

European pulse

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Foreword: **The Spring Report**

Vladan Žugić

"Montenegro will need to sustain its efforts, to further develop a track record in the area of rule of law, in particular with respect to high-level corruption and organised crime cases", "the court network still needs to be rationalised", and "a system to monitor the length of trials is to be set up", while "the fact that all high-level corruption cases have been initiated on the basis of evidence provided by a third party is a matter of concern" and the number of corruption cases in which seizure of assets was ordered is still "very low". These are some quotes from the spring report of the European Commission on Montenegro's progress. Overall, the report is actually quite positive, and recommends the opening of membership negotiations.

It is clear that Montenegro has made some progress in the last five months the report surveyed. Public officials now cannot be members of the boards of managers of public companies, which was unimaginable only a few years ago. The trials in the "Zavala" case are approaching the verdicts, while the previous cases against public officials used to drag on forever; the public can know who voted for what in the Parliament, the law protects the "whistleblowers"...

For an outside observer, that's a lot of progress in a short time. For some of us in Montenegro, it is difficult to see the nice things in the forest for all the giant trunks like "listings", "Telecom", "Carine", "First Bank" and others. The outside observer can also see the rotten trunks, but talks about them in the words cited at the beginning of this article. To get the trunks out of the forest, Montenegro needs to begin negotiations with EU, if possible tomorrow.

Calendar

- 09 May **Celebrating the Day of Europe** / Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, in co-operation with NGOs European Movement in Montenegro and Centre for Civic Education, organised public celebration to commemorate the Day of Europe. The organisers set up information stands in the hallway of the shopping mall "Delta City" in Podgorica, distributing fliers and information sheets about EU to the interested citizens.
- 15 May **Podgorica isn't Chicago, everything can be known** / German Ambassador to Montenegro Pius Fischer said there are serious attempts to intimidate journalists in Montenegro and that very few of these incidents have been properly investigated. He pointed out that the police never found the murderer of the chief editor of the daily "Dan" Duško Jovanović, nor the individuals who burned down the vehicles of the daily "Vijesti" last year. "Podgorica isn't Chicago. It's a small town, and there is enough police to be able to identify the perpetrators of these crimes", Fischer said.
- 16 May **Drobnič instead of Maurer** / Slovenia's Ambassador in Berlin Mitja Drobnič will become the new EU ambassador to Montenegro, taking over from Leopold Maurer whose term is about to expire this June.
- 23 May **EC's Spring Report positive** / European Commission found that Montenegro meets the EU membership criteria, especially the political criteria, to the extent that is sufficient to begin membership negotiations, states the latest EC report on Montenegro. The report was compiled in response to a December 2011 request by the Council of EU, and it strongly recommends the Council to begin negotiations with Montenegro in June 2012.
- 25 May **Bilateral screening for Chapter 24** / At a three-day meeting in Brussels representatives of Montenegro and EU examined the state of harmonization of Montenegro's legal system with EU acquis in the field of justice, freedom and security.
- 31 May **Bilateral screening for Chapter 23** / Members of the Working Group for Chapter 23 presented to their EU counterparts Montenegrin legal framework and the extent of its harmonization with EU acquis in the areas relevant to this chapter.

Greece, democracy and the euro



Timothy Garton Ash

When Germany's chancellor **Hannelore Kraft** met France's president **Francois Hollande** in a sunny Berlin last week, they agreed on a compelling strategy to save the eurozone. With no elections in any eurozone country for the next two years, they were able to stretch the austerity timeline for Greece, Spain and Italy, add some elements of growth stimulus, including increased demand in Germany itself, but also keep up the essential pressure for fiscal discipline and structural reform. As a result, even devastated Greece began to glimpse light at the end of the tunnel. In our dreams, fellow Europeans, in our dreams. The reality is different. While Francois Hollande and **Angela Merkel** - not Kraft, the Social Democratic victor in the North Rhine Westphalia elections and possible candidate for chancellor in 2013 - meet under thunder and lightning-torn skies, the panicking citizens pulled out more than 5 billion euros from the Greek bank accounts, there was fear and trembling in the markets, self-reinforcing talk of Greek exit from the euro and another month of uncertainty until another election in Athens. Meanwhile, back in Berlin, **Wolfgang Schäuble** still preaches the gospel of Ordoliberalism as if it were revealed truth. I recently heard a line attributed to the former Luxembourg prime minister **Jean-Claude Juncker**, now the head of the euro group, to the effect that 'we know exactly what we should do; we just don't know how to get re-elected if we do it'. It's not entirely clear that Merkel and Schäuble do know what is needed, but even if they did, or if it were already federal chancellor Kraft, there would still be the problem of an election imminent somewhere in Europe, and the chronic difficulty politicians find in telling home truths to people whose votes they are courting. Each country has its own home truth that its politicians are failing to tell. Britain's untold home truth is that it cannot have its cake and eat it, being a semi-detached member of the EU while continuing to enjoy all the economic benefits of membership. France's untold home truth is that it is no longer an equal partner of Germany. Germany's untold home truth is that it is going to pay for this mess anyway, one way or another. Many of Greece's bad debts have already been socialised via the European Financial Stability Facility, the IMF

