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SEVERANCE PAY

Imagine that in an EU member companies in a majority state ownership have been making millions of losses ever year, are about to lay off hundreds of workers and have less than promising future.

Imagine it turns out that the managers of these same companies, also high officials of the ruling coalition whose village or neighbourhood duly votes for the ruling party, receive severance pays in the amounts of tens or hundreds of thousands euros.

Now imagine the reaction this would stir among the trade unions in Germany, students in Greece, media in the UK and perhaps even the prosecution in Italy.

Imagine the reaction of voters in any EU country at the elections coming only a few months after such a scandal of "golden parachutes".

Parliamentary elections in Montenegro have been scheduled for 29 March.

The stated reason for calling a general election issued by **Đukanović's** cabinet is to give the new Government, the new Parliament and state institutions a full four-year mandate to dedicate their capacities entirely to the challenges arising on the road to EU.

Considering the dynamic of EU integration process, this might strike you as a good reason.

A good reason to doubt this Government's good reason for calling elections, however, is that they have been announced overnight, that the election law is not harmonized with the Constitution, that the Constitutional Court is silent about the issue...

It's also not "European" that the elections will not be held in accordance with international standards. The OSCE Office for Democracy and Human Rights (ODIHR) has earlier recommended amendments to the electoral legislation in Montenegro in order to separate the party from the state. ODIHR also suggested to make sure the citizens know in advance whom they are voting for in order to prevent the parties from choosing their own MPs for half of the parliamentary seats after the elections.

Perhaps some party officials would then think twice about taking their severance pay.

Imagine how a majority of voters will vote on 29 March.

V.Ž.

Plenty of work on environmental protection (12 January) – Ministry of Tourism and Environmental protection said that by 2012 Montenegro should harmonise its legislation with EU laws on environmental protection, consisting of 125 regulations.

Improve public procurement system (16 January) – Montenegro progressed in the harmonization of its public procurement system with European standards, but in order to be able to manage funds directed to these purposes it would have to make further improvements, says European Commission.

Questionnaire by June? (19 January) – Montenegrin government might receive the European Commission Questionnaire comprising some 4 500 questions by June, i.e. by the end of the Czech Presidency, said the European Parliament's Rapporteur for Montenegro **Marcello Vernola**. "As for the prospect of getting the status of a candidate for EU membership in the course of this year, that will be impossible. Montenegro is making very good progress in the key reform areas, but it still has to consolidate the rule of law and strengthen the capacities of its executive", Vernola said.



photo VIJESTI

Marcello Vernola

Ahtisaari to mediate between Croatia and Slovenia (23 January) – European Commission appointed **Martti Ahtisaari**, the winner of the last years' Nobel Peace Prize to assist in resolving the border dispute between Croatia and Slovenia that caused the blockade of Croatia's accession negotiations with European Union. Slovenia says that in the documents it submitted to the EU in December 2008 Croatia prejudged the solution to the border row, and it consequently blocked the opening and closing of several chapters in the Croatian accession negotiations.

Visa liberalisation a priority (27 January) – MEP Jelko Kacin said Montenegro should now direct all of its efforts to fulfil the requirements for liberalising the visa regime and strengthen administrative capacities. He believes that Montenegro is capable of meeting the requirements for lifting visas even before achieving the candidate status. He said one should avoid the fate of Macedonia and instead work incessantly in order to receive not only the candidate status but also the date for the beginning of negotiations.

Crisis visit (27 January) – Representatives of the European Commission **Jose Leandro** and **Antonio Sanchez** visited Montenegro in order to collect data on the impact of the global financial crisis, measures undertaken in order to alleviate its effects and on the economic sectors that have suffered the most. The ministry of finance said that the visitors from Brussels judged the approach of the Montenegrin government to eliminating the negative effects of the economic crisis and business barriers positive.

HOW FAR IS MONTENEGRO FROM EU WITH REGARD TO THE STATUS AND RIGHTS OF THE PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Levelling the pavements is not enough



Will the European Union take severe measures to correct the lack of atten-



by Danilo Mihajlović

tion in Montenegro towards the needs and rights of persons with disabilities is soon to be seen – the Brussels institutions, unlike the Montenegrin officials, are sure to inquire into what the state did so far in this respect.

The Questionnaire that the European Commission will present to the Montenegrin authorities will

contain, among other, about 200 questions dealing directly with the situation of persons with disabilities.

According to the representatives of the Association of Persons with Disabilities, public administration is not likely to sweat too much over the answers to these questions, since Montenegro has only made the most modest steps in this direction.

They insist that the cornerstone laws to make the rights of persons with disabilities functional are still missing, and those that have been adopted are either partial or ignored.

"One of the measures of democracy in a society is also the extent to which its laws and the functioning of public institutions protect and provide adequate status



for the particularly vulnerable sections of the society, among which is certainly that of persons with disabilities", says in the interview for the *European Pulse* president of the Association of the Blind **Božidar Denda**.

According to the World Health Organisation, about 10% of all citizens are persons with disabilities, which implies that in Montenegro there should be about 60 000 such persons. The exact number is, however, unknown.

During the mandate of the Prime Minister **Željko Šturanović**, in September 2007, Montenegro signed the most important international act in this area – the United Nations Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities.

Although a year and a half has passed since, the Parliament has still not adopted the law on the ratification of this Convention.

"Not only did they fail to ratify the most important document in this area, but there are also no indications that it may happen any time soon. According to my sour-

PREJUDICE – ENEMY NO. 1

Representatives of persons with disabilities warn that neither the law nor European practice will be enough to easily overcome the public prejudice against persons with disabilities.

"Prejudices certainly exist, but we are fighting them through active media campaigns, Miranović said.

According to Denda, Montenegro is a "society fraught with traditionalist burdens".

"Prejudices we have against the things we know little about exist in every sphere of the society, and the persons with disabilities are no exception. It is in our mentality to form opinions without regard for the facts", he claims.

Denda said that the organisations of persons with disabilities are also partly responsible for this.

"The movement has the primary responsibility to deconstruct the mechanisms that give rise to prejudices and lack of awareness about persons with disabilities. Our organisations have realised that, and are working to dispel the prejudices", he said.

He emphasised the role of the "media war" against this phenomenon.

"The media are an important, useful partner of persons with disabilities, and I believe we will soon be able to enjoy the fruits of our struggle. It is not easy to deal with the citizens' beliefs, it is a complex, labyrinthine fight with an invisible enemy. An invisible obstacle is much bigger than the usual physical barriers we have to deal with every day", he said.

Resolution of this case is ongoing.



ces, such a law never made it to the Government's agenda, nor on the agenda of the relevant ministry. Until that is accomplished, the declared will expressed by the signing of this Convention will remain dead letter", Denda said.

The UN Convention is the key document setting the standards for the laws on the rights and needs of persons with disabilities in all EU countries.

In order to catch up a bit with the EU, Montenegro should urgently adopt a series of legal acts: laws on the prevention of discrimination on grounds of disability, a systemic law on the rights of persons with disabilities and a law on organisation of persons with disabilities.

"At the moment there is no foundational law protecting the human rights of such persons. The relevant pertinent provisions exists scattered across different regulatory fields, such as the law on child and social protection. This particular law, which was adopted three or four years ago, contains many inadequate and incomplete provisions. We also contest the status of these organisations set by the current reg-

ulatory framework. It doesn't make sense to treat the associations of blind, deaf and paraplegics as NGOs", Denda said.

He reminds three years ago the Law on the hazard games came into force, based on which the associations of persons with disabilities were entitled to 40% of the related revenues.

"This only a temporary solution, providing partial funds for the needs

of such persons. What we need is a systemic solution, providing a concrete, clear definition of the status of such organisations as well as stable, regular budget financing for these organisations. Right now, we always have to worry whether we will have enough money to pay the wages and electricity bills all year round", explains Denda.

Nebojša Miranović, assistant in the Association of the Paraplegics of Montenegro says the situation of the persons with disabilities is very precarious, but hopes for the better.

He maintains that in practice state provided support is "very low".

"By this I mean primarily rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, employment and social protection. The latter is by far the lowest in the region, and it does not cover even the most basic needs of persons with disabilities, which makes their situation very precarious", Miranović said.

He also added that the efforts to adapt the pavements created an illusion in the public that much is being done for persons with disabilities.

"On the contrary, this is just the

XENA STILL NOT ALLOWED INTO THE OFFICE

Organisations dealing with persons with disabilities accused the mayor of Podgorica **Miomir Mugoša** of violating the law when, in mid December, he banned the blind employee of the municipality **Marijana Mugoša** from coming to her workplace with a trained guide dog named **Xena**.

The law on the movement of blind persons with the help of a guide dog was adopted on the 4 March 2008 and it allows the entrance of such persons and their dogs to all official premises.

The mayor however said that it was not written anywhere that dogs can "enter the workplace" and that he will not allow Mariana to enter her office with Xena.

In the meantime, Mariana received support from all sides – starting with the researchers into the violation of human rights **Aleksandar Saša Zeković**, numerous NGOs and media, Croatian ambassador to Montenegro **Petar Turčinović** who invited Mariana and Xena to a dinner and the minister of health **Miodrag Radunović** who said that "we shouldn't have the laws if we are not going to obey them".

first step. In order to reach the pavement at all a person must first get out of the building, and very few have adequate facilities for persons with disabilities", Miranović said.

On the positive side, he reminded that last November the Government has adopted the National Strategy for Integration of Persons with Disabilities for the period 2008–2016 and the first two-year action plan, based on international documents and national legislation.

Denda is less hopeful about such programmes.

"This document is too general... The Strategy is a good framework act that has to be concretised and operationalised into much greater detail in practice. To what extent it will become reality depends on the political will and the concrete solutions provided by the future laws and action plans", he said.

The Strategy is a long term programme for all social actors in Montenegro for the development



on the civic society and its integration into broader international community.

The stated goal of the project is to improve the position of persons with disabilities and incorporate them into the society on an equal basis.

