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Foreword: **Vote**

Vladan Žugić



It seems the European Enlargement Commissioner **Štefan Füle** still doesn't understand the Balkan mentality. Perhaps his Czechs or some other European nation would take his words – that the EC could recommend the opening of negotiations with Serbia, Macedonia and Montenegro by the end of the year – as encouragement, and step up their efforts until October when Brussels is expected to pronounce its verdict on these countries' progress. In the Balkans, this message is understood completely differently, especially by the governments and public institutions. In Montenegro, the understanding is more or less as follows: "Füle just said he'll give us the opening date of negotiations. Even if we fail to fulfil all seven conditions, the EU will close an eye, especially now that Serbia delivered **Mladić**, so they'll have to give them a candidate status too, and maybe even the date for negotiations". For Montenegro to begin accession negotiations, it still needs to adopt the electoral law, change the Constitution with regard to the election procedures for the Judicial Council and step up the fight against corruption. The current state of affairs does not merit the kind of optimism evidenced in Füle's statement. There might be an internal political agreement in the EU to grant some countries the date of accession, even if they don't fulfil the conditions, but that is a very different story. Still, the European Commissioner should know that the Montenegrin authorities won't fulfil any of their commitments by the set deadline if they know that Brussels is ready to turn a blind eye. It might be a way to postpone the work for the EU bureaucrats. For Montenegro, it is a way to postpone the much-needed reforms.

Calendar

- 11. jun **Professional MPs** / The office of the MP should be a professional function, and they should not be allowed into boards of directors and managers of public companies. These were the conclusions of the Parliamentary round table "Conflict of Interests", which will be integrated into the draft amendments of the Law on the Conflict of Interests, as demanded by Brussels in the Opinion on Montenegro. The solution was supported by the representatives of all parliamentary parties, even though the MPs of the ruling coalition as well as of the part of the opposition used to be against it.
- 16. jun **No results of anti-corruption fight** / Montenegro made some progress in fighting organised crime, but the results with regard to corruption are not so good, said the EU ambassador to Podgorica **Leopold Maurer**. He said he was hoping that more progress in this direction can be made over the next few weeks.
- 17. jun **Orban: No negotiations without the electoral law** / European Union cannot begin accession negotiations with Montenegro, unless the country adopts an electoral law that would be in line with the Constitution, said the Hungarian Prime Minister **Viktor Orban** after the meeting with **Igor Lukšić**.
- 18. jun **Negotiations with several Balkan countries** / EU Enlargement Commissioner **Štefan Füle** said there was a possibility that the Commission would recommend the beginning of negotiations with several West Balkan countries this year. "This year might be important for all Western Balkan countries. Considering the progress achieved, the EC might recommend the beginning of the accession negotiations for as many as three countries", Füle told Vienna-based daily *Die Presse*. Füle later confirmed that by this he meant Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia.
- 24. jun **COWEB on weather** / Members of the Delegation of the Council of EU Working Group for the Western Balkans (COWEB) visited Podgorica where they had "productive and intensive" meetings with the highest Montenegrin officials. **Tomas Reyes Ortega** and **Istvan Szábo** didn't want to talk about Montenegro's progress towards EU, and instead talked to the journalists, among other, about the weather in the country.

A Summer offer for the Balkans



Andrea Despot



Dušan Reljić

If the government and the opposition in Zagreb were to have their way, in the next few weeks the remaining stumbling blocks to Croatian EU accession would be removed, and by the end of June 2011 accession negotiations in progress since 2005 would be concluded. Yet, in certain key areas – primarily in respect of the rule of law – the *acquis communautaire* is still not being fully implemented. The European Commission and EU member states should therefore resist wishes for an expedited process. They must insist that deficits are first remedied. Croatian politician of every stripe are convinced that their country, after protracted negotiations, has now made the grade for EU accession. They believe that every one of the 35 negotiating chapters could be closed when the European Council meets on 24 June 2011. The Croatian government has indeed undertaken remarkable efforts since the publication of the latest progress report, but two central chapters – the judiciary and fundamental rights and competition policy – remain open. The Chapter on judiciary is the major stumbling block. It lists the benchmarks for establishing an independent judicial system, combating corruption, coming to terms through the justice system with war crimes, as well as for improving standardisation and transparency in criteria for nominating judges, and reducing the huge backlog in hearing court cases and in enforcing decision in about 785 000 cases. Another impediment to Croatia's EU membership is the outstanding privatisation and the EU's demand for withdrawal of state subsidies for key industries in the country. Like other countries in the region, Croatia has not yet managed – despite funds derived from privatisation and loans raised from foreign capital markets – to offer competitive goods and services on the global market. In other candidate countries in the Western Balkans, Croatia's final dash for the tape is being observed with some concern. The standards which are being applied in Croatian EU negotiations and the consistency of the conditionality criteria imposed by the EU act as signposts for other candidates. In admitting Western Balkan countries to membership, as numerous voices within the EU are demanding, no additional "gradual watering down of accession criteria" should



be tolerated, and the future members must demonstrate "whole hearted commitment" to EU values. Whether this kind of internalisation of EU criteria by Croatia can actually come about in view of the pressure with regard to the timetable emanating from Zagreb is questionable. There is no sense in indulging in predictions as to when negotiations might be concluded. This would be to prejudge the outcome of negotiations on political grounds rather than factually assessing Croatia's fulfilment of the criteria. And if Croatia does not succeed in establishing a stable political and economic system in accordance with the Copenhagen criteria let alone to create an open-minded political culture, and if support amongst Croatians for EU membership really is dependent on political mood swings, then EU membership for Croatia in June would amount to nothing more than a summer special offer. With its illiberal tendency in media legislation and other political fields Hungary, the EU's current national presidency, provides a sobering case study of the dynamics that could well play out in present candidate countries which have not completed all the required preparations. Making Croatia a member state without having put a tick in the box against every item which needs to be complied with would be counterproductive for the country itself, for the West Balkan region and for EU enlargement policies as a whole.

Source: Bulletin of the German Institute for International and Security Affairs

Whose fault will it be if Montenegro doesn't get the date for negotiations with EU because the parliament failed to adopt the new electoral law

Opposition bars the way



Samir Kajošević

The opposition could end up as a scapegoat for all Montenegro's problems on its way to EU, if the Parliament fails to adopt the electoral law that would be harmonised with the Constitution, the recommendations of the Venetian Commission and ODIHR. Adoption of this law by the end of July was one of the seven conditions to get the date for negotiations with EU. Socialist People's Party (SNP) is the one that stands to lose the most. It was the only opposition party which remained in the negotiations with the ruling coalition, thus showing a degree of responsibility for Montenegro's path to EU, unlike the New Serbian Democracy (NOVA) and the Movement for Changes (PzP), which showed no desire to be part of the two-third parliamentary majority that would adopt this law. On the other hand, the Government would get a perfect target to blame for Montenegro's failure to get the date for negotiations because of the electoral law because with regard to all other six conditions the Government and its institutions have made at least some progress. In addition to being branded the main villain in this electoral soap, the opposition would risk having to participate in the next elections according to the same electoral rules, geared in favour of the ruling opposition.



The monopoly the Government gains through electoral legislation, which allows them to enter the game with a three goal advantage, matters to them more than all European standards together. The opposition is a perfect scapegoat for their failures, because so far we haven't heard what it is they want that the Government refuses", warns president of the Lawyers' Senate Stanko Marić

In the worst case scenario, where the ruling coalition couldn't care less for the EU membership, the likely course of events could also include early elections in the first half of 2012, which would, of course, take place according to the law currently in force. During the campaign nobody would worry about the remaining commitments to EU, focusing instead on accusing the other side of stalling Montenegro's progress towards EU. In this case, Montenegro couldn't get the date for negotiations even in 2012.