and the European Central Bank (ECB). Germany has a major share of each of them, but particularly of the last. Greece's untold, or only half-told, home truth is that its only Alternatives now are bad, worse or worst. Worst is clearly an unplanned, chaotic exit from the euro. Their May 6 election was a howl of anguish at the suffering the country has been put through. It involved a majority rejection of the two main parties that have dominated the country's politics for decades and of those



parties' support for the so-called 'memorandum' - the agreement on austerity in return for European bail-out. The next election will be a moment of truth: in or out. These alternatives need to be placed as honestly as possible before Greek voters. Then they have to decide. Actually, that was the extraordinary idea people came up with in Athens about 2500 years ago. Free citizens gathered in the place of assembly. 'Tis agoreuein bouletai?' cried the herald - 'who wishes to address the assembly?' Then any free man (yes, it was only men) could make the best case for his favoured policy choice, with democracy and free speech being seen as two sides of the same coin. The future of the eurozone now depends on the choice to be made in Greece, the future of Europe on that of the eurozone, and that of the West to a significant degree on that of Europe - so, with slight hyperbole, we can say that the future of the West now depends on the birthplace of the West. Is it too much to hope that, in such a moment, Greek politics will rediscover some of the grandeur and simplicity that was present in Athens at the creation of democracy? Probably it is.

Possible criteria for the opening of chapters 23 and 24

From statistics to equality before law



Esad Krcić

Although the negotiations on Montenegro's accession to European Union have not yet began, chapters 23 and 24 could already be considered opened, because, in the EU lingo, the explanatory and bilateral screenings were already conducted. In fact, the meetings between European Commission representatives and members of the working groups of the Montenegrin negotiating team already took place, where the two parties were respectively acquainted with the content of EU legislation and the state of harmonization of Montenegrin laws with the European ones. Based on the experience of previous enlargements, the next move is for the Commission to present Montenegro with the benchmarks, or a list of conditions it has to fulfil in order to begin negotiations on these chapters. Optimistic forecasts suggest this could happen already after the summer break, some time in September. Once Montenegro satisfies these criteria, the Commission will set the next task – the benchmarks to be met in order to close the chapters, although these two will most probably remain open until the

these two chapters is that they will never know if they did enough. For most other chapters the criteria are clear and limited to the adoption of new laws, their rigorous implementation within certain deadlines, the need to establish new institutions etc. In these two chapters, however, the biggest problem will be to ensure consistent, impartial implementation of the laws that have been harmonised

In chapters 23 and 24, the biggest problem will be to ensure consistent, impartial implementation of the laws that have been harmonised with EU legislation.

Commission decide that Montenegro is ready for membership in EU. There are also some indications that Montenegro could become a testing ground for an entirely new approach, building on the bad experiences from previous enlargements. In that case, instead of setting the benchmarks, the Commission would formulate action plans for chapters 23 and 24 that would have to be fulfilled at a certain pace in order to satisfy Brussels and EU member states. In any case, the greatest challenge for Montenegro's negotiating team with regard to



with EU legislation. As the EU gradually realised the importance of independence and effective judiciary, it formulated a series of recommendations to ensure independence, integrity, and high standards for this branch of government, summarising them in Chapter 23, titled Judiciary and Fundamental Rights. The primary goal of these recommendations is to reduce the backlog of court cases, speed up the trials, strengthen legal security of the citizens, ensure access to justice and improve functional organisation of the courts with regard to the length of the process. The reform of judiciary should also include effective implementation of the laws relevant to the functioning of the judiciary and establish criteria for the work of the judges, specify the requisite qualifications,



In the chapter on judiciary, the criteria could be of technical nature: from the number of backlog cases to some legal formulations that have not been transposed into the Montenegrin legislation, to the functioning and implementation of these laws, which will probably be the biggest problem, says Petar Turčinović

set up a court inspectorate, as well as criteria for evaluation. Chapter 24, “Justice, freedom and security”, regulates the management of the country’s borders, visa and asylum policies, immigration procedures and prevention of illegal migration, fight against organised crime, smuggling, drug trafficking, terrorism, judicial cooperation in criminal and civil proceedings, cooperation between the police, judiciary and customs agencies in order to enhance the freedom and ensure security of the citizens. In accordance with the new approach, Montenegro will begin its membership

the greatest challenge for Montenegro’s negotiating team with regard to these two chapters is that they will never know if they did enough. For most other chapters the criteria are clear and limited to the adoption of new laws, their rigorous implementation within certain deadlines, the need to establish new institutions etc.

negotiations with chapters 23 and 24. In the meantime, in late 2011 the Government of Montenegro appointed the chief negotiator to lead negotiations on Montenegro’s accession to EU, and in early March 2012 it adopted several decisions on the preliminary training of the working groups to prepare for negotiations on chapters 23 and 24. Member of the negotiating group for Chapter 24, from the non-governmental organisation Centre for Monitoring (CEMI) **Vlado Dedović** says that the Commission’s benchmarks shouldn’t be expected for another six months. “I think it is still too early to talk about the specific criteria in particular policies under Chapter 24. At the moment we can maybe talk about the level of legal harmonisation and the areas in which it is necessary to further strengthen the rule of law and harmonise the laws with EU acquis, but hardly about specific benchmarks”, Dedović said. In late March the Commission organised explanatory screening meetings in Brussels for chapters 23 and 24, as the first part of the analytical overview during which the EU will present its legal framework in a certain field, so that the candidate country can become acquainted with all the rules it should implement in the course of the negotiations. In late May, the second round of meetings also took place as part of the bilateral screening for chapters 23 and 24, at which Montenegrin representatives presented their European counterparts the content of Montenegrin legislation and the state of its harmonisation with EU acquis in these two areas. Dedović warned that during the negotiations the EC will insist not only on

