

European pulse

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FOCUS OF THIS ISSUE

(Lack of) De-politicization and professionalization in public administration

interview

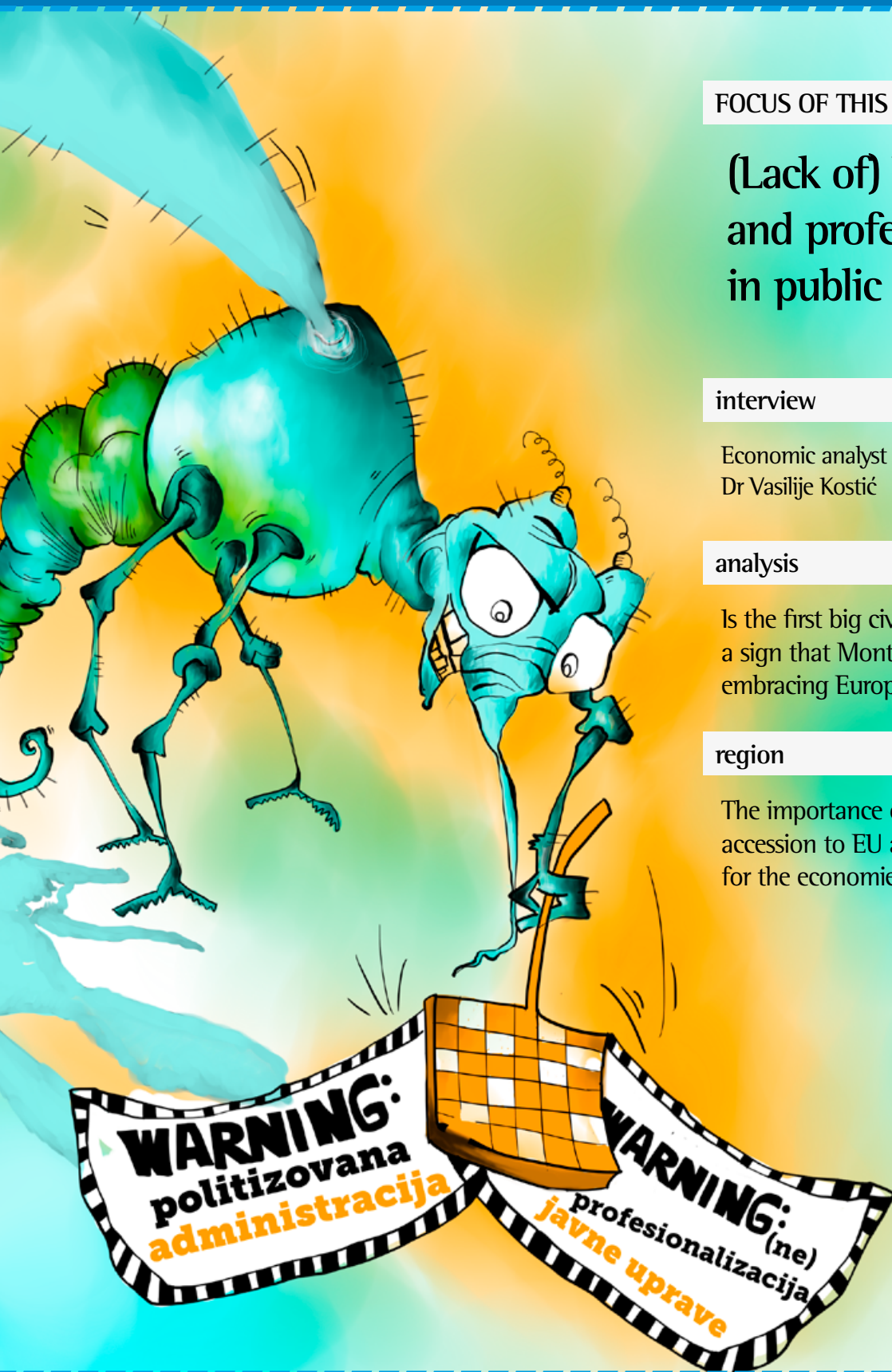
Economic analyst
Dr Vasilije Kostić

analysis

Is the first big civic protest a sign that Montenegro is embracing European values?

region

The importance of Croatia's accession to EU and exit from CEFTA for the economies of the region



Foreword: **Telecom**

Vladan Žugić

Public officials, from the Prime Minister **Igor Lukšić** through the former and current state prosecutors **Vesna Medenica** and **Ranka Čarapić** all the way to the directors of the Commission for Commercial Paper and Directorate for the prevention of money laundering **Zoran Đikanović** and **Predrag Mitrović**, have been passing the hot potato back and forth and over to the Hungarian prosecution, in an effort to convince us that the Telecom affair will end up like all others.

In other words, without ever finding or punishing the culprit, in this case persons who helped the foreign investors to buy a package of shares which will allow them to independently manage the former national resource, in exchange of 4.5 million euros on their private accounts. The media, in the meantime, has already called out the names: **Ana Kolarević**, a lawyer and sister of the former Prime Minister **Milo Đukanović**, and government officials previously in charge of Telecom **Miodrag Ivanović** and **Oleg Obradović**.

However, the Telecom affair is different from others. Instead of signatures of various intelligence services (Nacional, Moldovan S.C, listings), this time it bears the seal of the Commission for Commercial Paper of the United States of America.

We shouldn't hope for a revision of the privatization deal: a large multinational like Deutsche Telecom, whose daughter company Magyar Telecom bought the Montenegrin enterprise has plenty of ways to prevent that. However, documents in the hands of American investigators are an ideal opportunity for the first independent prosecutor or a different Government to prove their anti-corruption credentials and win points on the way to EU membership. For those who took the money and embezzled the family silver, the question is not if, but when they'll have to face justice.

Calendar

- 05. january **Urgent changes to the Constitution needed** / Deputy Prime Minister **Duško Marković** warned that, if the constitutional amendments are not passed before June, this could "come back as a boomerang", as the reform of judiciary is the key area for the beginning of negotiations with EU.
- 10. january **Agriculture and environment most demanding** / Minister of European Integrations and head of Turkey's negotiating team **Egemen Bağış** said that, if Montenegro gets the date for the beginning of membership talks in June, the most difficult chapters will certainly be "agriculture, food production and environment".
- 23. january **Twitter congratulations to Croatia** / The Government of Montenegro congratulated Croatia on the results of the referendum in which the citizens voted to join EU from its official Twitter profile.
- 24. january **Incessant struggle against crime and corruption** / The chief Croatian negotiator with EU **Vladimir Drobniak** said Montenegro can be sure about membership in EU only when it closes Chapter 23, which concerns judiciary and fundamental rights. "The work on this chapter never ends, and it remains a task even after you join the EU". At a meeting organised by European Movement in Montenegro and FES, Drobniak asked civil society representatives to do a favour to the Montenegrin chief negotiator **Aleksandar Pejović** and not to ask him when Montenegro will join the EU in the next five years, because no one will know.
- 23-25. january **Pejović in consultations** / Montenegro's chief negotiator with EU **Aleksandar Pejović** held several separate meetings with leaders of the parliamentary parties, NGO representatives and the media.
- 26. january **Lobbying for the freedom of speech** / Montenegro fell from 104th to the 107th place on the list of media freedoms ranked by Reporters without Borders, which makes it the worst-ranked country in the Balkans. The reason for the downgrade, according to the director of this organisation **Olivier Basill**, is the failure to prosecute attacks on journalists and property of the media, excessive fines in libel cases, corrupt marketing system, organised crime in media ownership structures, and grey economy which undermines professionalism of the journalists. Basil said that the Reporters without Borders will lobby against Montenegro's membership in EU until the situation improves.

