.

Just the opposite, the first reaction was that Brussels has no intention to start membership negotiations with Macedonia, and that Montenegro should wait a little longer before submitting its membership application.

Instead, the highest EU officials are focusing their efforts on Serbia, promising it the candidate status before the end of 2009, although this country does not yet have a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with EU.

What is going on? Apparently, both Montenegro and Macedonia will

have to wait until Serbia delivers **Ratko Mladić** to ICTY before any further EU-Western Balkans rapprochement can begin. Which is why the cabinet of **Milo Đukanović** should think through the position that Montenegro occupies in the eyes of the powerful EU countries, especially France. It was Paris, after all, whose EU presidency lasts until 1 January, which told the Government that its application, announced almost a year ago, is not welcome at the moment.

"Montenegro has its own interests and pace of integrations and if they believe that they should apply for the candidate status this autumn, EU will respect their decision. However, EU currently has many unsolved problems, mostly regarding ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, and France believes that Montenegro should wait with its applications for another few weeks", said French ambassador to Podgorica **Bernard Garancher**.

Deputy PM **Gordana Đurović** responded immediately, insisting that Montenegro will apply by the end of this year.

"It may be that the Council of EU December agenda is already crowded, but that should not discourage us from submitting the application whenever we feel ready. The decision on this, already near, date, is up to Montenegro and its political leaders. Everybody is perfectly aware that Montenegro needs to submit this application, and we will do so. Our application, with all due understanding and consideration for EU's internal problems, depends only on our achievements so far".

The decision to apply, she added, belongs to a sovereign state and is a political decision that comes with certain risks.

"We are, however, ready to accept these risks, because we believe we are ready", Đurović said.

And while Podgorica and Skopje are casting hopeful looks at Brussels, on the very day that Đurović and **Boceviski** met and agreed that Montenegro and Macedonia are expecting greater support from EU and clearer guidelines for the European integration of the Western Balkans, European Enlargement Commissioner **Olli Rehn** declared that Macedonia has not fulfilled the conditions necessary to begin accession negotiations. He did not mention Montenegro.

Reuters recently published a report which claims that Montenegro will have to wait for Serbia, but also that there is a tension between EC and the French presidency, as EC is now ready to offer Croatia a conditional deadline – end of 2009 – for the completion of EU membership negotiations.

France opposes this move, like it opposes Montenegrin application. Given with the cold reception in Paris, Montenegro's government should better start flexing its diplomatic muscle. It seems certain that Montenegro will hand over its application to the French, but it should also make sure that they do not hide it in a drawer, but accept the move and ask European Commission to compile a Questionnaire for Montenegro. Based on the Government's answers to this Questionnaire, the European Council will then decide whether to accord Montenegro a candidate status. Should the Questionnaire fail to arrive by Spring 2009, we will know that the hopes for speeding up the accession process were just an illusion. And the elections are due the year after.

A VIEW FROM BELGRADE

The picture of a desired partner

by Miljenko Dereta

Although they happened almost simultaneously, Montenegro's and Macedonia's recognition of Kosovo carry important differences with regard to both their motives and consequences – for each of these countries, and for the region as a whole.

Macedonia is maintaining political stability with much effort, delicately balancing between the numerous "minority" of Albanians and the politically sharply divided Macedonian majority. The memory of the rather recent armed conflict is still fresh in the memory of its citizens and the political elites who represent them and the return to violence represents a latent threat that might endanger the survival of Macedonia as a state.

Kosovo has an indisputable influ-

Although they happened almost simultaneously, Montenegro's and Macedonia's recognition of Kosovo carry important differences with regard to both their motives and consequences – for each of these countries, and for the region as a whole

ence on the Albanian minority in Macedonia and is a potential source of threats and blackmails. The number of Serbs in Macedonia is not so great as to exercise serious internal pressure and destabilise the country. Such pressure could only come from Serbia, but in the current balance of powers it seems improbable.

Macedonia does not really have real friends in the region. It does not have open enemies either, but it has subdued tensions on its borders. The accession to the European Union is thus the safest guarantee of peace and survival, and I understand why the demands of those who decide on its future must be unconditionally fulfilled.

In addition to serving its immediate interests, Macedonia had to

recognise Kosovo's independence also in order to demonstrate its readiness to follow the decision of a majority of EU members and thus prove itself as the desired, obedient, future member. This will certainly, if not accelerate than definitely ensure a smooth continuation of the accession process.

Montenegro's situation is markedly different. It is often heard that Đukanović remains in power in Montenegro thanks to the votes of minorities, among whom Albanians, against the true "orthodox" (read Serbian) votes who are against him. The pressure on the government, thus, comes from the "pro-Serbian" opposition and in order to oppose it effectively Montenegrin government must seek allies both in the region and in the international community. By recognising Kosovo it has achieved

both. Coordinated recognition ensured "collaboration" in the region with both Macedonia and Kosovo and strengthened the support from USA and EU.

Montenegro is just fighting for the candidate status, and because of its size, (lack of) economic power and the growing influence of Russian capital it must offer additional reasons and proofs to European Union that it will not be a pebble in the regional shoe and might thus earn the grace of being lifted up on the ladder towards full membership

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Miljenko Dereta

membership.

At the same time, recognising Kosovo is a proof of further distancing from Serbia and an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the impotence of the pro-Serbian opposition to mobilize support from Serbia for its nebulous reunification programme.

Thus, by recognising Kosovo Montenegro reaffirms its statehood and independence and thus undoubtedly speeds up the process of EU integrations.

Serbia's reaction, on the other

hand, had the opposite effect from the one intended, amplifying the importance of these recognitions and thus kindling further the benevolence of EU members toward Montenegro's and Macedonia's integration processes.

The author is executive director of Civic Initiative

A VIEW FROM PRISHTINA

Support for Serbia on the road to Europe

by Shkelzen Maliqi

Recognition of Kosovo's independence is the final act of the creation of a new, more complex architecture of regional security. After Montenegro and Macedonia recognised Kosovo's independence, Belgrade had to realise that there was no return, and that it cannot count on obstruction and delay of the process based on an idea of regional divisions. Serbia is alone in this, the only support it still has comes from Republic of Srpska and indecisive, divided and blackmailed Bosnia, which certainly puts it in the inferior position.

Let us also remember that Serbia's only big, influential ally – Russia, already betrayed Serbia in the most extreme manner, by intervening in and recognising independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and thus forsaking the principle that forbids secession of parts of territory of sovereign states. Belgrade is virtually on its own also in its defence of the "international law", as Russia has thus implicitly recognised Kosovo's independence, upon the principle of legal precedent.

Montenegro and Macedonia did not take too long to decide which alternative was more beneficial: not to spoil their relations with Serbia or to join the big powers and recognise the already formed, new reality.

In the given circumstances, to remain with Serbia was the obviously the bad, losing option, a waste of time and energy.

And there is another aspect of this issue which remains under-emphasised, and concerns the processes within Serbia, those that helped Podgorica and Skopje to decide in favour of recognising Kosovo. It is true that the Western powers weighted in with their lobbying efforts on the very same day, coordinating the moment of

recognition. Paradoxically enough, however, they were helped by the signals coming from Belgrade, which, headed by a new government, has made bold steps towards Europe and cooperation with the world, tacitly opting to abandon the already lost Kosovo.

Serbia's Pyrrhic victory at the UN General Assembly, where it succeeded in pushing through a resolution to submit the question of legality of Kosovo's "unilateral" declaration of independence to the International Court of Justice, was a good moment to execute a counter-attack on Serbia's aspirations to retain Kosovo.