Denda warns that inadequate implementation of the adopted laws

cannot be blamed solely on the government, and is the responsibility of the entire society.

"There is a general lack of activism. The movement of the persons with disabilities should, in cooperation with other NGOs, international organisations, diplomatic corps and citizens in general insist that the government implements these regulations efficiently and consistently. I believe this was also the message of the director of Directorate for Western Balkans **Pierr Mirel**. This is not only important for all persons with disabilities, but for the entire Montenegrin society", Denda said.

He welcomes the fact that the adoption of certain laws has moved this process a little, but worries that these acts are still not being implemented.

"Some progress was made last year with the adoption of several regulations that are of vital importance for persons with disabilities. For instance, before the Law on training and employment of persons with disabilities there was not a single legal act that would effectively protect the rights of these people on the labour market", he said.

The problem, however, is that the law is being ignored.

Although it was adopted last summer, the law has not come into force yet, because the regulations are missing to ensure its implementation", Denda explained.

Similar laws have been adopted in all countries of the region.

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

FAR IS CHINA

Even China is an excellent example of a country dedicating much effort to the improvement of the situation of persons with disabilities. Currently there are 148 vocational schools for persons with disabilities and the associations of persons with disabilities on various levels organise about 2 000 institutions for the training of persons with disabilities.

The Chinese association of persons with disabilities announced that this country will, together with Italy, organise trainings for 80 Chinese teachers for education of persons with disabilities.

The Italian side will invest 660 000 euros and the Italian experts will introduce their Chinese colleagues with their methods of education, educational system, training of students, professional orientation as well as psychological assistance to persons with disabilities.

In addition to this, the two sides will work together to define the appropriate content for the training of teachers of vocational education for persons with disabilities.

WHAT IS THE MESSAGE A MAJORITY OF MONTENEGRIN CITIZENS SENDS OUT IN THE POLLS ON THEIR "MOOD FOR EUROPE"?

Running after money and leaders



Do the citizens of Montenegro really know why they want their country to be a member of the



by Neđeljko Rudović

European Union, or are they just blindly following political slogans? If the ruling parties decided Montenegro should join a union with Russia, Belarus, Ossetia and Abkhazia, would a majority of Montenegrin citizens support such integration? Is there really any awareness in Montenegro of what the European values stand for and what the European integration brings?

These are the question glaring out of the several public opinion polls conducted in late 2008, all of which unanimously confirm that the only and most important goal of joining EU is an increase in the living standards. On the other hand, the rule of law and a lawful state where everybody has equal chances and there is no privileged strata rank bottom of the list of priorities of an average Montenegrin citizen.

According to the poll conducted by the European Movement in Montenegro, 53.5% of the respondents said they support membership in the EU in the expectance of higher living standards. Integration, i.e. closer ties with the EU members come second, with 9.6%, then visa-free travel (9.3%), stronger economy (6.8%), rule of law (4.3%) and greater employment opportunities (1.4%).

It appears that the EU is predominantly seen in Montenegro as a kind

of a promised land. Looking at the examples of Bulgaria and Romania, one concludes that the citizens of Montenegro know little about European Union, for instance, they don't seem to know that the average wage in Bulgaria, which has been an EU member for the last two years, is lower than in Montenegro. The examples of Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Baltic and Central and Eastern European countries undoubtedly show that the standard of living grew in these countries after the accession, but also that many other things changed dramatically. And the most important novelty was that in these countries the courts started ruling according to the

"European values" are lacking Montenegro at the moment, both in practice and in the imagination – they only exist as a proclamation

law and not according to the orders of those in power; that they saw development of market economy and healthy competition instead of monopolies run by the circles gathered around authorities; that corruption became a crime and that professionals of various orientations gained a chance to contribute to their communities, via municipal or administrative channels, and not only through their party membership card.

Unfortunately, all these "European values" are lacking in Montenegro at the moment, in practice, and even in the imagination, as an objective – they only exist as a proclamation. This is perfectly consistent with the research of a renowned international agency Gallup which shows that in Montenegro, more than in any other country of the region, people think that giving bribe or using "connections" and power positions are perfectly acceptable ways of "doing business".

The Gallup poll showed that most

citizens of the Western Balkans believe that corruption is something inadmissible, except for Montenegro, where a majority of respondents believes corruption is acceptable, that using influence or private connections is perfectly normal, and an overwhelming majority thinks that in the cases of "necessity" (for instance, hospital treatment) such acts are more than defensible.

In response to the latter question, 53% of the respondents said using "connections" to ensure better treatment at the hospital was perfectly acceptable, 39% would give a small present, and 31% would offer money. In order to enroll their child in a good

school, 48% of the respondents said they were willing to use their connections and influence, 33% offer a present, and 27% money.

If we try to put together this data with the profile of an average Montenegrin supporter of European integrations, what we get is a weak-willed voter who absorbs the slogans hammered in by political leaders, who is unready to change his or her habits and is more willing to accommodate to all deviations in the society and seek his or her place under the wings of the powerful than to rise against them.

Perhaps the best answer to the question – To what extent are European values cherished in Montenegro? – is a detail from the Gallup poll showing that Montenegrins still have most sympathies for the country where democracy exists only on paper. Asked to pick the best friend of Montenegro among the big powers, most of the respondents (47.8%) chose Russia.

PROF DR SONJA BJELETIĆ ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC CRISIS ON EUROPEAN INTEGRATIONS

Crisis to strengthen Euroscepticism

The Dean of the Faculty of Administrative and European Studies Prof Dr **Sonja Bjelečić** warns that the global economic crisis could slow down European integration of the Western Balkans and Montenegro.

"The crisis will certainly influence the priorities of the European Union. In principle, whenever a country is in an economic crisis, economy comes first. The EU members have already been deeply shaken by the global economic crisis, and all analysts agree that more negative consequences are yet to come. This will strengthen Euroscepticism within EU which does not help the cause of further enlargement. Besides, Euroscepticism is also present in the candidate and potential candidate countries and as a rule such sentiments are more likely to flourish during the times of crises", Bjelečić said in the interview for *European Pulse*.

On the other hand, she added, the fact remains that the basis for EU accession lies in the fulfilment of



ects and programmes. There are plenty of examples to learn from in the recent history and the current situation in other countries".

● Can the process of European integrations also suffer because of the choices of the Montenegrin

Stabilisation and Association Agreement, would not intentionally slow down the process of rapprochement with EU.

However, just like in the case of EU itself, the crisis will determine the priority tasks, such as the maintenance of economic, political and social stability.

I would like to add that the consequences of this crisis as well as the reactions of individual countries, both develop and developing, including the states of the Western Balkans, will depend on the degree and quality of integrations and on the measures undertaken by these countries' governments and their institutions.

● In its latest report on the progress of Montenegro the European Commission was mostly praising developments in the economic sphere. On the other hand, in the Montenegrin public there is some criticism in this respect, mostly aimed at the existence of monopolies, lack of competitiveness of domestic products, corruption in the administration... What is your take on the current state of Montenegrin economy?

As for the findings of the European Commission, all I can say is – that's diplomacy. One should always be positive and only positive.

The structure of our economy is problematic in every respect.

Just look at the two pillars of our economy – the production of aluminium and tourism. Both are directly dependent on imported inputs, which makes our economy very vulnerable. Import imbalances need not be a problem if their

When a country is in an economic crisis, economy comes first. The EU members have already been deeply shaken by the global economic crisis, and all analysts agree that more negative consequences are yet to come. This will strengthen Euroscepticism within EU which does not help the cause of further enlargement. Besides, Euroscepticism is also present in the candidate and potential candidate countries and as a rule such sentiments are more likely to flourish during the times of crises

the conditions stipulated by EU for candidate and potential candidate countries.

"The fulfilment of these requirements, however, is also likely to be affected by the crisis. An economic downturn is never a good opportunity for realising major proj-

authorities, who might prefer to dedicate their efforts to the preservation of economic and social stability instead of adopting and implementing European legislation?

I believe that the current Montenegrin government, in line with the commitments from the

function is support development but this is simply not the case in Montenegro.

● According to you, why is it that Montenegro cannot attract more investment from the EU members?

There are several explanations.

One could be that the EU members are traditionally oriented towards some other destinations such as the Spanish coast, southern France...

One should bear in mind that the biggest share of capital is exchanged between big countries. In order to attract these countries, which are in principle suspicious about investing abroad, we need to have a good record of political and economic stability, and in this country many things still remain to be done.

European investors base the decisions on where to put their money on the official indicators provided by the EU institutions. These indicators clearly spell out



Building of the Faculty of Administrative and European Studies

Similarly, the tendency of the expansion of Russian capital in the area could have alienated some of the Western investors.

Russian capital came to Montenegro for the same reason the capital from the West did not

our shortcomings: corruption, nepotism, lack of the rule of law...

● Is Russian capital dangerous for Montenegro in terms of slowing

down European integrations?

The Russian capital came to Montenegro for the same reason the capital from the West did not.

As a realistic expression of the situation in two transition countries, one large and one small, this capital only saw a suitable soil here.

The question of whether it is dangerous for Montenegro and whether it slows down European integrations is rather controversial – you must always think of the realistic options and consider the de facto position of this country. This is clearly a rapidly expanding economy which is gaining ever more influence on the world map... The whole of Europe, for instance, is dependent on Russia in energy terms.

In my opinion, any capital, even our own is dangerous for European integrations as long as you don't have a stable system, rule of law, functioning institutions...

V. ŽUGIĆ

TOO MUCH POLITICS IN EDUCATION

● The EU stresses a lot the importance of education. As a dean, what do you see as the biggest problems of our education?

The problem number one is the quality of education, which is closely related to the fact that not enough is being invested in education.

Simply put, quality takes money.

Knowledge is a real chance for this country. It could make up for many of its shortcomings, starting with the size.

● What is EU's opinion of higher education in Montenegro?