legal harmonization, but also on the tangible results, above with regard to the fight against corruption and organised crime. “This issue concerns both negotiating chapters: chapter 23 deals with corruption, and chapter 24 with organised crime, and these are the areas where we can expect the most pressing demands to demonstrate concrete achievements in fighting these phenomena. Also, the seven priority areas the Commission formulated last year will continue to be of interest to the Commission’s representatives. There will be no prerequisites for the opening of chapters 23 and 24, but there will be some for every next chapter. In a number of EU policies concerning chapter 24 – illegal migration, asylum, visa requirements, etc, and generally in the area of judicial cooperation in criminal, civic and economic matters, implementation of the Schengen agreement and many other issues, the Commission is bound to insist on very clear and specific benchmarks”, Dedović said. Member of the negotiating team for Chapter 23 from the non-governmental organisation Centre for Civic Education (CCE), **Boris Marić** says that after the second screening, Montenegro will be expected to deliver a statistical overview of the state of judiciary: number of cases solved, cases on the waiting lists, the structure of those cases, the time lag... “These are still mainly preparatory activities for the benchmarks that will be more substantial, and will be related to the implementation of the laws and the capacity of institutions to first of all combat corruption and organised crime”, Marić explained, adding that the benchmarks for the opening of negotiations in these two chapters will be difficult to meet. “The current criteria are contained in the seven recommendations of the European Commission, in addition to the key one requiring constitutional amendments with regard to the organisation of the judiciary. Judging by the current situation, it is hard to expect there will be a final solution ensuring independence of the judiciary in the next six months”, Marić said.

Similar to Croatia’s benchmarks

Croatian Ambassador to Montenegro Petar Turčinović told European Pulse that the European Union benchmarks in chapters 23 and 24 will be similar to the suggestions the European Commission already formulated in its progress reports. “There are no secrets here – those will be the requirements”, Turčinović said. He believes that the criteria the European Commission will “deliver” to Montenegro will be more or less the same ones as in the case of Croatia.

“We are dealing with the same principle and the same mechanism. The whole process basically comes down to it that the European laws, which regulate the lives of its citizens, must function also in Montenegro. In the chapter on judiciary, the criteria could be of technical nature: from the number of backlog cases to some legal formulations that have not been transposed into the Montenegrin legislation, to the functioning and implementation of these laws, which will probably be the biggest problem. I expect a lot of benchmarks there. It is often the case that you have a law which is only partly enforced”, Turčinović explained.

He said there could also be benchmarks related to the qualification of judges, the selection process, the functioning of certain institutions which do not exist in Montenegro, or which exist but are not working properly. “There could be some benchmarks related to contradictory provisions of different laws which regulate the same area. This is very often the case. On several occasions I noticed that in Montenegro there can be different laws which stipulate different practices for the same area, and only later you discover that the interaction of the two laws covering the same issue isn’t really harmonised”, Turčinović said.

EC's slap in the face for the prosecution

Only Ranka is blind to what all others can see



Neđeljko Rudović

Montenegro will probably get the Council of EU approval to begin negotiations this June, but this won't solve Montenegro's biggest problems. One of them is unprofessional judiciary, which has again received a bashing in the EC's "Spring Report". The Brussels officials in charge of following the situation in Montenegro have only put in bureaucratic terms what the critically minded public in Podgorica has been shouting for years. "The fact that all high-level corruption cases have been initiated on the basis of evidence provided by a third party is a matter of concern. The administrative capacity of the Special Prosecution Office in particular needs to be strengthened... The independence of the judiciary remains a matter of concern affecting the determination to combat corruption. Corruption is still an issue of serious concern", reads the Report. As usual, there are no concrete references in such documents. It is however enough to take a look at the curious ways of the State Prosecutor **Ranka Čarapić** to find plenty of reasons she could end up sitting on wrong side of the court bench. For instance, in spite of the complaints filed against the Mayor of Bar **Žarko Pavićević**, as well as clear evidence of his misuse of office, Čarapić chose to remain silent. In the case of **Naser Keljmenđi** and the former Mayor of Ulcinj **Gzim Hajdinaga** she already opted for the lowest penalty, agreeing that they shouldn't go to prison and ordering them instead to pay 10 000 euros each to the local kindergarten. Now the rumours have it she is planning to do the same with Pavićević. Flagrant violation of the law thus becomes profitable business with the blessing of the State Prosecutor, because for 10 000 euros you can make millions. The only question is whether you can count on the same privileged treatment if you're not part or partner of the government. Sooner or later, Čarapić will have to explain why she chose to exclude **Branimir Gvozdenović**, the former Minister for Urbanism and the current political director of DPS, from her charges on Zavala, a case calculated to politically break **Svetozar Marović**. Day after day, Čarapić refused to meddle with crime, ignoring the evidence MANS had been supplying for years, but reacted swift as lightening the moment University professor **Milan Popović** began to write about crime and corruption. She immediately summoned him to her office and warned him that "he