Myth of equality at an end



Jacek Żakowski

The events of the last three weeks have definitively put an end to EU hypocrisy that would have us believe that member states are “equal, albeit different, partners”. First and foremost, the members of the eurozone have decided to meet, deliberate and take decisions as an exclusive group, as if their decisions didn’t concern the rest of us. This has limited and undermined the role of the European Commission, which has always operated on the principle of equality between states, and also the role of the European Parliament whose seats are distributed among member states in proportion to their populations. If the European stability pact is adopted in its current form, we will have created a new union within the Union, and on a wide range of issues this new union will dictate its conditions to the others, just as “Merkozy” does today. Secondly, the decision to cut the credit ratings of nine Eurozone countries will not necessarily affect the cost of their debt (the downgrade of the United States had no impact of this kind, while Italy’s debt is now cheaper than it was when the country had a better rating). However, they will certainly have an influence on the informal hierarchy between member states and their clout within the union. As a result, Germany’s leadership along with its policy of prudent austerity have clearly been reinforced. All the indications are that Berlin will now be able to stimulate the market and borrow at even lower rates, while increasing its economic advantage over the rest of Europe. As a consequence, the quantitative criteria of the Lisbon Treaty (the calculation of a qualified majority in the European Council on the basis of the number of states and their demographic weight) will be relativised by increasing importance of qualitative criteria – the quality of states and their economies. We will even see the decline of the “Merkozy” couple, which has been made unstable by the weight of a **Merkel** who has become too powerful for **Sarkozy**. And it will be even more difficult to undertake any initiative in Europe without Germany. As for the other 26 member states, they will not be able to do anything to counter the Germans, apart from blow-

ing up the union. Procedures for decisions and voting in the European Parliament, Commission and Council, which were laboriously negotiated for the Lisbon treaty have now been shattered. We are entering a period where EU affairs will resemble football in the era when everyone played but the only country that ever won was Germany. Thirdly, the tough rhetoric and the political decisions that target Hungary have demonstrated that within the union, some countries can allow themselves more leeway than others. That is not to say that Orbán does not indulge in appalling rhetoric or that his economic policy is not stupid, but in terms of state institutions, he has done nothing that would not be tolerated on the part of other countries. His assault on the media is no more anti-libertarian than Sarkozy’s power plays in French public television, or what **Berlusconi** previously did to the Italian media. As for the BBC, its directors have always been directly nominated by government. We do not know what the long-term consequences of this will be for Poland or for the EU. In general, the adaptation of form (ie. institutional form) to content (for example economic content) has a rationalising impact on institutions. However, today we are dealing with emotions, that is to say with politics. Differences that are amplified emotionally and politically, and differences that are divulged and institutionalised become uncomfortable for everyone. Many countries will have difficulty accepting Germany’s stronger position within the union, while Germany will have trouble sustaining efforts for solidarity and self-imposed restrictions. In effect this means that along with economic and internal political tensions, we can look forward to significant international tensions and major issues with regard to decision making. And this will remain the case until a new logic replaces the hypocrisy of the founding myth of the union. This is likely to be a painful change and not one that will happen anytime soon.

The author is a columnist for the Polish weekly Gazeta Wyborcza. – Source: Presseurope.eu

Government's response to the demands for de-politicization and professionalization of public administration

One Step Forward, Two Steps Back



Samir Kajošević

In its most recent moves and announcements the Montenegrin Government demonstrated that it has no intention to de-politicize and professionalize public administration, in spite of continued reprimands from Brussels concerning "weak and highly politicised" administration, which is why the ruling coalition adopted a range of advanced legal measures in this area. To date, however, none of them had been implemented.

In late December 2012 the Government appointed **Božidar Vuksanović**, MP of the Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS), as acting director of the Police, which is a prelude to his appointment to the same post for a longer term. The fact that Vuksanović stepped out of DPS after fifteen years of membership does not inspire any hope that he might still do his job impartially and professionally. Moreover, there is an irresistible similarity with the case of **Duško Marković**, who a decade and a half ago renounced his membership in DPS in order to become director of the Agency for National Security (ANS), from which he went straight to the position of the deputy Prime Minister as a high-ranking cadre of DPS. The government is also planning to appoint another DPS MP, **Mevludina Nuhodžića**, as the new director of ANS, instead of **Vladan Joković** who will move on to become director of Customs Authority.

Public competitions for the posts of the directors of the Customs Authority and Police will be but a formality. By appointing Vuksanović and announcing the appointments of **Nuhodžića** and **Joković** the Government effectively discriminates against all those who have been working in these institutions for years, and who are professionals – which means that they understand that they stand no chance in the public call, and that by tendering their application they will only

A recent opinion poll conducted by UNDP found that 53% of the respondents believe that party affiliation is the main criterion in employment, or in other words, that most citizens believe that a majority of 11. 625 employees of public administration are party soldiers.



anger the new bosses. Moreover, the Prime Minister's office is sending a bad message to those in the lower ranks, where no place had been available for years now without appropriate family connections or party membership. After all, the former head of Police **Veselin Veljović** and **Joković**, with all their shortcomings, practically spent their entire working age in the Police and ANS. Appointing Vuksanović and Nuhodžić to their positions is a step back in de-politicizing and professionalizing public administration. **Đorđije Blažić**, dean of the Faculty for Administrative and European Studies, says that Montenegro is a partitocracy, where it is impossible to eliminate politics from administration. Decisions to "freeze" the party membership during



an official mandate only serve to create an image of fake reforms. “Giving priority to party cadres in public institutions debases the entire administrative system prescribed by our legislation. The “freezing” of party membership is a fairy tale. These are party’s soldiers and that’s that”, Blažić said. Reminding that such bosses always look for assistants from their own party ranks, Blažić warns that this introduces politics in administration on every level.

The bosses are aided in this by unclear regulation on employment of civil servants and state employees. Although the Human Resource Management Authority administers tests and conducts the selection of applicants through public calls, its opinion is not binding. In practice, that means that a public institution does not have to employ the candidate with the best results, but only to select one from the list. According to the new Law on Civil Servants and State Employees, the heads of administrative bodies should, “as a rule”, select the first-ranked from the list of three applicants compiled by the Human Resource Management Authority after the test. However, they can also select one of the other two candidates, if they judge he or she is better qualified than the first, but will have to justify this

Heads of public administration bodies usually look for assistants in the ranks of their own party, introducing politics into administration on every level, warns Đorđije Blažić, dean of the Faculty for Administrative and European Studies, who says Montenegro is a partitocracy where politics cannot be eliminated from administration.

decision in writing. The law will come into force a year from now, but the last decisions of the Government suggest that it too will be ignored in practice in order to give precedence to party cadres.

A recent opinion poll conducted by UNDP found that 53% of the respondents believe that party affiliation is the main criterion in employment, or in other words, that most citizens believe that a majority of 11. 625 employees of public administration are party soldiers. DPS MP **Miodrag Vuković** says the issue of party affiliation is over-hyped, and that among the 150 000 members of that party there are many professionals who must work somewhere. Vuksanović thinks the same, arguing that 2/3 of Montenegrin citizens are members of some party. “Does that mean that only 1/3 can do some jobs professionally? I don’t think my past membership in DPS is a problem, and I am determined to tackle this task honestly and professionally. If I don’t know something, I will ask my associates to fight my logic with their professionalism, and I’ll always accept good arguments”, Vuksanović said. Research coordinator in Institute Alternative **Jovana Marović** believes that a politicized administration could be a problem for Montenegro in the next phases of European integrations, and reminds that the accession talks require a professional, not an obedient administration. “The problem of

the lack of administrative capacities is partly a result of intensive politicization of public administration, which discourages and alienates capable applicants. The growing pressure of tasks which confront Montenegro in its quest for full integration into EU, and the need to respond to them adequately, might create an impulse towards genuine de-politicization, rationalization and modernization of public administration", Marović said.