European Ministerial Commission re-evaluates our educational system every two years. We know exactly what the problems are: an inadmissibly high level of politicisation of education as well as the lack of clear-cut criteria focused on professional ethics and expertise.

The idea of Europe



Contem-
plation of the
attitude towards
different and
other as a ques-
tion of political



by Vladimir Pavićević

life and its development is first found in ancient Greece, whose myths give us insight into their deliberations on different issues, and into the origin of the word "Europe" as denoting a certain geographic area. Some of the qualities the ancient Greeks associated with the term "Europe" many centuries before Christ have been preserved until today. This is why the story which inspired ancient Greeks to deliberate about Europe is still interesting as the foundation of the link between this myth and the idea of Europe.

The story has it that **Europe** was a daughter of the Phoenician king **Agenor** and the favourite of the supreme god **Zeus**. Europe often played on the seaside. One day, while she was picking flowers, she attracted Zeus' attention. The father of all gods fell in love with Europe and, in order

From the moment the term Europe was used to denote a certain territory, somebody's country or a clearly delineated area, it also clearly linked that territory to a variety of traditions and values

to get closer to her, he turned into a beautiful white bull that exuded the smell of roses and saffron. The girl, feeling no fear, approached the beautiful animal and caressed it, and with a bunch of flowers in her hands she climbed on its back.

In that moment, the bull rushed into the sea, further away from the Phoenician shore. Accompanied by Poseidon, Amphitrite, Aphrodite and a suite of Nereids signing wedding songs, Zeus carried Europe to the island of

Crete. In the cave of Dictea, under the platans, Zeus was united with his love, who later gave birth to three sons: **Minos**, **Rhadamanthus** and **Sarpedon**. In order to make their love eternal, the father of gods order the platans of Crete never to shed their leaves and that the part of the world to which the island of Crete belonged should be named after his beloved Europe.

At the basis of this myth is the fact that during Antiquity Europe was used to describe the part of the world inhabited by Greeks, but not by barbarians. The name of the daughter of the Phoenician king Agenor was used to make a clear distinction between sensible Greeks who toiled to arrange the political life of their communities consciously and autonomously, and barbarians who still looked upon their rulers as divine messengers, shielded

The story has it that Europe was a daughter of the Phoenician king Agenor and the favourite of the supreme god Zeus

by the supra-human nature of their power from all critique and opposition.

But the story also tells us something more important: from the moment the term Europe was used to denote a certain territory, somebody's country or a clearly delineated area, it also linked that territory to diverse tra-

ditions and values. The symbolic unity of a Phoenician princess that gave her name to the continent and the supreme Greek god set forever the pattern of European heteroglossia. Already then, while it worked conscientiously on building its authentic values, Europe left its borders open for the influences from the East.

Early on, Europe was that part of the world whose inhabitants' civilisation, great achievements in various scientific disciplines and different way



of life made Eurocentrism into a dominant factor of political thinking for the epochs to come.

Understanding the content of the myth shows us the side of the story that opens onto the symbolic plane of

development of the European spirit and European values. But true analysis requires more realistic and, if possible, factual elements. It directs us to the etymology of the word Europe and its position in relation to another, bigger and richer entity. The Asian continent was always the other in relation to whom Europe was building its identity, the continent that harboured such civilisations in relation to which Europe was a miserable periphery. It is no surprise, then, that even the root of its name, *ereb*, comes from Arabs who used it to denote the territory where the sun sets, i.e. the western part of the Eurasian land.

From this perspective, the idea of Europe comes from those times where Europe had to measure itself against the bigger, stronger other. In the reflection of its model it could see its own mistakes and shortcomings and, insisting on its differences, succeeded in becoming better and more fertile.

Europe grew and expanded, encompassed new territories and different peoples, until its growth met its natural limitations: seas to the north, west and south, and the Ural mountain to the east. The legal system of the Roman empire integrated the European continent through a single framework of legal norms which were administered from a single centre. With the fall of the empire the idea of a single political space disappears, and is dormant until the appearance of the Franks who by the rule of force tried to reunite all European peoples under one idea and one ruler. Precisely in this period we see the birth of the idea of Europe in its recognisable, articulated form that will later inspire many authors to deliberate on its origin.

William Penn, for instance, in late XVII century offers a theory on the present and future peace in Europe. The idea of peace was indeed to feature in many later discussions on the development of the European continent, which embodied so many different lifestyles that sometimes the differences would become irreconcilable and lead to conflicts. The very insistence on peace in the writing of great minds testifies to its scarcity in the real life. In early XVIII century friar **Abbe de Saint Pierr** writes about a lasting peace among European nations, while **Kant** later tries to elaborate on the prerequisites for eternal peace.

Between the two world wars Austrian count **Coudenhove Kalergi** was particularly keen on the idea of Europe and founded his Paneuropean movement, whose mission was to create a single European state, based on the leading idea of the American experiment – IN PLURIBUS UNUM. In addition to him, other contemporary leaders, such as **Brian** and **Stresemann** advocated establishment of a European federation, but were prevented in their efforts by other events which violently obstructed European integration. In the 1940s the biggest world tragedy of all times – World War II – swept the continent, with catastrophic consequences to all



sides. European cities were ruined, its economy destroyed, people starving and their lives marked by all-encompassing despair.

The end of the war brought little relief. In the spring of 1950 it seemed that Europe was nearing the end of its historical glory. One war followed another. With the beginning of the cold War, the fears of the potential conflict between the East and the West part of the continent threatened Europe. Five years after the end of the World War II, the former enemies were still far from a truce.

What was to be done in order

What was to be done in order to avoid the mistakes of the past and to create the foundations of a lasting peace among yesterday's foes? The core of the problem lied in the relations between France and Germany

to avoid the mistakes of the past and to create the foundations of a lasting peace among yesterday's foes? The core of the problem lied in the relations between France and Germany. There was a need for a link between these two countries, a link that could at the same time bring together all other free countries of Europe into a single community that could guarantee peace in Europe. **Jean Monnet** was the one who, with his unique negotiating skills, suggested to the French Foreign Affairs Minister **Robert Schuman** and German chancellor **Konrad Adenauer**

the creation of a community for joint exploitation of coal and steel. The community was based on common interests and was controlled by an independent agency. The proposal was officially put forward by France on 9 May 1950, and was eagerly accepted by Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg.

The treaty establishing the first European Community, European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was signed in April 1951 in Paris. The treaty opened the doors for the future achievements in the integration of Europe. The progress that followed in

the years to come led to the creation of the European Union as we know it today. In the beginning of the XXI century the European unity has to face a new dilemma, which concerns the depth of integration this structure can support. The question of the harmonious European entity stands or falls on the scope and content of values that the European societies really have in come.

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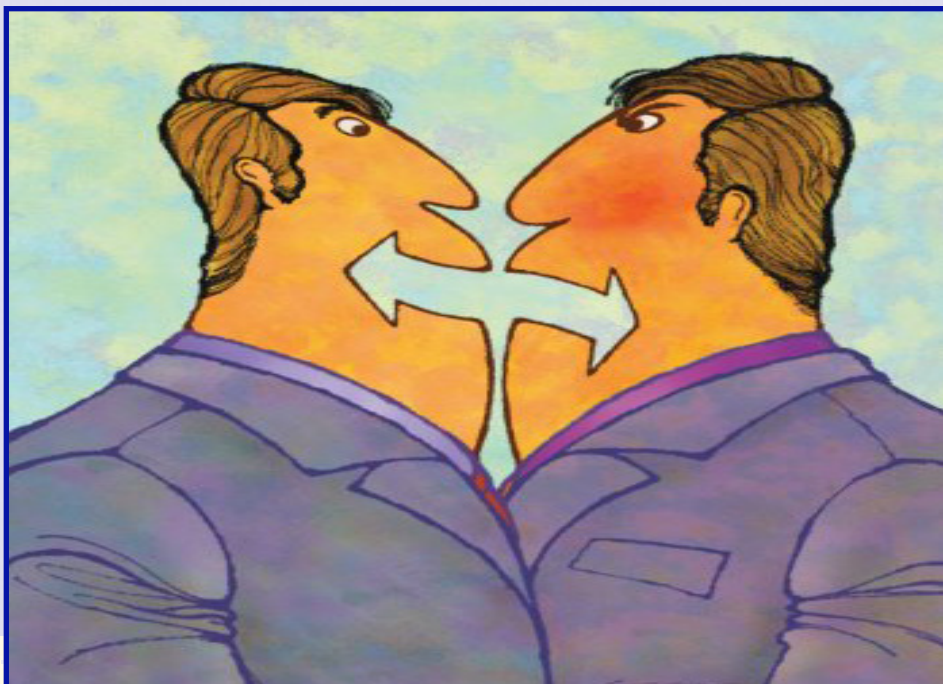
Communication campaign

by Brano Mandić

I like seminars. As an old pulloverist and misanthrope, I'm always glad to sneak into some session, watching the people watch the powerpoint reality of a hotel wall in some seaside or mountain resort, depending whether it's about European or Atlantic integrations.

I also make jokes during such seminars, which is the classical defence mechanism, an infantile regression unavoidable when I find myself in the critical mass of tie-strangled wretches citing John Stuart Mill, Miodrag Vuković or Oriana Fallaci.

For all those who were never at such events, I have to tell you that there are no more keys in hotels, everything works with a card. If you put it in your rear pocket, next to the mobile, it can de-magnetise, and then you have to go to the reception to say "Schlüssel-Sie"... If the seminar is also a part of the Communication Strategy, all the better – the Government decided to educate you: rejoice, the chosen one.



ed party ace on top of it, you're on the horse, in both the literal and slang meaning of the word.