Adoption of the new electoral law is the first of the seven conditions set by EC in order to decide on a date for the beginning of negotiations. The Commission will reveal its opinion in October, as part of the regular Progress Report on Montenegro, and potentially recommend the start of negotiations. The decision to include the electoral law among these seven conditions was the last warning to the Parliament of Montenegro to adopt the law that has been pending for the last three years. Although the final deadline for the harmonisation of the electoral law with the Constitution and OSCE's recommendations was 31 July, the current pace of negotiations between the Government and the opposition suggests that the final date could be again postponed. Government officials are increasingly warning that, if the agreement fails, the Government won't just sit with its arms folded. They have openly blamed the opposition for the difficulties around the

SNP: it won't be the end of the world if we don't get the electoral law

Kaluđerović reminds that the electoral law isn't the only condition Montenegro needs to fulfil, emphasising that the opposition cannot be the only culprit for the delay of the beginning of negotiations with EU "It won't be the end of the world if we don't adopt the new electoral law – this is not the only condition to begin negotiations. It is more important to get to a satisfactory solution, because this law is the basis of legitimacy of any government", he said.

electoral law, and in the informal conversations there have been insinuations of pulling out heavier guns against the opposition if Montenegro fails to get the date for negotiations this autumn. Well aware that somebody will have to explain to the voters why Montenegro, in spite of all promises, did not start negotiations, the representatives of the government are ready to look for the culprits elsewhere.

Miodrag Vuković, official in the Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS), says that the experience of negotiations on the electoral law has demonstrated that the opposition is abusing the situation. As the law cannot be adopted without a two-third majority support of the MPs, Vuković believes that by refusing to support the laws the opposition is trying to immobilise the system in Montenegro. "If the electoral law fails, it will fail because of them. On 31 July, they risk to remain in history as the politicians that deprived Montenegro of its European future. From the beginning they were obstructing the process, trying to compromise all the solutions on offer", Vuković said, warning that a compromise is necessary, as the European officials are insisting that it is high time to move on. Director of the Enlargement Directorate of the European Commission **Stefano Sanino** confirms that indeed it is high time for Montenegro to fulfil its European commitments. He openly warned that Montenegro won't get the date for negotiations unless

it adopts the new electoral law. Sanino hinted that this could be the main condition, saying that Montenegro made progress in the relations between the Government, civil sector and the media, and that there has been some progress in fighting corruption and organised crime. SNP MP **Velizar Kaluđerović** doesn't expect the agreement before 31 July, warning that the Government did not show willingness to listen to other parties. Although aware that the law must be adopted, the ruling majority is behaving as if that could be done without the support of the opposition, says Kaluđerović. "They are going by inertia: what they consider good should be accepted by all, and if they don't then those whose opinions differ from the Governments' are to blame. We are all responsible, but those who need to make the compromise have the greatest responsibility", he said. Although the vote on the law was already postponed six times, the main recommendations are the same as in 2008, when the electoral epic began. The main bones of contention are the right to affirmative action, the way to allow minorities to enter the Parliament, and the way to allow the citizens without Montenegrin citizenship to retain their right to vote. The opposition refused the offer of a model which does not set limits on affirmative action, warning that this



Albanian parties also on the spot

In addition to the opposition, the Albanian parties could also be put on the spot for obstructing the electoral law, because of their unyielding insistence on a separate electoral unit and guaranteed seats. MP of the Albanian coalition Perspective Vaselj Siništaj thinks this won't amount to special privileges for Albanians. He said this was not an attempt to obstruct the law, but to point out that Albanians in Montenegro are a very specific minority, different by their language and culture. "I perfectly understand the specificity of Montenegro, which doesn't have a single nation that would constitute more than 50% of the population, which is why we have all this haggling today", Siništaj explained.

would accord special privileges to enter the Parliament to the representatives of Serbs and Montenegrins, the most numerous peoples in the country. With stricter regulation on minority seats, SNP is also asking for a five year grace period to allow voters to acquire Montenegrin citizenship.

In addition to these demands, NOVA has made its support conditional on an issue completely unrelated to the elections – introduction of Serbian as the official language in Montenegro. This makes it quite clear that this party does not want to be part of the two third majority, which will allow it to accuse SNP in the future of "collaboration" with DPS, should the party of **Srdan Milić** vote in favour of the new electoral regulations. Unlike the opposition, the minority parties want the 3% threshold abolished, warning that this makes it impossible for minorities to win more than two seats in the Parliament. So far the Government did not appear willing to yield to any of these demands.

Stanko Marić, president of the Senate of the Association of Montenegrin Lawyers, justifies the Government's resistance with the fact that the electoral law will lay out the rules for all future elections. He reminds that, under the cur-

rent law, the ruling coalition entered the elections with an advantage it is loath to relinquish. To protect its electoral monopoly, Marić says, the Government is willing to endanger progress towards European Union. "The monopoly they gain through electoral legislation, which allows them to enter the game with a three goal advantage, matters to them more than all European standards together. The opposition is a perfect scapegoat for their failures, because so far we haven't heard what it is they want that the Government refuses", warns Marić. According to him, this is precisely why the Government will take it easy on the electoral law, and attempt instead to prevent the adoption of democratic electoral standards guaranteeing fair elections. He stressed that the ruling coalition won't cut the branch on which it's sitting. "The Government doesn't see these as conditions, but rather as recommendations whose implementation depends on them. It is clear that the EU has no enforcement mechanisms, and the Government is not in a hurry, as they are profiting from the integration hype while their activities keep them ever further from EU. This doesn't worry them, though, because the further they are from EU the longer they can stay in power", he said.



Independent media and the civil sector again “enemies of the state”

Lukšić's groove



Nedeljko Rudović

In spite of encouraging messages coming from Brussels, Montenegro uneasily awaits the European Commission's Opinion on its readiness to begin accession negotiations with EU. The EC will assess Montenegro's achievements until the end of July and its evaluation will pretty much decide the pace of further reforms, which still look great on paper but are barely visible in reality. The ruling coalition and opposition parties have less than a month to agree on the electoral law, the EU's first condition. There's equally little time left to try and change the constitutional provisions regulating independence of the judiciary. Even if they manage all that, they won't easily get rid of the bitter taste left by another public demonstration, on the part of the ruling coalition, of the complete lack of any intention to engage in genuine changes – in the sense of accepting the democratic rules of the game. This means that your opponents are not necessarily your enemies and that the critical spirit of the civil society should be encouraged, not blasted in the bud. When he took over the prime ministership from **Milo Đukanović** last December, Prime Minister **Igor Lukšić** suggested that he was ready for an honest dialogue with independent media and non-governmental organisations. But the government soon enough reverted to the old strategies of scaring and disciplining the disobedient, trying to force them into the groove: broadcasting the virtual rosy reality. The main drivers is again the head of the ruling party and the former Prime Minister Milo Đukanović, who recently unscrupulously crashed all the achievements Lukšić was about to reach. Just when Lukšić was sending a strong message on the need of cooperation between the Government and civil society, warming up the tense relations inherited from his predecessor, Đukanović trashed the independent media in an appearance on the public television. His personal message was that the real opponent of the Government is not the opposition, but the independent media which are beyond his control and which, according to him, are trying to sow a division within the Democratic Party of Social-