For years now, Brussels has been warning that the Montenegrin administration is too large and over-politicized. One of the seven conditions set by EC in order to get the opening date for accession talks was to "enhance professionalism and de-politicisation of public administration and to strengthening a transparent, merit-based approach to appointments and promotions". At the time, Brussels also asked the Government to "complete essential steps in public administration reform" which remains "weak and highly politicized". According to the latest progress report on Montenegro, European Commission was satisfied with the progress made over the last year: "Montenegro has taken important steps to address the main challenges posed by the public administration reform", states the report. It further notes that in March 2011 the Gov-

Research coordinator in Institute Alternative Jovana Marović believes that a politicized administration could be a problem for Montenegro in the next phase of European integrations: "The problem of the lack of administrative capacities is partly a result of intensive politicization of public administration, which discourages and alienates capable applicants", she said.

ernment adopted Public Administration Reform Strategy for 2011-2016, which includes "introducing European standards covering recruitment and promotion and measures to increase the efficiency of the State administration", and envisages an overall reduction in the number of public employees. The report reminds that the Law on general administrative procedure were enacted by the Parliament in June 2011, followed by a new Law on civil servants and State employees, which comes into force in January 2013, as well as by amendments to the Law on Remuneration of Public Servants and State Employees, which envisages a "transparent salary system" for the employees financed from the state budget.

"Overall, preparations for implementation of the adopted legislation have to be stepped up and focus on enforcing de-politicisation, professionalism and effectiveness and impartiality of the administration, including through merit-based recruitment and promotion", concludes the October 2011 Progress Report, based on which the Council of EU approved conditional opening of accession talks with Montenegro.

It's not hard to imagine what Brussels is thinking now about Government's promise to de-politicize and professionalize administration.

The first larger civic protest in Podgorica
– is Montenegro about to embrace European values?

Civic conscience a nightmare for the “elite”



Neđeljko Rudović

Montenegro is ever closer to Europe. Not so much because it got a green light to begin the accession talks with EU, but rather because for the first time it was a host to an authentic civic protest, free of national or party flavours. On Saturday, 21 January, some 5 000 citizens of Montenegro gathered in front of the Government building in Podgorica to protest against rising prices of electricity and general impoverishment of the society. For Montenegro, that was an impressive protest, where the participants did not call for an overthrow, but warned the Government that it should start doing its job and minding the living standard of its citizens at least as much as it cares for its tycoons. According to the eyewitnesses, some even shed tears – in addition to touching them, this fact should also probably worry the authorities. The general collapse of the value system which began with the dissolution of former Yugoslavia acquired concrete manifestation in Montenegro with the rise of a political and economic “elite” which in normal circumstances couldn’t even get close to the decision-making positions. Given the mentality and other factors in Montenegro, most importantly its size, this “elite” managed, through a series of manipulative manoeuvres, to cement its position and take the reins of control in pretty much every sphere. The result was the siphoning of social wealth into a few nodes, all closely connected with the head of the ruling party; erosion of the economic system, predominance of the grey zone in both economy and government and a close symbiosis between the state apparatus and the informal and underground power centres. Control of money and repressive forces casts a shadow of doubt over every electoral victory, and the relative ease with which they took over the country and turned the citizens of Montenegro into servants of the tycoons seemed to encourage the elite and bring forth more greed. The problems appeared when the economic cri-

The most common trait of the Montenegrin society – obedience and adoration of the ruler, partly from fear and partly from habit, could finally give way to the landmarks of Western democracies, where the authorities are expected to serve the citizens and be accountable to them.

sis floated to the top two realisations. The first was that the “elite” cannot manage the economy under normal circumstances, i.e. that it is more interested in side payments than in bringing strategic investors into the country. The second was that there is no money left to keep the social problems under the lid. They also forgot that Montenegro is too small, and that everyone will be able to tell whose pockets got filled in the process. And of course they cannot possibly resist showing off how much they got. And that is how the first bigger demonstration of revolt came to the streets of Podgorica, organised by the Union of Free Trade Unions, which was at once an expression of anger and of hope. This civic protest could be an introduction to even bigger upheavals, which would be a sign that the Montenegro of citizens is finally waking up from its sleep. The most common trait of the Montenegrin society – obedience and adoration of the ruler, partly from fear and partly from habit, could finally give way to the landmarks of Western democracies, where the authorities are expected to serve the citizens and be accountable to them. In Europe, the rulers are afraid of the citizens, not the other way around. This is why Montenegro needs Europe.

Economic analyst Dr Vasilije Kostić says little will change in Montenegro's trade relations after Croatia's exit from CEFTA

A chance for our goods



It is clear that Croatia's exit will put Serbia in the leadership position in the region.

By joining the EU, Croatia will automatically cease to be a member of the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA). This won't change much in the trade relations between Croatia and Montenegro, but the fact that some Croatian products will be subject to import tariffs in the region constitutes a chance for Montenegrin producers to make inroads in these markets. This mostly concerns food and agricultural products, says economic analyst Dr Vasilije Kostić in the interview for *European Pulse*.

» *What are the consequences for Montenegro's economy of Croatia's exit from CEFTA?*

Given that Montenegro is subject to the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) with EU members, after Croatia's accession to EU little will be changed in that respect, i.e. the trade will continue as defined by this Agreement.

Since the domestic industry of agricultural and food products has already achieved high standards of production, and high levels of food safety, I don't see that this could be an obstacle to continued trade relations with Croatia

in this sphere.

Compared to the terms of CEFTA, this means that the conditions of trade will practically remain the same, for all goods, except for a number of quotas which however we have not been able to make full use of, as recently indicated by the Montenegrin Chamber of Commerce.

We could even say that with Croatia's accession to EU Montenegrin products are getting a chance to become more competitive, because we are able to export to Croatia freely while our market is partly protected from the Croatian products. This also provides a degree of protection to Montenegrin producers and infant industries.

» *What are the consequences of Croatia's exit from CEFTA for the regional market?*

It is clear that Croatia's exit will put Serbia in the leadership position in the region. However, the change will also create some headaches for Serbia, since Croatia will also "take away" a portion of Serbian exports in some products, such as sugar. This could result in a severe reduction of Serbian exports in the future.

Besides, we can expect greater competitiveness of BiH's products, as they will naturally try to compensate the loss of the Croatian markets with gains in Serbia and Montenegro. However, it is quite clear that Serbia will be the leading power in the regional market.

Montenegrin companies in the sector of agriculture and food products can already compete with their regional counterparts and I do believe that some of them have the capacity to use the upcoming chance.

» Does that mean that you do not expect much change?

Overall, the bulk of trade will remain unchanged and subject to more or less the same terms, as it has already been liberalised and corresponds to European regulations in this area. As for the European regulation, it is also possible that some Croatian products will become subject to custom tariffs in the countries members of CEFTA, giving other a chance to expand their exports. Given the structure of these products, Serbia is the most likely to capture the new market share.

» Could Montenegrin producers use this opening, as some Croatian products will become more expensive in BiH, Kosovo, Macedonia and Serbia?

Montenegrin companies in the sector of agriculture and food products can already compete with their regional counterparts and I do believe that some of them have the capacity to use the upcoming chance, but it remains to be seen how they will react to this opportunity.

V.Ž.

The prices of Croatian products depend on our importers

» Do you expect certain Croatian products in Montenegro to become more expensive – dair products, cigarettes, wine...?

This can be realistically expected, but is not certain, as it depends on the price calculation of local importers. If they make a conservative assessment of the demand for such products, the prices will most likely go up in order to absorb the increase in tariffs.

