

European pulse

Electronic monthly magazine for European Integration – No 70, July 2011

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Consequences of Montenegro's potential failure to get the date for negotiations

interview

Scientific advisor in the Institute for European Studies, Dr Miroslav Prokopijević

analysis

Is the electoral law the main
obstacle on the road to EU

region

Slovenia too counts corruption



Foreword: **Merit**

Vladan Žugić

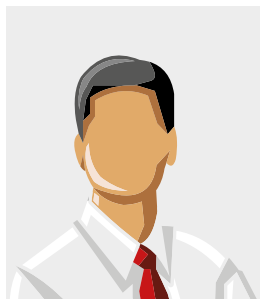


Brussels, some time in 2019. Montenegro is about to close Chapter 23, following the verdicts against the members of a group which engaged in illicit trade in drugs, oil and weapons. Serbia hopes to close the remaining two chapters and join the EU by the end of the year. *Brussels, a year later.* Montenegro failed to close Chapter 23 because the judiciary did not demonstrate sufficient independence in the case against the former high officials charged with corruption. Serbia finished the negotiations, but is formally still not a member of EU. *Balkans, July 2011.* The last ICTY fugitive **Goran Hadžić** was delivered to the Hague and the first reactions suggest that Serbia might get the candidate status, maybe even the date for negotiations. Montenegro is also expected to get the date for negotiations. *Balkans, a few weeks later.* New tensions have erupted between Belgrade and Prishtina, leaving Serbia further away from the candidate status. Podgorica's chances to get the date for negotiations are also declining, and the ruling elite are seeking an excuse in the regional context. That's why the EU should stick to individual merit. A conditional date for negotiations with Montenegro, especially if **Ranka Čarapić** delivers on her promise of two big fish, would dispel the doubts that Montenegro is a hostage to the region, which could further influence the process of European integrations. Besides, ever since the EC set its seven conditions, democratic processes seem to have jumped ahead, even if the voices of those who don't like the new situation are getting ever louder.

Calendar

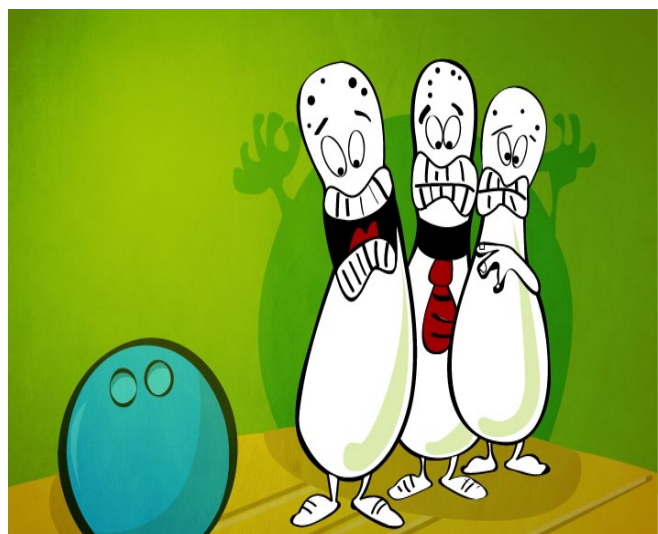
- 05. July **Hungarian Memorandum on Balkans** / Bearing in mind the level of its preparedness so far, as well as the size of the country and the number of inhabitants, Montenegro could conclude its negotiations with EU relatively quickly, concludes the Memorandum on Western Balkans, submitted by the Hungarian prime minister **Viktor Orban** to his colleagues in EU. Hungary, which held the helm of EU in the first six months of this year, sent the Memorandum to the 27 EU member states, asking them to maintain the policy of enlargement on the Western Balkans.
- 09. July **No negotiations without a new electoral law** / If it fails to adopt the new electoral legislation, Montenegro won't get the date for the beginning of negotiations, said the director of the Enlargement Directorate Stefano Sanino. "There are seven key priorities, and you have to fulfil each one of them. It's not a menu from which you can pick and choose", he said.
- 13. July **Đukanović reluctant to make sacrifices** / President of DPS **Milo Đukanović** said that his party "won't be sacrificing anybody, neither the big nor the small fish". In an interview for the special issue of Pobjeda, head of the ruling party said that the EU now has to go through a period of profound consolidation because of the financial and other worries, which means that Montenegro's progress "towards full membership will not depend entirely, and perhaps not even crucially, on the quality and speed of our reforms".
- 19. July **Croatia the example** / Montenegro has all the preconditions to become a success story in the Balkans, and the end of membership negotiations between Croatia and EU confirms the interest in further enlargement on the Western Balkans, said the Slovak ambassador to Montenegro **František Lipka** at the second National Convention on European Integrations.
- 29. July **Legislative assembly line** / The Parliament of Montenegro adopted amendments to the laws on the conflict of interests, financing of political parties, Ombudsman for human rights and freedoms and public administration, thus strengthening the anti-corruption legislative framework.
- 31. July **Seventh time lucky** / For the seventh time, the Parliament of Montenegro failed to adopt the electoral law that would be harmonised with the Constitution and recommendations of the Venetian Commission and OSCE. This time the breakdown came after the Government refused the condition set by the opposition to adopt amendments to the Law on General Education in order to equalise Montenegrin and Serbian languages in the educational system.

Italy in Europe's bowling



Guido Vidale

There's no such thing like the "Greek disease". Greece is simply the first of the kegs that was taken as a target by the European financial bowlers. Nobody believes any more that the Greek finances could be saved. The game consists of dragging on with it, because nobody sees what could be done to save the situation. Portugal, Spain, Ireland and Italy could be brought down, like in bowling, by the collapse of the Greek keg. But any one of these countries could also be the one to fall first and drag down with it everybody else. The very construction of EU risks collapse. And euro is the centrepiece of the storm. The idea that we could just throw the diseased bodies one by one out of the Euro-zone isn't realistic. What made the governments and political parties to compete at satisfying or shutting up "the markets". What, indeed, are these "markets" which hold the "sovereignty", or the control over the lives of millions of people? They are the international finance, capital in the purest form. Backed up by enormous private patrimoniums, also known as hedge funds, private equity or investment funds. There are also the big banks which profited from the liberalisation of the last 20 years and are now able to speculate with the money of their clients. The thirds are the large multinational corporations (oil, retail, construction or food companies, pharmaceuticals...) which "integrate" their own profits. But the most powerful actors on these "markets" are the insurance companies and pension funds which, in order to guarantee enormous profits on their investors, do not shy away from strangulating the companies and throwing out the workers who gave them the money in the first place, hoping to insure their old age. If the euro as we know it – and it wasn't the worst of ideas – is killing the EU as we speak, what really tied the hands of the planet, what keeps on holding it hostage, Europe included, was the universal spread of "single-mindedness". Liberalism: the idea that the market or markets must rule the world. This idea has been ruling the societies for quite a while and, to an extent, we all



succumbed. So, when they spoke about a nice TV programme "Leave with me", with **Roberto Saviano**, who won a prize for his book "Gomorra", a young man who fights with a pen against the mafia and lives under permanent police escort, nobody talked about the content of the programme, or its value, or even the number of viewers – but about the advertisements that could earn RAI a profit. That means: the markets-advertisements decide on the value of a good. Accordingly, the markets ought to rule the world, as well as our personal lives – the idea which made us all weak or turned us into imbeciles. In the future, we must rule from below. It means: we must have the power of initiative, acquire and spread the knowledge, practice solidarity, be aware of the common goods and know how to defend them from privatisation. To succeed, we must now how. It's not only about having more active and engaged citizens to develop and shape new forms of governance, which is neither private nor public but common. We need new competent cadre, with technical and management capabilities, a new "class of managers", that will be able to take the power from the hands of this incompetent and corrupt elite, which exists in both the politics and business, and which is ruling our lives.

Excerpts taken from the journal "Novi plamen"

What if Montenegro doesn't get the date for negotiations with EU this autumn

Running out of steam



Samir Kajošević

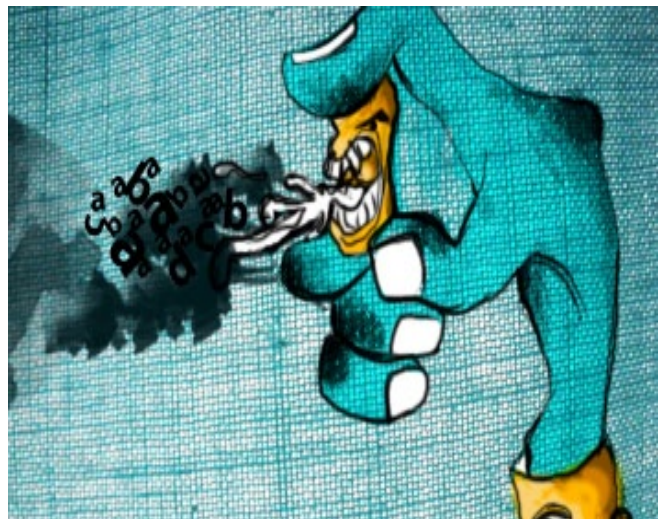
Montenegro could face rising political tensions, plummeting interest and greater scepticism of serious investors and a slow-down in reforms, unless it gets the date for the opening of negotiations with European Union. In case the waiting period for the negotiations takes longer, Montenegrin society will become more closed, the corruption will have more space to flourish, and serious reform cuts will be more easily avoided. Although this doesn't mean that Brussels will be paying less attention, Podgorica could lose a lot of the rating in the eyes of its European partners, falling back to the bottom of the pile of West Balkan hopefuls. These

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are some possible scenarios and consequences for Montenegro if it fails to fulfil the seven conditions of the European Commission and begin negotiations with the European Union. Namely, the "European success story" could join Macedonia as the eternal candidate for accession negotiation.