ists (DPS). This was not only a proclamation of a new round of reckoning with those who are not ready to obey and close their eyes in the face of reality, but a clear guideline for Lukšić's future endeavours. The rules are clear – the Prime Minister can be dismissed at the whim of the ruling party, i.e. its leader, so Lukšić rather took a step back, realising that it paid more to be on the right side of the boss than to lay foundations for a free, civic Montenegrin society. Thus in his latest interview for TV “Vijesti”, Lukšić had a more critical assessment of the media, practically accusing them of spreading defeatism and sabotaging economic development of Montenegro. He was especially hurt by the articles suggesting that the new arrangement with the Italian company A2A, the buyer of minority shares of the main energy provider in Montenegro, which intends to merge the company with the Coal Mine and thus reduce the state's share in EPCG. His arrogant tone was, in fact, a demonstration for his boss that he is back into the groove, and the message for those who expected him to have European, not Balkan, manners, that they cannot count on him. For Lukšić, the most important thing, it seems was to convince Đukanović that he won't be his enemy. Perhaps he doesn't even realise that, at the same time, he had joined the Montenegrin theatre of absurd, where the country is being dragged forwards, to Europe, by an elite which doesn't realise that the Berlin Wall is down and the times of single-mindedness long gone.



Former ambassador in Brussels Bojan Šarkić believes that Montenegro can get the date for negotiations with careful lobbying in Brussels and EU member states

First station: Warsaw

Former ambassador of Montenegro to European Union and a long-term Montenegrin diplomat **Bojan Šarkić** says that Montenegro could get the date for the beginning of negotiations with EU, even if it fails to adopt the electoral law, which is one of the seven conditions Podgorica got from the EU.

He said the decision on negotiations is a political one and that it could be influenced if the Government in Podgorica immediately begins discussions with Brussels and the EU member states, starting with Poland as the current president of EU.

» Do you think that Montenegro could at least get the conditional date for negotiations with EU should the Parliament fail to adopt the electoral law?

European Union issued Montenegro not one, but seven conditions to work on in order to receive the date for the beginning of negotiations. These are processes, not tasks that should be completed once and forever.

But the whole business with the electoral law has been dragging on for too long, and fi-



nally got to the stage where we all wonder why the government was so inert, and is the opposition really so committed to Europe if they are conditioning the law, on which everybody agrees, by issues that have nothing to do with European integrations.

It is clear that a situation like this can only slow down and compromise the process of Montenegro's progress towards EU.

» Do you think that intensive lobbying in Brussels and EU member states could result in a date for negotiations, even if we fail to adopt the electoral law?

The date for negotiations is a political decision, and it is therefore possible to influence it. The right partners to talk to about it are the EU member states, starting with the presiding Poland.

If there is notable progress with regard to all other conditions, I don't see why this stalemate would cause an indefinite delay in the beginning of negotiations.

But it isn't that simple. The whole process can be considered a regional one, together with Serbia and Macedonia, in which case Serbia, or rather Kosovo, will cause further complications.

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However, things are not that simple, because the whole process can be considered a regional one, together with Serbia and Macedonia, in which case Serbia, or rather Kosovo, will cause further complications.

Finally, do we have enough time to influence the decision-makers in Brussels and the capitals of the member states? The answer is “yes”, but hurry up – even if there’s tropical weather in Podgorica, in Brussels it’s already raining.

» After the rising tensions in the relations between Serbia and Kosovo, Serbia seems further than ever from the candidate status and negotiations. What are the consequences of this for Montenegro?

I am quite sure that Serbia could get the candidate status in December, unless the conflict with Kosovo really escalates. At the same time, negotiations indeed seem far away. It is clear that Kosovo is again an important, if not the most important, obstacle.

What does this have to do with the region and Montenegro? There are some currents in the European Commission which would be happy to see Serbia, Macedonia and Montenegro in a single package. This has some advantages, but also disadvantages, and I think Montenegro would be the one to suffer the most, because this depends on political and security issues which are beyond the influence of Podgorica, while a certain turn of events could undermine its efforts to go further.

I’m sure that many aren’t aware of this scenario, and I hope that because of this both the government and the opposition have to do everything to bring a new, reformed Montenegro, closer to integration into NATO and EU.

» What are the consequences for Montenegro, if it fails to get the date for negotiations?

First, it would be a shame if something like that happened, and it could happen for all sorts of reasons. But here we’re getting into all sorts of speculations, which wouldn’t be in the interest of the Montenegrin citizens. Their interest lies in the fastest possible integration of Montenegro into EU and NATO, in order to finally settle certain political issues, illusions of the opposition, government monopolies, secret desires of some neighbours etc, and get Montenegro into the European manners of thinking, working and living.

The opening of negotiations would be just the beginning of a medium-term project which requires the whole of Montenegro and cannot tolerate the divisions. To start the negotiations means that the opposition too must come to its senses and get involved in the process. The opposition should finally realise that Montenegro is our common home and that we should work on it together, respecting equally the rights and obligation of all and by all.

What is the image of Montenegro in Brussels?

Generally, I think it’s fine. To be honest, we could be a bit more “present” – numerous and competent. Our presence is either very limited or non-existent in the countries such as Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg, which are important economic and financial centres. There are hardly any investment from these countries, in spite of the fact that these are the states that suffered the least from the economic downturn. We have no direct connections with the Netherlands or Belgium, and yet the citizens of these countries are big spenders and good tourists. They know very little about Montenegro, mostly from sports (football), while, given the awful climate in Belgium, Montenegro could become a magnet for the rich tourists from these countries.

Work will set you free, won't it?



Brano Mandić

Ever since I started to work on the line, I care less for politics. I don't have time, I'm barely informed – it's damn hard to analyse with all the headlines buzzing behind the eyes. My job is mostly to read the headlines and polish them for the eyes of internet readers. Working for an online news portal was a kind of enlightenment: now I know why the people who do mechanical jobs eight hours per day cannot think about politics and have no taste in arts. Since they don't pay me here to write art essays, it seems fitting to dedicate some time to the former phenomenon.

What matters is that all creative energy of a group of people doing the same job has to come from above. Instead, DPS appoints the directors in our schools, and you tell me how healthy is the working day of a professor whose director got the instruction from the minister of education not to give any statements to the press

Work, arbeit, the kind which most of the Montenegrin citizens do for a living, is so desperate, deprived of a professional context, unionised protection and creative muse that we can safely say that most of us have no clue of the social purpose of our efforts. We all struggle and work only as much as we need to – that's pretty much the story of everyone I know. It is equally rare to see a good, dedicated journalist as to find a taxi driver in a good mood. Many are only there to survive the working time and face the epic complexes of their superiors. We all know what Marx said about work, we also know what Groucho Marx said about it, we know that work is the backbone of our life and that we ought to form the basic social instincts around it, only slightly less important than those we imbibe within the families by force of circumstance. And yet, professionalism is a collective category and in a perverse system a man resembling a professional appears to his fellow men an idiot. There isn't a single profession in Montenegro that established its own association, developed a system of values which set the direction

of progress, which is the fundamental political question. Because if the professional association, of whatever kind, decides on the rules, the most able ones will climb to the top of the pyramid, take the lead to fulfil the common interests of a group of people in a single profession. This is not the case in Montenegro, as most painfully illustrated by the journalists themselves, a congregation of generally primitive peasant wisecracks who pass as the carriers of the public word, while the best of them hardly thought twice outside of the space defined by DPS-SNP coordinates.