Half the food ends up in thrash

Up to one half of edible and healthy food gets wasted in EU households, supermarkets, restaurants and catering companies every year. In the meantime, 79 million EU citizens live beneath the poverty line and 16 million depend on food aid from charitable institutions. In a resolution “How to avoid food waste” adopted on 19 January, European Parliament called for urgent measures to halve food waste by 2025 and to improve access to food for needy EU citizens. The resolution proposes campaigns against food waste on the national levels, and suggests that food packaging should be offered in a range of sizes, while foods close to their expiry dates should be sold at discounted prices. However, some member states forbid the supermarkets to sell food at prices below production cost. Every year the EU throws away 89 million tons of food, or 179 kilograms per person. The households are the main culprits for food waste, as they contribute 42% of the wasted amounts, out of which 2/3 could still be used.

How much of “Made in Germany” is made in Germany

German industry fears it might suffer a great damage if the European Commission’s new proposal on product labelling takes off the ground. The proposal said that no product can bear the label “made in ...” unless the product is mostly manufactured in that country. According to the German media, EU Commissioner for customs and customs union **Algirdas Semeta** plans to restrict the “Made in ...” label to products where at least 45 percent of the value content comes from the said country. Until now, EU rules defined the country of origin as the place where “the last substantial, economically justified processing” took place. This means that the label “made in Germany” could also apply to those products where more than 90% of the manufacturing process took place abroad, and which were only given finishing touches in Germany.

Hidden information on credits

According to a comprehensive pan-European research conducted in September 2011, more than two thirds of European websites offering consumer credits do not provide information required by the EU laws. The main problem in consumer credit advertising turned out to be the lack of key information based on which the consumers make the decision to take the loan. Only in Belgium out of 93 examined websites 89 had some irregularities. On the other hand, the six Bulgarian websites which were part of the research all provided complete information on credit conditions. The decision to analyse the electronic offer of consumer credits comes at the right moment – the data show that EU citizens use the websites advertising consumer credits on a daily basis. Only in 2010 the financial institutions in the Eurozone issued more than 600 billion euros in consumer credits.

Three billion for 17 religious communities

The government of the Czech Republic adopted a proposal on restitution of church property, which intends to compensate 17 religious communities in this country, starting with the richest Catholic Church, by returning land and real estate worth 3 billion euros. Immediately after the “Velvet Revolution” the churches received a small proportion of compensations, while the remaining property was restituted through a number of laws in the course of the transition. The EU does not have a framework for restitution, but it considers it important as part of legal guarantee of property rights. According to the latest proposal, over the next 30 years the Czech Republic will pay the churches financial compensation amounting to 2.36 billion euros. Around 56% of real estate formerly owned by churches and seized by the communist regime after 1948 will be returned in the course of the next five years. That property mostly consists of forests, farm land and a number of buildings.

Events which marked the performance of the 27-member block in 2011

EU alive and kicking



In the last 12 months the EU went through what might be the most difficult period since its inception, due to inability of the political elites to formulate and harmonise their policies in response to the return of the economic crisis.

Until 2011, even the biggest Eurosceptics did not risk the assessment that the Community has no future – instead, they focused their critic on the expensive and cumbersome bureaucracy, the loss of their countries' sovereignty and similar quibbles. From the second half of 2011, however, a growing number of experts is warning against the possibility that some members could leave the Eurozone, which could signal the end of EU, at least in the form which the rest of the world still finds attractive.

The crisis which hit Greece and Ireland in 2010 continued to spread unchecked in 2011. The first to fall was Portugal, which turned to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and EU for help, and got 78 billion euros promising in exchange a draconic austerity package.

A ray of hope came from the EU Summit in Brussels on 9 December when the heads of EU states and governments agreed on a binding set of rules to tighten budgetary discipline

Italy and Spain, the third and the fourth largest economies in the Eurozone, found themselves on the wrong end of the markets. Financial difficulties and high interest rates forced these countries into severe spending cuts. In Italy, the side effect was the collapse of the rule of Silvio Berlusconi, while in Spain the socialists lost the elections.

Something else happened that would have been unimaginable only a year ago – the storm of mistrust swept France and Germany. Rating agency Standard and Poor's announced it was closely watching their finances, and that there was a chance that it might soon reduce their star credit ratings (AAA), which allow these countries to borrow cheaply.

A ray of hope came from the EU Summit in Brussels on 9 December when the heads of EU states and governments agreed on a binding set of rules to tighten budgetary discipline, although some members refused to agree to the deal, with UK leading the opposition camp. The agreement prescribes the so-called "golden budget rule", i.e. introducing a limit on budget deficit into the national constitution, which would automatically trigger austerity measures when the country exceeds the deficit threshold of 3% of its GDP. By the end of 2012 only Germany and Spain introduced the "golden budget rule". According to this rule, when a country exceeds 3% budget deficit, the sanctions will automatically come into force, unless the measure is opposed by a qualified majority of member states. Also, all countries are expected

to declare in advance how much debt they plan to raise through the bond market. The agreement was accepted by 17 EU countries which are part of the common currency area, plus Denmark, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Bulgaria which might eventually join. The UK categorically rejected the deal, while Sweden, Hungary and the Czech Republic said they might join the treaty at some later time. It was also agreed that the Eurozone countries, together with other EU members who decide to join, should set apart some 200 billion euros into the IMF coffers, so that the fund can help

The Arab Spring overthrew the old rulers in Egypt, Libya and Tunisia, and increased the number of illegal immigrants in EU by 50%

of member states to grant the European Commission greater powers in interfering with the fiscal policies of member states which fail to respect the rules. In addition to its economic difficulties, the EU continued its vague performance in global politics, which recalled the old joke about “the EU’s phone number”. The confusion culminated in the context of the Arab Spring. The Arab Spring overthrew the old rulers in Egypt, Libya and Tunisia, and increased the number of illegal immigrants in EU by 50%. The data accumulated in the meantime shows that the hardest hit was Greece which found itself in the midst of the so-called “East-Mediterranean route” with immigrants arriving via neighbouring Greece.



protect the Eurozone. The result of the agreement is a new Eurozone fund, European Stability Mechanism (ESM), which will replace the current European Financial Stability Fund (EFSF) a year before it officially expires – from July 2012.

However, the EU leaders failed to agree on an increase of the stability fund, which currently has 500 billion euros, but promised to reconsider this issue in March 2012, before the ESM comes into force. They also rejected the demands of the President of the European Council **Herman van Rompuy** and a number

The immigration wave peaked in March 2011, when 20 000 people tried to cross EU’s border, 17 000 of them arriving from the Maghreb countries. They swamped the shores of Italy and continued towards France where the Tunisian community alone already numbers 700 000 people, and where they could more easily count on help with accommodation and with finding jobs on the black market. All this led to tensions between Italy, France and Brussels. The French police stopped the immigrants at the Italian border and sent them back to Italy, which, according to the European Home Affairs Commissioner **Cecilia Malmström**, was against the EU regulations and violated the Schengen agreement. One piece of good news in 2011 was that since 1 May the EU labour market is completely open to the workers of the eight new East European member states. The citizens of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia, which joined the EU in 2004 together with Cyprus and Malta. Some EU countries already decided to open up their la-



bour markets to the newcomers in 2004 or a few years later, but Germany and Austria, and to some extent UK, stuck with the suspension of EU's regulation on the freedom of movement of workers until the last day of the seven-year transition period, which finally expired on 1 May 2011. Another positive development on the European continent in 2011 was the enlargement of the Schengen zone, which now counts 26 members, since it was joined by Lichtenstein on 19 December.