Podgorica and Skopje could have been "persuaded" by Brussels and Washington to recognise Kosovo together with Croatia, Bulgaria and Hungary, but that was not a wise option while the battle between pro-European and anti-European forces raged in Serbia. Once Tadić managed to forge a pro-Western coalition and secured a strong alibi – that, from a diplomatic point of view, he did everything to "defend Kosovo" – Podgorica and Skopje were called on to bring Serbia to reason, to support her on the

In the short run, the relations between Belgrade and Podgorica and Skopje may be soured, but in the long run they have been restored on new, healthier foundations, which is a precondition for the creation of a new, common strategy of the region to speed up the process of Euro-Atlantic integrations

road to European integrations, which was not possible with the Kosovo millstone around her neck.

Seen in this light, the fact that Montenegro and Macedonia recognised Kosovo is not at all a "stab in the back", as it was experienced by the nationalist forces in Belgrade, but a balm on the wound of "secession", or taking stitches after the operation that began in 1999 and was completed with Ahtisaari's plan.



Shkelzen Maliqi

In the short run, the relations between Belgrade and Podgorica and Skopje may be soured, but in the long run they have been restored on new, healthier foundations, which is a precondition for the creation of a new, common strategy of the region to speed up the process of Euro-Atlantic integrations.

The entire region is predominantly and decisively pro-Western and clear in its decision to participate in the integration processes – all but Serbia, which up until recently was

deeply divided on the issue, but has managed to make a breakthrough and take a decisive turn towards the West.

Only within this historical mainstream does Serbia have a chance to recover and catch up with others. Montenegro and Macedonia, like its other neighbours before them, have only supported Serbia on this road.

The author is a political analyst and a publicist from Kosovo

Kosovo's skein of boredom

by Brano Mandić

True, somebody could have been hurt in front of the Parliament of Montenegro. Imagine that flood of public analyses and syntheses. That's what gives the people their share of excitement: we love instability, shouting into megaphones, taking oaths, drinking on loan, throwing stones. Montenegro is, together with its neighbours, a dismal society. And there's no fixing it. European Union is not blind, they see us as retards, half-fabricated, or, more importantly, do not even try to fix anything. The opposition leader is on hunger strike – how boring. And nobody can see the leader. The whole nation is wondering whether he eats in secret. What a cheap thriller. Then he'll get sick, call the photographers, have his colleagues carry him out on a stretcher. On goes the revolving light, Dr **Kadić** short of breath with a storm in a glass of sugary water...

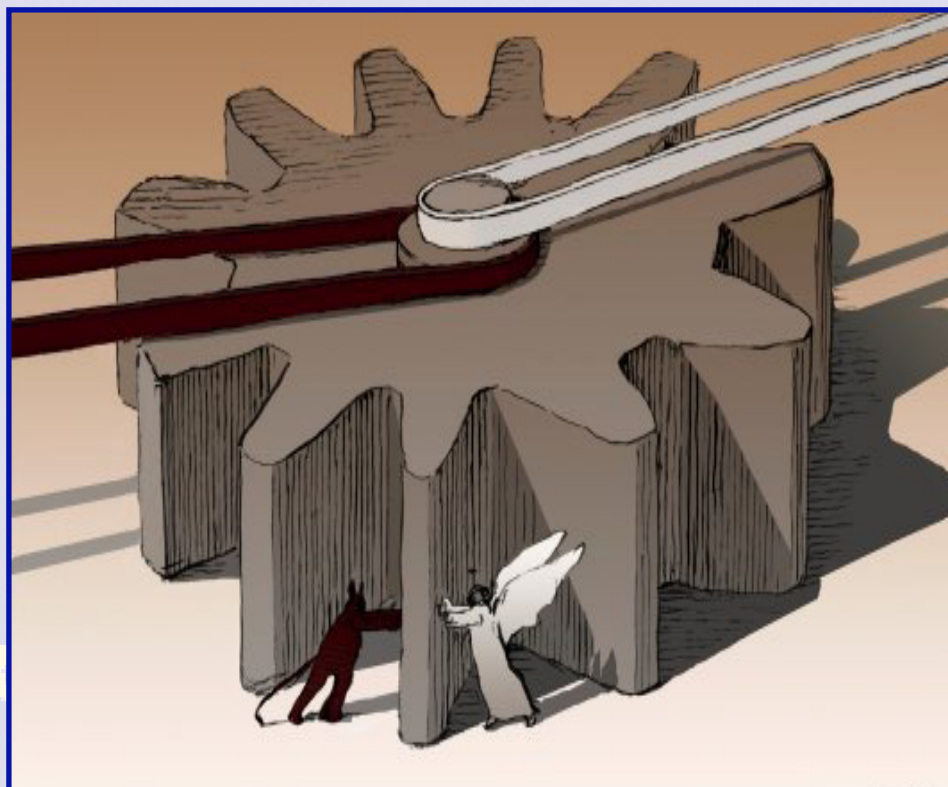
There will be **Amfilohije** citing the

Who's Olli Rehn when you don't have a cinema? Then comes Mišković and makes you a cinema. And the citizens of Titograd dress up in their best clothes and go to see the first shopping mall in their lives. These are rough scenes

Holy Scripture and an analyst who says it is brave not to eat, one should respect the deed. And what with us who don't respect it. Has anybody asked Montenegrins how it feels not to respect anything. I'll ask the doctors: is it easy to make disgust a hobby?

That one man has decided not to feed himself, to risk a heart failure or a slip into unconsciousness, obliges one to nothing, with the exception of his closest family who should try to return his appetite.

That somebody is willing to ruin himself for Kosovo can only, at least for the first few days, be funny. Especially when he starts writing a column from famine. Like some insane replica to **Kafka's** hunger artist – a hunger leader. Hundreds have walked Montenegrin roads to pay their respects. They grew



calluses, pet corns, open wounds, Kosovo stigmata... Highly spontaneous

gatherings, should we add. Speaker of the Serbian People's Party, **Dobrić** himself, announces to the journalists that a group of women will spontaneously

The regional agony is going to last a while, for the EU is a wizard, but the one from Oz, a political dwarf with the modulated voice of a giant

gather in front of the gas station in Podgorica at 18 o'clock. The speaker is so thick-skinned to sign his e-mail as "women citizens of Montenegro".

Is it possible that **Milo Đukanović** was born under such a lucky star? All we can expect now is a quick agreement on early elections when all Serbs will gather around **Mandić** and the Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS) can play the "stability factor".

My colleague **Vesko Belojević** got a stone into his head. I was treacherously

on holidays at the time, watching the whole thing on Elmag television, and I truly regret not getting a stone myself to finally bring me to my senses and remind me once and for all that Metohija used to be Montenegro.

Then I remember that in Kosovo they have an epic portraying king **Nikola** as a war criminal. And I want to crank up the volume all the more. There's **Amfilohije Radović**, the eternal charmer of our and your youth. The

man who blessed murderers, corpses, cossacks, skulls, platoons, mortars, democratic decisions at referendums, stands up for anthems, dances with the President of the Republic, mentions knives and thorns, shouts into the microphone, never looks straight when he speaks, sings, stamps his feet, makes stupid jokes, elevated to his throne by the secret police, drives around in a helicopter, never ever talks about **Lomi**, aka **Duke**.