This is the very source of the power of parties: they take up an enormous space that should be covered by professional associations. That is why the parties can plant their aces like cuckoo's eggs into various committees and boards, newsrooms and factories. They would be worried if the voice of reason and expertise took over, blasting away corruption, lack of talent and exchange of favours. Corruption that is rife in this half-world isn't only of material nature. Let us leave aside all the brown envelopes and business trips, let their wives wallow in the most expensive perfumes and their children graduate from Yale: what matters is that are there to defend, first of all, the system that brought them into the decision-making positions. They are afraid of talents, of eroticism, they make little dirty jokes in the corridors when in their fifties. The fact



that they have the money doesn't satisfy their basic drive – to play with other people's destinies. Who are they? Our embassy hawks, lifelong directors of public companies, but also less visible nerds accustomed to the power of a good intrigue and greasy pork knuckles. The more numerous group, the working class, or rather the mass of citizenry working for a wage, found themselves in a position where they hope that

Editing a news portal I noticed that the number of readers is the greatest during the working time. This is rather worrying, perhaps even more so than the unemployment figures.

perhaps their children will one day get a whiff of what in the normal world they call professional dignity. What matters is that all creative energy of a group of people doing the same job has to come from above. Instead, DPS appoints the directors in our schools, and you tell me how healthy is the working day of a professor whose director got the instruction from the minister of education not to give any statements to the press. The thing catches on like plague: now imagine the journalist who writes about education and who now needs to play detective and Clark Kent to get some petty information in this Stalinist shithole. Then imagine a reader who has to decipher from the papers the unofficial information from the said educational sector. It's all unofficial, even in schools, let alone in the places with slightly higher wages. Through this chain mechanism, apathy and the sense of mistrust are spreading through the society, perfect tools for the politicians and their electoral tricks. Our brains are slowly becoming a mush, and the jobs are just a means, not the goal and the motivation, or a path to creative catharsis.

Editing a well visited news portal (more than 30 000 visitors daily), I noticed that the number of readers is the greatest during the working time. This is rather worrying, perhaps even more so than the unemployment figures. I'd rather trust a guy who is officially unemployed, and finds refuge in gardening, small repairs, smuggling on the local market – he's driven by

his instincts. The others, who spend eight hours every day in the wrong place, all the way until retirement, these are really dangerous: they think nothing. They use their jobs to collect the years of contributions and small privileges while their field or department is falling apart without anybody caring. Many fields and many departments.

We should have this in mind the next time we blame everything on organised crime, the octopus, criminal regime, and invoke the magic formulae which serve the critics of the Montenegrin reality to explain every social phenomenon. Unless criticism comes from many angles, it can easily turn into essentialism, propaganda, kitsch and pornography. It's like with vitamins: hypervitaminosis is also an illness. So with critique from a single gun. Until we connect the ills of this society to the fundamental problems such as the quality of work, education, urban development of rural retardation – those who toil for eight hours per day will see the crime stories as a thriller happening to somebody else. Or they'll take time off work to check whether the police caught the villain, or if Soraja won the Big Brother. And that's already morbid and, I fear, incurable. It takes an alternative group of people that would di-

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vide the task and keep on prodding this value system, constantly and stubbornly exploring its lavish pathologies. But it's a lot easier to write a statement for the public saying we are living in a Stalinist regime, and sound like a martyr. This way, one can follow the same track until retirement, without any desire to get down to work, like so many others do in Montenegro.

Fight against organised crime and corruption
the first and the most difficult task for the West Balkan countries

The embrace of tycoons and politicians

The Balkan countries have been fighting tooth and nail to overcome the consequences of the global economic crisis, as well as of the preceding two decades of devastation of the national economies. But each of them is equally well described by the recent populist observation of Boris Tadić that they have “many dirty rich people”. The most common reason for the existence of these people, popularly known as “tycoons” are the political elites themselves.

At least the first millions were made from the deals between the tycoons and politicians. In the process, many politicians also became tycoons. That is probably why one of the main requirements from Brussels – that the Balkan countries must demonstrate ability to counter corruption and organised crime – is also the most difficult one. For now, Croatia is the only one in the region to have tackled corruption in the highest ranks of the government. More than a hundred high officials in public companies and in politics are currently under investigation, including the former prime minister, Ivo Sanader. The Office for anti-corruption and fight against organised crime (USKOK) opened its sixth investigation against Sanader on charges of having accepted a 10 million euro in bribes from the Hungarian company MOL for the purchase of controlling share of the Croatian Oil Industry. If he is found guilty, which is not impossible, the investigation could be extended to the broadest circle of Sanader’s associates, writes Viktor Vresnik, analysis in the Croatian “Jutarnji



list”. “The entire presidency of the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) could not just ignore what was happening. I find it very hard to believe that a woman who was then deputy prime minister didn’t have a clue. On the other hand, we see that she is now pushing for some things to be cleaned up”, Vresnik said. For the six long years of accession negotiations, the EU kept demanding that Croatia demonstrates genuine commitment to the fight against corruption and wasn’t happy until it saw some high-level arrests.

This spring, European diplomats received a detailed documentation on 35 most notorious corruption affairs from the affair “Trucks”, which brought down, among other, the former minister of defence Berislav Rončević, to numerous plunders of public and state owned enterprises, involving among other the deputy prime minister Damir Polančec, to the famous “FIMI-Media” affair, which concerned directly the former prime minister. It is worth reminding that the reasons for Sanader’s resignation were never entirely clarified, but it seems he did it under the pressure of foreign governments which got hold of sensitive information. This sheds a whole different light on the entire procedure – although Croatia has an amazing record in arresting and detaining even those at the highest political level – the prime minister, his deputy, ministers – this is still not the end of the story. “Two factors should be considered in this

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context. The first is the fact that the whole process was precipitated by internal divisions in HDZ, a conflict of fractions which helped those who were not drawn into such businesses of the party and state circles to dismiss their competitors without too much tact. The other important factor is the EU's close monitoring of Croatia, which accelerates these processes" says the university professor and expert on corruption Josip Kregar. According to him, not a single larger fraud took place without "sponsorship" of the political circles and for years nothing was done about it because of the lack of political will. "However, once the genie got out of the bottle and it turned out that it was impossible to cover up all scandals, that they don't only concern one party, then investigation, eradication and punishment became inevitable", Kregar said. The way things are now, such examination of the first dirty million of the nouveau riches won't ever happen in Serbia. During Milošević's rule everybody was involved in illegal imports of this and that, starting with the largest state owned companies, so the new democratic government didn't really get a chance to conduct a thorough "lustration" of dirty money, says Žarko Korać, one of the former deputies of Đinđić's government.

"We made a decision to establish a Commission for investigations into the origin of property, under the leadership of late Vuk Obradović. The sole success of the Commission was to decide that two famous Milošević's tycoons, Bogoljub Karić and Željko Mitrović from "Pink", should pay back unpaid taxes. To make things worse, because of some formal decision and a mistake of the court Bogoljub Karić received his money back by the end of that Government's term. Obviously, the decision had no real effect. The problem was that this had to be an arbitrary decision when someone would simply say – that's how much you need to pay, because you got reach under entirely irregular conditions, during international sanctions, during illegal imports of excise articles. That means that the state was the largest smuggler, and they had to smuggle together with the state, on the black market. This includes illegal trade in foreign currencies, primary emissions, cigarette imports. "Delta" was involved in cigarette smuggling, but so were JAT or the daily "Politika". At some point Đinđić asked if we need to overthrow all institutions in Serbia. That's was his dilemma: the Commission had to do something, but, as you can see, it never even touched Mišković, which is rather puzzling. On the other hand, his wealth grew much more after 2003 than during Đinđić's and Živković's governments".