did not submit a single piece of fact or evidence in support of his claims". A similar interview followed with the leader of PzP **Nebojša Medojević**. On the other side, she protected the leaders of DPS, above all **Milo Đukanović**, who was not even called as a witness in the hearings on the May 1992 deportations of refugees from BiH, even though he must have at least known about it, having been the Prime Minister at the time. Her predecessor **Vesna Medenica** didn't even try to investigate whether there was any truth in the writings of the former head of state **Momir Bulatović** who openly spoke about criminal activities around Đukanović. But the most obvious illustration of the "hostage prosecutor" who dares not interfere with the untouchable members of the government is the Mayor of Podgorica **Miomir Mugoša**. First she brought up completely forced charges against Vijesti's editor **Mihailo Jovović** because of his involvement in an incident whose main actor was the Mayor, and now she is refusing to investigate his sale of 15 00 square meters of land in Podgorica to the company "Carine" - a transaction which, according to experts, is clearly in the domain of criminal responsibility. The prosecutor first rejected the complaint against Mugoša who sold this public property well under its market price, and then remained silent when the Supreme Court in 2010 declared the sale contract void, establishing that prosecutor **Čađenović** acted against the law when he rejected the previous complaint against Mugoša. Čarapić is silent, so Mugoša continues to break the law and against the court order in 2011 again "secretly" "sells" the land to "Carine" for the same price. In the meantime, prosecutor's husband **Budimir Čarapić** is doing good business with Mugoša...

Former deputy chief negotiator of Bulgaria Antoaneta Primatarova

The sooner you start fighting corruption, the better



According to the former deputy of the Bulgarian chief negotiator **Antoaneta Primatarova**, the fact that Montenegro will begin its negotiations for membership of European Union with chapters 23 and 24 is an opportunity to solve the problem of crime and corruption early in the negotiation process, as well as to establish independent and efficient judiciary system.

» What does it mean that Montenegro will have to begin its negotiations with chapter 23 and 24, concerning respectively the rule of law and the fight against corruption and organised crime? Will the negotiations be more difficult for Montenegro than they were for Bulgaria?

When we speak about corruption and crime, we should always bear in mind that there are no precise guidelines on how you should organise your institutions, or what instructions you should give them.

The reason that Montenegro is to begin its negotiations with these two chapters lies in EU's experience with the past enlargements, including that of Bulgaria. Already in 2006 the EU

stressed that all issues related to the judiciary, corruption and crime must become priorities. Croatia should have also begun its membership negotiations with these two chapters, but the procedure was changed, so Montenegro will be the first to go with the new approach.

I believe this is quite good for Montenegro, because it gives you enough time to sort out these issues in the early phase of negotiations, which could otherwise become quite a burden. This means you won't repeat the experiences of Romania and Bulgaria, which did not do enough in these areas. In fact, it turned out that we needed much more time to eradicate crime and corruption and reform the judiciary, and by opening these chapters early on you will get enough time to produce some tangible results.

» What are your recommendations for Montenegro with regard to the fight against crime and corruption? How long will it last, in your experience?

Corruption and crime are problems which require support of the whole of society, as well as political will.

No country in the world is completely free of these problems. These are not areas where you can implement a few measures, and the problem will disappear forever. What is at stake here is really democracy itself, which means that it requires sustainable solutions. I cannot say whether you can do it in three or four years. It is therefore very important, in the years to come, to come up with solutions based primarily on political will and tangible results. On the other hand, the society must learn to condemn these ills, and by this I mean that the citizens shouldn't see it as a regular part of their lives. The question is whether you will admit that you have a problem and create an environment which won't tolerate crime and corruption.



» What could Montenegro do in order to ensure independence of the judiciary, given that Bulgaria still has some problems in this regard?

Independent judiciary is definitely an attainable goal, but there are no magic formulas. As for the Bulgarian experience, we didn't only focus on the independence of judiciary, but also on its efficiency. You have to find the balance between independence and effectiveness, because at some point in Bulgaria the judiciary was organised in a way that substantially reduced its efficiency. Then we had to make a huge effort to improve the system again. This is one of the challenges of this system.

» What is the most important factor for the success of negotiations with EU, and what suggestions could you give to Montenegro, its chief negotiator and his team?

First of all, people don't always understand that EU has its rules and standards which are not negotiable. The European officials usually warn you that it's you who are seeking membership in the Union, and you therefore must accept their rules. So, you need to convince the

The importance of women and ideals

» What did you do in Bulgaria to motivate the members of the negotiating team? Did they receive larger salaries, promotion prospects?

People are not only motivated by larger salaries, bonuses or prospects of promotion. We didn't only use financial incentives. Those were mostly very young people who believed in the idea of European integration and were simply delighted to be part of the negotiating team. It is extremely important that the members of the team should believe in what they do. The ideals cannot be paid in cash, because if money is your only goal you can always work for the private sector. Some of my colleagues at some point discovered that their work wasn't sufficiently valued in monetary terms and went to work for private businesses. I must say the people in EU were very happy to see many women working for our team, and I would recommend the same to Montenegro, as the women seem to be more dedicated to their work.

EU that you are really adopting these rules. The problem of countries like Bulgaria and Montenegro is that when their citizens are unhappy with some policies, they expect the EU to somehow change them.

» What were the most difficult chapters for you during negotiations? Which could be the most difficult ones for Montenegro?