To those, these two, **Amfilohije** and

Đukanović, represent the European perspective of Montenegro. Nothing is as stupid as hoping for democratisation. Too late, we're out! Who knows how long it will still take to build roads, to help out the people with disabilities, to produce an educational TV programme for children, for the people to stop seeing Albanians as the lower race...we're talking decades here, don't give me your Olli Rehn. Who's Olli Rehn when you don't have a cinema? Comes along Mišković and makes you a cinema. And the citizens of Titograd dress up in their Sunday clothes and go to see the first shopping mall in their lives. These are rough scenes.

Dear reader, the queues of pensioners are our everyday reality. They are waiting for the 200 euros the state owes them. On the other side of the street, should FC Budućnost be beaten by Zeta, you might get angered Barbarians and there goes your "clockwork orange" in the middle of Podgorica. Kosovo is just an experiment. Organised police exercise, practicing



contract for the sale of KAP.

This is where the problems are solved, here we're just playing tension. Just how much everybody is trying to make history, to give everything an epic dimension – that could have, perhaps,

Poisonous RTCG newsreels on the one hand and cracked skulls on the front page of what is known among the people as daily "Dan" on the other do not bode for good. Simply, somebody is doing it on purpose. We were not made for this sorrow

strategy in case a more serious show-down happens. Next door there's the Republic of Srpska and Kosovo – wonderful neighbours.

The regional agony is going to last a while, for the EU is a wizard, but the one from Oz, a political dwarf with the modulated voice of a giant.

Another bit on media crimes and torture. Do you know who Montenegrin journalists are? Come up with a handful and congratulate them. Poisonous RTCG newsreels on the one hand and cracked skulls on the front page of what is known among the people as daily "Dan" on the other do not bode for good.

Simply, somebody is doing it on purpose. We were not made for this sorrow, it is being produced on at least two addresses: one in the country, one abroad. I mean Russia, of course. I have the right to doubt until I'm shown the

passed in '91. Today, after twenty years we slept through, no masterful decasyllable can bring anybody, apart from a handful of masters of vandalism, to do anything revolutionary, like attack armed policemen.

Most policemen do not support Government's decision to recognise Kosovo, but have been so professionally drilled over the last years to be ready to defend it to the last drop of their blood, because the decision has been made in accordance with Constitutional prerogatives of the government. It's no small feat to have such a loyal army

A propos, on the day of one of the meetings in front of the Parliament the building was surrounded by some 200 bobbies, shield bearers, helmets and other assorted blue soldateska (it has been ages since we last heard the sweet word "soldateska", favourite one of our people's representative Labudović).

Strolls by one MP Dinoša, ethnic Albanian with his briefcase and posture of a drowsy bey, when one policeman hisses under his breath: "Uh, may his mind go dim".

This seemingly stupid scene can also be judged from the security standpoint. Most policemen do not support Government's decision to recognise Kosovo, but have been so professionally drilled over the last years to be ready to defend this decision to the last drop of blood, because the decision has been made in accordance with the Constitutional prerogatives of the government. It's no small feat to have such a loyal army.

On top of it, you can tell by their hidden smiles that the policemen long for demonstrations, because these make them feel sexy in their uniforms. A few days ago in front of the Parliament a line of boys in armours flirts with naked-bellied chicks, always ready to take a walk through the blue ranks, as if they want to prove that beneath these bullet-proof vests knightly hearts are beating, restrained by professionalism, but still warm.

Add to it pumped-up casualties in tight shirts, our dear inspectors in civilian clothing sitting in front of the monument to Pushkin as if they were ready for who knows what nationally heroic deeds...

It makes you think back to the heroic days when the police keenly trod over the boss' political enemies. Today

the enemies are dying out. The intention is to herd them all into the national pen, to boost Đukanović's and Mandić's list by ten percent, they'll figure out the details.

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

EUROPE FOR THE NEXT 50 YEARS: "BACK TO FUTURE"

Europe 2057

On an afternoon somewhere in Southeastern Europe, a boy and a girl are passing by a 104-storey



by Jelena Džankić

skyscraper. Suddenly, almost three dozen people appear rushing into the building. They are followed by a usual crowd of journalists. While the boy is taken by what is going on, the girl picks up a metal star from the street. 'Look, it's steel!', she says to the boy, and throws it up against the sky. And while the star was falling in a perfect circular movement, against all laws of gravity, a ray of light reflected upon it making it look as bright as gold... **STOP.**

REWIND: March 2003, BBC News:

The US stationed additional forty B52 planes in the United Kingdom, with the plan of increasing the intensity of flights over Southern Iraq. These highly equipped aircraft were used in the First Gulf War in 1991, and during the Kosovo crisis in 1999. Most of the world public regards this occurrence as the unofficial beginning of an unwanted war. The British Prime Minister **Blair** continues to support the strikes despite the fall in the polls. This led to a fresh situation in the Parliament, where the Labor party is in the state of fragmentation. This has never happened before in the UK politics. Meanwhile, the French president **Jacques Chirac** fiercely opposes the upcoming start of strikes against Iraq... **STOP.**

FAST FORWARD: June 2057, Luxembourg (two former rival officials over a cup of coffee):

Mon Dieu! C'était une bonne idée! Time for celebration, I would say... We've finally made it – and it is all actually working! Incredible, I didn't think I'd

live up to this moment. Who would have said that we would have done so much in 20 years? I was afraid, mon amie, that we would not have made it. Europe seemed so fragile way back then, and Brussels functioned like a bureaucratic monster.

Well, it took a lot of time and effort –but Our House is pretty much stable right now.

Oui, we are... I can't think of a right word... Well, finally, we can believe in what the Italian was singing about in 1990s...

The one who won the Eurosong contest?

Oui, oui... What's the weather back in London, still rainy?

STOP.

REWIND February 2003, Brussels – Europa Pressroom:

The European Parliament has published the Draft of the Accession treaty for the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia to the European Union. The document is based on the negotiation process the countries engaged in during the past few years, and is believed to be a vast step towards the expected enlargement next year. The Institutions believe that the EU is prepared to face the challenge of accepting the new Member States. The Commission claims that the European project with more than 25 countries will be rather challenging. However, they trust in the sustainability of the project by reverting to the success of the single market, followed by the launch of euro. These two achievements in the field of European integration demonstrate the compatibility of ambition and realism. **STOP.**

FAST FORWARD: January 2016, Strasbourg (European Parliament Session):

Dear Members of the European Parliament,

We have an upcoming wave of enlargement in a few months, which leaves little time for contemplation. Our ambitions to enlarge the EU are inhibited by the slow development of the

European Institutions, and the ongoing criticism about the widening of the democratic gap. Once again, we have to show both ambition and pragmatism. Ambition – because enlargement is an important project. Pragmatism – because we have to make the EU more efficient and transparent.

In other words, we cannot build the second floor of the house, without a stable base. In order to explain this, I revert to the strategy employed in a board game called 'The colonizers of Katan'. Each contestant has a territory with material for building—either rock, coal, grain or wood. When the dices are thrown, the contenders can accumulate their material, and start building the cities. But, in order to construct a city, one needs to have a village on its place; and in order to have a village, one needs two streets. Of course, each of the elements has its value in terms of material, and a mixture of 'ingredients' is needed to construct any of the mentioned. The point is – the players have to cooperate, and trade the material, in order to construct their cities. Sometimes a player might lose some 'ingredients', but he will regain it by having a city on the board.