Secretary General of the European Movement in Montenegro (EMiM) **Momčilo Radulović** believes that this won't stop the reforms in the country, but might slow them down. In spite of the difficult experiences of Macedonia and earlier Slovakia, Radulović says that there won't be any radical changes in Montenegro even if Podgorica fails the EU test this time.

"Of course, our political image will deteriorate, as so far we had a big advantage over the competitors. This would take us a few steps backwards and slow down the reforms, but



they wouldn't just stop", says Radulović. With a deteriorating image among the European officials, Radulović said, early parliamentary elections could be the main consequence of the bad news from EU. The early elections would be called according to the old rules, which are beneficial for the government, while the opposition would become the villain, guilty of obstructing the European way.

"This attitude of the opposition will soon yield the bitter fruit among the international officials, even among those who were initially sympathetic. This is already starting to be tragicomical and to demonstrate irrationality of the opposition leaders", Radulović said. Asked whether the reforms could halt because Brussels would be paying less attention because of the delay in negotiations, Radulović says that the Government's commitment to fulfilling the European conditions must be preserved.

After the EU found that Slovak institutions are unstable and its democracy flawed, this country had to wait for two years to begin accession negotiations, and suffered serious economic difficulties in the meantime.



EU funds slipping out reach

Economic analyst Mila Kasalica said that, like Slovakia, Montenegro might face economic problems in case the elections are postponed. Reminding that until now Montenegrin economy relied almost entirely on construction, tourism, and the risky support of financial institutions, she believes that the beginning of negotiations is important for providing access to the European funds. "The next phase in the accession process has to include adoption and dedicated, sensible implementation of the regulations that would bring the country entirely in line with the EU economic criteria. This would open up the EU funds, and in the long term allow us to participate in the larger markets, regional and European. Yet, all this won't happen unless we start the negotiations", Kasalica said.

She added that the difficulty in accessing the European funds will have a greater impact on the economic and development policy than on the public finances. The positive outcome of negotiations with EC would lead to a change of the mindset with regard to economic and development projects.

And yet, given the current results in fighting corruption and, especially, negotiating with the opposition, there is little chance that the Government's commitment will yield fruit by autumn. On the one hand, Brussels quit asking for tangible results in the fight against corruption, but on the other hand they insist that the date for negotiations will only be granted if Montenegro fulfils the first condition set by the European Commission. In spite of that, the fate of the electoral law remains unclear, and autumn is the last deadline for Montenegro.

After the opposition made its agreement to the electoral law conditional upon government's support for the law that would equalise the use of Serbian and Montenegrin languages in education, it seems nearly certain that Montenegro will remain waiting before EU's doors.

Montenegrin politicians could learn a lot from Slovakia and Macedonia, which were sent into the corner for their failure to fulfil European criteria. After the EU found that Slovak institutions are unstable and its democracy flawed, this country waited for two years to begin accession negotiations. The situation changed only after the Slovak opposition united to overthrow the Government of **Vladimír Mečiar**. In the meantime, the country faced economic downturn, which was later alleviated by an inflow of foreign investors, once the environment stabilised and the government took steps to make the tax system more attractive and step up the law enforcement. Slovakia completed its accession negotiations within a record three year period. Unlike Slovakia, Macedonia has been waiting for negotiations for a full six years. Although it fulfilled the political criteria, Macedonia faced parliamentary elections in 2008 which led to fierce conflicts and unrests. A year later, the EC recommended the European Council to begin accession negotiations with Macedonia, but the motion failed because of the ongoing conflict with Greece over the name of the country.

Political analyst from Skopje **German Filkov** warns that ever since Macedonia has become

increasingly isolated and distanced from EU, economic reforms are long not the centre of politicians' attention, and the country is troubled by ethnic tensions. "The consequences of this epic soap opera between Macedonia and EU are terrible and multiple. The country is closed and we rarely get visits from foreign officials, and even more rarely have one of ours go abroad. This increasingly fuels nationalism and frustration among both Macedonians and Albanians", Filkov explains.

He said that, in addition to the political tensions and economic recession, there is a growing number of Euro-sceptics who believe that Europe does not wish to see Macedonia among its members. According to Filkov, this means that instead of settling the dispute with Greece, rising nationalistic sentiments are only making it worse. He added that the Government is using the breakdown of negotiations with Brussels to justify the internal problems. "The Government is using the dispute with Greece and EU's blockade to justify poverty and nationalism. And the main victims are the citizens, who have plunged into apathy".

Macedonia has been waiting for negotiations for six years. In this period, Macedonia has become more isolated and distant from EU, economic reforms are no longer a priority and the country is torn by ethnic tensions. "The consequences of this epic soap opera with the EU are terrible and multiple", says German Filkov, political analyst from Skopje.

However, Momčilo Radulović believes that Montenegro won't suffer the same fate if it doesn't get the date for negotiations, citing much greater difficulties in Macedonia. "Macedonia has a deep ethnic conflict, a very different Government and many more general problems than Montenegro. Here we have a purely political, inter-party issue, while in Macedonia they are facing social and statehood issues which

European integrations small political change

Radulović warns that the question of electoral law, as the first condition for negotiations, has been reduced to small change in local political exchanges, and called on the politicians to approach this issue with more seriousness.

According to him, the fact that the law wasn't adopted until June is entirely the fault of the ruling coalition, which demonstrated terrible arrogance and lack of flexibility in the way they dealt with the problem. On the other hand, conditioning the electoral law by the discussion on the Serbian language, the opposition took on the role of the biggest culprit for the potentially negative outcome.

"Instead of using the European demands for moderate political exchanges, the opposition insists on anachronistic and irrational political platforms. They are going back to the issue of identity, not of Europe: this has nothing to do with reforms, democratisation or European integrations. It only has to do with the question of identity and Serbian nationalism, and belongs to an obsolete political discussion", Radulović says, adding that this way the opposition is ruining its credibility both internally and internationally.

are much greater than our quagmire with the electoral law", Radulović said. He added that it is still possible that Montenegro might get the positive opinion of EC by the end of the year, even if the failure to adopt the electoral law put this scenario under a big question mark. "All options are still open, although chances are that without the electoral law it is more likely that we won't get the negotiations", he said.

Obstacles to the date of negotiations – Đukanović or the electoral law?

Meet our elite



Neđeljko Rudović

Unless they manage to reach a compromise on the electoral law, the Montenegrin government and the opposition will once again demonstrate that they don't deserve the wages and privileges they enjoy as the so-called representatives of the citizens, bringing us back to the question: Does Montenegro have any more strength to produce some sort of political elite that would be able to turn the country into another small, modern and efficient EU member? The way things are going now, the citizens of Montenegro will continue to pay for the vanity of those sitting in the Government and the Parliament, unable to see the forest for the trees and too frightened to face the bare fact that the public institutions are only there to protect and preserve the power of a handful of people who leach the wealth off the country they are sworn to serve. The collapse of the July negotiations on the electoral law, which is the first EU condition for the beginning of membership negotiations, demonstrated the immaturity of the Montenegrin politicians, and sparked new doubts about the government's dedication to the strategic goal – Montenegro's membership in EU. There was no compromise, because the Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS) and Social-Democratic Party (SDP) didn't want to accept the condition of the opposition parties to adopt, parallel to the electoral law, amendments to the Law on General Education that would equalise the status of the Serbian and Montenegrin languages in the educational system. This, of course, has nothing to do with the electoral law, but the real question is why would the government allow the opposition to put this issue on the agenda and block the negotiations? There was already a round of discussion on the electoral law in June, but the negotiations failed – not because of the electoral law, but because DPS and SDP stubbornly refused to accept 15% population threshold as a maximum below which the nationalities will be eligible for guaranteed seats in the parliament. They were unyielding to the demands to extend negotiations to the Law on Citizenship in order to allow the citizens of Montenegro who voted in the referendum to re-

tain this right until 2016, when the procedures for acquiring Montenegrin citizenship will be simplified. Then, in July, they accepted all that, but only after the results of the census, which demonstrated that Serbian is the preferred language of a majority of the population. It is true that the status of the language has nothing to do with the electoral law, but it is also true that the results of the census made it a legitimate issue that couldn't have blocked the negotiations in June if the government were a bit more sensible. Never mind the fact that the controversial subject could keep on being called "the mother tongue" for a few years, until the experts finally agree



on the Montenegrin grammar. In the midst of all the "hard work" of the Government and the Parliament to fulfil the seven conditions for the beginning of negotiations with EU, the 13 July interview of the head of DPS and the shadow prime minister **Mila Đukanovića** suggests waning enthusiasm even among those who thought that Montenegro ought to take the next step toward membership. In this message to his followers, Đukanović brazenly rejected all the warnings coming from the European centres, which demand that Montenegro shows visible results in the fight against corruption and organised crime. Without reservations, he proclaimed that DPS has no intention of sacrificing either big or small fish in order to appease some outsiders, and sent an even more interesting and damning message – Montenegro's rapprochement with EU doesn't only depend on the success of the reforms, but also on the situation in the EU, which is currently in a phase of consolidation. In other words, there's no reason to kill ourselves over reforms, until the EU figures out what to do with itself.