There are different kinds of difficulties. Sometimes it's difficult to close a chapter on justice, because there are no clear guidelines on how to do it, and our administration was sometimes simply unsure what it had to do. Sometimes there are chapters which suddenly turn out to be difficult, such as the one concerning the environment. Croatia still needs to restructure its marines, and this could also prove to be a problem Montenegro's case.

T.R. - V.Ž.



18 EU members raised VAT

18 of the 27 EU member states have raised VAT rates during the crisis, and only the Czech Republic and Slovakia reduced it.

VAT remains the same as in 2000 in Belgium (21%), Bulgaria (20%), Denmark (25%), France (19.6%), Luxembourg (15%) and Sweden (25%). According to Eurostat, the average VAT rate in EU was 19.2% 12 years ago, and has climbed to 21% in 2012, which is slightly higher than last year's 20.7%. European directive on VAT allows the member states to apply a general VAT rate at a minimum level of 15%, and a special rate which mustn't be below 5%. However, the older member states have the "acquired right" to maintain lower VAT rates, if they were introduced before 1991. In 2012 the general VAT rate varied between the 15% in Luxembourg in 17% in Cyprus and the high 25% in Denmark and Sweden and 27% in Hungary.



Czechs in Bulgarian footsteps

Czech officials in charge of monitoring the distribution of EU funds "fixed" their audit results, so that misspent funds show up as than 2% of the overall amount, warned the European Court of Auditors. The European auditors discovered that more than 41% of funds for transport infrastructure programme in the Czech Republic was inadequately allocated, compared to the 1.85% reported by the Czechs. The corrective action by the European Commission in these cases is to lower the next year's funding by 41% in this programme. The total amount for this programme in the Czech Republic was around 6.4 billion euro in 2011. Brussels and Prague have a "gentlemen's agreement" according to which the Czech Republic won't request any more assistance until June, when a reliable control system is expected to replace the current one. A few years ago, the Commission temporarily froze Bulgaria's access to these funds because of widespread misuse of the money.

Advertisements too long

In a number of Member States the legal limit of maximum 12 minutes for advertisements and TV commercials per hour of broadcasting is regularly breached. The broadcasters generally respect the ban on alcohol commercials, but more than 50% of most frequently shown advertisements contain some violations of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive in the provisions related to alcohol. A similar trend is apparent with regard to the protection of children, because the advertisements are increasingly design to appeal to minors even when they are not the explicit target group. The Commission also noted that none of the countries surveyed is immune to gender stereotypes in TV commercials.



If you're arrested, you'll understand

If you are arrested anywhere within EU for bank robbery, possession of fake documents etc, alongside the handcuffs you will also receive a list of your rights, in writing, in a language you understand. European ministers of justice recently adopted a new law stipulating the right of suspects to be informed about the charges against them. The so called "letter of rights" will contain all the basic rights of the suspect. At the moment, arrested suspects only have the right to information in about a third of EU member states. Each country can decide what the letter will look like, but the Commission proposed a template in 22 languages that can be adjusted to the national legislation. For example, point A of the template, "the right to a lawyer or legal assistance" says "you have right to a private exchange with a lawyer. A lawyer is independent of the police. Please ask the police if you need any help contacting a lawyer, and you will receive the necessary assistance".



Why is Poland the fastest-growing economy in 2012?

EU money well spent



negative GDP growth throughout the crisis that has roiled markets for nearly four years. **Mads Koefoed**, Macro Strategist at Saxo Bank, told EurActiv he expected the Polish economy to continue to be a solid performer with growth of 3% driven again by domestic demand, consumption in particular, and a rebound in trade with key partners such as the eurozone. He substantiated his optimism with rising domestic demand and consumption and investment, related to the Euro 2012 football championship, which Poland and Ukraine are

Poland's GDP increased by 12.5% between 2007 and 2010 while the EU average declined by 2%. However, its good performance could backfire during negotiations for the EU 2014-2020 budget, as other members could argue that Poland doesn't need all that money from the common funds

The European Commission's latest economic forecast ranked Poland as the fastest developing EU member state in 2012, although it revised the country's growth estimate downwards for 2013. But analysts appear much more optimistic than the EU executive and insist that the Polish economy will do even better next year. The Commission's Spring economic forecast, unveiled on 11 May (see background), brought substantial change to the previous estimate published in November 2011. The fastest GDP growth in the European Union had been expected in Lithuania (3.4%), followed by Estonia (3.2%), Latvia and Poland (2.5% each). However, growth prospects in Baltic countries were reduced significantly compared to autumn forecast, while the Polish GDP forecast was raised to 2.7%. The forecast is also above the 2.5% prediction by the Polish government. **Olli Rehn**, the EU's Economic and Monetary Affairs Commissioner, said Poland had been the only EU member that didn't suffer from

co-hosting from 6 June to 1 July. Austria's Erste Group, one of the largest financial services providers in Central Europe, was also optimistic about Polish growth this year. "We expect the growth of Polish economy to slow down to 2.8% this year from 4.4% recorded in 2011. Even though the budget deficit reduction from 5.1% of GDP in 2011 to 2.9% this year seems too ambitious, a deeper look shows that such an adjustment is manageable without any significant negative shocks to the economy," said **Petr Bittner**, analyst from Erste Group. The economists argue that the growth in 2013 will be much higher than 2.6% predicted in the EC spring forecast. Bittner told EurActiv that due to the end of fiscal consolidation process, the Polish economy should expand by 3.3% in 2013. Looking deeper into the Polish economy's performance, **Piotr Maciej Kaczyński**, research fellow at the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS), a Brussels think tank, said the Polish growth was