You learned to peck off the Swedish table and when the Kingdom of Sweden joined European Union. It's your responsibility, that's also true, to spread the knowledge further down to

goal is to be simple and interesting, don't do something you call "Communication Strategy", and don't repeat that in every newspaper. And don't bring Lipka to agitate for the NATO until he tells us all about his property in Montenegro... But the worst part comes when you hear the tone in which they talk about integrations. It is the exalted, invocative cry to the political muse to descend on the speaker; a neo-platonic tremens in Dionysian trans; and all that sprinkled with a little mention of the restoration of statehood etc. That's how we speak about integrations.

This is why I would like to share here the precious experience from one of these seminars where I had the chance to listen to Dragan Đurić, flatly introduced as an expert in EU profession. It was the first time somebody was telling me without pathos about one relatively boring administrative process, deprived of everything but flourishing bureaucratic mess and routinely used to conceal the core of the whole process – raw political power, the mother and stepmother of the final decision in Brussels.

How does the state explain integrations to the citizens? Through its Communication Strategy. The first mistake is to give names like that. If your ultimate goal is to be simple and interesting, don't do something that's called "Communication Strategy", and don't repeat that in every newspaper. And don't bring Lipka to agitate for NATO until he tells us all about his property in Montenegro

I imagine the local officials of the Democratic Party of Socialists packing their dressing cases, going for the business trip and wondering out loud that they couldn't think of anything better. It seems the seminars, trainings and trainings of trainers, with flipcharts and coloured pens, are the only way. When you go back to your village, you stick the diploma under the Montenegrin coat of arms, and your old office seems somehow smaller. It's clear – you deserve something better. Your CV is getting really cool, and if you're a test-

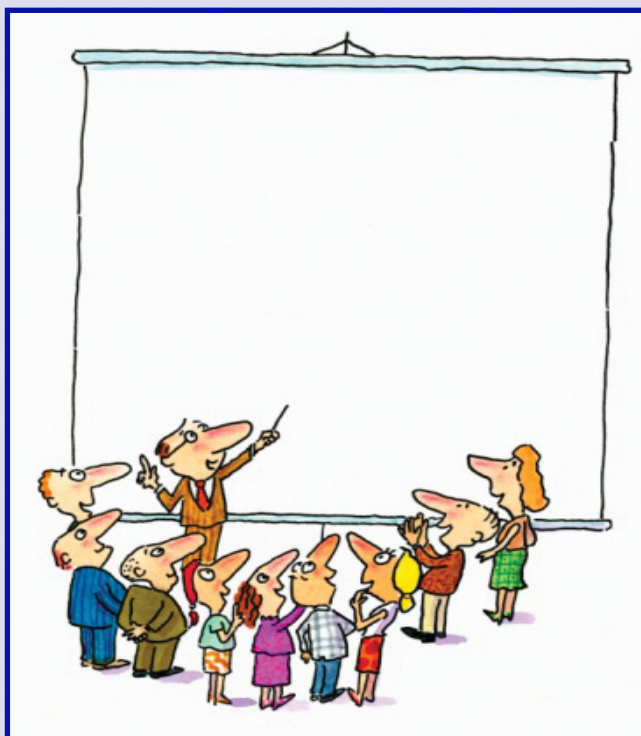
your associates until every citizen has attended at least one seminar and we're all capable of something crucial, like writing projects for IPA.

In conclusion, seminars are a wonderful way to relax and also learn a bit of something, touched that we don't have to be at work we are paid to do.

Now the question is, how does the state explain integrations to the citizens? Through its Communication Strategy. The first mistake is to give things names like that. If your ultimate

In a word – only those who know the process well and are not on the waiting list for party-administered housing can demystify the process. Then you can listen to them without yawning.

Since our politicians have repeatedly demonstrated in various polls that they mostly have no clue about European Union, it is to be expected that they are a little afraid of their ignorance. And the best way to hide your fear is to raise your voice a little, throw out your chest and embark on a long litany in the sports hall of a primary school in Zagorič, for instance. The plebs will be satisfied. You will give them the sense that we are about to enter something at least as awesome as the tsarist Russia, where we'll finally be able to participate in the events decisive for the future of humanity, and, like in the old textbooks "balance between the East and the West".



fire... Pity those journalists who will have to record, copy and publish all that.

Truth be told, shamefully it will always be more interesting to listen to some newly baked "expert" blabbering

The election campaign will leave napalm-spots on the brains of all those who will follow it, and the European tirades will drag the awareness of EU to at least two steps backward. Ignoramuses will speak about the EU, they will flood all televisions, litter every paper. They will build again and again one pornographic version of the progress of the state

That our civilised man still waits for us to wash and spruce up ourselves a little before we can even travel and trade on the European continent is of secondary importance – our inner shortcomings will solve themselves of their own accord the moment our application is accepted.

The election campaign, therefore, will leave napalm-spots on the brains of all those who will follow it, and the European tirades will drag awareness of EU at least two steps backward. Ignoramuses will speak about the EU, they will flood all televisions, litter every paper. They will build again and again one pornographic version of the progress of our state, they will spit

about Europe than to leaf through the boring brochures planted by the Government in daily papers and post boxes...

Most importantly, only the chosen ones will be able to travel abroad and learn on the spot how easy it is to understand an orderly state, how difficult to become one. Or, to cite **Vojo Stanić**: "It's difficult to be a genius, but it's easy for them".

Among the chosen ones are naturally our party leaders. But they haven't understood the basics, they have no business going to **Leopold Maurer** so he can help them fight for basic human rights, like living in a country with a Constitution. Of course Maurer will lis-

ten to them, pat them on the shoulder and in the best case he'll put a note or two in his secret notebook, if he has one and keeps it locked away as a draft for future memoirs from exotic parts. It's all one big farce where everything is an illusion of political dynamism and happenings while the real decisions are made under the table. And the voters know that, and it's no wonder that they keep voting in those who are the best at backstage intrigues, the corrupt bosses of a world which rose too high for media conferences.

The citizens will again spot the villains and circle their names, and all that's left for the opposition is to call on for everybody to vote for the ruling coalition and thus at least draw the attention of the international community to themselves by this charming little gesture for history. Until the homo ludens breaks out of the ranks of the opposition, one cannot expect the "ordinary citizens" to find the will to poke fun at the mighty machine.

Instead of that, we are going to listen once again to the grumpy whining and armchair rebels whose only desire is to squeeze themselves into the parliament benches, the best workplace without any responsibilities and with supreme benefits. It's been long since there's nothing strange in Montenegro about people voting in a government that destroys its own economy. It's boring even to talk about it. Let's all gather instead around the Aluminium Combine and say – it was an excellent privatisation, all thanks to Government of Montenegro, we wish you another four years of successful rule.

It's still better than listening to whether the opposition will go on a single ticket or on three tickets. Who cares, people, keep something to yourselves!

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

MONTENEGRO'S ECONOMY

Not quite a crash, but the fallout from the world's economic slowdown may be large

The Economist

A recent Montenegrin video, released on the internet, shows two shrieking teenagers filming the speedometer of their car as they roar through a tunnel at 260kph. Although the appearance of the film earned the boys criminal charges, at least they did not crash. In a curious manner, the video mirrors Montenegro's present fate. After three years of breakneck growth, the economy is rapidly slowing down. It has not quite crashed—but the aftershocks could still be nasty.

The capital, Podgorica, has been expanding fast in recent years. Flats and offices have sprouted all round the city's edge as developers flush with cash from sales of villas and apartments on the coast to Russian, British and other investors have poured the proceeds into new property. But in the past few months, as the number of foreigners investing in coastal property has dried up, so has the cash. Workers at many building sites across the city have lost their jobs. Property prices have fallen by 50% or more.

Down by the coast things are as bad or worse. Planned developments, many aimed at rich Russians, have been scaled back, though the government hopes to lure Gulf Arab investors to take their place. Growth figures say it all. In 2006, the year it declared independence, Montenegro's economy grew by 8.6%. In 2007 it accelerated to 10.7%. Last year the government forecast 8%, but the correct figure will be lower. And in 2009 the

government is planning for growth of only 5%—and the IMF is talking of a mere 2%.

That will be disappointing to the Montenegrins, even if in these hard times some growth is better than none. But the government is also grimly aware that, besides coping with the general fallout from the global financial crisis, it faces two home-grown problems. The biggest is a huge aluminium factory on the edge of Podgorica. Its fumes are toxic, it makes a loss and it consumes gargantuan quantities of subsidised electricity. It is controlled by **Oleg Deripaska**, a Russian tycoon well known in Britain and elsewhere, who is now locked in disputes with the Montenegrins. Aluminium prices have crashed; unless he keeps getting subsidised electricity from the government, he will, he says, have to shut the whole place down.

In any other country this might not be front-page news. The problem for tiny Montenegro, with a population of only 650,000, says **Saša Popović**, an economist, is that the factory and its related industries account for a vast 40% of GDP. So its closure would be a huge political blow to the government of **Milo Đukanović**, the prime minister.

He has already been embarrassed by a second matter. In December the government had to bail out a troubled

bank owned, in large part, by his brother and, to a lesser extent, by his sister and himself. That Prva Banka was considered the family bank lured large numbers of people, companies and even government departments to transfer their accounts to it. But the end of the boom means that many of the bank's borrowers cannot pay back their debts. "We are very nicely packaged from the outside," says **Daliborka Uljarević**, executive director of Centre for Civic Education, "but when you open the box it does not look so nice inside."

Gordana Đurović, Montenegro's Europe minister, admits that the bank affair seems "unusual" but insists that no laws were breached and that the cost of doing nothing was higher than the cost of doing something. Understandably she is keener to talk about good news. Just before Christmas Montenegro lodged a formal application for the status of candidate to join the European Union. Formal candidacy is "realistic" by December, claims Ms Đurović.

Montenegro may by then have a new government. An election may even be called for March 29th. Mr Đukanović is currently riding high in the polls, but much of that reflects the disarray of the opposition rather than his own personal popularity. Mr Popović reckons that Montenegro's economy may not crash but go into a kind of hibernation. That might give the opposition a chance to reorganise and make up lost ground—which explains why the prime minister may choose to go to the country sooner rather than later.