Scientific advisor in the Institute for European Studies in Belgrade
Dr Miroslav Prokopijević

The end of Euro means the end of Euro-integrations



The end of Euro will mean the end of Euro-integrations, said Dr Miroslav Prokopijević, scientific advisor in the Institute for European Studies in Belgrade in the interview for *European Pulse*.

» *You recently said that “the end of euro was unavoidable”. Does that mean that the end of EU is also neigh?*

I’m afraid so. The euro was created as the final cornerstone, as security on all Euro-integrations to date, but I’m afraid that, if the euro fails – and everything points in that direction – whether it will happen in a year or five – that this will be the end of European integrations.

The member states will be too preoccupied to pay much attention to this form of cooperation, which brought the EU a lot of good

Eurobonds could postpone the dissolution of the Eurozone by a few years. But even if it’s issued, in a few years a common bond will turn the whole country into Greece, not into Germany.

results in the previous decades, in spite of some bureaucratic burdens.

Naturally, when things like that fall apart, as we have seen on the example of former Yugoslavia and Soviet Union, they leave behind economic and social ruins.

» *What is your opinion on the present offers for the recovery of European economy and rescue of the Eurozone, such as the idea of an economic government?*

The EU will probably do everything it can to save the Eurozone, precisely because of what I said above – big interests are involved!

I believe that the proposal to establish some kind of, not economic government, but a system of economic coordination, with **Van Rompuy** as the chairman and the members’ respective ministers of finance in charge of keeping their countries’ budgets under control won’t work. The EU had the stability and growth pact all along, but it simply failed to apply it. Even France and Germany often violated the terms of the pact. And if the member states ignored these rules in good years, there is little chance to keep things under control in these difficult times.

Besides, the existence of such a body doesn’t guarantee any discipline. You have countries like Spain, where the Spanish government controls the whole country, and yet it failed to limit enormous deficits in some provinces, which in the end show up as deficits of the Republic of Spain. This model doesn’t work.

» *So what could the EU do?*

I suppose that in some phase they’ll pull out heavier weapons than some economic government or coordination.

One would be the emission of Eurobonds. Eurobonds could postpone the dissolution of the Eurozone by a few years. However, precisely because of this lack, the ability to preserve the financial discipline and, on the other hand, the inability of these over-indebted countries

The other possibility to hold things together for a while is analogous to Japan or the USA. This means printing more euros, without inflation, like Japan did, to somehow lower the weight of debt. That could also postpone the collapse of the Eurozone by a few years.

to become competitive and regain high economic growth in order to pay back their debts is one of the reasons why a Eurobond is not a solution. Even if it's issued, in a few years a common bond will turn the whole country into Greece, not into Germany.

The other possibility to hold things together for a while is analogous to Japan or the USA. This means printing more euros, without inflation, like Japan did, to somehow lower the weight of debt.

That can also postpone the collapse of the Eurozone by a few years, but in the final count it cannot bring back the competitiveness and economic growth in the key players of the zone, and is therefore unviable in the long run.

» How do you see the economies of the West Balkan countries?

They are all more or less on the Greek road: they are taking up debts in order to pay for the pensions and wages, which are above the equilibrium limit. They have lower debts than the Eurozone countries, but once the crisis intensifies, the price of debts will go up and will end the current lifestyles and mindsets.

All these countries are just waiting for it to happen – not one of them can just break away from the cycle of indebtedness, like an addict who can't give up the drugs until he's taken away to some clinic.

» What should the Balkan countries do in the light of this, as you say, inevitable collapse of the euro. Should they look for partners in China, India, or another growing economy?

I wouldn't recommend that. The countries of the Western Balkans and former Yugoslavia should start to think seriously about the Plan B – what will they do and how will they develop if the EU is gone or if it's still there but the costs of membership become much higher. Don't forget that all EU members, and especially those in the Eurozone, are now paying a special tax to pay back the debts of other members. The West Balkan countries should make a programme of reforms for the medium term, where they would say: we are doing this for the good of our own country, to make them look a bit better than they do, not because the EU or the IMF said so.

That's what they should do, and they should think about the future because once the Eurozone collapses the countries will go back to their national values. Germany will exchange their citizens' euros for Deutschmarks as agreed, but the mark will immediately appreciate, unlike drachma, lira, or other European values which will take a plunge – to the detriment of Germany's competitiveness.

» What will happen to Montenegro where Euro is the official currency?

Montenegro and Slovenia are in the best situation, because they have the euro in different ways. Montenegro used to have the contract with the Bundesbank, and Bundesbank would probably exchange the Montenegrin euros back to Deutschmarks.

The other countries would probably exchange their euros on the secondary markets.

This means that if they took liras or other southern currencies they would lose their value, but if they all bought the mark the mark would rise and they would maybe lose a bit as well.

V.Ž.

Attack is the best form of attack

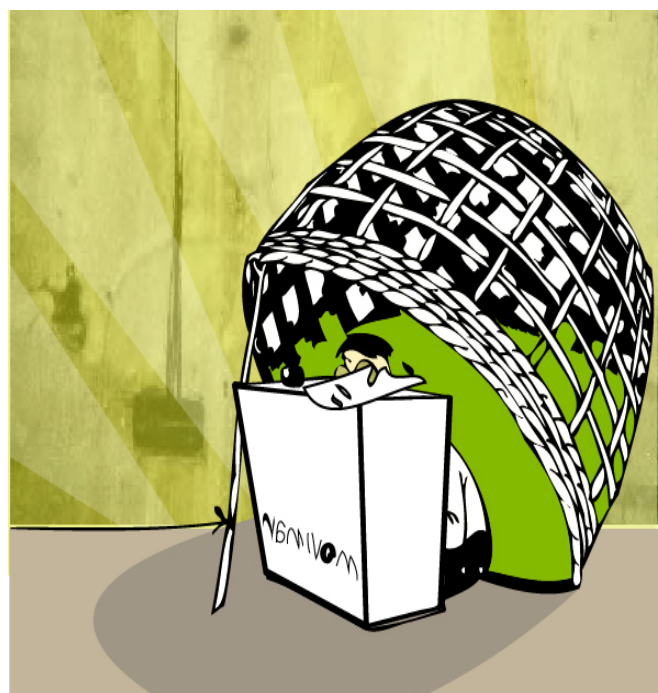


Brano Mandić

Job like any other, you'd say. But it isn't. To work for the public good of Montenegro isn't at all easy. A journalist is a medium, he should convey the values to the popular masses, but in a society where the values are hard to come by, you're often tempted to wield your pen to create some. And that's the trap: you set aside your Dictaphone, you take up the torch, you become an advocate of public good and you get ulcer. Honest, I had enough. I'd love to report like a machine. But that's the end of journalism – if you don't let the social poisons enter your body you won't be able to experience them and value them, and you won't be able to produce the healing potion which you ought to carefully package for the public – the lazy, disoriented, arrogant public which we call the citizens. Although I've known it all for a while, these days I've been watching my colleagues, i.e. their reaction to another attack on the "Vijesti". Three attacks, if fact. Successive, of course, although the authorities claim they were all isolated incidents. Namely, there was practically no reaction. Nothing special: they set three of our cars on fire, so what. However weird it may sound, we got used to other people pouring petrol over the property of the newspaper we work for. There's no immediate danger, we've been through this already, we're not going to break down now. Of course, we know in advance the Police will never find the madman with the gasoline, and there we have an open field for interpretation which the public will take over, to ruminate and forget about. These "incidents" have a media life of less than one week. The politicians deplore the incident, the police collects "operative evidence" and "Reporters without borders" send a telegram expressing their support. Attacks on journalists are a puzzling phenomenon. You never know if somebody exploded at another typo in the obituary, or if an organised group of criminals and policemen decided to attain new creative heights and experience the beauty of a perfect crime. Speculation is the worst thing you can do. Speculations are