Now, look at the EU, as a city that we want to build. We have the ingredients. What we need is to find an adequate way to compile all the materials that we have, and start from constructing – first the streets, then the villages, and finally, the city. Or, as we call it – our House... **STOP!**

REWIND: January 2007, BBC News:

Today, the EU has welcomed Bulgaria and Romania – the newest Member States. The Community has grown from the initial six members to twenty-seven. After series of delays of this enlargement round due to the restructuring of the European Institutions, or the internal problems of the applicant countries, the world is faced with a new outlook of Europe. Will Europe be stronger than ever? **STOP.**

PLAY (unplugged):

In varietate concordia – Unity in diversity

The author is a PhD candidate at the Centre of International Studies at the University of Cambridge (Murray Edwards College), and senior associate of Institute Alternativa"

EU REGULATIONS ON VITICULTURE CAUSE TROUBLES FOR BOTH GOVERNMENT AND PRODUCERS

Do-it-yourself method for fewer vineyards

EVROPSKI REPORTER

Separating the production of wine from brandy and other alcoholic drinks through special legal framework and defining wine as a food product was a step forward in the direction of bringing Montenegrin viticulture closer to the contemporary European standards.

Still, a year after the new law on wine has been adopted it seems that this branch of Montenegrin agriculture has been sliding backwards.

Ministry of agriculture is behind the schedule according to which it was supposed to issue seven important legal acts detailing regulation in this area by June 2008, the EU already sent in new regulations to be incorporated into the law, and hasty implementation of some European models in the beginning of this year had disastrous consequences.

Marija Krstić, advisor for fruit growing and viticulture in the ministry of agriculture, points at the abrupt decrease in the spread of new vineyards which arose in con-

sequence of the application of European practices.

For the last six years, the ministry has used the resources of its agro-budget to distribute close to 800 000 vine scions per year via public calls to the private sector. Only last year such subsidies resulted in 128 acres of new vineyards.

"Since January 2008 we have been using the European model which envisages cash rewards per planted acre. This model has brought only six new acres of new vineyards in the course of the spring planting, and we are expecting another five to six in the fall season", Krstić said.

The ministry hoped to enlarge the territory covered by vineyards by 50 acres per year, but after implementing European solutions these projections turned out to be overly optimistic

In order to get the "reward", Montenegrin producers have to resort to a do-it-yourself system, which requires sizeable investments disproportionate to their economic means.

In order to make sure that the



"rewards" do not remain lying in the agro-budget, the ministry will either have to find a transitory solution for

next year or return to the old system.

"We did not have to implement this model, because Montenegro isn't an EU member. Our task is to prepare our wine producers for EU accession, and the EU is not interested in the way in which we do it. We ought to find a method that suits our producers, and the solution we used in the last six years proved to be good", Krstić said.

According to our incomplete data, Montenegro has some 4.500 acres of vineyards, 2.400 of which in the ownership of "Plantaže". Average output for the last 10 amounted to 66 hectolitres.

The ministry hoped to enlarge the territory covered by vineyards by 50 acres per year, but after

21 WINES

At the moment, the list of Montenegrin wines comprises of 21 sorts – mostly "vranac" in several different variants, six table wines produced by "Neksan" and a few new types from "Plantaže" (chardonnay, perla nera, sauvignon).

Krstić says that Montenegro meets necessary preconditions for the production of supreme quality wines from several types and that foreigners keep recommending us to diversify the list further.

According to the law, high and supreme quality wines are those that are made from home-grown grapes, whereas table wine is made out of imported grapes.

implementing European solutions these projections have proved to be overly optimistic.

The new law on wine has also brought stricter criteria on quality control before wine can be put on the market.

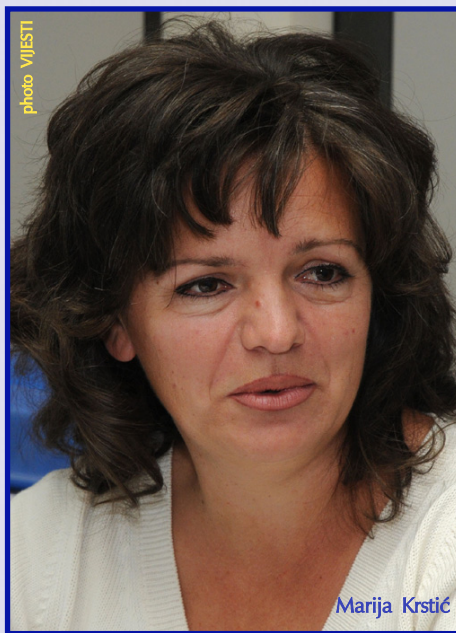
A producer can make as much wine as he or she wishes, but the wine must be subject to a "grading procedure", which one of the legal novelty.

The wine is assessed first through a laboratory test of its physical and chemical properties and then by a Commission consisting of three professional wine tasters. If the producer is dissatisfied, he or she can "appeal" to get the final mark from a commission of five tasters.

Wine quality depends, among other things, on the conditions of production, which is why the technical and technological equipment of local producers has also recently come under scrutiny.

Krstić says that "in Montenegro, everybody believes their wine is of supreme quality and that making lower quality wines is impossible".

"In practice, however, this is unfortunately not the case. There is quite some knowledge and tradition that gets passed on from one generation to another. This as such is not bad, but the production process ought to keep up with new technological developments and knowledge in order not to lose the pace and competitiveness on the world markets. Besides, our pro-



ducers often boast having eight kilograms of grapes per vine and making quality wine out of it.

Montenegrin producers often boast having eight kilograms of grapes per vine and making quality wine out of it. Quality wine in the European practice usually means two kilograms of grapes per vine

European practice presumes two kilograms of grapes per vine for quality wine", Krstić said.

Within the given schedule, the Ministry has managed to complete a Registry of wine and grape producers and compile a list of professional wine tasters who acquired the licence by taking the exam in Zagreb. The Registry contains seven wine producers and 1000 grape producers.

"Among the bylaws to be adopted by the end of this year the most important is the study of regional distribution of viticulture.

This document will contain the data on the structure of soil, climate with temperature averages, recommendations about the types of grapes that can be grown in these areas, the weight of grape per vine...this is not at all easy, and it requires hiring a team of experts", Krstić said.

The study will stipulate the types of grape to be grown in certain region and the optimal amounts. It can, for instance, require the produce to grow 80% of "vranac" in a certain area, and grow whatever he or she wants on the remaining 20%.

The law on wine was entirely aligned with EU rules when it was adopted, but with the constant changes in EU regulations in this

area, the Ministry will now have to catch up with implementing new regulations.

For instance, the EU reform package that is in force since the 1 August has simplified the labelling system for wines without designation of geographic origin, and allows producers to write the sort of wine and the year of harvest.

Subsidies to winemakers for planting new vineyards will be extended until 2018, the amount of sugar permitted will be lowered and the subsidies for crisis distillation will be phased out over the last four years.

After adopting the current law, Montenegro became member of the International Organisation for Vine and Wine (OIV), which enables it to follow and implement contemporary developments in this field.

Marija MIRJAČIĆ

NO REPLY

Montenegro has recently signed the Stabilisation and Association Agreement that allows it to export up to 16 hectolitres of quality wine per year to EU tariff-free.

The Ministry, however, could not tell us to what extent Montenegro has made use of this clause and what is the ratio of quality wine to table wine in the total production.

WHY DO I WANT TO BE A CITIZEN OF EUROPE

I am not a child of the Western Balkans



I want to talk about the fundamental reasons that make me want to be a citizen of Euro-



by Nina Vujović

pean Union, from the perspective of a student and an ordinary citizen of Montenegro, without dwelling on the theoretical aspects of the European Community law. Words on a piece of paper are often not a good representation of the reality. Europe for me means European Union, for this is what it came to stand for.