At some point Đinđić asked if we need to overthrow all institutions in Serbia to identify the source of money and get the taxes. That's was his dilemma, says the former deputy prime minister of the Government of Serbia Žarko Korać

Even the tycoons confirm Korać's story. A few months ago a very successful businessman Milan Beko, in the interview for the magazine "Economist" said that if he and Mišković are indeed tycoons, they are rather Koštunica's and Tadić's than Milošević's tycoons. A few days ago Beko testified about "racketeering" of Serbia's top businessmen by the political elite. So far, the Council of the Government of Serbia has been leading a fruit-

less fight against corruption, with criminal charges against tycoons, ministers and other public institutions which allowed the largest dirty privatisations. It remains to be seen whether the EU, which ordered Serbia last month to investigate 24 cases of suspicious privatisations, will be any more successful.

It's been two years since the Sarajevo magazine "Dani" published an extensive list of property owned by the then prime minister and now president of the Republic of Srpska Milorad Dodik, whose value was at the time estimated to more than 200 million euro. Neither the state nor the entity authorities ever deigned to investigate the origins of this property.

In the meantime, Bosnia and Herzegovina similarly pledged silence. It's been two years since the Sarajevo magazine "Dani" published an extensive list of property owned by the then prime minister and now president of the Republic of Srpska Milorad Dodik, whose value was at the time estimated to more than 200 million euro. Neither the state nor the entity authorities ever deigned to investigate the origins of this property. There are many reasons: BiH still doesn't have a country-wide law on confiscation of illegally acquired property. At the same time, according to the findings of the Centre for Investigative Journalism in Sarajevo, in the last eight years the courts have submitted more than 100 verdicts to the public attorney offices of BiH, Federation of BiH and Republic of Srpska, ordering requisition of illegally acquired property of a total value of nearly 20 million euro.

So far, only two of these orders have been carried out, resulting in confiscation and sale of property of a total value of 400.000 euro. "Among the politicians we investigated 21 already faced criminal charges, complaints, investigations or even verdicts. The highest number of investigations was conducted against Vahid Hećo, Dragan Čović, Sadik Bahtić and a few other politicians, says

Dino Spahić from the Centre for Investigative Journalism. He adds that, in addition to above-average wages that can exceed 50 000 euro per year, BiH MPs take every opportunity to cheat on the state and taxpayers.

Recently, another law on confiscation of illegally acquired property and reversal of privatisations conducted during the war was submitted to the Parliament for review. The initiator was the Alliance for a Better Future, whose president Fahrudin Radončić has been accused for many years for being a media tycoon. Radončić, owner of the most popular daily in Bosnia and Herzegovina "Dnevni avaz" says: "There are two ways to get rich in the post-socialist countries. Some only privatised illegally what the previous generations built, while the others profited from a chance created by capitalism. You have to know that I'm the author of the best-selling Bosnian product, "Dnevni avaz". Therefore, I have made my own wealth, which is completely legal, as hundreds of investigations have confirmed", Radončić said.

Another problem in BiH is in the discrepancies between the laws and practices in different entities. "Serbia was the first, and now Croatia too has the law on confiscation of property which brings together in one place and regulates the legal grounds for confiscation, the procedures of confiscation, property management, insurance, all the way to the enforcement of the court's verdict, whether it's temporary or permanent confiscation. It is clear that political will is the first and the most essential step in any country to combat this phenomenon", explains Eldan Mujanović, professor at the Department of Criminology in Sarajevo.

Source: Radio Free Europe

Hungary: from the star new EU member state to the nightmare of the Union

Great expectations, great disappointment



Vera Šćepanović

Unlike Greece, Ireland, Spain, Portugal and Italy, which make the headlines in the European and world media because of their economic troubles, In the last few months Hungary has made itself a fame as the source of continuous scandals and concern over the instability of democracy, illiberal and undemocratic politics and the growing power of the extreme right. Until 2006 Hungary was considered the most successful new EU member state. Its economy was steadily growing, fueled by enormous inflows of foreign investments, and it had the most stable political system in the region. Overnight, the star pupil became the nightmare of the EU. The liberals and the socialists practically disappeared from the political stage, and the centre right FIDESZ won a two third majority in the parliament, which it uses to push through controversial laws, some of which are far removed from the standards of the civic, liberal democracy. In the meantime, the extreme right made it into the parliament, and uniformed paramilitary groups are patrolling the Roma villages and spreading terror in the north-east of the country. To make it worse, all this happened in the year in which Hungary took over the presidency of European Union.

FIDESZ' first move was to introduce a retroactive "tax" of 98% on severance payments, which practically takes back the severance payments given to the former public employees who retired after 2000. FIDESZ justified the move by saying that the former employees of public companies (and thus the customers and collaborators of the socialists) received enormous payments in exchange for their silence on corruption.

What had happened? Since 1989 Hungary has undergone the transition without any major upheavals. The change of the regime took place peacefully: the former Communist party accepted the multi-party elections and participated in the establishment of the new constitutional order



of the country. There was no lustration, and already in the next elections in 1994 the reformed Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) took back the helm of the state. Hungary saw a succession of stable governments, regular elections where the opposition always managed to beat the governing party, until 2004 when the same Socialist Party managed to win the second term, for the first time since the change of regime. The party system was relatively stable since the beginning, and the right for votes mainly took place between MSZP and the moderately conservative centre-right FIDESZ. The Hungarian Constitution was considered to be the most liberal in the region and in 2004 the country joined the EU as a free, democratic country with functioning institutions and a democratic political system. In spite of its liberal and civic exterior, however, the conflicts between the Hungarian political alternatives were never truly resolved during transition but were – similar to the process we can witness in some of the Balkan countries – suppressed and evaded in order not to jeopardize the process of European integrations. The paradoxical result of this is that, in spite of the apparently functional political system, the two parties that peacefully replaced each other in the government for full 20 years actually do not recognize each other as legitimate – both claiming that the other is not democratic. For years, FIDESZ has been claiming that MSZP never really reformed and that

under its wing the country is still run by the same apparatchiks who used their party connections to make enormous fortunes through the sale of public property. According to them, this means that the transition cannot be over, as the political elite never confronted the question of the crimes of communism. In a country where communism is equated with Soviet occupation, this is tantamount to saying that MSZP isn't the legitimate representative of the nation and thus has no right to govern. On the other hand, MSZP says FIDESZ is not democratic, as it relies on the traditions of pre-war, nationalistic and fascist Hungary, which places the national and ethnic interests above the civic ones, and that their victory in the elections leads straight to dictatorship. The dangers of a heavily polarized political scene became apparent already in the last year's election, where MSZP went from around 40% to