A toxic red aluminium lake

Tim JUDAH

A DECADE LATER, THE GOVERNMENT OF MONTENEGRO ADOPTS SOME OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CONVENTIONS CONCERNING ENVIRONMENT

Arhus and ESPOO finally in Podgorica

EVROPSKI REPORTER

After more than a decade of dragging its feet, the Montenegrin government has finally adopted and submitted to the Parliament for discussion the proposal for ratification of what may well be the two most important international regulations regarding environmental protection: the Arhus and ESPOO conventions.

Just before the New Years', the Government adopted the draft laws for the ratification of the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (the so-called Arhus convention) and ratification of the Protocol on the Strategic Evaluation of Environmental Impact in the Cross-border Contexts (ESPOO convention).

The Arhus Convention, officially known as Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation

in Decision Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, was adopted by the United Nations and the European Commission on the 25 June 1998 at the ministerial conference "Environment for Europe" in the Danish city of Arhus.

The rationale of the Convention states that this document was adopted "in order to contribute to the protection of the right of all

After more than a decade of dragging its feet, the Montenegrin government has finally adopted and submitted to the Parliament for discussion the proposal for ratification of what may well be the two most important international regulations regarding environmental protection: the Arhus and ESPOO conventions

present and future generations to live in an environment suitable for their health and survival".

It is clearly stated that "all sides ought to guarantee the right to access information, public participation in the decision-making process and access to justice in the matters

of the protection of the environment".

The convention lays out detailed obligations for every country and its citizens in this respect.

In short, it envisages that all citizens ought to have correct information on the event and activities that might have an impact on the quality of the environment, human and animal health, and the right of the citizens to participate in the decision making process when defining plans and programmes

concerning the environment. It also provides the right to recourse to the judicial solutions when such rights have been violated.

What it means is that the information on the state of the environment cannot remain hidden, that the procedures for accessing them must be shortened and that those who aspire to conceal such information will be order by the court to make them public.

"Most of our regulations incorporate provisions from the Arhus convention. Almost all regulations stipulate the obligation to inform the public or involve the public in the decision making, and whatever some additional commitments the Convention brings Montenegro is ready to implement them", says the deputy minister for tourism and environmental protection **Siniša Stanković**. Asked why they postponed it for so long, Stanković retorts that



the Convention is "rather demanding and that a failure to meet its requirements entails severe consequences".

He rejected all suggestions that the Aarhus convention was postponed on purpose in order to protect the interests of investors.

"First of all, Montenegro is only independent since 2006. We have no reason to fear the participation of the public. We are not even supposed to change too much because of the amendments to the law following the ratification of this Convention, as we have already incorporated the provisions regarding public access to information. It is a different thing whether the public is interested in making use of their legally sanctioned rights", Stanković said.

Espoo Convention binds neighbouring countries to mutual exchange of information and consultations on all bigger projects that might have a cross-border impact

Aarhus Convention has explicit provisions on free access to information with regard to environment and public participation in decision making in this area

on the environment. It obliges all signatories to make detailed assessments of the environmental impact in the early phases of their activities and to share such information with other countries.

Espoo is relevant for all social, industrial and energy-related undertakings in all signatories, regardless whether they are "countries of origin", "affected parties" or "interested parties".

The convention takes its name from the city of Espoo in Finland where it was adopted in 1991. It came into force in 1992.

This is the first multi-lateral agreement establishing the procedures for the assessment of the environmental impact across the state borders ahead of time, i.e.



while the project in question is still being drafted. It also establishes the rights and obligations of the neighbouring countries in case when a certain activity has a negative

impact across the border. "Impact" is defined here as a consequence of a certain activity on the environment, including consequences for the human health and safety, flora and fauna, land, air, waters, climate, landscape and historical monuments

Espoo Convention binds neighbouring countries to mutual exchange of information and consultations on all bigger projects that might have a cross-border impact on the environment

or other buildings. Among the projects requiring clearance on the basis of the Espoo convention are oil refineries, coal-based power stations, nuclear power stations, plants for the production and enrichment of nuclear fuels, chemical plants, highways, oil and gas pipelines, commercial harbours, large dams

and accumulations, paper production, mining of coal and metal ores, as well as large-scale exploitation of forests.

"We have recently joined this Convention and last year in Bucharest we also signed a contract with the states from the region additionally regulating these issues. In addition to being a pre-condition for EU membership, this convention is also very important for Montenegro from the standpoint of the possible threats arising from the activities in the neighbouring countries, for instance the construction

of a nuclear power-plant in Albania. From now on, they are obliged to inform us about all plans in that regard and on the safety measures they are implementing to ensure absolute safety of this project ", Stanković said.

Dejan PERUNIČIĆ

WHY DO I WANT TO BE A CITIZEN OF EUROPEAN UNION

The dream of Promised Land



What do you teach your children when they are small?

You teach them not to touch the food on the



by Violeta Marniku

table when the guests are in the house, not to take too many sweets when you're visiting others and so forth.

And what do you teach them when they grow up a little?

You teach them to tailor their desires according to the opportunities.

This is where the educative determination one generation, the one that suffered through inflation, queues for bread and food coupons, faltered. Mostly because of their own frustrations and lives of privation, because of TV series such as "Better Life", "Happy People" and "Family Treasure", because of the children of mafia bosses who sported shiny branded trainers tucked into their pants and thick golden chains around their necks, the parents of the children who grew up in the nineties were dreaming aloud about big fortunes, better future, "the first of the month", all that once we become Europe.

The Europe they dreamed of was not simply a matter of geography. This Europe, which like a mirage hovered now nearer now farther from us was a promised land, with "chocolate houses"... As if our people forgot the old proverb: A promise is a comfort to a fool.

This is how parents broken by the burdens of transition who, often in the absence of basic provisions, fed themselves on the belief in progress (and probably pathos) with the best of intentions managed to breed a generation of young, capable, intelligent (and, if not always intelligent at least diligent) people, who are intent to find out about the lives of these "cousins" of ours in Europe.

And if the road to hell is paved with good intentions, the road to the EU is paved with promises of visa facilitation. And other similar fairytales...

So these young people are now at pains to learn everything about integrations, institutions, organisations, processes... all in order to bring their country a step closer to the promises. They are reading and memorising all fundamental treaties, printing handbooks, organising lectures, trainings, conferences, cocktails... the lucky ones also get to go to "their" trainings, conferences, cocktails... all in order to prove that the "hills of Balkans" do not only breed hillbillies, that we can also produce refined, intelligent, prosperous people, who know their manners and foreign languages and all the big titles and abbreviations that you, the gentlemen from the EU, are so fond of wielding.

These same young people, every time they get a chance to represent their country, spend days on collecting piles of documents and waiting in the queues in front of embassies. There they are met by the first obstacles in the guise of rude officers, whose looks and suspicious questions make them look rather like the

police investigators dealing with criminals than helpful administrators who are there to make our trip to "Europe" easier.

Provided that you obeyed every deadline, submitted all documents, secured a royal ransom as a guarantee for the trip and had the right stars move into your Zodiac sign, you may get to live through that magic moment when the secretary carelessly flings you your passport with an offensively short term visa, and you are ready to go and represent your country.

At the said conference or meeting you will be listening carefully, impress others with your rhetorical skills or witty remarks or questions, you lobby, raise funds, support, in short – you make a great impression about your entire country.

But then, the time comes when you have to return to this same country, and nobody will care about your successes and brilliant impressions... All they want from you is to put up your photos on Facebook and obey your superiors. Because they were a bit luckier, they were born in some other families and they also have a toothbrush the colour of lavender which was listed in the job announcement as a necessary prerequisite for the job.

Why do we all want to be citizens of Europe?

So we can travel? With what money?

So we can work there? Why, if the EU doesn't know what to do with its own workers?

To have our children there? Why, if sooner or later we will also be EU?

Will we ever be equal? Is it important that we are equal?

We're introducing European institutions, copying European laws, but it all ends up a little lopsided here in the Western Balkans... We're trying everything to become European...but it's just not sticking to us...

The author is an associate of Centre for Civic Education. She attended the VIII generation of European Integrations School



The art that shook EU

One part of the controversial mosaic placed by the Czech EU presidency in the foyer of the Council of EU in Brussels that depicted Bulgaria as a squat toilet has been covered with a black curtain.

It was done on the request of Bulgaria which protested against the way it was portrayed in this provocative installation executed by the Czech artist **David Cerny**.

The exhibit consists of a mosaic made of geographic shapes of the EU member states. Italy is represented as a football field, France's map is emblazoned with the word "strike", Romania is a Dracula theme park, Denmark is constructed from Lego-blocks, Sweden is a do-it-yourself IKEA furniture flatpack, Greece is in flames, the Netherlands as a sea with minarets rising from the waves, Germany is a network of motorways arranged in the shape of a swastika. United Kingdom, commonly considered the most Eurosceptic EU member, is not on the map at all.

Traditionally, countries that hold the

EU presidency construct a decoration or sculpture in Brussel's EU quarter, but so far these have gone unnoticed. The exhibition was supposed to be a joint work of artists representing all 27 EU members, but two days after it was unveiled it turned out that Cerny lied about the names and biografies of other artists and constructed everything on its own with two friends.



Protect Mediterranean cuisine

European Parliament has recently proposed to include Mediterranean food on the UNESCO's list of non-material cultural heritage.

Mediterranean cuisine decreases the risk of heart diseases, diabetes and cancer, and offsets the symptoms of Alzheimer and

Parkinson diseases, said the liberal German MEP Jorgo Chatzimarkakis.

European Commission has already supported inclusion of the Mediterranean cuisine in the list of the world cultural heritage, but the decision formally belongs to UNESCO.

Irish change of opinion

According to a public opinion poll conducted in December, majority of Irish votes, 55% is planning to support the Lisbon Treaty on the new referendum which is scheduled for autumn.

The research showed that 37% would reject the treaty again, while 15% remains

undecided.