I will try to describe my standpoint through those facts that matter to me as a young person, and offer

I do not want walls between me and the rest of Europe, I want to be free, I want to be a part of it, and not only in geographic terms

me the desired opportunities.

I can freely say I was not a witness of the painful and ugly history of this region – former SFRY. I was a child when these processes took

place, too young to understand.

However, I do feel the consequences of these acts of then political leaders (which inevitably drew our own onto the same path).

I have been wearing the label of a "child of the Western Balkans" all my life, although I consider myself a "child of Europe", the same as my colleagues from other European countries.

I do not want walls between me and the rest of Europe, I want to be free, I want to be a part of it, and not only in geographic terms.

I have been wearing the label of a "child of the Western Balkans" all my life, although I consider myself a "child of Europe", the same as my colleagues from other European countries

Free access to all European states will give me, first of all, immense opportunity to fulfil my dreams and desires. With free access to all educational institutions, I will

have a chance to demonstrate my successes and ambitions and develop them into expertise.

All application calls will be a chance for me too. I will be able to

choose (or be chosen). At the same time, this is a chance to get to know other cultures, new people, customs, opinions and new experiences.

The rights I will have will be the same rights of other citizens of Europe and thus strengthened by one objective, independent and impartial protective body. The very scope of these rights will be broadened and secured through various democratic institutions.

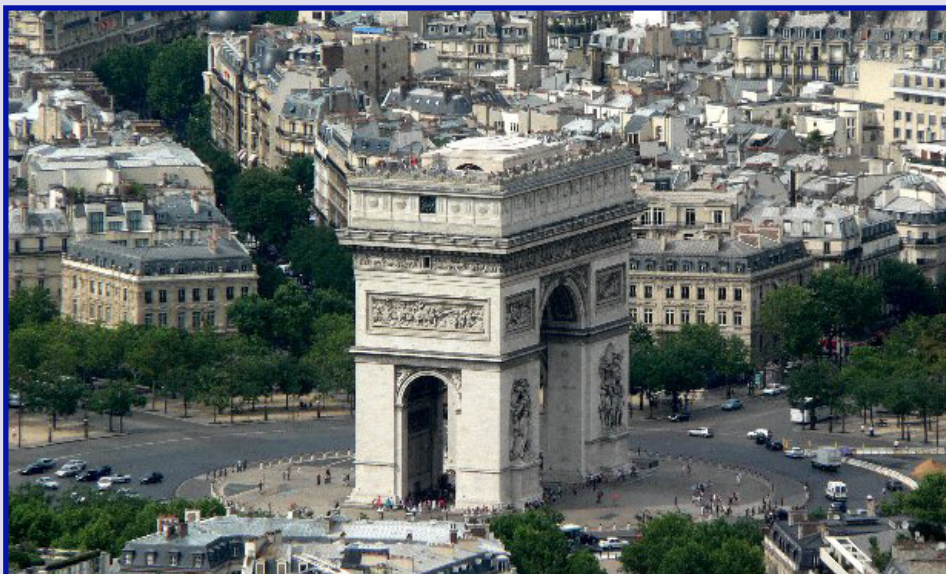
I would feel more secure as a citizen of European Union, too, because I would be surrounded by a

"family of states". I wish the same to the society in which I live, to all citizens and my Montenegro. Security and openness would ensure all these "investments" that would make it more beautiful and more developed, offering it, and us too, the kind of life we deserve. For starters, the improvement of our roads would reduce the number of victims of traffic accidents in Montenegro, and thus the irreparable loss of our dearest and then...well, then, perhaps I too would finally decide to start driving.

Finally, at the current state of the global financial crisis, which "...does not touch us..." I would like my salary to be worth something. I want a higher standard of living!

All that is in there in Europe, this European Union, but although we exist in its framework we are still far enough for all this to remain fervent desires.

The author is a student at the Faculty for Public and European Studies. She attended VII generation of European Integration School



Used machines like new

The Sofia City Court began the trial against nine defendants charged with fraud regarding millions of euros from EU funds. Nine Bulgarian citizens are accused of embezzling 14 million lev (7 million euros) from the European SAPARD programme.

The defendants allegedly used false documents to purchase used meat processing and packing machines and present them as new ones.

The report of European anti-fraud office (OLAF) which leaked to the media in July, said that the main subjects of the

affair enjoy political protection. According to the Bulgarian media, Bulgarian Socialist party and Bulgarian President **Georgi Parvanov** have received financial donations from this group.

This trial is the first of its kind in Bulgaria and is a landmark event for Bulgaria's changing attitude towards abuse of EU funds. In July, reports on insufficient efforts to stall corruption and organised crime spurred Brussels into freezing nearly €500 million in infrastructure and agriculture development programmes for Bulgaria.

Ljubljana's risky roads

By the number of deaths on its roads, Ljubljana was last year the most "dangerous" European capital, says the report of the European Transportation Safety Council (ETSC).

With 12.98 deaths per 100 000 inhabitants, the number of fatal accidents in Slovenia increased by 4% in the last few years, while it decreased by 5.3% on average in other European

capitals.

The second place by the number of victims in EU is Riga with 9.69 deaths per 100 000 inhabitants, while the safest are Dublin, Lisbon and Oslo.

In 2001, the EU set a goal to reduce the number of deaths by half by 2010. According to the ETC, traffic safety in European capitals has been improving since then, but only France, Luxembourg and Portugal have a chance of actually meeting the target.

The high number of deaths in Ljubljana and on the surrounding highways, according to the Slovenian police, is due to an ever-higher number of vehicles. The reasons for accidents are usually speed and shifting into the wrong lane.



Stop the illegal logging

European Commission proposed a series of legal measures designed to ban illegal timber and wood products from the European market within the package of activities aimed at preventing deforestation.

"Illegal exploitation of forests has severe ecological consequences, as it contributes to the global warming, reduces biodiversity and threatens the means of living of the local population", the Commission said.

EC proposes to include these

issues in the international climate negotiations, with the goals of halting the reduction of forests by 2030 and decreasing deforestation of the tropics by 50%.

It is estimated that around 19% of timber and wood products sold in EU originate from illegal logging.

EC has proposed a regulation obliging all importers to seek sufficient guarantees that their timber and wood products have been acquired in accordance with export country's laws.

Kaczynski waits for the Irish

Conservative Polish President **Lech Kaczynski** reiterated his intention not to sign the law ratifying the Lisbon Treaty until the document is ratified by Ireland.

"I will gladly sign the Treaty, when the time comes, and that will be when the Irish say 'yes', Kaczynski said.

Polish parliament has ratified the Treaty in April, but Eurosceptic Kaczynski still refuses to sign it.

The new European Treaty has been ratified in almost all EU countries, except for Sweden and the Czech Republic. Czech Republic is waiting for the opinion of its Constitutional Court, and the Swedish parliament should vote on it this fall.

President of Germany has also not signed the Treaty, awaiting the decision of the German Constitutional Court.



EU has more than 6.5 thousands TV channels

More than 6500 TV channels are currently available to viewers from EU countries, including the two membership candidates – Croatia and Turkey, said the European Audio-Visual Observatory (EAO).

Britain is first with 833 available channels, followed by Germany (300), Italy (284), France (252) and Spain (199). Estonia and Lithuania are at the very end of the list, with 15 channels each.

Bananas as agreed

European Commission fined two importers of bananas, American Dole and German Wichert, with 60.3 million euros for setting prices and violating the strict EU laws on the protection of market competition.