Activities of the new Hungarian Government immediately sparked dismayed reactions in other European countries: the neighbouring Slovakia and Romania, which immediately declared the new Constitution irredentist, but also in other countries, especially Germany, where the media was already railing against the rising "fascist threat" in Hungary

some 20% of the votes, while FIDESZ won 53%, enough to secure two thirds of the seats in the Parliament. Thus FIDESZ got a chance to "correct" the mistakes of the transition and complete the "unfinished" revolution, and immediately got down to changing the basic laws, including the Constitution. FIDESZ' first move was to introduce a retroactive "tax" of 98% on severance payments, which practically takes back the severance payments given to the former public employees who retired after 2000. FIDESZ justified the moves by saying that the former employees of public companies (and thus the customers and collaborators of the socialists) received enormous payments in exchange for their silence on corruption. Even if this was true in a great number of cases, the Constitutional Court immediately reacted, warning against the illegality of retroactive enforcement, and struck down the "tax". The



government responded by changing the law, limiting the power of the Constitutional Court to issue binding opinions on "economic issues". Soon afterwards, the parliamentary majority adopted a law on the control of the media, instituting a special body for the control of media content that has the power to punish the media for "offensive" statements and hate speech. In line with its nationalistic beliefs and populist approach, FIDESZ also simplified the procedure for acquisition of the Hungarian citizenship for all ethnic Hungarians, of which there are some 2.5 million in the neighbouring countries (Slovakia, Romania and Serbia), drawing anger from its neighbours. As the final touch, the Government pushed through a new constitution in mid-April, the first draft of which only appeared in public a month earlier, and which was drafted exclusively by the members of FIDESZ. The "one party Constitution", as it became known, contains a preamble which is at odds with the values of the civic, liberal democracy, and introduces new, conservative values. Instead of the rights of the individual, it emphasises the importance and rights of the family, community, Christianity, and the unity of the Hungarian people, wherever they might live. Activities of the new Hungarian Government immediately sparked dismayed reactions in other European countries: the neighbouring Slovakia and Romania, which immediately declared the new Constitution irredentist, but also in other countries, especially Germany, where the media was already railing against the rising "fascist threat" in Hungary. Thus the renowned German weekly *Süddeutsche Zeitung* emphasizes that

the new Constitution “enshrines a spirit of ideological, ethnic intolerance” while the news programme of the ARD television network called Hungary “a disgrace for Europe” and expressed its surprise that “the more some countries profit from the European Union, the more prone they are to anti-European sentiments”. The question is, however, how a country that was once the star pupil of European integrations came into this position in the first place, and whether Hungary is just an exception, haunted by its past, or an expression of a deeper process, closely tied with the European integrations, which the European

Union cannot, or perhaps doesn't want to, control. The first thing of note is that FIDESZ won a two-third majority in the Parliament not by gathering a huge number of supporters, but by winning more or less the same number of votes (around 2.5 million), as in 2006 when they lost the elections. This time, however, there was nobody to mobilise the votes for the other side. The Socialist lost all support, especially after the crisis, some went over to the extreme right, some to the smaller liberal parties, and most of them simply didn't show up at the ballot.

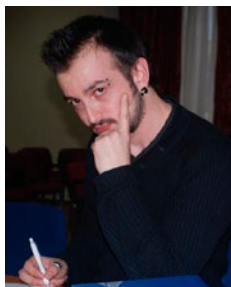
Second rate European citizens

The background to this trend is a profound disappointment, not only by the parties in power, but also by the overall outcome of the transition process, the end of integration and the loss of a clear, tangible goal to replace the membership in EU. Hungary found itself in the EU, the EU acknowledged that all is well with Hungary, and the citizens realised that they are still facing the same problems – their wages are low, and much lower than in other EU member states, the inequality is rising, especially in the east of the country where the foreign investors never came, and, perhaps the worst of all, there are no more promises, because they achieved all the goals they had fought for in all these years. This makes the discourse of the “unfinished revolution” extremely popular – it is an attempt to revive the idea that it isn't yet over, that somebody tricked them, that new radical changes can produce something more than the grey everyday reality of second-rate European citizens. Political and social problems, which have been pushed into the background until the accession, now came into the fore, and with a lot of ideological fuel for good measure. And while the Germans are enraged that the countries that “profited so much” from EU are now turning against it, the Hungarian citizen's don't think they got too much. Their wages are still around a quarter of the German wages, and for the last seven years they were still banned from working in the rich neighbouring countries – Germany and Austria.

The neighbours and EU

The feeling that the EU cannot or doesn't want to do anything more for these countries isn't, however, only of economic nature. Last year, Slovakia adopted a law on minority languages, which is especially hard on the large Hungarian minority in this country. The law forbids public use of minority languages, except in the regions where the minority constitutes more than 20% of the population. “Public” is very broadly defined: for instance, a Hungarian doctor and a Hungarian patient are expected to speak Slovak to each other during an exam in a public hospital. In addition to being nearly impossible to enforce, the law was understood as a direct provocation in already tense Hungarian-Slovak relations, but the EC answered the Hungarian complaint very diplomatically – that no member state should be allowed to discriminate against its citizens, but that Slovakia has the right to protect its language. Such a hypocritical response would be inconceivable in the years before the accession to EU, and Slovakia didn't even try to implement a similar law then. However, in similar disputes between the member states, the EU can only try to calm the spirits, which reinforces the sense that the new member states are left to themselves, and rekindles nationalism.

The magic of European Union



Alen Čuturić

The author is a volunteer in the Centre for Civic Education (CCE) and a student of the Political Science Department of the University of Montenegro.

Is it good for Montenegro that we're all hypnotised by European Union? Can the fact that we don't have many Eurosceptics be somehow bad for Montenegro, which is already deep in the process of European integrations?

"Personally, I won't have any benefits from Europe" is a statement you can often hear. Moreover, in EU itself there are plenty of citizens who doubt the policies and usefulness of EU. The logic suggests the following: if there are such doubts in the EU member states, it is paradoxical that we look on the EU as some kind of divine saviour.

Much of this can be explained by the lack of information, or indeed interest, on the part of the citizens. They are used to have their fates charted by others, influential, "important" people... Our citizens are suffering from an extremely worrying syndrome – the inferiority complex.

To be a Eurosceptic does not mean to be against EU and the processes of European integrations per se – on the contrary, I believe it means to be cautious, reasonable and ready to embrace alternative solutions. The citizens of our country are hypnotised by European Union and they take everything for granted. Our public opinion (politicians and other supportive elements) see the EU as a saviour, as the final solution to all social, economic and political problems. But the reality begs to differ... The EU cannot be a goal in itself. On the contrary, we should see the European Union as means to strengthen our institutions and contribute to the prosperity of our country.

Our citizens have to understand that the EU membership won't mean anything if the state of our economy, human and minority rights, as well as other social segments doesn't improve. We have to build a civil society, which promotes collective action with a goal of realising com-

mon interests and values. This requires a more intensive support for and development of non-governmental organisations, pressure groups, trade unions, employers' associations etc. Simply, if we wish to progress we ought to change many things, and invest much in such changes.

Still, I believe that the key role in the process of European integrations doesn't belong to the ruling parties, or the opposition parties (although they have a lot of influence and can have positive or negative effects), but indeed WE, the citizens of Montenegro. We are holding the key of the gates to European Union in our hands, and we're not even aware of it. We are the ones who need to develop this society, raising the awareness to a higher level – starting with the rule of law, stronger institutions, economic development etc.

Sooner or later we will be a part of EU, that is not the question – but the main goal should be to clean up our own backyard. What can we do about this?

One answer lies in effective education of our citizens. The citizens of Montenegro must know about the European Union, what it brings and if we're ready for such a big step. We have to learn from past mistakes – ours and others'. Do we want to become part of EU at all costs? Is the title of a member enough? Is it enough, for our country and for ourselves, to just call ourselves part of the "European family"?

I believe the most important thing is to build a strong civil society, a society which doesn't depend on the economy of other countries, a society capable of deciding on its destiny instead of obediently following others' decisions and blindly accepting all impositions.