heavily influenced by the European structural funds. “Public investment ratio in the Polish GDP is enormously high – much higher than, for example, in Portugal or Spain during their period of prosperity. Fortunately, those public investments will be followed by private investments that will keep Polish growth at a high level during next years,” he said. The CEPS researcher insists that public investments would generate private investments – for instance, newly build highways will attract investors to build nearby logistics centres. The other reason for the rise in private investments, according to Kaczyński, was the “excellent opinion” among foreign investors about Poland’s capacity, in difficult times for Europe, to stay away from recession. To put the Polish growth in a wider perspective, Kaczyński noted that the country’s GDP measured by purchasing power per capita between 2007 and 2010 rose by 12.5%, while the average for the EU as a whole fell 2%. On the other hand, the good shape of the Polish economy could backfire on the negotiations over the EU budget for 2014–2020. “One may argue that Poland doesn’t need a lot of help due to its good performance,” he said. However, he pointed out that Poles must not rest on their laurels and improve on areas where they still lack competitiveness. For instance, the difficulty of starting a business is clearly reflected in the World Bank’s Doing Business ranking where Poland ranks 62 out of 184 countries. Experts from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) recently warned that Poland should speed up privatization, reform healthcare and cut administrative costs for the private sector in order to maintain high rates of growth. According to OECD, Poland owes its good performance to the influx of money from European funds for road infrastructure, financial incentives in times of crisis, devaluation and stability of the financial market. They however believe that the state still plays a very large role in the economy, in spite of ongoing privatization. In 2008 the Polish government announced its ambitious plan of selling 800 companies, and the programme picked up further in 2010.

Plumber goes home

Marcin Grodski is among an estimated one million Poles who flocked to the UK over the last decade, but is now preparing to head home, not without bitterness, due to economic difficulties. He claims the life is now better in Poland and that he is not the only one planning to go back after the number of Polish immigrants to UK dwindled down in the last couple of years.

Grodski was 30 when he arrived in London, two years before Poland and seven other former eastern bloc countries joined the European Union, says the report by AFP, and reminds that the opponents of the rejected 2006 EU Constitution used the “invasion by the Polish plumber” to rally against closer union.

Grodski started at the bottom in London, spending nine months holding a massive placard on London’s Oxford Street shopping district directing people to discount shops. In his spare time, he learned English. The beginning was promising: he turned his hand to construction – “a natural choice for Poles,” he says – and he quickly rose to the position of site manager.

Filled with confidence, he set up his own construction firm but his timing was bad. “It was going very well for the first six to eight months and then suddenly everything crashed,” he said. That was the financial crisis of 2008.

He admits he always earned enough in London to have cash in his pocket and until recently was financing his younger sister’s education, but now he is willing to reduce his income in return for a better quality of life.

“It’s sad to say but the standard of living is much better in Poland. If you have a decent job you can live like a human being. In London you can barely afford a double room,” Martin said.

OECD sees no reason why the state should still own airports, financial institutions or mining and chemical companies. Poland should also continue liberalization of its energy market in order to comply with EU directives. Source: *Euroactiv.com*

EU is changing people for the better



Ružica Bulatović

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

European Union in Montenegro is normally discussed by politicians, who present it on the one hand as a source of security and political stability, and on the other as a well of income and welfare. Of course, the politicians will highlight what they think will bring them popularity and support of the voters. It doesn't mean that the young people should only think in this way about the union of Europe's nations. First of all, we can agree that we also have a lot to offer to the EU. The above benefits shouldn't be underestimated, but the EU can also directly improve the quality of lives of the Montenegrin youth. In the first place, it can bring what the young people always crave – freedom. Freedom in EU is manifest in every aspect of life. You'd like to travel? Pack up and go, just don't forget your passport. You don't need to apply for a visa, or be afraid you'll be rejected. You'd like to study abroad? For the EU citizens the costs of tuition are always below those for the people outside its borders. Finally, would you like more choice in any area of your life? The range of possibilities will make your head spin.

I think of life as a kind of race where my will and dedication are constantly measured against challenges I set or others set for me. And I would like this race to take place in the EU! I would like to compete and measure myself against my peers, according to the rules that already exist, have been established and are the same for all. For my generation, the membership in EU will bring extra motivation to try our knowledge and confidence against the civilizational norms of Europe. Honestly, I think we have already been part of Europe for a long time – both geographically and as people, because Montenegro and its citizens harbour some values that could be an example to the famed European standards. I want to be a citizen of Europe because I want to be able to chose – a society, because different environments support different goals; the economy – because different jobs have different value in different cultures; psychologically – because I



want to know that I'm protected, equal, free. EU changes a person for the better. Aware that we can succeed, we trust our abilities more. Aware of the competition, you give your best, knowing that someone will know how to value your ideas, because there are many different needs in a large market. Your ideas aren't limited by the mentality of the country you happened to be born into, by the size of its market, its economic situation – they are, in fact, not limited by anything. Your failures are only your own fault. I want the values of my country and my people, my own knowledge and self-confidence, to face the demands of Europe as if in a competition. I am sure it will be a success, and this is why I need to be a citizen of EU.