If you're only writing about one mayor, it can get boring. But if you dig up a corruption scandal in a village commune, then at the Department of Philosophy, it means you're getting there. Montenegrin society needs these little stories to understand the big swindle

a pure narrative pattern (oral literature, junior year), with all the rules of the genre: from epic exaggerations, via linguistic simplification, to the laws of hearsay. If we speculate about crimes against journalists, we are already on the way to desecrate the crime, to turn it into a circus or ideological ping-pong. Nothing is more powerful than an unresolved crime: it's the loudest trumpet calling forth the madmen. You can go ahead and set fire to the journalists' cars, beat up the editors and managers, spit on the presenters and drag the photographers by their ears. Go ahead, everything is allowed, the police will just spend a few days writing public announcements until everybody forgets about it. By then there will already be another murder in the metropolis of tourism – Budva, our mother, and we'll all have other worries,



like the responsible devourers of daily press we are. I nearly forgot the European Union, but you'll forgive me, these 12 stars kind of get blurry when I think of the local troubles. The EU features in background as a foreign policy priority, something far that occasionally sends us a signal, like from the outer space. The signals are there again, the case will come up in the Commission's Progress Report, but that's just bedtime reading. If they really want to help, let them send the police. Since we can't expect anything from EU with regard to the attacks on journalists, there's nothing left but to get organised and punch back. Really, how can a newspaper fight back? Here it's important to say that every attack on a media company has a less explicit consequence, traumatising the work environment, shifting the limits of the meaning of the job you do between explosions and beatings. The worst is to take on the mantle of the victim. No, even worse is to launch a direct counter-attack, obsessively writing about things that everybody already knows – that the police doesn't care to protect you. So what is left? To keep quiet? We need to shift the game from the "crime" pages of the paper. Crime is a society-wide diagnosis, it leaves traces on the summer fashion shows, as much as it does in the Parliament or in the prison. The value system is rotten, the selection involutionary, and it's little wonder that we're getting a crop of big heads with robber masks. My point is that we need to ridicule systematically, not only the politicians, but also the singers, the judges, the professors (especially the professors!), people on hunger strike eating in secret, all the ragdolls who, out of malice or ignorance, contribute to the survival of this simulacrum of a public system, perversely founded on injustice. The only possible and legitimate answer of the journalists is professionalism, a careful analysis of all areas ridden by primitivism and theft. If you're only writing about one mayor, it can get boring. But if you dig up a corruption scandal in a village commune, then at the Department of Philosophy, it means you're getting there. Montenegrin society needs these little stories to understand the big swindle. So, keep calm,

without the calls to crusade and kamikaze oaths. Organised crime, when used as a mantra, means nothing. A single petty thief from the local government can mean everything. It is the harder way. It's way easier to write slogans, but then you're on the battlefield of politics, and there you play by their rules. Finally, for every Montenegrin journalist the most important thing is to avoid the following two traps: first, not to turn into a militant revenge-monger or a revolutionary, because there's no hope for a civil revolution in a state which got its first University in the 1970s. The other trap is to become lethargic and allergic to any kind of civic engagement, from the moment that you realise, from experience, that the system permeates everything, from the association of inhabitants of your building to the Agency for Privatisation. The situation among the journalists is especially defeating, with barely literate people setting the norms of the profession, manipulated dolls direct media development projects and pimply kids occupy editorial posts. A society without criteria, a profession without well-trodden hierarchies, sliding foundations. Or better, like this: you find yourself with a viola under your arm on the beachfront in Sutomore around midnight. What will you do? Start playing unplugged in the sea of salty morons, or break your instrument over somebody's head? These are the dilemmas, and we must each find our own solutions. In short, nothing good will come forth for the Montenegrin media unless the all band together against the criminals who persecute the freedom of speech. But that won't happen, because most of the media have the goal to earn something by serving the current system. Ergo, the attacks on journalists will continue for a while, free and unpunished. These are little spectacles, statistic of no consequence. Montenegrin society has already demonstrated that it isn't too keen on truth, like all other traumatised Balkan societies. There isn't much the European Union can do about it. We have all the reasons to put this last attack on "Vijesti" into the archive and get over it as soon as possible. Until the next one.

Recommendations and conclusions of the national convention on Montenegro's european integration

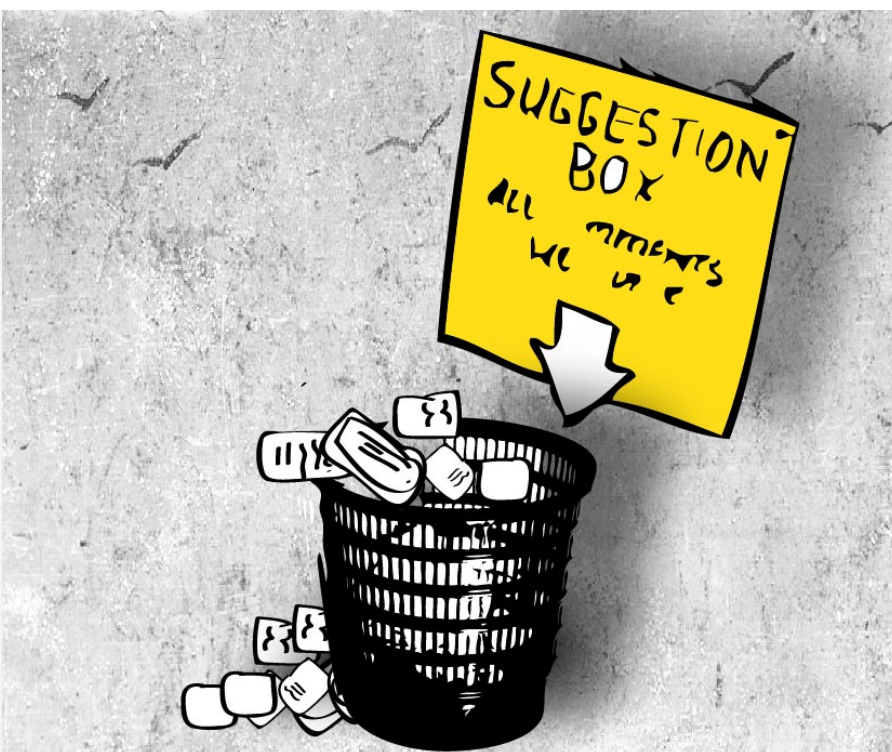
117 suggestions for a better tomorrow

The Parliament should establish a permanent body that would oversee anti-corruption efforts, as well as a mechanism to take into account citizens' submissions and complaints. The highest officials in anti-corruption bodies should be people who have not been members of any party for at least five years, while the new Law on free access to information should make that access easier. These are only some of the 117 recommendations and conclusions compiled by 120 experts from the public and civil sector working in 4 working groups over the period April-July

Constitutional amendments
should include the institute of
civic initiative.

2011, all within the framework of the National Convention of European Integrations in Montenegro. The project is implemented by the European Movement in Montenegro and Slovak Foreign Policy Association, with financial support from the SLOVAK IAD and Government of Slovakia, and with support of the Government and Parliament of Montenegro. The goals of the project are, among other, to institutionalise public debate between the civil and the public sector on EU-related issues, and to strengthen the capacity of the Montenegrin society overall to engage in the process of European integrations and conduct negotiations for EU membership. **Working group on the rule of law** agreed in principle with the Government's proposal to have the Parliament nominate the president of the Supreme Court, upon recommendation of the Judicial Council, produced in consultation with the general assembly of the Supreme Court judges. "However, the Working Group believes that the president of the Supreme court should be appointed by qualified majority, either: a) majority of the total number of MPs (which only includes the members of the ruling coalition, as until now), or b) a major-

ity that would require approval of at least some opposition MPs – 3/5 majority (in Albania, this is used to appoint Ombudsman) or 2/3 majority (as required by the Montenegrin Constitution for the changes in the electoral law and the Constitution itself). President of the Judicial Council will be elected by the council members, but another proposal was to consider, instead of the 4-year term, the option of electing the President every six months, as a "rotating" office. The Working Group also agreed with the Government's proposal to change the Constitution so that more than a half of the members of the Judicial Council would be judges, but their opinion differed on the composition of other members. The Working Group suggested that these should consist of three renowned lawyers, one of whom would be elected in the Parliament, on the proposal of the ruling coalition, one would be nominated by the opposition and one by NGOs. Another member would be the minister of justice, by virtue of office (but without the power to decide on the dismissal or disciplinary measures against judges. Further, the Convention urged the Parliament to establish a permanent working body that would monitor the fight against corruption, with clearly specified responsibilities and subjects of oversight, and also asked for immediate steps to establish instruments and procedures to handle the citizens' submissions and complaints. As for the **Working Group on Public Administration Reform**, one of the recommendations is to adopt a Law on the Government. The Working Group stressed that all activities of the public institutions to (re)define the legal framework of local governments have to involve prior broad consultations and public discussions with the citizens and interested non-governmental organisations. "The Law on Public Employees should clearly specify the sanctions for the heads of public institutions who fail to fulfil their obligations with regard to evaluation of the employees" is another recommendation. The Working Group called for urgent measures to reassess the number of