"EC found that the two importers of Chiquita bananas, companies Dole and Weichert formed a cartel from 2000 to 2002. Chiquita was not fined, as it provided the Commission with information necessary to conduct the investigation" states the EC report.

WHILE THE FINANCIAL CRISIS IS KNOCKING AT THE FRONT DOORS OF BALKAN COUNTRIES AND NEW EU MEMBERS, THE EUROPEANS ARE ALREADY CHANGING THEIR CONSUMPTION HABITS

Plant vegetables instead of flowers

While the heads of the leading EU member states are trying find a way out of the financial crisis that is already slipping into the backyards of the West Balkan states and through the front doors of the "new" EU members, many Europeans have preventively changed their living habits in order to save for the hard days to come.

A few days ago Brussels sent out the first serious warning that the banking crisis in West European countries could spill over into the new EU members and Balkan countries. Director of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) **Tomas Mirov** said the bulk of the banking sector in the former socialist countries consists of branches of the West European banks.

Faced with an unprecedented level of crisis, these banks will



perhaps cease to be able to support their branches in the East, which could lead to an investment crunch and entail serious conse-

quences for the economies of the former socialist countries.

Tomas Mirov urged the West European governments to take into account the Eastern branches of their banks when devising their support and bail-out plans for the banking sector in order to contain the spread of recession.

"If they fail to do so, West European governments could endanger their chances for further economic growth, which has received a strong boost in the past from economic development of Eastern Europe", warned EBRD director.

Among the new member states Hungary appears to have taken the hardest blow from the global financial crisis.

The value of the forint and stocks on the Budapest stock market have been plummeting for a

BLAME THE BANKS

Most Europeans believe banks are responsible for the current financial crisis, and few support the state-led bailout of the banks.

According to *Financial Times* opinion poll, 80% of EU respondents believe commercial and investment banks to be the sole or key villains responsible for the outbreak of the crisis.

According to 70% of the respondents, part or all of the blame falls on central banks. This, according to the papers, points at the opinion that the central monetary authorities ought to have taken more decisive steps in curbing the greed of banks.

The poll reveals divided opinions on the matter of state support to the banks. While in Germany most of the respondents support the move, in France more than a half of the respondents is against bail-outs. In the UK, 49% agrees with a state-engineered support while 36% opposes it.

Most respondents in UK, France, Spain and Italy consider the crisis to be an outcome of the "abuses of capitalism", but not a "failure of capitalism". Germans are more divided: 46% believes the crisis is due to abuses, while 30% considers it a failure of capitalism.



while, only to experience a partial recovery after the European Central Bank, which is in charge of the Eurozone, promised to land Hungary up to 5 billion euros.

Hungarian Central Bank plans to lend this money to the national banks, which are facing an ever-growing demand for euros.

The country is in crisis due to fears that the richer EU countries will be plunged into a recession, says BBC business reporter **Lucy Hooker**.

"Economic crisis in Western Europe is certain to have a great impact on the new EU members. Their economies have been closely connected: these countries are highly dependent on Western

Europe for most of their exports and imports. This means that a recession in the West will sharply slow down the growth in the East. Hungary is a good example of this: not only have the stock markets and the forint nearly collapsed, but the government also withdrew the draft of the next year's budget, realising that the expenditures will have to be severely cut", says Hooker.

The reason for Hungary being ahead in this line of misery is its enormous foreign debt. According to Hooker, both the government in Budapest and the Hungarian businesses and citizens have been borrowing substantial amounts abroad.

"Large portion of the loans

taken by average Hungarian citizens have been set in euros or Swiss francs, since the interests rates on foreign currency loans have been lower than on those in forints. Now, however, foreign banks are in the midst of a credit crunch, and the Hungarians cannot raise as much foreign currency. If the forint continues to depreciate in relation to these currencies, the burden of paying back the loans in euros and Swiss francs will soar", Hooker explains.

At the same time, common people have been changing their habits to cope with the new situation.

London's *Sunday Times* writes that the consumer mentality of Brits has taken a sharp turn.

Data from one of the biggest department stores show that, at the time the overall sales have dropped drastically, sales of sewing machines and hot water bottles have increased, which indicates the desire to spend less energy and buy less in general, but make better use what is already there.

This is not an effect of money shortage – few have been directly hit by the financial crisis so far – but of a certain cultural and psychological turn aimed against excessive and unnecessary spending, writes Times.

The paper lists the examples of those inspired by the financial crisis to change their lifestyle, like that of a woman who has turned her flower garden into a vegetable plot and is planning to keep chicken and a goat, and enjoy healthy, fresh and cheap food.

Some extended this idea to preparing healthy meals for sale or offering creative mending of old clothing. Everybody seems to be enjoying the change.

KEYNS FASHIONABLE AGAIN

In the cabinet of **Gordon Brown** the philosophy of the famous economist **John Maynard Keynes** is the order of the day.

During the Great Depression of the 1930s he insisted that the state should increase public expenditure on infrastructural projects, thus reviving the economy.

In the light of the upcoming recession, the UK government announced the plan to do just that – i.e. speed up the implementation of the planned reconstruction projects for schools and hospitals and construction of recreation centres.

However, similar policy by the Japanese government in the 1990s brought no revival to the economy. British dailies have also warned that a decision to increase public expenditure can turn out to be rather irresponsible.

V.Ž

WHAT IS WRITTEN IN THE DOCUMENT WHICH STIPULATES THAT IN THE 2008–2010 PERIOD MONTENEGRO CAN DRAW 99.9 MILLION EUROS FROM THE IPA FUND

Economising with assistance money

Should Montenegro manage to revive trust in the judiciary and increase local budgets as well as the number of court cases and independent media, European Commission (EC) will be able to conclude that the money of European Union (EU) taxpayers went into the right hands.

In the opposite case, however, Brussels could decide that Podgorica is incapable of drawing on the funds of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) in the right way and to the right extent, which does not speak well of a country's prospects and capacities for EU membership.

This is the gist of the Multi-Annual Indicative Planning Document (MIPD) for IPA, adopted by the EC in late September, based on which Montenegro will be able to draw on 99.9 million euros from the IPA funds in the period 2008–2010.

This decision is, in fact, only a confirmation of last year's decision which allowed Montenegro as well as other potential candidates for EU membership (Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania) to profit from the first two components of IPA programme – transition assistance and institution building, and regional and cross-border cooperation.

Countries with a candidate status (Croatia, Macedonia, Turkey) can use



also use the other three components – regional development, human resource development and rural development, which also entail greater amounts of assistance.

The component concerning transition assistance and institution building is intended for the use of ministries and government bodies, whereas other components can have multiple beneficiaries: non-profit organisations, local self-governments, non-governmental sector, associations... The amount of money allocated to the first component is significantly bigger from the amount available for regional and cross-border coordination projects.

In 2007, Montenegro received

27.5 million euros for transition assistance and institution building projects, and 3.9 million for the projects belonging to the second component.

MIPD outlines possible areas for cooperation i.e. recommended areas for the future projects to be proposed by the Montenegrin government. It also contains "expected results and indicators", designed to measure how effectively the money is being spent.

Transition assistance and institution building component supports projects along three dimensions: political, socio-economic and European integration projects.

Detailing the political criteria, EC emphasises that significant progress in the implementation of reforms in the judiciary should include a new system for appointment and career development of the judges and prosecutors based on professional and objective criteria as well as the revision of parameters for financing the judiciary.

Indicators of a successful employment of funds aimed at the reform of judiciary include "reduction of backlog, new recruitment system in place, increased efficiency, confidence in the system".