The EU offers whatever a young dreamer needs: a chance to test the terrain, an opportunity to try out his or her ideas, fight for a place, grow. Protected by the democratic principles and laws, free media, regulatory agencies and courts, the citizens of EU have a chance to be valued as much as they're worth. Who needs more?

Parliament's (un)justified expenses

Centre for Civic Education (CCE) developed the projects **“Public procurement projects: whom, how much and what are the Montenegrin taxpayers paying?”**, and **“To whom and to what purposes is the taxpayers’ money allotted?”** as part of its Accountability and Transparency of the Government programme, in order to raise awareness and contribute to accountable management of the public money. The aim of these project is to find out how much money is spent on public purchasing and subcontracting in Montenegro, assess the legality of procedures, identify the potential privileged beneficiaries or space for improvement in the way the money is spent.

In 2011, the Parliament of Montenegro spent 750 000 EUR on “subcontracted services” within two areas: improvement of legislative infrastructure and administrative expenses. Using the provisions of the Law on Free Access to Information, CCE tried to give a contribution to the transparency of spending of the Parliament’s money, and draw attention to the importance of careful monitoring of the public procurement process, which easily lends itself to corruption.

It should be stressed that the Parliament of Montenegro readily complied with the Law on Free Access to Information and submitted to CCE the breakdown of the budget for “contracted services”, and has been the most cooperative of all public institutions we contacted during this project. Moreover, the data on public procurement – such as the amended plan for 2011, as well as reports on services procured – are all available on the Parliament’s website, which is certainly a good practice that ought to be followed by other institutions.

However, upon closer inspection of these reports it would appear that the Parliament ought to provide more detailed explanations and justification of the expenditures, and in some cases also of the criteria based on which the money is being distributed. The public has the right to know how their money is spent, especially in times of social and economic crisis which require clearer and more precise explanations of the purpose of certain spending decisions. The only way to convince the citizens to contribute more in taxes in order to balance the public budget would be to make sure they understand that their money is spent prudently and responsibly.

There is a good reason for the Parliament of Montenegro to explain who received a net 93 000 EUR in a temporary service contract, why was it necessary to spend 73 000 EUR on medical services, was it reasonable and prudent to spend 15 000 EUR in a crisis year like 2011 on parking services, etc. It should be noted that one third of expenditures under subcontracted services falls under category “other services”, which suggests insufficient planning in this segment of public expenditures.

There is a positive trend of growing transparency in spending by public institutions, but there is much more to be done before we can be satisfied with having a “glass budget”, a popular nickname for fully transparent public funds. Asking these questions, insisting on the need to make the data available in a form that would be accessible and understandable to the wider public, help us approach this ideal and ensure responsible management of the public money. They also raise awareness among the citizens of the ways in which the authorities treat their money, and a sense of ownership over the purposes for which it is being spent.

EC's Spring Report on Montenegro, ahead of the June decision on the beginning of membership negotiations

Some progress, but more is needed against corruption



In December 2011 the European Council granted Montenegro the status of a membership candidate, following a positive assessment by the European Commission of Montenegro's progress on seven key priorities set in 2010 as a prerequisite to opening accession negotiations. However, the exact date for the beginning of negotiations remained pending, and while the provisional date was set for June 2012, the European Commission was asked to examine more closely the implementation of reforms, with particular focus on the area of rule of law and fundamental rights, especially the fight against corruption and organised crime. The eagerly awaited Spring Report is largely positive, and it recommends the Council to begin negotiations with Montenegro. The Commission found that Montenegro achieved further progress in this period, particularly in strengthening the work of the parliament, the professionalism and de-politicisation of public administration, media freedom and cooperation with the civil society. However, the report also stressed that Montenegro will need to sustain its efforts, to further develop a track record in the area of rule of law, in particular with respect to high-level

The fact that all high-level corruption cases have been initiated on the basis of evidence provided by a third party is a matter of concern. The number of corruption cases in which seizure of assets was ordered is still very low

corruption and organised crime cases, and to ensure a safe environment for investigative journalism. The document presented on 22 May 2012 offers a very detailed overview of improvements especially in the domain of the rule of law and the fight against corruption and organised crime. The Commission notes that anti-corruption legal and institutional frameworks have been improved, and lists specific cases such as the amendments to the Labour Law which provide additional protection to the whistleblowers in the private sector. Other notable pieces of legislation are the amendments to the law on free access to information and on

Drug trafficking remains a major concern since the country is a transit area on the smuggling route to and from the EU

political party financing, which regulate the supervisory institutional framework, in-kind contributions and fixes the ceiling on membership fees at 10 % of a member's annual income. The report also welcomes the measures to strengthen Parliament's oversight role and its greater involvement in anti-corruption activities, and points out the positive example of parliamentary investigation on the alleged corruption in the privatisation of "Telekom". EC also stressed the successful implementation of the recent legislation in the area of conflict of interest which resulted in all MPs who held management posts in state-owned companies or execu-

tive positions (more than half of all MPs) resigning from one of their functions. Apart from progress in adopting and implementing anti-corruption legislation, some improvements were also made in coordination between the responsible bodies, and in collecting and processing citizens' complaints concerning corruption in local self-government, public administration, judiciary, health and the education sectors. The Commission especially welcomed the measures undertaken to eradicate corruption in the judiciary, and the related decision of the Judicial Council to allocate a special allow-