Less cheerful news from the Schengen zone for the West Balkan countries came from the meeting of the Home Affairs ministers of EU in mid-December, who adopted a new mechanism that can re-introduced visa obligation for the citizens of these countries on short notice in "extraordinary situations". The mechanism is triggered when the inflow of immigrants from a certain county increases by more than 50% in a given period. In 2001, Greece ceased to be the only "black sheep". It was joined by Hungary which, in addition to dismal economic situation, upset the EU but its Government's most recent political moves. Hungary's conflict with EU began already in early 2011 when it took over the presidency of the Community. The conflict erupted over the new Hungarian media law, which came into force at the time and prescribed large fines for the journalists, as well as interfering with the journalists' right

In 2001, Greece ceased to be the only "black sheep". It was joined by Hungary which, in addition to dismal economic situation, upset the EU but its Government's most recent political moves

not to disclose the source. Lately the Prime Minister **Viktor Orbán** and his Government clashed with Brussels over the new regulations which apparently undermine the independence of the Central Bank, judiciary and the Commission for Data Protection. Budapest had already requested financial assistance of some 15 to 20 billion euros from EU and IMF, but both organisations said they will not consider the request unless the country can guarantee independence of its central bank. Another country which occasionally attracted attention was Belgium, which in early December finally got a Government after 535 days, which is a world record among the modern states. The new Prime Minister is the leader of franco-phone socialists, **Elio Di Rupo**.

However, the country which stood in the epicentre of the storm for the whole period was Germany, whose economy remains stable and which, together with France, pushed the rest of Europe into negotiations in order to contain the chaos in the markets. Perhaps **Angela Merkel's** phone number is not the same one which you should call to talk to Europe, but it was definitely the one where in 2011 you could get the answers to the most important questions.

A boost to enlargement

Among the few areas that could be called successful in 2011 was the EU's enlargement policy. On 9 December Croatia signed the Accession Treaty, and in July 2013 it will become the 28th member of EU. In June 2011 Iceland also began the accession talks, and by the end of the year it had already closed a number of chapters.

Will the government of the Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán succumb to EU's pressure

The members of the club must also play by the rules



On 17 January the European Commission (EC) initiated the infringement procedure against Hungary for a breach of European regulations. Specifically, the EC found that the most recent moves of the Hungarian authorities violated independence of the central bank, the judiciary and the data protection authority. A day later, the Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán tried to play down the conflict and showed himself ready for compromise. There is growing support in the European Parliament for the initiative to suspend Hungary's voting rights, but that requires support from all other EU member states. As for central bank, Orbán's government is charged with interfering with its independence. Under the new Hungarian laws, the economy minister can participate directly in the meetings of the central bank's Monetary Council, opening it to possible government influence. Moreover, the agenda of the central bank meetings needs to be sent to the government in advance, thus impeding its capacity to hold confidential discussions. There is an unnecessary increase in the number of deputy governors, as well as changes in the remuneration scheme, which appear to put political pressure on the bank. The governor and the members of the Monetary Council have to take an oath of fidelity to

the country and its interests, which the Commission sees as problematic, as the governor of the central bank is at the same time member of the European Central Bank. The judiciary is another area of concern, the main problem being that 274 judges were retired in contradiction of EU regulations, based on a new decision which lowers the compulsory retirement age for judges from 70 to 62 years, which is the general retirement limit. Finally, the decision to establish a new data protection agency to replace the current Ombudsman for data protection violates the European regulation according to which the member states must have an independent monitoring body in this area. As part of the procedure to bring Hungary before the European Court of Justice, the Commission sent three "Letters of Formal Notice" to Hungary, listing the shortcomings of the new legislation. The authorities in Budapest have until 17 February to respond to Commission's

Remembering Austria

Guy Verhofstadt, president of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) in the European Parliament, called for suspension of Hungary's voting rights in EU institutions, but the proposal was rejected by the Commission for the time being.

The Green Party in EP also supports sanctions against Hungary, and the Socialist and Democrats are also "considering" the possibility. Verhofstadt asked for the issue to be put on the agenda of the next European Council. However, a drastic measure like that would need support of the other 26 member states.

The heads of governments mostly belong to the parties members of the European People's Party, as does Orbán. They don't find it a pleasant task to contemplate such radical solutions.

The 2000 precedent is still before everyone's eyes. At the time the EU imposed sanctions on Austria after the extreme right rose to power, but the effects were minimal.



concerns, and the Commission will decide on the next step by mid-April. Should Hungary ignore Commission's request, the EC can go straight to the European Court of Justice, but in that case the procedure could take up to a year. "Hungary is a key member of the European family and we don't want a shadow of doubt to be cast over its respect of democratic principles and values. The sooner we clear this up, the better", said President of the Commission **José Manuel Barroso**. EU has another, much faster way of dealing with Hungary. Budapest had already requested a 15 to 20 billion euro support package from IMF and EU. Both organisations have refused to even consider the request unless the country can guarantee independence of its central bank. It is small wonder then that the Hungarian Prime Minister decided to meet some of the requests, although he maintained he will never step back. In an interview for the German daily *Bild*, Orbán played a conciliatory role, announcing that he will "comply with the requests" regarding the council of the central bank, "even if that is to the detriment of the Central Bank". Orbán came to power in

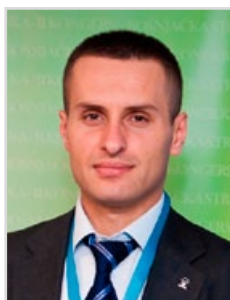
KLUB RADIO

Prime Minister Orbán is facing harsh criticism from the EP and human rights organisations accusing him of dragging the country back into authoritarianism, much like the one it experienced during communism. The often cited example is that of Klubradio, which is known as the only voice of the opposition. On 1 March the radio will lose the licence to broadcast on the territory of Budapest, which, in the words of its president and founder Andras Arato, would leave it headless. In December the Media Council gave the licence previously used by Klub Radio to a completely unknown new station Autoradio, with a capital of only 3 000 euros. The Media Council itself was founded by a controversial law on media which came into force only a year ago, and consists of people loyal to Orbán. According to the decision of the Media Council, Klub Radio, the sixth most listened radio in the country, won fewer points in the contest because it proposed less music and local news in its programme. Klub Radio also has financial difficulties, because it lost advertising contracts with the state owned enterprises, and the private sector has followed their example. "We are only surviving thanks to our listeners' contributions", Arato said.

2010 after 11 years of Socialist's rule. He won 2/3 of parliamentary seats which allowed him to initiate constitutional changes which have been deemed anti-European by EU, as well as by much of the Hungarian public. In April the Parliament adopted the new Constitution, written in a nationalist, conservative and traditionalist key, which came into force on 1 January 2012. Hungary already clashed with EU in early 2011 when it took over presidency of the Community. The conflict erupted over the new Hungarian media law which came into force around that time and which prescribed draconic fines for the journalists, and undermined their right not to reveal the source.

Sources: *EurActiv*, *AFP*, *Beta*

The potential of diversity



Asmir Pepić

The author is the head of the Office of the President of Bosniak Party of Montenegro. He attended X generation of European Integration School.

Many questions spring to mind today with regard to accession to EU, and to EU itself. For instance: Will the membership in EU solve some existential and political problems? What will be my status when we join the EU vis-à-vis other EU citizens? Will we preserve our cultural, ethnic and other identities by joining the EU or will invisible assimilation gradually take over?

It seems nobody has definite answer to these questions, although every day we can read prophecies that EU's end is near. The political and economic crisis in EU necessarily inspires fears that economic or political collapse will follow, and that some basic principles of EU will have to be changed. However, we should remember that until now the EU always emerged from its crisis stronger and more stable, and that its foundations always remained the same: institutions based on the rule of law, respect for human rights, democracy and market economy prevailed and are likely to remain fundamentally unchanged.