Beaches ready for tourists



Most of the European summer resorts have high quality water and are ready to receive the tourists this summer, according to the report of the European Environment Agency. The water is the cleanest in Cyprus – 100% according to the European guidelines. Croatia is right behind, with 97.3% compliance with the European standards. The next in line are Malta (95.4%), Greece (94.3%) and Ireland (90.1%). EU has more than 21 000 bathing locations, out of which 70% are seaside resorts. The EEA report indicates that the quality of water is generally satisfactory, although slightly lower than last year.

By 2060 every third european old



According to the Eurostat, by 2060 almost one third of Europeans will be older than 65. Eurostat explains aging population by “relatively low birth rate and an ever greater number of people who live until a very old age”. European Union, which in early 2010 had 501 million inhabitants, will reach the peak of 526 million by 2040, after which the population will gradually decline to 517 million by 2060.

What is a diet product?



European Commission decided to force the industry of diet products to provide scientific evidence that their products are not damaging to a certain population in order to be allowed to market them. The purpose of the draft directive, which needs to be adopted by the member states and the European Parliament, is to eradicate fraud in this sector. The market for diet products, from protein tablets

and drinks for sportsmen to jams for diabetics and foods for pregnant women has exploded in the last thirty years, bringing enormous profits to the industry. The production and trade in these goods so far escaped EU regulations. If the directive is adopted, the industry will have to provide evidence for its claims, such as that their products do not raise the level of blood sugar. In addition to this, the attribute “diet” will be removed from the labels.

Easier alimentionation



New regulations coming into force in late June will simplify the procedures for access to alimentionation of children whose parents have divorced. According to the EC, there are 16 million international married couples in EU, out of which one million divorces every year. According to the new regulations, the decision which obliges one parent to pay alimentionation made in a certain EU country will be automatically valid in all other members, without any additional procedures.

Ex smokers are unstoppable



“Ex smokers are unstoppable” is the slogan of the new European campaign against smoking, initiated by the European Health and Consumer Protection Commissioner John Dalli. According to EC, there are more than 650 000 deaths every year in the EU from tobacco-related disease. Every third adult citizen is a smoker. The new three-year campaign will concentrate on the positive results of quitting, as testified by the former smokers in media advertisements, social media, events... The campaign is primarily intended for smokers aged between 25 and 34.

Declaration of the EU-Montenegro Stabilisation and Association Parliamentary Committee

Still short on the big fish

The track record of investigations, prosecutions and final convictions in corruption and organized crime cases was improved but insufficiently, especially in cases of high ranking officials, mostly due to the low efficiency of law enforcement, warns the Declaration and Recommendations to the Montenegrin and EU institutions, adopted by the joint EU-Montenegro Stabilisation and Association Parliamentary Committee (SAPC) at their second session on 17 and 18 May in Podgorica. The meeting of the Montenegrin and European MPs, which was also attended by the deputy general director for enlargement Stefano Sanino, head of the

Government to disclose acts on privatisation

The Declaration pointed out that the freedom of information law is being implemented with difficulty, especially when it comes to the provision of documents that could reveal corruption in the field of privatisation and public procurement. "The Committee urged the government and local authorities to facilitate access to relevant data; urged the state authorities to refrain from pressuring those non-governmental and non-profit organisations and civil society actors in general which investigate corruption and organised crime cases and perform a watchdog role", states the Declaration.

EU delegation to Montenegro Leopold Maurer and the chief of Montenegrin diplomacy Milan Roćen, under joint presidency of Eduard Kukan and Ranko Krivokapić. In the 18 points of the Declaration and Recommendations the Parliamentary Committee welcomes the fact that the process of establishing the legal and constitutional framework of the country has almost been finalised and noted the need for close cooperation between all political entities in order for the process to be completed. "The Committee calls on all political parties to reach a consensus on the draft electoral law without further

delay in line with the recommendations of the OSCE-ODIHR and the Venice Commission", states the Declaration. The Committee also welcomed the improvements in the work of the Parliament and called for greater internal allocation of budgetary and human resources to it in order to provide MPs and the Parliament's administration with better technical and financial conditions. The Committee also noted the timely adoption of the "Action plan for strengthening the legislative and oversight role of the Parliament of Montenegro". "The committee encouraged further strengthening of legislative and control functions of the Parliament including hearings and other control mechanisms. The Committee welcomed the establishment of the parliamentary Working Group, mandated to upgrade rules of procedures, particularly with regard to representing initiatives and motions coming from the opposition" states the document. The Committee called on the Parliament to "urgently and significantly strengthen" its capacities regarding the task of assessing whether laws proposed by the government are in line with the *acquis* and urged the Commission to provide the necessary technical assistance in this regard within the framework of the Instrument for Pre-Accession, and also urged the government to make the process of law-making more transparent and publicly accessible. The Declaration also welcomed the appointment of the Council for Cooperation between the Montenegrin Government and NGOs called for further strengthening of cooperation of the government and NGOs, as well as the signing of the Memorandum between the Parliament of Montenegro and the network of NGOs in the area of democratization and human rights, and welcomed the work of the National Council for European Integration, which includes representatives of civil society, government, the judiciary and the opposition, but called for its role in the progress of EU integration to be strengthened. The Committee reiterated the utmost importance of the rule

Think about ownership of the energy sector

The committee welcomed measures to develop a lower carbon economy by developing the country's huge hydroelectric, thermo-energy and other renewable energy potential, which will contribute in covering domestic needs and even constitute an export resource. "The Committee warned of the risks that large scale dams may have on the environment; called for appropriate and transparent environmental assessments of the investments in energy, including of 'environmentally better options' and public consultations with NGOs, prior to the decision to invest and called upon the Government to be careful in decision making on possible ownership changes in the energy sector", states the Declaration.

of law for the development of the country and welcomed, to this end, the increased activity in preparing and adopting the requisite legislation and underlined the central importance of full implementation of the new laws. The committee invited the Montenegrin authorities to fully implement the constitutional provisions of the official languages in use, in all areas and particularly in education in the next school year. The document also noted "some progress" in the reform of the judiciary, as demonstrated by the adoption of major amendments to criminal procedures, and in increasing the human resources available and reducing the backlog of cases in the courts, but called for a review of the system for the appointment of judges and prosecutors in accordance with the opinion of the Venice Commission requested by the Government. The Committee regretted the fact that the first Gay Pride has been postponed, and expressed their expectation that the state authorities, political parties and all institutions will preserve an open society, promote tolerance and give an equivocal support to the organisers of the Gay Pride and ensure that it can take place with the safety of all participants guaranteed. The Committee commended Montenegro's good relations with its neighbouring countries and recognised the significance of the strengthening of the par-

liamentary dimension of regional cooperation. The Declaration and Recommendations further call on the Government to ensure the environment for a significant improvement of the competitiveness of the economy, monitoring and enforcement of privatisation contracts, ensuring transparency in the provision of state aid and the adoption of better and simpler regulation of the business environment and in particular to facilitate the functioning of small and medium enterprises. "The Committee noted a significant role of tourism in the economy and its potential to contribute to the development of the country; it pointed out, however, certain weaknesses in this sector, and called upon the Government to take further steps to achieve an optimal balance between the valorisation of mass and elite tourism, the revitalization of rural areas, linking of tourism and agriculture, infrastructure improvement, environmental protection, efficient waste management; emphasized the importance of increasing the volume of agricultural production with adequate support for rural development and with special emphasis on organic produce and livestock", states the Declaration and Recommendations of the Joint Committee.