The Commissions for allocation of funding to NGOs should be professionalised.

employees in local administrations and conduct managed redundancies, with full observance of social security regulations and the right to severance pay. All local administrations are urged to implement the system of employee evaluation and promotion in a transparent manner, using an effective, objective methodology adapted to the needs of different structures and institutions. “The reward system, in addition to the financial incentives which should be progressively increased, must incorporate a series of non-financial incentives (priority for training, promotion, days off etc)”, recommends the Working Group. Local administrations are recommended to conduct a detailed analysis of their own financial management, and the Government is urged to assist them in this endeavour, in order to formulate the necessary guidelines and recommendations for their implementation. “All local administrations must build reliable systems to maintain and manage public property and property inventories. Related to this, there should be a direct, permanent control over the key local public en-

terprises, with detailed systems and procedures of oversight”, specified the Working Group on the reform of public administration. Every local government, they added, should have a system to analyse the returns on investments after the project, as there are currently no mechanism to monitor and measure the effects. **Working group on public institutions, local governments and civil society** found that the Government ought to improve information, consultation and participation of civil society organisations in the processes of public policy-making. The Group especially stressed the need to introduce the institute of civic initiative in the amendments to the Constitution of Montenegro. On the other hand, the civil society should establish a mechanism within the sector to delegate civil society representatives to the public bodies, councils, etc. “Also, it is necessary to define the responsibilities and duties of these representatives towards the rest of the sector and the citizens at large, by setting criteria, standards and methods of communication”, wrote the Working Group. As for the financing of civil society organisations from the Montenegro's public funds, it was recommended that the calls for distribution of funding should be announced in the last quarter of the current year for the next year, while the decision should be made no later than the end of the first quarter of the next year.

It is necessary to raise the criteria for the establishment of higher education institutions in Montenegro.

“The Commission charged with distributing the funds to NGOs should be professionalised, and in that sense it is necessary to strengthen the capacities of the Commission's members through additional education, especially trainings on project evaluation. Further legal acts are necessary to specify the conditions under which the Commission can hire independent experts who could help to assess the specific or exceptional projects. The new law on NGOs should to set the limit of support for NGO projects between 0.8% to 1% of the current year's budget, and the

very process of allocation of funding should be decentralised (through participation of the ministries and NGOs from the sector in the process of evaluation of project proposals)", wrote the Working Group. The experts added that to improve sustainability of the projects, as well as development of NGOs themselves, the Government should insist on partnerships among NGOs, so that several organisations are responsible for the implementation of the project, and the more developed ones can transfer their expertise to the less developed ones. "The Government, the Parliament and the local governments and all relevant commissions in charge of allocating finances should ensure that the process is entirely transparent, especially insofar as it con-

cerns publication of the complete proposals for the approved projects on the website of the commission, so that public can have a chance to monitor the development of implementation, but also learn how to write a successful project, which is especially important for the smaller and less developed non-governmental organisations", state the recommendations. The work of the commission in charge of distributing the funding should be subject to public audit. As for education, the Working Groups agreed that key competencies for life-long learning should be incorporated into the programmes of higher education institutions, and that it is necessary to raise the criteria for the establishment of higher education institutions in Montenegro.

Tax on kitsch

With regard to the role of the media in the society and the process of European integrations, the Working Group believes it is necessary to update the Communication strategy of the Government for EU integrations. "The Communication Strategy should also set aside financing for the Government's press club (EU press point), which would have a library, a database and a database of experts which would be available to the media and NGOs in order to ensure regular, timely, accurate and clear flow of information to the public on any aspect of the accession process". The recommendations further state that "in the current situation, where there is no self-regulation body of journalists, the Agency for Public Broadcasting Services should step up its monitoring of media programmes and sanction any media content which violates human rights, or in any way broadcasts inappropriate or offensive content". The experts said that public institutions should work to create an atmosphere conducive to genuine enjoyment of the proclaimed freedom of speech and expression. "The new Law on free access to information should ease the access to information in order to enhance the ability of individuals to understand political, social, economic and cultural issues and to freely discuss them. Public institutions should create mechanisms (i.e. by introducing a tax on kitsch, and providing tax benefits for socially responsible media) that would stimulate the media to deal with the issues of public interest in a more comprehensive and analytical manner, and create disincentives for the rise of tabloids, which is a consequence of rapid commercialisation and sensationalism". According to the Convention, all media, and especially the public service, should give more space to the civil sector.

Five years without politics

Working group for the rule of law recommended the Government and the Parliament to constitute the bodies in charge of anti-corruption, conflict of interest, overseeing business performance of public enterprises, control of the elections and finances of political parties (i.e. the State Electoral Commission, State Audit Institution, Agency for Anti-Corruption Initiative, Commission for the Conflict of Interests etc.) as entirely independent bodies, formally and practically. "This means that senior officials of these bodies, and especially the managing structures, should be appointed by the Parliament from the ranks of independent individuals, who haven't been active in any party at least for the last five years".

Europe a single destination

Tourism can help Europe to climb back from the economic hole, said the European Union, justifying its plans to step up the funding to the tourist sector. Europe is the leading destination for foreign tourists, with Spain, France, Italy, Germany and UK leading the pack. The EU is trying to find a way to help the sector whose contribution to the Union's GDP is estimated to more than 500 billion euro. The amount doubles if the related branches, such as transport or culture, are taken into account. In a recent report to the European Parliament, MEP **Carlo Fidanza** says that the EU needs to join forces to beat the international competition by offering Europe as a single destination, instead of supporting competition among the member states. Last year, EC started putting up websites with tourist information in several languages, starting with Chinese, in order to attract more visitors from non-Anglophone countries. The number of tourists reached the peak in 2008, with 370 million international arrivals, but subsequently the sector succumbed to recession across the continent. The EC, which cooperates with tourist associations in 36 countries, reported a slight increase in the number of visits last year, and predicts the trend to continue, with 3 to 4% growth in 2011 and 2012.

Cheaper cars for all

Differences in the prices of new vehicles among the EU member states fell in 2010 thanks to more intensive competition. Real prices of new cars fell in 24 out of 27 member states by around 2.5%. "It is good to see that European consumers are profiting from the competition on the new cars market", said the Competition Commissioner **Joaquin Almunia**. The sharpest fall in prices was found in Eastern Europe, led by Slovakia, where the prices of new cars decreased by 17.4%. Slova-

kia is followed by Bulgaria (13.5%) and Slovenia (11.6%). Among the larger EU countries the biggest price decrease was in UK (3.7%), followed by Germany (1.9%) and France (0.9%).

Insurance almost sure

According to the European Insurance and Pension Funds Agency (EIOPA), around 10% of the European insurance businesses which were submitted to the stress test lack the capital to survive larger economic shocks. The test included 221 insurance company, comprising around 60% of the insurance market in EU member states, Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. As 90% of the tested companies proved robust, it "can be said that in general the European insurance sector will remain strong in the face of major shocks", concludes EIOPA. The results were published for the market as a whole, not for individual companies as in the case of banks.

Court upholds L'Oreal's case against eBay

The highest European court warned the retailers, such as eBay, that they could be held legally responsible for violations of protected brands of the goods they sell. The decision is the result of a case initiated by the French cosmetics company L'Oreal, against eBay in UK. L'Oreal complained that eBay offered some of its products which were not intended for sale in Europe, and the court found that the seller didn't make enough effort to prevent such sales.

The only EU member from among the former Yugoslav republic has some similarities with the Western Balkans

Mathematical evidence for corruption



Svetlana Vasović Mekina

Almost five months after the UK “Sunday Times” launched the affair “money for laws”, in Slovenia there is a revival of the “Taler case”. New contributions to the uncovering of the affair are coming from the Commission for Anti-Corruption, which used the example of Taler to initiate new investigations on the deep roots of corruption in the Slovenian society.

The affair erupted on 20 March 2011, when the journalists of the UK “Sunday Times” published video recordings with cases of corruption in the European Parliament. Among the MEPs “caught” on these tapes, who agreed to work in the interest of (fake) lobbyists, was **Zoran Taler**, the former Slovenian Foreign Affairs Minister. Taler, who bit into the 100.000 euro “commission” bait, was elected to the European Parliament from the list of the Social Democrats (SD), led by the Prime Minister **Borut Pahor**.