The main reason for membership in EU is stability and security, and a host of programmes supporting and improving social integration. EU is a guarantee of economic security, of economic growth in a country without orders and customs, with the single EU market based on the fundamental freedoms of movement of goods, persons, services and capital as the best remedy for unemployment. Nevertheless, a major question confronting the Montenegrin citizens, regardless of their nationality and religious affiliation is: Will we lose our national identity, language and culture if we join the EU? It is well known that EU is a supra-national, multi-cultural community, based on the principle of "unity in diversity". All EU citizens can turn to its institutions in their own language. The EU spends a lot of money to preserve the traditions, cultures and languages, all in order to protect national identities. So why



are we still afraid? It is not hard to see that our citizens' fears rest predominantly on the lack of information about human rights and quality of life in EU. Our idea of EU is based on the one hand on the high salaries, secure housing, expensive cars, and on the other hand on gradual assimilation to the dominant behavioural patterns of the majority. These prejudices are today feeding on the apocalyptic vision of the end of EU. Relative dearth of sensible analyses and conclusions has turned into an outbreak of disastrous ideas.

Ignorance – or indifference – is the reason that most of my friends never heard of the European Urban Charter II, Manifesto for new urbanity. Nor did I notice that this document received much attention in the media. Its goal is not to defend small states against bigger states, nor is there a need for that. This document re-



inforces the view of EU as unity in diversity, an idea already promoted by Heraclitus, the ancient philosopher from Ephesus. I will only cite a few articles from this document:

- *Our towns and cities are the crossroads of civilisations. They are the ideal setting for knowledge and culture to find expression; they are contact and meeting places. We, European local elected representatives, view our towns and cities as places of exchange, cosmopolitan places where differences are free to interact and find expression in a spirit of mutual respect.*
- *We are not looking for towns and cities where cultural differences merge into a single global, globalised and homogenised model. Our towns and cities are culturally and architecturally different and diverse, and must remain so. We are alert to the risks of standardisation of buildings and services and the aberrations of a globalised urban development model which only obeys the rules of a global market, leaving its uniform imprint everywhere.*

- *We also support the culture of our local areas and their identities. We wish to promote and disseminate our local cultures and our local history as a key asset in an increasingly globalised world. We undertake to continue our efforts to support artistic creation and ambitious policies of cultural amenities for our towns and cities.*

- *Our towns and cities have always been home to forces for change and innovation. They are an opportunity for progress and adjustment to change. We believe that our towns and cities are the focal points of the knowledge-based economy, which is already driving the development of our communities and will do so even more in future.*

I don't think further comment or criticism of these statements is necessary. What I found so fascinating in them was the belief that "small towns" also have a rich history which was overshadowed in the past by the history of "big cities". The word "local" in this document is not something to be ashamed of, it is a statement of potential!

In the typical division into big and small Montenegro belongs to the small, and so does Rožaje, my town of birth, which, regardless of its enormous potential, is still mired in economic and cultural stagnation. I believe it is only a matter of time when this small town will be able to rise to its full potential, mobilise its economic strengths and tradition to charm the "big cities" in the region and EU. I believe that as a town in a European Montenegro, as a town in EU, it will be recognised as an environment "open to the forces of change and innovation", and will be able to jump onto the train of sustained growth. Together with Montenegro it will be different, economically stronger, culturally still different and rich.

I truly want to be able to contribute to this process. It's one more reason why I want to be a citizen of EU.

Consequences of Croatia's membership in EU and its exit from CEFTA for the economies of the region

The return of customs



The biggest impact on Croatia's accession to the European family on other countries of the region will be felt through its exit from the CEFTA agreement: Serbia gets the chance to become the "main player" on the regional market, and the Serbian exporters to conquer the market of BiH. However, we can also expect pressures from BiH to enter neighbouring markets, as its exports to Croatia will become more difficult. On 1 July 2013 Croatia will join EU and thus automatically cease to be a member of the CEFTA agreement. Consequently, all trade-related commitments between Croatia and other countries of the region will cease to exist, and Croatia will become part of the trade regime between EU and countries of the region, as defined by their Association and Stabilisation Agreements (SAA). Deputy director of the Office for European Integrations of the Government of Serbia **Vladimir Medak** told EurAktiv that Croatia's accession will create some difficulties, but will not endanger overall trade between Serbia and Croatia, which has been largely liberalised in the CEFTA framework, and will be such within EU as well. He explained that the Serbian trade deficit with Croatia will be "reassigned from CEFTA to EU". "This means that

BiH ranks as the second largest market for Croatian goods according to value, right behind Italy, accounting for 11% of exports. Once Croatia becomes a member its exports to CEFTA members, including BiH, will become subject to customs tariffs, lowering competitiveness of a number of Croatian exports such as drinks, flour or milk. This is an opportunity for other countries of the region.

within CEFTA our trade surplus will be even bigger, because the trade deficit with Croatia will migrate to the EU account. Since our trade with EU is much larger, this deficit will only grow a little, our surplus towards CEFTA will increase by a lot, and it will seem like our trade performance improved tremendously, while in fact everything remains the same", Medak said. For Serbia, Croatia's exit from CEFTA will be important as it leaves Serbia as "the main player" in CEFTA, and will enhance its role in the regional market. Medak said that similar consequences are to be expected from Croatia's exit from the South-East European Energy Community, which leaves Serbia as the country with the biggest energy potential in Europe. Director of the Regional Cooperation Office of the Serbian Chamber of Commerce **Milivoje Miletić** said that for Serbia it is important to see what consequences Croatia's accession to EU will have on its trade with BiH, which is an important market for both Serbia and Croatia. BiH ranks as the second largest market for Croatian goods according to value, right behind Italy, accounting for 11% of exports. Once Croatia becomes a member its exports to CEFTA members, including BiH, will become subject to customs tariffs, lowering competitiveness of a number of Croatian exports such as drinks, flour or milk. For Serbia and its food exports, this is a new chance to conquer the market of BiH.

On the other hand, BiH producers who export their food products to Croatia do not have the requisite certificates for export to EU. This will result in a surplus of goods on the BiH market, creating additional pressure on the neighbouring markets, including the Serbian one, as the Bosnian companies redirect trade. However, the director of the Serbian representation of the Croatian Chamber of Commerce **Goran Masnec** expects the biggest change in trade between Croatia and the members of CEFTA to happen in relation to Kosovo and Moldova, as these two countries still have not signed an SAA with EU. According to him, this means that varying additional customs tariffs will apply in these two countries: in Moldova they depend on the type of the product, whereas Kosovo levies a single tariff of 10% on all goods. Croatia's exit from CEFTA and entry into EU will not change anything in certain areas of trade. The only larger changes will be felt in agriculture, primarily in tobacco on Croatian and sugar on the Serbian side, Medak said. According to the terms of the CEFAT agreement, Serbian exports of cigarettes to Croatia are subject to a 38% tariff, beyond the initial quota of 25 tons which are only taxed at 10%. Croatian cigarettes are subject to a similar 10% tariff for the first 25 tons and 15% above that quota. However, when Croatia joins EU, Serbia will be able to export its cigarettes to Croatia tariff-free, whereas the tariff on imports on Croatian cigarettes to Serbia will be 57.6%. "This will make Croatian cigarettes a lot more expensive and less competitive, because we agreed with EU that even after the 6 year transition period the tariffs on cigarettes and tobacco will remain the same", said the deputy director of the Office for European Integrations in the Government of Serbia. According to the analysts, Croatian wines might also face difficulties on the Serbian market, as Serbia has an annual quota for imports of wine from EU, which will now also include Croatian wine. On the other hand, the biggest problem for Serbia will be its export of sugar, because the EU limits imports of sugar from Serbia to 180 000 tons, and the amounts currently exported to Croatia will have to fit within this quota. That

After Croatia leaves CEFTA, there will be fewer imports of cigarettes from this country, as higher tariffs will make them more expensive



means that Serbia cannot keep the scale of its sugar exports to Croatia at the current level, unless the quota is increased. Medak said that Serbia has already requested a revision of SAA for this reason, and that it is currently negotiating a change of sugar quota with EU. He added that this could potentially entail Croatia's request for additional changes to SAA in order to keep its position on the Serbian market, but said that both sides would have to agree on this first. Medak reminded that similar requests came from Romania and Bulgaria when they entered the EU in 2007, even before Serbia signed the SAA, but the EU refused to change the parts of the agreement which had already been negotiated. The experts also told EurAktiv that the Croatian government won't be able to continue campaigns which urge the citizens to only buy Croatian products. According to **Bojana Todorović**, deputy Minister of economy and regional development, "Croatia will not be able to implement campaigns which prioritize domestic products such as "Buy Croatian" or "Let's be Croative" etc. which can improve the standing of Serbian agricultural products with Croatian consumers".