According to the media, the change of mind was largely influenced by the economic crisis. Many were shocked at the recent decision of the Dell company to relocate its facilities from Limerick to Poland, laying off 1 900 workers in Ireland.

Employed by wind

Employment in the wind-energy industries in Europe is expected to grow more than twofold by 2020, providing 330 000 jobs, shows the report of the European Wind Energy Association (EWEA).

In the framework of the EU programme for halting climate change and decreasing its dependence on gas and oil imports, by 2020 some 12% of the overall energy consumed in EU will be produced

from renewable sources.

The wind energy sector employed 108 600 people in 2007, 59% in the production of turbines and the rest in installation, maintenance, project development and research.

Most of these jobs are concentrated in Germany, Spain and Denmark, the home countries of several companies that first started to employ new technologies.

Facebook worries in EU

Young Europeans using Facebook and other social networking sites may be unwittingly risking their privacy, according to a warning from **Jacques Barrot**, a vice president of the European Commission responsible for matters concerning justice, freedom and security in the EU.

The alarm comes amid an outpouring of concern from parents and privacy advocates about the potentially negative effects of posting personal details and photographs to popular Web sites accessible from virtually any computer. Youth job prospects have become a particular concern now that employers trawl social networking sites to discover details about whether potential employees are suitable hires.

EU officials also are concerned that information collected from such sites could be used by companies to flood consumers with unsolicited advertising or used by government agencies to compromise citizens' civil liberties.

Fewer cars

The number of new car registered in Europe in 2008 was 7.8% lower than in 2007, which is the biggest drop in the last 15 years, reported the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association.

According to their data, in 2008 14.71mn cars were registered in Europe.

In the "old Europe" (EU 15 and EFTA) there was a decrease of 8.4% while in the "new Europe" (new member states and Croatia) it was only 0.7%.

In Western Europe the only growing markets were Finland, Portugal, Belgium, Luxembourg and Switzerland. In all other countries there was a drop in sales, ranging from 0.7% in France to 43.3% in Iceland.

Among the 11 new member states seven are "above red" with the highest growth recorded in Slovakia – 17.3%. In Poland the growth was 9.4%, 8.4% in the Czech Republic, 6.8% in Croatia and 4.6% in Slovenia.

Ranked by brand, the best selling car was Volkswagen with 1 570 583 cars sold or 10.7% of the market, followed by Ford, Opel, Renault, Peugeot and Fiat.

THE GAS CRISIS REVEALS RUSSIA'S "DIVIDE AND RULE" STRATEGY TOWARDS EU

Gas EU's weakest link

The recent standoff between Moscow and Kiev over gas has shown once again that using energy as a tool, Russia is increasingly able to influence EU decision-making, relying on the good old "divide and rule" tactics.

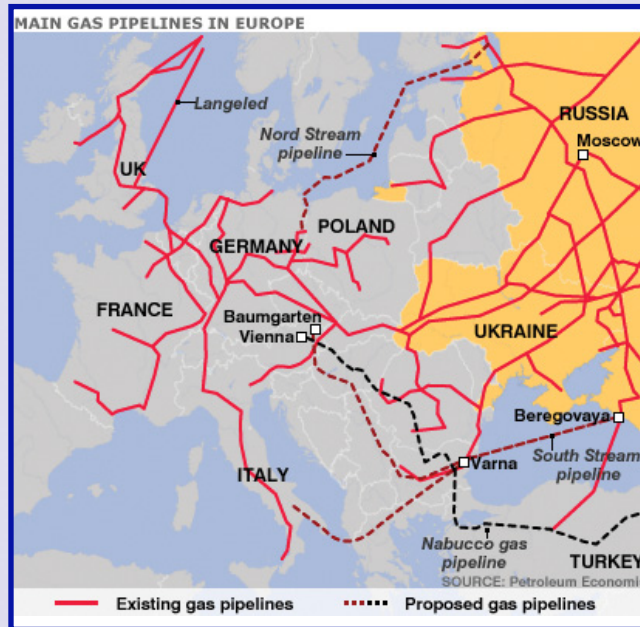
Emboldened by the flow of petrodollars (and euros) in recent years, Russia has revealed ambitions to block plans to bring gas from Central Asia into the EU, bypassing Russian territory.

In addition, Russia is devising plans to avoid unfriendly transit countries. The Nord Stream and South Stream pipelines under the Baltic and the Black Sea are part of this strategy. The policy would also allow Moscow to keep traditional transit countries under pressure, as supplies to those states could be cut without affecting deliveries to the West.

Sympathy with or antipathy towards Russia may not represent the main disruptive force within the EU at the moment, but there is obvious readiness on Russia's part to engage in pipeline projects with countries such as Italy, Austria, Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Germany and Slovenia. Conversely, Moscow clearly intends to isolate critics such as Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and the three Baltic states.

The Georgian crisis of August 2008 revealed that Russian leaders did not fear the imposition of EU sanctions on their country. The Kremlin would expect "friendly" countries like Italy, which is central to the Gazprom jigsaw, to veto all hard-hitting decisions.

Yet the EU's moderate criticism of Russia for its "disproportionate" response to an "irresponsible" Georgian attack on its breakaway regions of



Abkhazia and South Ossetia was probably the right decision, as the alternative appeared to be a return to Cold

The EU only produces a quarter of the gas it consumes. It imports another quarter from Russia, 16% from Norway and 15% from Algeria, with the remainder coming from Libya, Nigeria and Central Asia. From this perspective, the Union's dependence on Russian gas does not appear to be quite so dramatic: unless figures for individual countries are considered. While Spain does not import any Russian gas at all, Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Finland supply 100% of their gas needs from Russia

War rhetoric. Nevertheless, the influence of energy dependence over decisions made by individual EU countries cannot be ignored, despite being difficult to measure.

Perhaps the most visible indication that Russia has regained influence in Europe came from NATO members' opposition to giving Georgia and Ukraine clear membership perspectives in April 2008. According to observers, it was the first time that a non-NATO member – Russia – had been able to veto an American proposal to expand the alliance.

The European Commission's Se-

cond Strategic Energy Review, unveiled on 13 November 2008, warns that Europe will continue to rely on oil and gas imports until 2020, despite efforts to switch to a low-carbon economy.

Europe has a strong interest in a well-functioning global oil market based on transparency and reasonable, predictable prices. For gas, however, reliance on pipelines creates interdependence along the supply chain, the review warns.

In response, the EU is seeking a balanced energy partnership with Russia and is pushing for the renewal of a wide-ranging Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), which includes energy relations as part of a broader trade arrangement.

The EU is concerned that Russian companies are limiting their investment in developing new oil and gas fields. It is also worried about the legal difficulties encountered by European companies investing in Russia, such as Shell and BP, which have been forced to sell key assets to Gazprom to keep their operations going.

However, the Georgia crisis of August 2008 showed that "friendly" European countries were unwilling to go too far in imposing economic sanctions and freezing negotiations over the new EU-Russia basic treaty.

Should Russia fall short of its

export commitments in the next few years, not only would gas prices soar, but Moscow would be able to cherry-pick individual European countries to which to sell its gas, leaving others in the dark. The European Commission also admits that there is currently no definitive emergency plan at EU level to deal with short-term supply shortfalls or disruptions. Should Lisbon Treaty be ratified, a mechanism would be introduced to increase solidarity among EU members "if severe difficulties arise in the supply of certain products, notably in the area of energy". Also, it was recently confirmed that consensus has been reached in the European Parliament to create another top EU job, that of high official for foreign policy on energy security. The new office would be part of a future 'Foreign Minister's Office' created under the Lisbon Treaty.

Unlike oil, which can be easily shipped in containers, gas is a commodity which is more difficult both to transport and to store. Despite efforts to shift to Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), the technology remains relatively expensive and pipelines remain of primary importance, both economically and geopolitically.

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From this perspective, the Union's dependence on Russian gas does not appear to be quite so dramatic: unless figures for individual countries are considered. While Spain does not import any Russian gas at all, Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Finland supply 100% of their gas needs from Russia.

European solidarity requires such realities to be taken into account, as well as the situation of non-EU countries such as Ukraine, which is also highly dependent on Russian supplies.

Fearing the potential negative consequences of the North Stream pipeline which would bypass Ukraine on the way of transporting the Russian gas to EU, Ukrainian Prime Minister **Yulia Tymoshenko**, during a visit to Brussels in January 2008, proposed a joint EU-Ukraine project for an alternative pipeline "White Stream" to bring more Caspian gas to Europe.

In response, Russia drew its next ace: Russian President **Vladimir Putin** signed a deal with Greek Prime

Minister **Kostas Karamanlis** for the "South Stream" gas pipeline, a project perceived as a rival to the EU's flagship Nabucco project.

South Stream was launched in 2007 by Italy's ENI and Russia's Gazprom. It is designed to pump 30 billion cubic metres of Russian gas per year to Europe: under the Black Sea via Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia and Croatia to Italy.

A branch of the South Stream pipeline will run through Serbia and Hungary to Austria, ending at the Baumgarten gas storage facility.

If Russia succeeds in its manoeuvres, the most likely will be the EU's flagship Nabucco pipeline project, which aims to bring gas from the Georgian/Turkish border and the Iranian/Turkish border via Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary to Austria. Hesitation of the private sector to finance the project and the brief war between Georgia and Russia aggravated the outlook of this project further. Officially, the European Commission refuses to admit to any setbacks and maintains that Nabucco is not an attempt to find alternatives to Russian supplies but a necessary additional channel. Meanwhile, however, the EU is also trying to convince Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, which are home to some of the world's biggest oil and gas reserves, of the need to diversify their supply routes.

Nabucco will be the litmus test of Russia-EU relations. The estimated cost of the project is 10 billion euro, with uncertainties regarding its profitability, i.e. the availability of gas in this region to fill the pipeline.

In the meantime, experts believe that Russia is willing to use its pipelines at low capacity, losing money in the short term in order to kill off all competition and take over the entire web of pipelines in the region. In the interest of its own energy security, the EU cannot afford to depend to that extent on a single supplier.