The Commission found that there were 65 companies in Slovenia which, until 2004, did successful deals with the state, but whose balance sheets rapidly deteriorated after the 2004 elections and change of government. The “thin years” lasted exactly until the next elections! As the helm of the state passed from the hands of the right to the leaders of the so-called left again in 2008, the same 65 firms began a series of business successes.

Nudged by the Taler affair, the state Anti-Corruption Commission decided to support its ongoing investigations by a mathematical experiment, i.e. to offer “scientific” evidence of the pervasiveness of corruption in the Slovenian society. In its last report, the Commission published intriguing data on the deals between



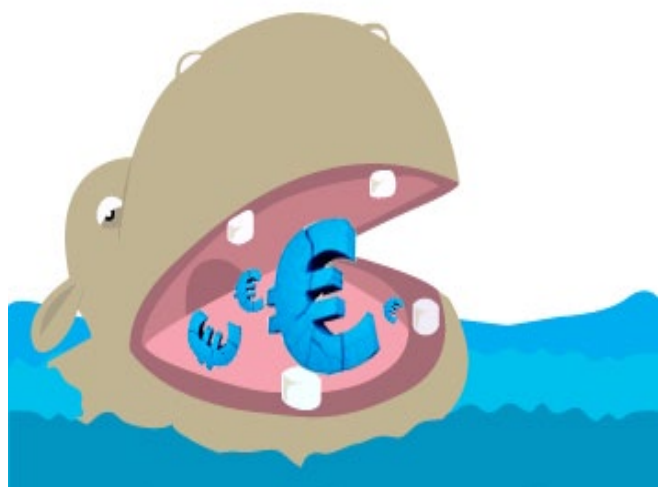
a selected handful of companies and the Government. The Commission found that there were 65 companies in Slovenia which, until 2004, did successful deals with the state, but whose balance sheets rapidly deteriorated after the 2004 elections and change of government. The “thin years” lasted exactly until the next elections! As the helm of the state passed from the hands of the right to the leaders of the so-called left again in 2008, the same 65 firms began a series of business successes. All that thanks to excellent (and renewed) deals with the Government.

But that is not all. The Commission found that during the reign of the “right”, under the leadership of **Janez Janša** the exact same good fortune befell 252 companies which until 2004 had no dealings with the Government.

This unusual statistic demonstrated that the Slovenian “right” prefers to work with a larger number of smaller firms, while the “left” concentrated on a four times smaller number of firms with which it had prior experience. The Slovenian Anti-Corruption Commission points at the detrimental aspects of this business model. These are not symbolic payments: the money involved,

according to the first estimates, is in the region of 50 million euro. While we're in power, the money goes to the pockets of "our people", and after the elections, if we lose, it can go to "their people".

According to the Anti-Corruption Commission, this recently uncovered "stable practice" of doing business with 65 or 252 companies proves that Slovenia's main problem isn't petty corruption, but large-scale bribery taking place, before the eyes of the public, through relationship between the members of the Government and their chosen partners in the private sector. All this is extremely dangerous, as it undermines competition, which is the first precondition for a healthy market economy. This way, in a society ridden by corruption, the job doesn't go to the more competent and cheaper bidder, but to the one who's "ours" and will repay the favour. The names of the companies, privileged to snatch the public contracts if "our side" wins, have not been published after all. This caused an outrage among the public, and the Commission replied that in the case of publication these companies would be immediately singled out as "corrupt". **Goran Klemenčič**, president of the Anti-Corruption Commission, explained this contradictory move by the Commission's wish to first "establish the root cause of this ill, and at the same time to remove the causes and develop services for other watchdogs in Slovenia and abroad". Klemenčič promised that the public will soon be given the entire scheme of corruption under the blessing of the state, traced through analysis of exchanges with private businesses and comparisons with the finances of the parties in power.



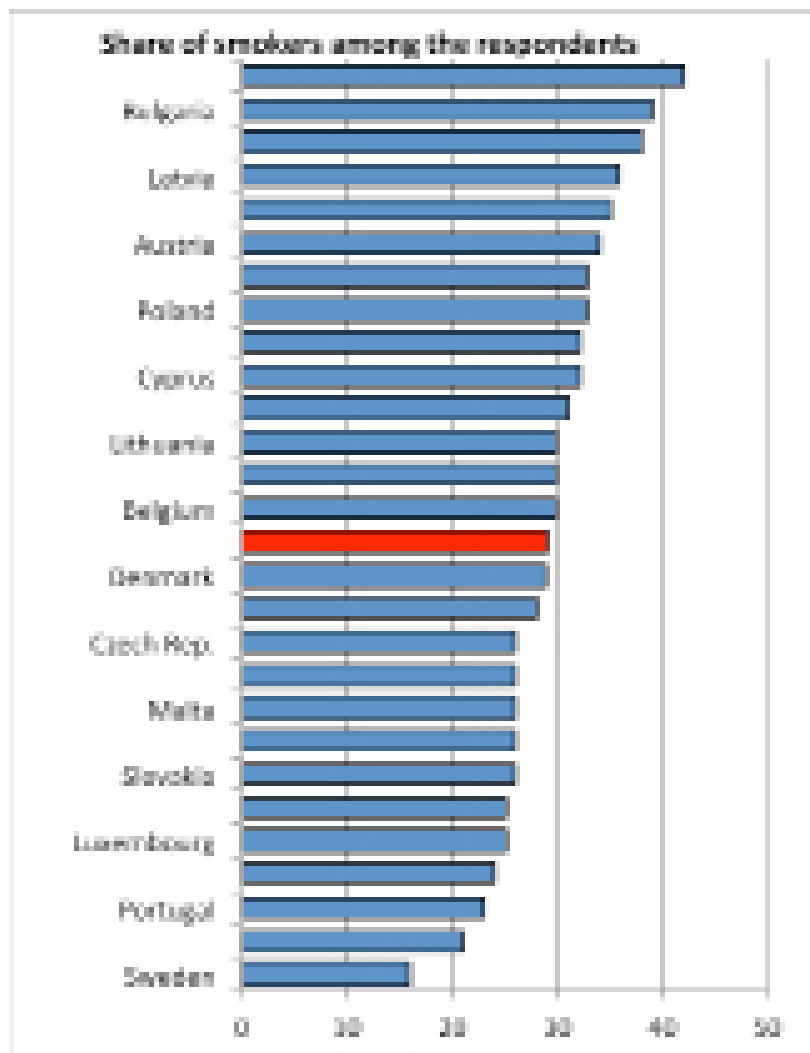
The chiefs of the Slovenian Anti-Corruption Commission say the institutions in the region have demonstrated enormous interest in this research, hoping to replicate it in their own countries. Klemenčič's Commission said they are considering the possibility of a separate public service that would conduct similar analyses with the help of Slovenian and international institutions, and with support of the European Commission. Busting corruption on the highest level could be useful in preventing similar affairs in the future. Slovenia is coming from the same political context as Serbia, and this example shows that in the countries where the politicians spend their entire careers perfecting the skills of bribery in line with the electoral cycle, this is exactly what they do. And the politicians who have been through this "training" don't only do it at home – when they get a chance, they will take their modus operandi into the European institutions.

Grateful clients

The Commission found a similar mechanism during the analysis of performance of state-owned banks. It turned out that the Slovenian banks issued around one thousand loans at extremely favourable rates to the clients of the ruling parties, all that without the usual rigorous condition, procedures and rules. To make the problem worse, these same banks, in majority state ownership, have been hit by a crisis and are dependent on the Pahor Government for the new injections of fresh capital.

European commission planning new cigarette-trading rules, but the opponents also get more vocal

Smuggling, falling VAT revenue and layoffs in the tobacco industry



In Montenegro, people suspect that the new rigorous law on smoke-free environments, which came into force early this month, will suffer the fate of its predecessor, which was basically and thoroughly ignored. An early hint is the fact that the tourist inspectorate decided of its own accord to suspend the law until the end of the summer season and spare the entrepreneurs whose bars, shops or restaurants allow smokers. In the meantime, the European Commission is set to widen the scope of cigarette-trading rules to cover potentially harmful electronic cigarettes, flavourings and even marketing strategies, as part of a wider campaign to urge Europeans to quit. On 16 June 2011 the EC launched a campaign called 'Ex-Smokers are Unstoppable' which is principally targeting smokers aged between 25 and 34. The campaign is centred around a new online tool, called 'iCoach', which works by analysing the smoking habits of its participants and provides tailored advice on a daily basis. Smokers from all European countries will have free access to the iCoach in their own language (<http://www.stopsmokingcoach.eu/home.ashx?lang=en>). The campaign will be running from 2011 to 2013, and it builds on the previous HELP campaign. The European crusade against smoking is in fact a decade-long project. The first such campaign was launched in 2002 under the slogan "feel free

ALMOST A THIRD OF EUROPE SMOKES

All the campaigns notwithstanding, curbing tobacco consumption remains a major public health priority of the European Union. The proportion of smokers in the European population is 29%, and on average, 31 % of smokers in the EU have tried to give up smoking within the last 12 months. The EU is the world's biggest tobacco importer (400 000 tons annually). The highest number of smokers is found in Greece, Bulgaria, Hungary, while the lowest percentage is found in Sweden, Finland and Portugal. According to the Eurobarometer findings, smoking is strongly related to the occupational status – the highest number of smokers is found among the unemployed (52%), followed by manual workers (39%), and the lowest among managers (25%). According to the World Health Organisation, around 32.7% of Montenegrin citizens aged between 15 and 65 are regular smokers.