Similarly, increased municipal budgets and the number of citizens' information centres are the indicators based on which the Brussels' bureaucrats will decide whether IPA money contributed to strengthen local governments.

EC also expects the government to "address the problems of vulnerable groups, including improved health services, education and housing, strengthened Ombudsman's Office, elimination of cases of ill-treatment, especially for the persons

RTCG AS PUBLIC SERVICE

European Commission notes in the Multi-Annual Indicative Planning Document the goal of "promoting the public service character of the Radio Television Montenegro".

"Expected results: Radio Television of Montenegro is confirmed in its public character, involving civil society and media "watchdog" organisations and other interest groups. This implies significant progress in media compliance with standards on independence and objectivity", states the document.

with special needs; improved situation of prisons and implementation of Action Plans relevant to the integration of the Roma"

Another possible field for cooperation is the upgrading of capacities of the police force, for which the relevant indicators are "the number of cases processed and of international cases solved; number of trained police officers; perceived opinion on corruption improved; increased number of corruption cases opened; improved cooperation among law enforcement bodies".

According to this document, the existence of an active and effective civil society would have to include a recognized role of NGOs by Governmental authorities, and participation of civil society at consultations meetings.

"Indicators: number of projects approved, number of partnerships; observations of civil society taken

In the Multi-Annual Indicative Planning Document European Commission outlines possible areas for cooperation i.e. recommended areas for future projects to be proposed by the Montenegrin government. It also contains "expected results and indicators", designed to measure how effectively the state is spending the money of EU taxpayers

into account in official documents (legislation, strategies)", states EC.

Concerning economic criteria, European Commission expects Montenegro to align its labour market policy with the standards and requirements of European Employment Strategy (EES), which includes good governance, equal opportunities in the employment field, development of social dialogue, investment in human capital development, active labour market measures, harmonized national legislation in particular with respect to labour law, health and safety at work, social inclusion and anti-discrimination. The relevant indicators in this area are "reduction in unemployment; a functioning Economic and Social Council, improved capacity of the social partners, increase in the num-

INCREASE FOOD EXPORTS

EC expects progressive alignment of veterinary, phyto-sanitary and food safety legislation with EU acquis.

This would include increased capacity of veterinary and phyto-sanitary services, increased awareness about rights and obligations on the side of producers and consumers, improved promotion and protection of food products, product safety mechanisms in line with the EU good practice, participation in EU-wide animal disease eradication measures.

"Indicators: development of food exports; improved public health indicators; number of foodstuffs with protected designation of origin, protected geographical indication and traditional speciality guaranteed", states the EC document.

ber of adult learners and improved employment rates, particularly of youth, women and disadvantaged groups".

Brussels also expects the Montenegrin authorities to use IPA assistance funds to enhance the effectiveness of institutions dealing with environmental protection, which will be evaluated based on the "number of infrastructures, of moni-

taking into account potential social impacts. Indicators: New legislation aligned with EU standards; restructured and legally unbundled electricity utility; functioning independent transmission system and market operator", states the Multi-Annual Indicative Planning Document.

Regarding the projects aimed to strengthen Montenegro's ability to assume the obligations of membership, EC will evaluate the effects of spending EU taxpayers' money based on the number of staff devoted to EU integration tasks in relevant institutions, nomination of EU affairs coordinators in line Ministries, and the number of mature projects for funding.

IPA funds are also meant to help Montenegro complete the agricultural census, land cadastre, compile price statistics...

"Banking, insurance and capital markets ought to be aligned with the acquis and good practices in the area of financial supervision, there is also the need to establish institutional framework for financial regulation and fight against money laundering and organised crime. Indicators: improved efficiency and effectiveness of on- and off-site banking supervision, effectiveness of the Securities Commission, laws and bylaws on insurance supervision aligned with EU legislation and practice, established Insurance Supervision Agency", states the EC document.

V.Ž.-V.Š.

Communicating EU in Montenegro and communicating Montenegro in EU



During the month of October Centre for Civic Education organised two training seminars for the employees of various bodies of the Government of Montenegro with support of the UK Foreign Office and in cooperation with the Secretariat for European Integrations in the Government of Montenegro.

The first, three day seminar titled "Introduction to the development of European Union and basic EU concepts and institutions" took place between 22 and 24 October at the Faculty for Public and European Studies. The opening speech was given by the representatives of the British Embassy, Centre for Civic Education and Secretariat of European Integrations, and the lecturers were: Dr **Vladimir Pavićević**, professor at the Belgrade Faculty of Political Science, **Jovana Marović**, advisor for European integrations and international relations to the mayor of Budva; **Zlatko Vujović**, president of Centre for Monitoring, **Daliborka Uljarević**, executive director of Centre for Civic Education, **Zvezdan Čađenović**, legal counselor for EU projects and legal harmonization and Dr **Miroslav Prokopijević**, professor at the University of Belgrade.

The second, one day seminar

titled "Europe ahead of us – various experiences" was held on the 30 October in the Secretariat for European Integrations and was dedicated to the experience of Slovenia in the process or rapprochement with European Union, with a focus on building institutional capacities, public participation and accession-related cost-benefit analysis. The lecturer was Dr **Rado Genorio** from the Government of the Republic of Slovenia.

The seminar was attended by 30 representatives of public administration who are closely working on the issues of European integration and communicating this process to different audiences.

The project is a direct response to the need of communicating European integration process to the citizens of Montenegro in a more intensive and proximate manner, as well as the need of lobbying in EU. It was created in order to supply precise, focused education about European integrations for civil servants who are working on these issues, and as a training in communication of European affairs in Montenegro and lobbying for further support to European integration process in Montenegro using the best EU practices.

NON – GOVERNMENTAL
ORGANISATIONS
IN EUROPEAN UNION



**HANDICAP
INTERNATIONAL**

Handicap international is an international non-governmental, non-profit organisation with the mandate to prevent and limit the impact that disabilities can have on a "normal" life of a person.

It pursues this mission by offering assistance to people with disabilities in their efforts towards autonomy and social integration. The organisation focuses its endeavours on enabling the persons with disabilities to take charge of their own life, notably by recognising the rights guaranteed to them by the relevant international documents.

Handicap International has existed for 25 years, and has sections in 8 European countries. The seat of the organisation is in Brussels. The projects conducted by the organisation are not limited to the countries where it has the sections but involve the whole Europe and the world, including help to persons with disabilities in areas ravaged by war.

The organisation pursues its goals through various activities, such as

- campaigns for raising awareness and understanding needs of persons with disabilities, both within the target group and in the wider public;
- monitoring the respect for human rights of persons with disabilities, as well as of observance of recommendations offered by the relevant international documents dealing with rights of persons with disabilities
- support and information of persons with disabilities about the available medical assistance and provision of medical assistance in the areas where it is not available
- providing psychological support to persons with disabilities to ensure their successful social inclusion
- lobbying for the removal and a ban on landmines in war-torn areas and providing support in removing the mines from areas where the conflict has been settled
- specialised medical and psychological assistance to persons with disabilities victims of landmines
- financial, material and staff support to kin organisations or institutions working with persons with disabilities

As a founding member of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, Handicap International received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1997.

More information about the organisation and its activities can be found at: www.handicapinternational.be

Prepared by: **Petar ĐUKANOVIĆ**

Gender equality in the eyes of the media



NGO Nova – Centre for feminist studies in Podgorica, with support of the Foundation Open Society Institute – Regional Office in Montenegro, recently published a collection of essays titled "Woman in the mirror of the media". The collection, edited by **Nataša Nelević**, consists of eight contributions from Montenegrin authors who offer different approaches to the problem of media representation of women in Montenegro's media space. It was conceived as a part of a larger project, i.e. as a handbook for teaching the new subject in high schools. The subject is media literacy and is being taught in the second or third grade of two Montenegrin gymnasiums – those of Budva and Kotor.