DIVORCED AND LOYAL WIVES

A recent study on international relations in Europe categorised EU countries according to their level of loyalty towards Russia.

According to this research, on one extreme are the "Eastern divorced" countries of the former Soviet bloc, which nowadays are for the most part hostile to Moscow (Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, Latvia, the Czech Republic and Slovakia).

On the other extreme are the "loyal wives", which maintain good relations with Russia (Italy, Austria and Greece). In between are the "vigilant critics" (Romania, Slovenia, Sweden, Bulgaria, Hungary and the United Kingdom) and the larger group, the "acquiescent partners" (Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain).

V.Š.-V.Ž

Visa facilitation only on paper

The Agreement on Visa Facilitation came into force in January 2008, with the goal of enhancing the mobility of the citizens of West Balkan countries to



by Petar Đukanović

EU and simplifying visa procedures.

Liberalisation of the visa regime was aimed at certain categories of citizens (journalists, students, people working in NGOs, science, sports, culture...) to enable them to get a multiple entry visa to EU countries within the Schengen zone with fewer necessary documents, shorter waiting periods and at the fixed cost of 35 euros.

The importance of this Agreement cannot be understated and is a great contribution to the entire process of European integrations in the Western Balkans. Greater mobility will also strengthen the ties between the citizens of these countries and those living in EU, facilitate contacts and exchange of ideas, practices and values, and in the long term strengthen the European identity among the citizens of the West Balkan states.

A group of NGOs from Montenegro, Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania, with support of ECAS from Brussels as well as King Boudin Foundation and Open Society Institute conducted a region-wide project "Does it really matter? Visa facilitation for the Western Balkans – monitoring of new agreements". The project consisted of two levels: field research and a hotline which allowed citizens to describe their experiences with visas. In Montenegro the project was conducted by Centre for Civic Education.

National reports containing summary findings of the research were presented at the conference on visa facilitation on 10 December 2008 in Brussels. The research showed that in spite of great expectations the agreement did very little to enhance liberalisation of the visa regime. The public in the Western Balkans did not experience the benefits that were supposed to follow from this Agreement, leaving the visa procedure very complex and constituting in many cases a humiliating experience for the citizens.

One of the biggest problems for the implementation of the Agreement noted in every country under review is lack of information for the citizens about the rights and ben-

efits they are entitled to. The lack of information allows the embassies and consulates to manipulate the citizens and deny them their rights and often make the visa procedures longer and more expensive than in the period before the Agreement was signed.

Most complaints received by the Centre for Civic Education via hotline concerned the behavior of the staff in consulates and embassies, who often violate the rules of professional conduct and are infrequently rude and unhelpful in their communication with the citizens.

The most flagrant lack of professionalism among the employees of the consulates consists of giving imprecise or incorrect information to the citizens about the number and type of documents necessary for visa application. Sometimes this means that the citizens have to return to the consulate several times in order to supply the documents which are deemed unnecessary according to the provisions of the Agreement.

The citizens also complain about the lack of transparency in consulates which often fail to provide justification for rejecting visa applications.

Another problem for the citizens are long queues in front of the consulates and the lack of adequate waiting rooms which turns visa application into an unnecessarily unpleasant experience.

The agreement sets total costs incurred in applying for a visa at 35 euros. The real costs are, however, much higher, due to high charges on telephone calls for making appointments, travel expenses for citizens living outside of Podgorica and the costs incurred when collecting the document for the visa. The citizens complained to CCE that when they call to make an appointment they are made to wait for a very long time and the phone charges on this particular line are inordinately high. A significant number also complained that even if they called well in advance they would get an appointment for a date later than

the date for which they needed the visa, making the entire application process senseless.

In numerous cases the citizens came to their appointment to submit the documents but had to wait sometimes for several days because the consulate gave priority to tourist agencies which submit dozens of applications at once. This complaint was particularly frequent with the Joint Application Centre in Podgorica, which tried to mediate the problem in the last few months by introducing appointments over the phone. Nonetheless, this Application Centre, which was meant to rationalise the application process to EU countries in Montenegro and make it more efficient remains one of the most problematic institutions, according to the citizens' reports.

Presentation of the National Reports in Brussels at the conference on visa facilitation was thoroughly commented on and supported by the presentations of other participants in the project, as well as European Commission and other EU institutions, EU member states and countries of the region.

The participants urged the EU institutions and member states to apply the Agreement on Visa Facilitation more thoroughly. At the same time, the West Balkan countries (both the governments and the civil sector) and the European Commission ought to improve their monitoring over the implementation of the Agreement, inform the citizens about its content and work on strengthening professionalism among the employees of the consulates.

For their part, the national governments will have to continue their work on fulfilling the priorities from the Roadmap for Liberalisation of the Visa Regime required by the European Commission.

On the other hand, the European Commission will have to make its visa policy clearer and define more precise criteria for monitoring the progress of these countries in fighting organised crime and other security threats. At the moment, these criteria are very broad and they leave plenty of space for different interpretations, relegating the final decision on the liberalisation of the visa regime into the realm of political will.

In the spirit of the Czech EU presidency's slogan "Europe without Barriers", the region of the Western Balkans hopes for greater progress in the process of liberalisation of the visa regime between the EU and the West Balkan countries. Until then, all those who would like to travel to EU will have to arm themselves with piles of documents, money for various expenses, plenty of nerves, time and patience, and a willingness to bear with unpleasantness.

The author is a programme coordinator in the Centre for Civic Education



EMIM: CITIZENS SUPPORT MONTENEGRO'S MEMBERSHIP IN THE EU, BUT THEY KNOW LITTLE ABOUT EUROPEAN INTEGRATIONS

Most believe the EU means higher wages

If a referendum on Montenegro's accession to European Union (EU) were held in late 2008, 70.9% of the people would have voted in its favour.

These are the results of the public opinion poll conducted by the European Movement in Montenegro (EMiM) in late December 2008 with support of Friedrich Ebert Foundation, on a sample of 1000 respondents in all municipalities.

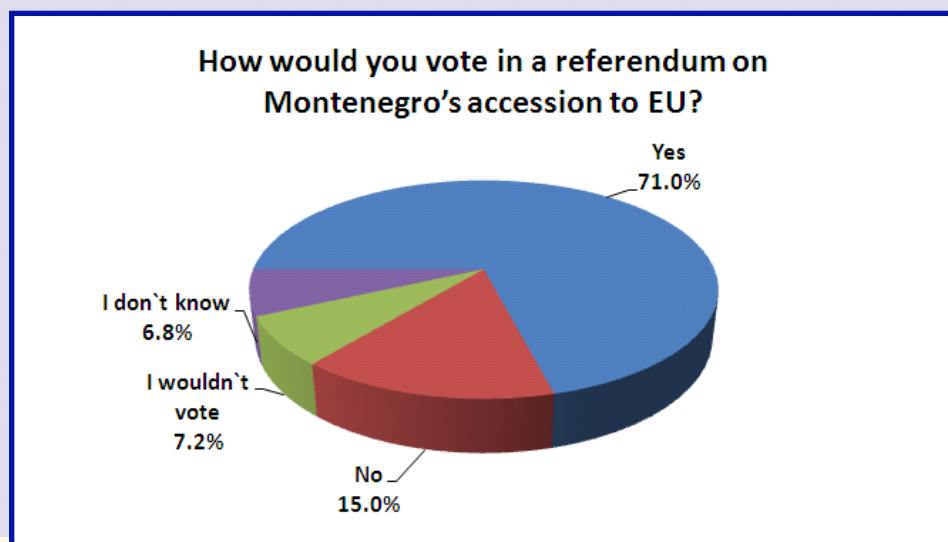
According to the same poll, 15% of the citizens would have voted against Montenegro's membership in the EU, 7.2% would not have voted, while 6.8% was still undecided.

Most respondents (53.5%) said that the main reason for joining the EU was a better life and higher wages, while 9.6% base their choice on the promise of closer relations with EU members, and 9.3% on the opportunities for visa-free travel and elimination of borders. Only 4.3% of the respondents believe Montenegro should become a member of EU in because that would strengthen the rule of law in the country.

Asked to give the main reason why our country should not become a member of the EU 27.5% said they saw "no reason to join the EU", while 26.9% of the respondents declared they did not trust EU. Another 15.9% believe that the EU is "an illusion, and is in deep crisis", which is why Montenegro should not aspire to become a member of this club.

When it comes to knowledge, 38.1% of the citizens believe themselves to be entirely or sufficiently well informed about the EU, while 35.4% respondents said they were both "informed and uninformed". Mostly or entirely uninformed were some 24.6% of the respondents, shows the EMiM research.

As regards the process of Mon-



tenegro's accession to EU, 44.1% respondents said they were entirely or mostly well informed about it, while 25.9% in total said they were not well informed.

However, asked to state the current status of Montenegro in the EU association process 50.7% could not come up with an answer. Only 33.8% of the respondents knew the right answer – Montenegro is a potential candidate country.

An overwhelming majority (67.9%) of the respondents thought Montenegro should get the status of a candidate as soon as possible, whereas 18.8% believed we were still not ready for this position. Other respondents did not answer the question.

According to 19.5% of the respondents, being a candidate country would bring Montenegro greater economic development, while 18.6% hopes that this status would bring liberalisation of the visa regime. The most important thing to come with the candidate status, according to 13.9% of the citizens, would be a faster pace of democratisation, 4.4% believe it would accelerate development of institutions and 2.7% hope for greater

access to EU funds.

A great majority of the citizens (60.3%) believe they will live better if Montenegro becomes a member of the EU, while only 8% though they will be worse off. On the other hand, 73.1% of the respondents they were likely to work more once Montenegro joins the EU, an opinion with which only 2.5% of the respondents disagreed.