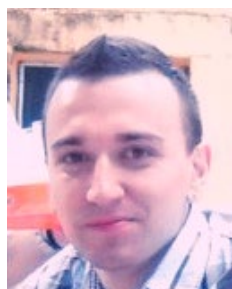
to say no”, and was followed by HELP, which lasted between 2004 and 2010. The “Ex-smokers are unstoppable” shifts the focus from the dangers of smoking - turning attention to the positive benefits of giving up smoking, highlighting the inspirational achievements of ex-smokers and offering smokers practical help to quit. The three-year campaign has been budgeted at €16 million for the first year. The European health commissioner, John Dalil, a former smoker himself, expects the employees of the European Commission to sign up, in order to lead by example. But the European Commission doesn't stop at media campaigns and appeals to individuals, and does not shy away from heavier weapons in the form of legislation. Since 2000 the Commission issued several directives on the rules of packaging, which required the manufacturers to put warnings on tobacco products, and banned cross-border advertising of tobacco products in printed media, radio, and online services, as well as sponsorship of cross-border events. In 2009, the EU council has also issued a recommendation on smoke-free environments, which calls on Member States to adopt and implement laws to protect citizens from exposure to tobacco smoke in enclosed public places, workplaces, and public transport. It also calls for the enhancement of smoke-free laws with supporting measures such as protecting children, encouraging efforts to quit smoking and having pictorial warnings on cigarette packages. The latest legislative innovations are to be broadened to cover potentially harmful non-tobacco products – such as

electronic cigarettes, advertising, packaging, and the way tobacco is marketed in shops. On the other hand, the announcement of tighter rules has sparked a fervent debate in the European parliament, where some MPs and lobbyists argued that tightening the ban will only encourage smugglers, and that such measures could be detrimental to some vulnerable groups, especially the Roma. Thus Hungarian Socialist MEP Kinga Gönöcz said that 50% of the 20,000 seasonal tobacco workers in Hungary are unskilled Roma. She said that cultivating tobacco offers them almost their only opportunity for work, and that any kind of radical anti-tobacco measures should take into account the social consequences. The smoke-free pub plan is also facing widespread opposition from European bar and cafe owners, especially in Spain, Greece and Italy, where up to 40 per cent of teenagers smoke. Of the 25 EU member states, thirteen produce tobacco – with a few regions in Italy, Greece, Spain and Bulgaria being particularly active. The 27-member EU currently produces about 250,000 tons of raw tobacco annually, making it the world's fifth-largest producer after China, the US, India and Brazil. So far, 15 Member States have introduced comprehensive anti-smoking laws. Total bans on smoking in all enclosed public places and workplaces, including bars and restaurants are in place in Ireland, the UK, Greece, Spain and Hungary. Italy, Sweden, Malta, Latvia, Finland, Slovenia, France, the Netherlands, Cyprus and Poland, have introduced smoke-free legislation, however, allowing for special enclosed smoking rooms.

SARTRE AND TITO AMONG THE NON-SMOKERS?

Citing “cultural heritage” concerns, French lawmakers have recently approved new exceptions to a Draconian anti-smoking law, which forbids display of tobacco products in the media and in public places. The law, which bans any “direct or indirect” promotion of tobacco products, had in recent years led authorities to remove images of cigarettes from publicly displayed pictures of famous French figures, many of which appear with a cigarette in their hand. A public outcry gradually mounted as the philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, the iconic comic character Jacques Tati and Charles de Gaulle's culture minister Andre Malraux appeared in posters without their trademark cigarettes. A cigarette was even removed from the cover of former President Jacques Chirac's memoirs. Under a similar law, Montenegrin daily “Vijesti” was recently fined for publishing a photo of Josip Broz Tito with a cigarette.

EU isn't only about benefits



Vladimir Jovanović

Autor is volunteer in the Centre for Civic Education. He graduated at the Faculty of Political Sciences of the University of Montenegro.

“Europe doesn’t exist as a political concept. This part of the world contains nations and states in a state of chaos, on the brink of international conflicts, on the field of future conflicts. This is the European question: the mutual hatred of Europeans which poisons the atmosphere. (...) The European question will be solved only through unification of the European nations. The greatest obstacle to the making of the USA are the 1 000 years of rivalry between the two most powerful nations of Europe: Germans and French...” Thus spoke the Austrian count **Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi** at the making of the Pan-European Movement in 1923. Today, after nearly 90 years from the establishment of this movement, Europe as a political concept came true, to some extent. The goal of all European nations and each European state in the 21st century is membership in the most influential organisation of the old continent – European Union. The question of the right motives for accelerated membership in the EU can be asked from two different perspectives. One is contained in the demagoguery which is being propagated by the so-called political elites, offering banal arguments such as “everybody else is there, why not us”. Their image of EU is that of altruist organisation, which promotes the idea of a community and cooperation between all European nations for the benefit of all European citizens. One can hardly ignore the privileges that come with citizenship of EU: most of them are contained in the concept of the “common market”, which enables mobility of capital and people. And yet it is precisely this mobility which fuels demands for greater controls of the borders and limits to this mobility in some member states. The extreme reaction of one of EU’s most powerful members – France, which banished thousands of Roma to their countries of origin is just one possible scenario that can happen, and has been happening to those to enjoy the privileges of visa liberalisation. This is, of course, not the first such example: already in 2001 Germany deported Roma refugees from Kosovo back to their countries of origin. Based on examples which violate international conventions and European norms, we can conclude that the two

most populous European nations still exercise their authority over the other European nations, undermining the concept of a united Europe founded upon democratic principles, rule of law and equality of all peoples. The process of accession negotiations is important from the standpoint of development of a democratic, open society, and the pressure exercised on the candidate countries is of great importance in this process. But the impact of European norms on the national legislation often cannot cover the entirety of the national context, and the ensuing conflicts amount to violence against the citizens and their traditional way of life. The European Union has very specific rules on certain issues – for instance, with regard to the standards concerning certain products being sold on the EU markets. When you’re a citizen of EU, don’t be surprised if your traditional way of making alcohol, cheese or other products gets banned. This is perhaps trivial compared to the privileges you might get, but be aware that it involves a loss of identity and be ready to clearly say “NO” to your traditional roots, embracing instead the so-called identity of a European citizen which is still far from defined. Another important fact about EU membership is that all member states lose a portion of their sovereignty, delegating it to the EU. This means that the government you elect in direct elections, as citizens of a certain country, won’t have any impact on such policies as the common market, monetary and agricultural policy etc. I believe we should think about this before becoming citizens of EU, because we might also lose a lot. And if your only argument is that “everybody else is in it too”, let me remind you that Switzerland is not part of the EU precisely because of the fear that its contributions will be greater than its benefits, and that its agricultural sector would suffer from the membership. Other nations’ experiences can be useful, but only once we take into account the realities of the society and mentality. I have nothing against EU and its ideas, I’m only saying that a democratic society should be built through efforts at internal stability, not because the EU said so. At least, we would have ourselves and not the EU to thank for it.

Europe in my town



Centre for Civic Education (CCE), in cooperation with the Centre for Monitoring (CEMI) from Podgorica and Civic Initiative from Belgrade began the project *“Europe in my town”*, supported by the European Union through the EU Delegation in Montenegro, through 2009 IPA programme.

The goal of the project is to strengthen the capacities and role of local communities and civil society organisations in Montenegro, in order to ensure their long-term, more effective contribution to the process of EU integrations. More specifically, the project aims to increase the level of understanding and support for EU accession process, by initiating debates and creating platforms for cooperation between local governments, local civil society organisations and citizens of 9 Montenegrin municipalities: Podgorica, Nikšić, Cetinje, Ulcinj, Budva, Herceg Novi, Bijelo Polje, Pljevlja, Kolašin.

The target group of the project are the citizens of 9 Montenegrin municipalities whose understanding of and active support for the process of EU integrations is of crucial importance for the success of this process. Direct beneficiaries are the civil society organisations and the

media, as well as administrations of 9 Montenegrin municipalities whose capacities will be strengthened with regard to advocating European integrations in their municipalities, but also in terms of communication and cooperation with the citizens.