Excerpts from the article by Maja Poznatov and Ivana Pavlović. The authors are editors of EurAktiv Serbia.

What we need to know before we decide to join European Union

EU for citizens

Directives, regulations, *acquis communautaire*, Council of EU, chapters, screening... How many citizens of Montenegro, or for that matter of most countries which aspire to become EU members, or are already in EU, understand this terminology? In effect, the questions which really matter to European citizens, much more than familiarity with these omnipresent bureaucratic terms, are those that relate to the working conditions in EU, prices, the size of fruit, driving licences, schools... this is why European Pulse decided to publish answers to the questions important for our everyday lives, answers that should make EU more familiar for the citizens of Montenegro.

Is it mandatory to use energy-efficient light bulbs in EU?

From 1 September 2012 the sale of all energy-inefficient light bulbs will be forbidden, regardless of their voltage. The decision to withdraw the conventional (incandescent) light bulbs from the market was adopted in order to reduce CO₂ emissions, to which the traditional light bulbs contributed some 15 million tonnes per year. Lighting accounts for 20% of the total electrical energy consumption of an average household, and thus of the carbon-dioxide emissions required to produce this amount of energy. Energy-efficient bulbs reduce the consumption of electricity by 15%. In addition to environmental benefits, the new bulbs should last ten times longer than the traditional ones and reduce household spending by 25 to 50 euros per year.

Does EU prescribe the number of daily or weekly working hours?

Working time directive from 2003 regulates one of the key areas of EU labour law, which is the basis of social protection in Europe. It prescribes the minimal standards that each EU member should guarantee to all employees:

In 2007 European Union had five million kilometres of paved roads, more than USA (4.2 million km), Japan (956 000 km), China (2.5 km) or Russia (771 000 km).

maximum 48 work hours per week, including overtime, and a maximum 8-hour daily duration of the night shift. The Directive also stipulates special provisions for the workers in transportation, doctors, fishermen and some other professions.

The EU classifies as small enterprises those with an annual turnover of 1 to 2 million euros and employing between 10 and 50 workers, while medium enterprises have an average annual turnover up to 50 million and employ up to 250 workers.

Does EU require introduction of new IDs, passports and licence plates?

EU has no specific laws on personal documents, they are the responsibility of the member states. The EU however does have rules on driving licences and registrations which are mandatory for all member states. Within a period stipulated by the regulations in force, the licence plates should also be replaced by ones containing EU insignia.

Is it forbidden to plant new vineyards and olive grove in EU?

Because of overproduction of wine, the EU forbade the planting of new vineyards in all member states until 31 December 2015. After this date the ban will be lifted. In the meantime, old vineyards can be replaced by new ones provided it does not alter the total surface of the land covered. There is no ban on new olive groves, and the EU encourages production of high-quality olive oil. The support for

this sector is decided based on the total area of land covered by olive groves in a certain year, as agreed during accession negotiations.

What is a single national milk quota?

A quota means a specific amount of milk that can be produced in each EU member state, and is then subdivided between the final producers (farms and/or dairy plants). For the new members the quotas are set during negotiations with EU based on statistics on the amounts of milk delivered to the dairy plants and in retail markets. Milk quotas guarantee stable production conditions to the European producers, a good price of milk and a regulated market for the quantities exceeding the reference quotas. Such quotas only exist for milk and sugar.

Does the EU set the size and shape of fruit and vegetables and why?

There are no rules on how certain products should look like. There is, however, a classification of products that takes into account their size and quality based on the demands of the international market. Standards and classes of products were introduced to provide the buyers and sellers with more precise information on the quality of products.

Can you get a refund on defective products bought in another member state?

Yes. Regardless of where he or she made a purchase, as long as it is inside EU borders, the buyer has the right to fix or exchange the defective product within a period of two years. If the product cannot be fixed or exchanged, the buyer has the right to refund. The rule also applies to the products bought online. If the seller refuses to fix or refund the defective product, the buyer can complain to the European consumer centre in his or her country, or in the country where the product was bought.

How are the roaming prices calcu-

When applying for work in other EU members, medical doctors, nurses, veterinarians, dentists, pharmacists and architects need not submit a certified translation of their diplomas.

lated in EU?

Tariffs for roaming calls within EU (without VAT) can be at most 35 eurocents per minute, 11 eurocents for receiving calls and for sending SMSs, while receiving SMSs is free. These are the maximum amounts that can be charged, and individual operators can choose to make them cheaper. The maximum wholesale price for cell phone "surfing" is 50 eurocents per megabyte.

The highest number of agricultural products with a guaranteed seal of origin comes from Italy, France and Spain. Most of them are cheeses, followed by beer and meat products.

How much are the ATM charges for withdrawing money in other EU countries?

If the citizens withdraw the money in euros, the charges cannot be higher than those that would apply in their country of origin. If they withdraw money in another currency (i.e. pound in the UK), the charges are set by the bank from whose ATM the money is being withdrawn.

On average, European Union members cover half of their energy needs by imports. Denmark is the only exception which does not have to import energy.

Source: "101 question on EU's influence on the lives of citizens", published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integrations of Croatia – www.mvpei.hr

**CCE and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung publicise AN ADVERTISEMENT
for participants of XIX generation of**

DEMOCRACY SCHOOL

- school for learning democracy from theory to practice -

School comprises 5 modules lasting totally four months. The courses will be held once or twice a week for two hours. All expenses are covered by the foundation Friedrich Ebert and Centre for Civic Education, with obligation of the participants to attend not less than 80% of the programme. Upon finishing of the School the participants shall receive a certificate and be eligible for further educational development. The right to participate have candidates who want to contribute to development of democracy and civic society in Montenegro. All candidates are welcome, regardless of age, gender, nationality, religion or personal convictions, with the indication that advantage have activists of the political parties and non-governmental organisations and all individuals who are showing high level of social activism. Moderator of the School is professor Radovan Radonjic, PhD, and beside him eminent domestic and foreign lecturers will be working with participants. All interested candidates may submit their application with short biography not later than 12 February 2012.