Asked whether Montenegro's accession to EU will change their personal habits and way of life, 44.9% of the respondents said no, while 23.5% expect "slight" changes in their habits. 21.9% of the citizens, however, believe there will be major changes in their way of life. The rest had no opinion on this issue.

The statement that Montenegro's future membership in the EU will have a positive impact on its political future is supported by 63.1% of the citizens, while only 11.7% think otherwise.

On the other hand, 13.9% of the respondents thought the eventual EU membership will impinge on Montenegro's independence, while 61.5% believed this would not be the case.

V.Ž.



Centre for civic education

CENTRE FOR CIVIC EDUCATION (CCE)

wants to share its vision of Montenegro as democratic society of responsible citizens with you!

**If you are young, knowledgeable, skilled, daring,
You should be actors, by no means passive observers!**

**Join us in changing and improving the environment that we live in,
Join us in creating a society of equal opportunities!**

CCE announces the urgent call for 17 new associates:

- 6 associates in the *Democracy programme* (sub-programmes: Media and Democracy, Responsibility and Transparency of Authorities, Political memory, Corruption in education)
- 4 associates in the *European Integration programme* (sub-programmes: European Pulse, Montenegro on the way to the EU)
- 3 associates in the *Human and Minority Rights programme* (sub-programmes: Transitional justice, Public Advocacy)
- 3 associates in the *Active citizenship programme* (sub-programmes: Corruption in education, Citizens matter)
- 1 associate charged with web design and updating of the CCE web site

Requirements: university degree (not mandatory for all positions), active knowledge of the English language (not mandatory for all positions), computer literacy, ability of both independent and team work, capability of working under pressure and tight deadlines, accuracy, punctuality, precision, sense of responsibility and initiative, dynamic approach and dedication to work.

Advantage will be given to candidates experienced in social activism. All accepted associates will undergo a one month probationary period prior to the start of their contract.

Applications with CVs should be sent to info@cgo-cce.org by 5 pm on 10 February. Shortlisted candidates will be called for an interview. More information on CCE could be found at www.cgo-cce.org

NON – GOVERNMENTAL
ORGANISATIONS
IN EUROPEAN UNION



THE EUROPEAN
CONSUMERS'
ORGANISATION

BEUUC was created in 1962 by the consumer organisations of Belgium, Luxembourg, France, the Netherlands, Italy and Germany and established headquarters in Brussels.

Its goal is to promote consumers' rights and bring the issues of consumers' rights into all relevant EU policies. BEUC was a pioneer, one of the first lobbying organisations to set up base in the European capital in a bid to influence the decision-making process.

Just like the EU itself, BEUC's membership has grown, and in 2008 our members include 42 well respected, independent national consumer organisations from some thirty European countries (EU, EEA and applicant countries).

BEUC acts as a sort of "embassy" for these organisations in Brussels and its main task is to represent our members and defend the interests of all Europe's consumers. BEUC is acknowledged as a trustworthy partner by both its members and EU institutions. Most of the BEUC members are grass root organisations who have a day-to-day contact with consumers and thus BEUC benefits from objective, detailed data on the impact of various EU policies on consumers and thus presents strong arguments to EU institutions.

BEUC investigates all European Union decisions, programmes and developments liable to affect consumers, and promotes the development of a Single Market that truly works in the interests of consumers.

BEUC's endeavours to pay special heed to the needs of the most vulnerable consumers, such as children, the elderly and the disadvantaged. Lastly, BEUC focuses on social and environmental aspects and on responsible (or "ethical") consumption.

In addition to lobbying activities, BEUC also formally represents consumers within the decision-making process. BEUC has a seat on the European Consumer Consultative Group (ECCG) and experts from its member organisations participate in various European Commission advisory groups.

In the European Parliament, BEUC has established good relations with MEPs, notably via the Health and Consumer Protection Intergroup. The aim of the Intergroup is to bring together MEPs, experts from industry, and consumer and public health organisations, to discuss issues on the European Parliament agenda related to consumer protection.

More information on BEUC can be found at: www.beuc.org

Prepared by: Petar ĐUKANOVIĆ

CCE and FES publicise AN ADVERTISEMENT for participants of
XIII generation of



DEMOCRACY SCHOOL



– school for learning democracy from theory to praxis –

School comprises 5 modules lasting totally four months. The courses will be held once or twice a week for 2 hours. All expenses are covered by the foundation Friedrich Ebert and Centre for Civic Education, with obligation of the participants to attend not less than 80% of the programme.

Upon finishing of the School the participants shall receive a certificate and be eligible for further educational development.

The right to participate have candidates who want to contribute to development of democracy and civic society in Montenegro. All candidates are welcome, regardless of age, gender, nationality, religion or personal convictions, with the indication that advantage have activists of the political parties and non-governmental organisations and all individuals who are showing high level of social activism.

Moderator of the School is professor **Radovan Radonjić**, PhD, and beside him eminent domestic and foreign lecturers will be working with participants.

All interested candidates may submit their application with short biography not later than 15 February 2009, on the address:

Centre for civic education
(for "Democracy school")
Njegoševa 36, 1 floor, 81 000 Podgorica
Fax: 020 / 665 112; tel: 020 / 665 327
E-mail: info@cgo-cce.org
www.cgo-cce.org

Established RECOM

On the 10 January 2009 a group of scientists met in Zagreb at a region-wide consultative meeting to discuss establishment of a Regional Commission for the Establishment of Facts Regarding War Crimes in Ex-Yugoslav Countries (RECOM). It was chaired by **Vesna Teršalić** and **Nataša Kandić**, representatives of Dokumenta from Zagreb and Foundation for Humanitarian Law from Belgrade, whose organisations summoned the meeting which attracted a large number of intellectuals from the region.

The meeting reviewed similar efforts until now: regional programmes, obstacles to cooperation, further developments especially focusing on the role and responsibilities of the scientists for the establishment and publication of facts regarding war crimes.

Daliborka Uljarević, executive director of Centre for Civic Education and **Aleksandar Saša Zeković**, research into violations of human rights represented CCE at the meeting.

One of the conclusions of this round of consultations was on the importance of regional approach to the process of reconciliation with the past, and the establishment of RECOM was approved as a moral, humanitarian and professional effort.

The next regional forum is supposed to take place in Podgorica, in spring 2009.

Responsibility for the protection of women's human rights

In the framework of UNIFEM's programme "Responsibility for the protection of women's human rights on 29 and 30 January 2009, in Miločer, the final segment of the constitutional component of the programme took place in the form of a regional conference titled "Gender, Constitutions and Legal Frameworks". The programme is supported by the

Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) since 2006.

The conference gathered 40 representatives of organisations and institutions dealing with gender equality to review the results of public advocacy and analyses conducted with regard to gender equality and constitutional reform in the Western Balkans. The participants discussed

the possibilities for improvement of gender equality in the region, nationally and through cross-border cooperation within the existing legal frameworks.

One of the participants and authors of the regional study on the gender aspects of Constitutions was **Daliborka Uljarević**, executive director of Centre for Civic Education.

FOR THIS ISSUE WE RECOMMEND:



GLOBALISATION AND EUROPEAN INTEGRATION: 'THE NATURE OF THE BEAST'

The conference invites specialists from the fields of politics, international relations, international political economy and sociology to build on their experience of applying historical materialist theories in empirical settings related to global governance and regional integration, with an emphasis on the European Union (EU).

The conference aims to stimulate interdisciplinary exchange on the historical materialist frameworks used to investigate the relationship between global governance, regional integration and the national state, with special reference to the EU.

We are inviting abstracts addressing one of the conference's key themes: Global governance, the EU and the national state, The EU and the global economy, Social agency and European integration, Regionalisation beyond the EU. Abstracts should be no more than 250 words for a 20 minute presentation.

Deadline for papers to be submitted: by March 15th.

Other deadlines:

Registration: 15 April 2009.

Submission of paper: 25 May 2009.

Registration fee (Friday and Saturday): £27 per delegate.

Includes refreshments, buffet lunch, and wine reception on Saturday.

Conference webpage:

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/pais/ss/beast/>

CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY, BUDAPEST SUMMER COURSE ON "NEW REGIONALISMS, EMERGENT POWERS AND THE FUTURE OF SECURITY AND GOVERNANCE"

Dates: July 13–24, 2009.

Application deadline: March 1, 2009

Location: Central European University (CEU), Budapest, Hungary

Course description

<http://www.sun.ceu.hu/regionalisms>

Course Director: Roger Coate, University of South Carolina and Georgia College & State University, Department of Political Science, USA

Language of instruction: English

Tuition fee: EUR 500. Financial aid is available.

The global political economy is in transition, and there exists an ever evolving restructuring of world affairs in socio-cultural, economic and political spheres. A complex relationship is evolving between development and security as state and non-state agents and macro and micro forces interplay dynamically impacting on the triangular relationship among development, governance and human security. Traditional approaches to the study of

international relations and global political economy do not provide much guidance in understanding the implications of such dynamic dualistic forces and processes of regionalism and globalization for the future of world politics and global governance. Through examination of substantive regional cases and informed interdisciplinary and international research and debate, the course explores alternative theoretical perspectives and conceptual devices for analyzing and understanding the evolving world order.

This research-based seminar aims to contribute to the advancement of new cross-disciplinary knowledge by introducing participants to and immersing them in cutting-edge research utilizing new perspectives for explaining and understanding the dynamic and interdependent processes of social, economic and political change and transformation at play in the post-Cold War, post-9/11 world. Participants, working in self-selected research teams, will be guided in the production of research papers of publishable quality.

During this summer school the faculty will interact with the participants both before the actual course begins in an e-based distance learning mode, during the course—in the classroom and in tutorial sessions and one-on-one and group consultations—and again, in an e-based distance learning mode after it concludes, to assist in the design and conduct of their research projects and will encourage and assist participants to publish their research papers in professional journals.

Online application:

<http://www.sun.ceu.hu/apply>

(Attachments to be sent to:

sun09-regionalism@ceu.hu)

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