“Europe in my town” seeks to tackle two problems: on the one hand, its goal is to educate the citizens of 9 municipalities about EU, by offering them locally relevant, adapted and targeted information. On the other hand, by including the local governments and civil society organisations in this process, the project aims at fostering lasting cooperation and exchange of knowledge and experiences between the local governments, civil society representatives and citizens themselves. This way, they would continue to address those issues in the process of EU integrations which are of relevance and interest for the local actors, formulate their interests and priorities in this process and conduct joint activities in the future. This would be a huge step in increasing the level of active participation of citizens in the process of EU integrations, with support of the local authorities – especially if we bear in mind that the success of European integration requires informed and supportive citizens.

In this way, the project aims to achieve the following results: a detailed assessment of the level of knowledge about the process of EU integrations in 9 Montenegrin municipalities, establishment of a platform for cooperation between the local authorities through joint efforts to promote the awareness and information about EU integrations in 9 municipalities, initiation of public dialogue and discussion, exchange of information and best practices with regard to the process of EU integrations among the citizens of the local communities and NGOs that would strengthen their potential to become partners in the EU accession process.

Dialogue for compromise

Institute Alternative and Centre for Monitoring organised on 1 July 2011 Panel discussion “The electoral law – seeking a compromise”, focusing especially on the relationship between citizenship and voting rights, and the genuine representation of minorities. The speakers were **Milutin Simović** (Democratic Party of Socialists), **Kemal Purišić** (Bosnian Party), **Vasel Sinishtaj** (coalition Albanian perspective), **Aleksandar Damjanović** (Socialist People's Party) and **Rifat Rastoder** (Social-democratic Party). The panel was moderated by a journalist, **Dragoljub Duško Vuković**. On behalf of their political parties the speakers presented their views on the issue which has been among the most important and current, both in the context of harmonisation of the electoral legislation with the Constitution of Montenegro, as well as with regard to EC's recommendation for the beginning of Montenegro's negotiations for membership in EU. There was much discussion about the open issues and problems with attaining a 2/3 majority for the electoral law to be passed. The panellists exchanged opinions and answered the audience's questions about genuine representation, a model of affirmative action for the Albanian minority, representation of women in the electoral lists, affirmative measures for the national parties on the local level, opportunities for compromise, political background and the importance of the requisite majority. The discussion was attended by representatives of the civil sector, academic and expert public, students and the media. The audio recording of the entire event is available from the website of the Institute Alternative (www.institut-alternativa.org). The panel was organised as part of the POLICY FORUM, a joint initiative of the Centre for Monitoring and Institute Alternative, which is a programme of periodical public discussions on the current affairs in Montenegro.

More than half a million signatures for the creation of RECOM

On 11 July 2011, Centre for Civic Education (CCE) and Monitoring Centre (CEMI) organised, on behalf of RECOM in Montenegro, a press conference to mark the end of the campaign for the collection of signatures to support the establishment of RECOM. At the conference, the organisers presented the results, as well as the further plans, of this regional coalition of civil society organisations and individuals, the broadest such coalition to date. The speakers at the conference were **Daliborka Uljarević**, director of CCE, **Zlatko Vujović**, president of the Board of Directors of CEMI, **Mirela REbronja**, PR coordinator of the RECOM initiative in Montenegro, and **Mensur Bajramspahić**, coordinator of the signature collection campaign. They announced that during the two-month campaign 31.087 signatures were collected in Montenegro in support of establishment of a Regional Fact-Finding Commission on war crimes and other violations of human rights committed between 1991 and 2001 on the territory of former Yugoslavia (RECOM). Across the region, more than half a million of citizens gave their support to RECOM, which is the highest number of signatures so far collected in the region for a joint initiative. The RECOM initiative said that in Montenegro the signatures came from nearly every town. Most of them were collected in Podgorica (10 879), followed by Bijelo Polje, Rožaje, Ulcinj and Nikšić. Mirela Rebronja emphasised that during the public advocacy campaign which accompanied the collection of signatures the presidents of the state and government **Igor Lukšić** and **Filip Vujanović**, as well as the president of the Parliament **Ranko Krivokapić** also gave their support. Apart from them, representatives of all parliamentary parties also supported the initiative. Mensur Bajramspahić said that the results of the signature collection campaign showed that the citizens of Montenegro recognised the importance of confrontation with the past, and that the signatures were collected within the original timeframe. Zlatko Vujović said that Montenegro can be a good example and that significant public support also accelerate the process of signature collection. Vujović said that, at 10% of the voters giving their support, the turnout to support the Initiative has been amazing. Finally, Daliborka Uljarević spoke about future activities of the initiative for RECOM, expressing her hopes that the political support will grow in the upcoming period and that by 2013 RECOM will become reality.

Cooperation on the local level

On 8 July 2011 in Podgorica Office for Technical Assistance to Civil Society Organisations (TACSO) Montenegro organised a round table “Cooperation between local governments and non-governmental organisations”, to assess the current level of cooperation between local NGOs and local governments and consider the possibilities for further improvement in cooperation. Speakers at the round table were **Goran Đurović**, head of the TACSO office in Crnoj Gori, **Mladen Jovović**, assistant Minister of interior affairs and public administration, **Rajko Golubović**, secretary of the Union of Montenegrin Municipalities, Ana Novaković, director of the Centre for Development of Non-Governmental Organisations and **Stevo Muk**, TACSO office in Montenegro. The event was attended by a large number of representatives of local NGOs from all over the country. **Ana Vujošević**, CCE programme coordinator, participated on behalf of the Centre for Civic Education.

Difficulties in reducing the gender pay gap

Between July 15 and 17, in the hotel “Tara” in Bečići, European Movement in Montenegro (EMIM) organised the seminar titled “The impact of public policies on the gender pay gap”. The seminar is a part of the project “Gender pay and income gap in Montenegro”, which has been going on for a year and is co-financed by EU via the European Union Delegation in Montenegro. The goal of the seminar was to define recommendations and measures for the public policies which are recognised as important, but are problematic from the point of view of gender mainstreaming, to improve the situation and perspective in these areas. The conference formulated recommendations in several areas: employment policy, introduction of gender-sensitive concepts in the functioning of inspectorates, protection of the rights of workers, social policies, educational policies, trade union policies, as well as for the media. During the three days of the seminar, experts for the civil sector and institutions presented their findings, and formulated the recommendations. The event drew a large number of organisations and institutions dealing with gender policies and those whose activities can contribute to their promotion. **Milana Bojović**, CCE volunteer, participated on behalf of the Centre for Civic Education.

The seminar was followed by a conference on 22 July in Podgorica, titled “The equality of women in Montenegro-recommendations for the future”, which consisted of three panel discussions: “Women and their employment, economic and social status”, “The economic situation of women and domestic violence” and “Economic and political empowerment of women”. Both the speakers and the audience engaged in a discussion of the situation of women in the contemporary Montenegrin society, and of ways to improve it. The participants presented a study which justified the initial idea of the project, recommendations formulated throughout the project, as well as the publication “Gender equality – wages, income and public policies”, which was the outcome of this project, and which also touches upon a wider array of economic and social problems of women in Montenegro. The publication contains very comprehensive data and analyses on gender equality with regard to wages, income, as well as other economic, legal and social aspects of this issue.

Ana Vujošević, CCE programme coordinator, participated on behalf of the Centre for Civic Education.

European Commission Traineeship

Brussels, Belgium / Luxembourg, Luxembourg

1 October - 28 February

The aims of the official in-service training with the Commission of the European Union are:

- » to provide young university graduates with a unique, first-hand experience of the workings of the EC in particular, and of the EU institutions in general;
- » to give trainees an opportunity to acquire practical experience and knowledge of the day-to-day work of the Commission Departments and Services;
- » to give young university graduates the opportunity to put into practice knowledge acquired during their studies, particularly in their specific areas of competence.
- » The European Commission, through its official traineeships scheme:
 - » benefits from the input of young enthusiastic graduates, who can give a fresh point of view and up-to-date academic knowledge, enriching the everyday work of the EC;
 - » creates a pool of young people with first-hand experience of and trained in EC procedures, who will be better prepared to collaborate and co-operate with the EC in the future;
 - » creates long-term "goodwill ambassadors" for European ideas and values, both within the EU and outside.

Training periods begin with an administrative welcome meeting followed by a 2-day general introductory conference on Community matters. Attendance is obligatory for all trainees, with the exception of those based in a Delegation and those starting at a later date (deferred start). Trainees are then assigned to their Directorates-General or Services. All trainees are awarded a monthly living allowance of 25% of the basic remuneration for an official at grade AD 5/1 (Commission Decision C/2007/1221). For the March 2011 traineeships, the living allowance for in-service training has been set at €1071,19 per month.

More information on: http://ec.europa.eu/stages/information/traineeship_en.htm#Infotab1

Publisher: Centre for Civic Education (CCE)

EIC Bulletin - European pulse - is electronic magazine publicized

with the support of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. It is registered in the Ministry of Culture as item No. 578

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