The key idea of the subject, and of the book itself, is to demonstrate (on concrete examples analysed in these articles) that the media is not an "innocent" channel for "transmitting" raw, unprocessed information, and that they do not represent the "objective" reality, but that in fact generate, prescribe and define these reality through certain mechanisms. The themes, i.e. the lecture topics of this newly introduced subjects are centred on this indeed commonplace understanding that the media of mass communication always advocate a certain ideological position and represent some desired reality, a reality that is yet to be, through skilful media intervention. It is precisely those, at the first sight hidden or invisible interventions, techniques and mechanism, that the authors are trying to examine in their contributions. As the editor herself emphasises in the introduction "every media representation ought to be understood as a political event, because it always represents some interests linked to control and power". Therefore, a minimum of critical approach, awareness and basic mistrust towards the enormous amount of information that we are exposed to every day is necessary if we do not wish to become

passive, receptive wax figures in the hands of the powerful mass communication media, fed on the daily basis with already digested ideological slops we do not dare to question.

In that sense, the key goal of this new and, based on the early reactions of the students, very interesting subject, is to develop critical awareness through the creation and enhancement of analytical skills with regard to media content and messages. Gender equality, as one of the basic values of a democratic society that ought to be promoted by the media instead of jeopardised by perpetual stereotypes about female inferiority and "natural" roles and jobs that belong to women, is an important topic within this subject.

The book "Women in the mirror of the media" focuses on the problem of a stereotyped patriarchal depiction of women that is the rule in the Montenegrin media space. The authors use concrete examples to recognise, locate and reveal different strategies and mechanisms of manipulation used, whether consciously or not, in a particular article, advertisement, video clip, cover page etc. In that, they focus on different media strategies: objectification of the woman and her reduction to her body, privatisation of political activities and appearances of women, privatisation of violence against women, production of female heroes as branded sex symbols on the market, positively patriarchal self-identification of a great majority of people, propagating discrimination through the stereotype of a super-woman, inciting fear of feminism and legitimising a certain narrative by distinguishing it from feminism, as well as sexism in language. All this is analysed in great detail by **Jelena Martić-nović**, **Nataša Nelević**, **Ervina Dabidžić-nović**, **Janko Ljumović**, **Sanja Marjanović**, **Aleksandra Kovačević**, **Paula Petričević** and **Sanja Mijušković**.

Promotion of this publication took place on 13 October 2008 in "Karver" bookstore. Although the book was primarily intended as a textbook for students and teachers, it also aims at a wider audience, primarily at those interested in the improvement of journalism and its approximation with the professional standards and principles of human rights in the

JEF Balkan training days 2008

NGO JEF Montenegro and JEF Norway organised a seminar titled "JEF Balkan training days 2008 – inspire, motivate, activate", from the 1 to 5 October in Budva.

The seminar gathered 30 young people from 8 Balkan sections of JEF and it dealt with youth activism, obstacles and opportunities for their greater involvement in the processes taking place in their respective societies. Marginalisation of the young, inadequate understanding of their potential and apathy were as the typical common problem of the young people in West Balkan countries.

One of the key goals of the seminar was to facilitate contact between participants coming from different countries and create opportunities for planning joint actions and projects aimed at improving the status and role of youth.

The seminar offered the participants insights into specific skills and techniques of raising awareness among the youth about the need for and mechanisms of strengthening their active participation in their social realities, primarily through joining different youth organisations such as JEF. The sessions dedicated to concrete techniques for boosting activism were conducted by **Peter Matjašič**, Secretary General of JEF Europe.

Other lecturers at the seminar were: **Daliborka Uljarević** and **Violeta Marniku** from Centre for Civic Education, **Miloš Konatar** from the Youth Network of the Movement for Changes, **Ivana Vojvodić** from NGO Juventas and **Petar Đukanović** from JEF Montenegro. They each offered experiences in working with young people and activities aimed at boosting their social activism.

media. The marked absence of media representatives at the event was therefore surprising, as no journalists were present either in private or as reporters for their respective establishments. The fact that the meeting "Face comes first" was taking place on the same day in front of the Government building and on the streets of Podgorica is hardly an excuse for this absence – a demonstrative act that, better than any article, testifies about the media representatives' sensitivity and attachment to the principle of equality.

FOR THIS ISSUE WE RECOMMEND:

BRITISH POST-GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS

The British Embassy is offering scholarship awards to post-graduate students or young professionals, including those working in public administration, to study in the United Kingdom during the academic year 2009/10. The scholarships will be for studies at post-graduate level. Awards are normally for a period of one academic year but may also be given for shorter, vocationally oriented courses of not less than three months. Potential candidates should be less than 35 years of age.

One of the main aims of the scheme is to assist successful candidates in playing leading roles in the future of their country. Applicants will normally be selected from those who wish to take courses in diplomacy, European integrations, public administration reform rule of law, institutional capacity building and EU & NATO Studies.

Applicants should contact Institutions/Universities in the UK separately regarding admission to courses of study, and, provide details of their preferred courses in the application form.

Selection of candidates is carried out jointly by the British Embassy and the British Council.

Online application forms must be completed by 1st November 2008. Application forms sent by email or in hard copy will not be accepted. Applications which arrive later than 1st November will not be accepted.

For further information and application forms please go to:

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/montenegro-learning-learn-english-chevening.htm>

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CALL FOR APPLICATIONS
4TH CHANGING EUROPE
SUMMER SCHOOL

Civil Society in Central and Eastern Europe before and after the End of Socialism National University of "Kyiv-Mohyla Academy" Kyiv (Ukraine) 27–31 July 2009 organised by the Research Centre for East European Studies at the University of Bremen in cooperation with the EU Institute for Security Studies at the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy with funding from the Volkswagen Foundation.

The Changing Europe Summer School adopts a broad understanding of civil society, including not only NGOs but all kinds of interest groups and societal organisations active in the public sphere between the state and the individual. The Summer School will also cover discourses about and public perceptions of civil society insofar as they are related to Central and Eastern Europe.

Each year the Changing Europe

Summer School brings together 20 to 30 young academics (i.e. mainly doctoral students from disciplines like political science, history, sociology, social anthropology, economics, law and geography) working on issues related to countries in Central and Eastern Europe.

The core of the Summer School consists of the presentation of doctoral research projects and their discussion with senior researchers of international repute in their respective fields. In addition, there will be several sessions with experts on funding, access to information, publication strategies and policy consulting. The sessions will be framed by lectures and excursions as well as other activities designed to give participants the opportunity to socialise and establish contacts. Selected contributions to the Summer School will be published in an edited volume. The participants will be integrated into an alumni network.

Paper proposals must be based on original research and may not exceed 1000 words. They must be drafted in English and must connect an empirical question with a theoretical approach and concept in order to be accepted. Comparative approaches (across countries and across time) are encouraged. An international review panel will assess the papers for the conference in an anonymous review process (for more information about the reviewers, see www.changing-europe.de). The deadline for receipt of paper proposals is 11 January 2009. Please submit your proposal according to the guidelines at www.changing-europe.de.

Location: National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, www.ukma.kiev.ua
More information about the Changing Europe Summer Schools is available at www.changing-europe.de

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