Troubling independence and financing of the public service

The Committee, it says, acknowledged the steps taken by the Montenegrin Government to ensure freedom of expression in the media by sending to the Parliament a proposal of the law on electronic media and amendments to the Criminal Code and in particular by decriminalization of defamation. "However, the Committee called for further energetic and swift efforts to ensure the independence and professionalism of media outlets, especially ensuring their independence and strengthening the objectivity of the public broadcaster as well as an improvement of transparency of its accounts", states the joint Declaration of the Montenegrin and European MPs. The Committee stressed that reported cases of intimidation and physical violence against journalists as well as against civil society activists must be fully investigated and prosecuted wherever appropriate.

Democracy in theory and practice

With a diploma-award ceremony on 12 June 2011, the XVII Generation of Democracy School successfully completed the programme. The School is organised by Centre for Civic Education (CCE), with support of Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES). The participants received the diplomas from Professor **Radovan Radonjić**, the head of the School, **Daliborka Uljarević**, executive director of CCE and **Ivana Račić**, FES programme coordinator. During 4 months of active work and study, 30 participants successfully completed the programme of the School. The programme was designed to offer a chance to the socially active citizens who wish to contribute personally to the development of democracy in Montenegro to broaden, complete and advance their knowledge, through lectures of renowned professors and experts from various academic and other institutions and organisations, from country and abroad. In addition to knowledge and experience, the participants also acquired many friendships, which we hope will last, as this is one of the main goals of the School's organisers. Diplomas were awarded to **Andrea Mitrović**, **Ana Rutović**, **Bojana Ščekić**, **Bojan Veljović**, **Bojana Vujošević**, **Dejan Dedović**, **Denis Martinović**, **Dimitrije Šofranac**, **Edmir Kalač**, **Ida Kolinović**, **Jasmina Guberinić**, **Jelena Leković**, **Jovana Živković**, **Maja Radonjić**, **Mersiha Rastoder**, **Mijat Tomić**, **Miroslav Drobnjak**, **Milena Nikić**, **Miodrag Radulović**, **Nataša Perošević**, **Nenad Nišavić**, **Radoš Mušović**, **Sanja Bulatović**, **Stefa Adzić**, **Stevan Zicer**, **Svetlana Kumburović**, **Tamara Milaš**, **Vesna Brajović**, **Vesna Ročenović**, **Vladimir Obradović**. The next generation of Democracy School is planned for September 2011.

The importance of civil society in the promotion of citizenship

Between 14 and 17 June 2011, 40 participants from the Western Balkans, Turkey and Island visited Brussels, as part of the P2P programme titled "The role of civil society organisations in the promotion of active citizenship". The programme of the European Commission aims at offering individuals and organisations from the countries in various stages of accession to EU an opportunity to acquire direct knowledge of EU institutions, as well as of the relevant civil society platforms in EU. During the study visit the participants discussed active citizenship, focusing on civic education, development of the community and volunteering, and explored the possibilities for networking among their organisations. **Milica Milonjić**, CCE programme associate, participated on behalf of Centre for Civic Education.

Completed Series of lectures on Herbert Marcuse

Centre for Civic Education is pleased to have realized Series of lectures on **Herbert Marcuse**, a project within educational program - "Contemporary tendencies of critical thought." Between 24 February and 3 June 2011, every Thursday at 7:30 pm an unusual group enthusiasts gathered at the Centre for Civic Education (CCE), interested in the works of a philosopher, sociologist, political theorist and a member of the famous Frankfurt Institute for Social Research, Herbert Marcuse. The works were discussed and interpreted by the creator of the cycle, Dr **Filip Kovačević**, professor at the University of Montenegro and author of a book on psychoanalysis and critical theory "Liberating Oedipus?". This exceptionally successful experimental program was a volunteer project to which professor Kovačević volunteered his knowledge and expertise, CCE its facilities and organizational capacity, and students their curiosity and spare time, because what we recognize as needs of our academic community and society as a whole does not always correspond with the priorities of donors. The book "Marcuse in Podgorica" which will contain key moments of lectures and discussions held by professor Kovačević during this cycle is under preparation. The next cycle of this educational program is planned for February 2012.

New focus on the Western Balkans

Between 12 and 15 June 2011, in Sarajevo, Centre for Trans-Atlantic Relations of the John Hopkins University (SAIS) and American-Bosnian Federation organised an international conference titled “Western Balkans: progress, stagnation or regression”? The organising institutions were active participants in the efforts to build stronger ties on all levels between the USA, European Union and Western Balkans. The goal of the conference was therefore to strengthen these efforts and to initiate further activities in Washington and Brussels, with a series of officials and civil society representatives. During these three days a great number of experts from the USA, EU and Western Balkans gave presentations in a number of thematic panels. **Philip Gordon**, deputy US State Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs. **Daliborka Uljarević**, executive director of CCE, gave a presentation within the panel “Positioning of civil society, perspectives of the civil society vis-à-vis the governments, internal EU reforms and the accession process”.

Political education for democratic transition

Between 7 and 9 June 2011, Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES) organised a regional conference “Political education in a democratic transition – challenges and results of 15 years of political education in Serbia”, to mark the 15th anniversary of its presence and work in the region. The conference was opened by **Boris Tadić**, president of the Republic of Serbia; **Michael Ehrke**, director of the regional FES office, **H.E. Wolfram Maas**, ambassador of the German Republic in Serbia and **Stefan Dehnert**, from the FES headquarters. Civil society representative from Serbia and the region, as well as representatives of political parties who share the values and vision with FES, spoke about different aspects and results of political education. **Daliborka Uljarević**, executive director of CCE spoke at the conference as well as the only representative from Montenegro, as a sign that Centre for Civic Education has been recognised as the most important organisation in the country dedicated to political education and democratic transition.

Getting to know the EU

As the best students of the X Generation of European Integrations School **Milica Dragojević**, **Ana Bogavac**, **Miloš Žižić** and **Miloš Žarković** spent a few days in Brussels between 6 and 9 June 2011, where they visited the European Commission, European Parliament, European Economic and Social Council as well as independent lobbying institutions. The programme is organised by Centre for Civic Education (CCE), Centre for Development of Non-Governmental Organisations (CDNGO) and European Movement in Montenegro (EMiM), with support of the Foundation Open Society Institute, Regional Office in Montenegro.



Call for Applications Graduate Schools and Doctoral Programs Grants

University of Verona, Italy

In order to be able to apply for admissions to Graduate Schools and/or Doctoral Programs, any applicant (regardless of age or nationality) must be in possession of either a Laurea Specialistica/Magistrale or a Laurea Degree (Vecchio Ordinamento) released by an Italian university. Also, students with a foreign Master's Degree (Master of Science or Master of Arts) or an equivalent Master of Science-level degree that in their country grants access to a Ph.D. program are eligible. Applicants who will qualify for their degree within and not after the beginning date of Doctoral Programs (1st January 2012) will also be able to apply.

The amount granted for a scholarship is 13.638,47 per year (gross) and will be increased in situations stipulated by law and it is exempted from IRE (personal income tax). The scholarship will be granted for the entire duration of the Doctoral program (three years) and the instalments will be paid monthly on the 30th day of each month. The scholarship will be increased of 50% during authorised study periods abroad. Should the student be suspended or excluded from the Doctoral Program, the scholarship will be granted just for the period in which he/ she attended it. Scholarships will be granted on the basis of the order of the respective rankings.

Deadline: 31 August, 2011.

More information available on <http://www.sdsim.univr.it/sdol/main?ent=iniziativa&cid=3786>

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