**Centre for Civic Education (CCE) is publishing an ADVERTISEMENT
for XIII generation of the**

HUMAN RIGHTS SCHOOL

- school for learning human rights from theory to practice -

School comprises 3 modules in total of one intensive week with numerous lectures, workshops, film screenings and theater forums which will offer an opportunity to learn and discuss various topics concerning human rights. All costs related to the School are covered by the CCE, with support from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through the regional project of human rights education in the Western Balkans, and with the obligation of participants to attend not less than 80% of the programme. Human rights school provides broad theoretical and practical knowledge on concept of human rights, affirms the culture of human rights, inspiring and motivating people to stand for their rights, as well as for those who are not able to do that on their own and to empower them to have more direct influence within society in future. From late February 2010, CCE is included as an equal project partner in the Regional Programme for Human Rights education for active citizenship in the Western Balkans, which runs from 2000 supported by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in cooperation with the Norwegian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights. Entering into this type of partnership implied a certain reformulation of the conception and organization of the previous School programme, the structure of the participants, as well as the increase of number of interactive sessions. Accordingly, the advertisement for the Human Rights School XIII generation is open to all interested candidates aged 18-25 years, regardless of gender, nationality, religion or belief, with the indication that advantage is given to the activists of political parties and nongovernmental organizations, youth leaders, students and individuals who demonstrate a high degree of social activism. Expert lecturers will be working with the participants through the presentations, workshops, film screenings and theatre dealing with broad spectrum of human rights issues. Upon finishing of the School the participants shall receive a certificate and be eligible for further educational development. *If you are want to know, to listen the others, to understand those who are different, and you are open, courageous, concern about the environment in which you are leaving and eager to contribute to the development of culture of human rights in Montenegro, Human rights school is the choice for you!*

All interested candidates may submit their application with short biography not later than 25 February 2012, on the address:

Centar za građansko obrazovanje
(za "Školu ljudskih prava")
Njegoševa 36, I sprat, 81 000 Podgorica
Tel/Fax: 020 / 665 112
E-mail: info@cgo-cce.org
www.cgo-cce.org

It's ok to be different!



As part of the project “It’s ok to be different!” implemented together with LGBT Forum Progress, and with support of the Canadian Embassy, Centre for Civic Education (CCE) organized on 26 and 27 January on the premises of the Human Resource Management Authority a training in human rights and human rights culture, focusing on minority rights, anti-discrimination policy and practice, as well as the situation of the LGBT minority. Twenty five participants attended the training, among them representatives of the Supreme State Prosecution, Supreme Court, Police Directorate, Parliament, Educational Bureau, Ombudsman for Human Rights and Freedoms and the NGO sector. The Training was introduced by **Daliborka Uljarević**, **Zdravko Cimbalević**, executive director of CCE, executive director of LGBT Forum Progress and **Svetlana Vuković**, director of the Human Resource Management Authority.

The first session “The concept of discrimination and international standards” introduced the participants to the concept of discrimination, as well as to the international standards related to this issue. It also discussed concrete cases which are currently being dealt by the European Court for Human Rights, as well as some which have already been closed. The session was introduced by **Tea Gorjanc Prelević**, executive director of Human Rights Action. The second and the third session were dedicated to case law of the European Court for Human Rights related to Article 14 and offered an overview of anti-discrimination practice and legislation in Montenegro. The trainer was **Marijana Laković**, deputy Ombudsman for Human Rights and Freedoms. Within this session the participants also had a chance to analyse the legislative framework, and more precisely the anti-discrimination legislation in Montenegro related to the rights of LGBT community, as well as other vulnerable groups. The second day of the training started with a lecture by the executive director of EKVISTA, **Milan Šaranović**, under the title “*Discrimination of persons with disabilities – case studies*”.

Presentation of several cases of discrimination against persons with disabilities offered an effective way for the participants to realize the difficulties these people face on everyday basis. It was followed by a lecture by , coordinator of the NGO Women’s Safe Home, whose presentation was titled “*Gender-based discrimination – case studies*”, and offered examples and illustrations of gender inequality in Montenegro in various spheres of life and decision-making. In addition to the obvious “public” discrimination, she also brought up cases of domestic violence, discrimination in the workplace and many other issues which have become a taboo or are hidden from public, but also outlined the remedies available in the international and Montenegrin legislation. The third lecture on the second day, “*Discrimination against sexual minorities – case studies*”, was held by human rights expert **Aleksandar Saša Zeković**. This session was of particular interest to the representatives of the Prosecution, Supreme Court and the Police, who were presented with cases of discrimination and violence against members of the LGBT population. Also, he highlighted the examples of good and bad practice in prosecuting violence based on different sexual orientation. He especially emphasised the need to make the officials in charge more sensitive to these cases in order to ensure equal treatment for all victims. During the same session, **Mira Bošković**, the first publicly declared transsexual person in Montenegro talked about her own experiences and expressed her uneasiness with the situation of the LGBT population in Montenegro. The training ended with a panel discussion “*Institutions, media and NGOs as promoters and defenders of anti-discrimination policies and practices*”. The speakers were **Branka Vlahović**, project manager in the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, **Duško Vuković**, journalist and **Daliborka Uljarević**, executive director of CCE. The session was closed with concluding remarks from the executive director of LGBT Forum Progress **Zdravko Cimbalević** who awarded the participants with diplomas for successfully completed training.

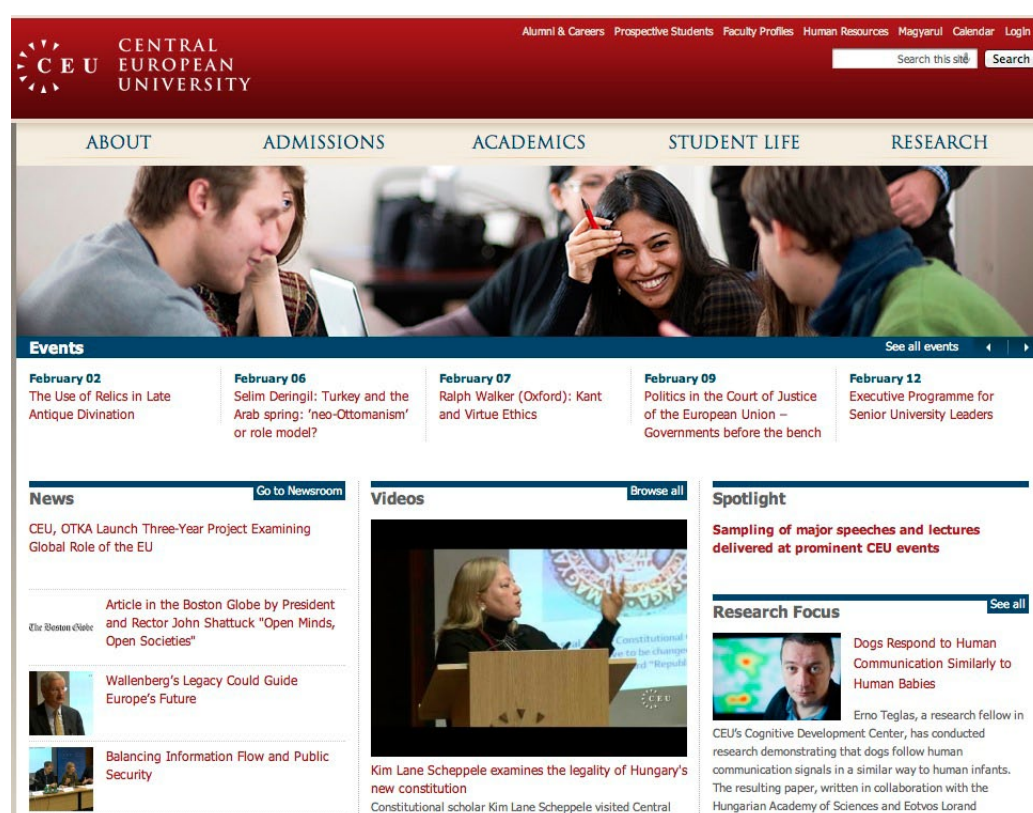
Human Rights Litigation Course

The Open Society Justice Initiative will conduct a week-long course on Human Rights Litigation from 16-20 July 2012, as part of the summer school program at the Central European University (CEU).

The course is aimed at young human rights professionals with 3 years' experience, especially those involved in litigation, and provides a unique opportunity to build on their experience and to develop their skills. It will cover a broad range of issues related to human rights litigation, including principles of strategic litigation, procedural questions, practicalities such as drafting and evidence, substantive legal issues, and activities in support of litigation.

More information can be found on the Justice Initiative's website www.justiceinitiative.org

Applications are open until 15 February 2012, and should be submitted through the CEU website www.ceu.hu.



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