There was a decrease in the number of unresolved cases by 4% in 2011 compared to 2010, but this still means that the backlog amounted to some 11 500 cases. The court network still needs to be rationalised, the reliability of judicial statistics needs to be improved and a system to monitor the length of trials is to be set up



ance to those judges working on organised crime, corruption, terrorism and war crimes cases. "Montenegro has further developed its track record of investigations, prosecutions and convictions in corruption cases. In the reference period, four employees of the public property administration of Ulcinj were sentenced by a second instance court to imprisonment for abuse of official position, and one customs officer for bribery. First instance verdicts have been issued in December 2011, January and March 2012 against sixteen persons, including two municipal officials sentenced to imprisonment, the managers of a public company and a judge. Court hearings are ongoing in the high-level corruption case 'Zavala', involving the former Mayor of Budva, his deputy and a Member of Parliament, and two other cases against 23 per-

sons accused of abuse of official position and bribery. Investigations are ongoing against the former Mayor of Ulcinj, the President and a judge of a Basic Court, the former and current directors of a public company in Budva, and three employees of the Ministry of Interior", notes the report. However, the Commission stressed that in spite all progress, the competences and resources of the responsible bodies need to be advanced further, including those of the Directorate for Anti-Corruption Initiative, as well as of the newly established special investigation team. "The track record in combating corruption needs to be systematically developed, in particular in terms of investigations and final convictions for high-level corruption cases. The fact that all high-level corruption cases have been initiated on the basis of evidence provided by a third party is a matter of concern. The number of corruption cases in which seizure of assets was ordered is still very low. Inter-agency cooperation has improved to a certain extent, but it is to be further enhanced, in particular to ensure the prosecutors' leading role in investigations", concludes the report, adding that "corruption is still an issue of serious concern". A similar record is apparent with regard to organised crime, where a number of verdicts were issued in cases of drug trafficking, money laundering and trafficking in human beings, and new investigations are under way. However, "drug trafficking remains a major concern since the country is a transit area on

the smuggling route to and from the EU". The report also notes that in spite of the new legislation on temporary seizure of criminal assets, the Public Property Administration which is in charge of managing them needs to be further strengthened, and the value of frozen assets remains low. In general, the Commission notes improvements on many levels regarding the transparency and accountability of public institutions, and their communication with the public and the civil sector. The Parliament started publishing the voting record of individual MPs on its website, and adopted a new law on lobbying regulating the relationship between lobbyists and MPs. Similarly, all decisions of the Administrative Court and the Appellate Court became publicly accessible. The Commission also found that the reform of public administration strengthened cooperation with non-governmental organisations and at introduced public hearings in law drafting. State Audit Office (SAI) was given the task to audit political party financing, although its capacities in this regard remain limited. The report welcomes the establishment of new Commissions for monitoring compliance with the Code of Ethics of judges and prosecutors, as well as of the Disciplinary Commission which is among other in charge of monitoring corruption in the judiciary. On the other hand, the report is much less complimentary with regard to the efficiency of institutions, and especially of the newly established bodies. Some mechanisms have been put in place to ensure relevant feedback, such as the procedures for impact assessment for new legislation. Nevertheless, the Commission notes limited capacities and resources of monitoring institutions across the board, from the State Audit Institution to the Administration for Prevention of Money Laundering to Ombudsman and all the way to the Electronic Media Agency. The main concern over missing capacities is, however, still reserved for the judiciary. The report cites a decrease in the number of unresolved cases by 4% in 2011 compared to 2010, but this still means that the backlog amounted to some 11 500 cases. "Enforcement of civil decisions remains weak, bailiffs are yet

The lack of financial sustainability and operational resources could undermine the functioning of the media, as well as of the audiovisual self-regulators. Their lack of resources to monitor media throughout the country is cause for concern. Professionalism and independence of the public broadcaster are not yet fully achieved

to be recruited and the functioning of the newly established bailiffs system still needs to be assessed. [Also] the court network still needs to be rationalised. The reliability of judicial statistics needs to be improved and a system to monitor the length of trials is to be set up. Judicial training needs to be streamlined and strengthened", warns the Commission. Finally, the Commission noted some progress also in the area of freedom of expression, where decriminalisation of defamation has contributed to a decrease in the number of lawsuits against the media. However, the report warned that in some old cases of defamation, fines not paid have been converted to custodial sentences and insisted that the cases need to be brought in line with ECHR case-law in particular to ensure no prison sentence is imposed in case of unpaid fines. "Further progress needs to be made on certain recent and earlier cases of violence against media, which still have to be thoroughly investigated and prosecuted, including a physical attack on an investigative journalist in March 2012". In spite of the improvements in this area, the report notes that "the lack of financial sustainability and operational resources could undermine the functioning of the media, as well as of the audiovisual self-regulators. Recent legislative amendments to the Law on electronic media put at risk the independence of the audiovisual regulator. Its lack of resources to monitor media throughout the country is cause for concern. Professionalism and independence of the public broadcaster are not yet fully achieved", concludes the report.

From 2014 EU assistance to be tailor-made for each West Balkan country

Easier access to the funds



Funds from the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), which are available to Montenegro and other countries candidates and potential candidates for membership of EU, should be tailored more closely to the needs of each individual country. The EU is currently working on the new framework budget which among other includes the programme for pre-accession assistance funds. According to the documents available to the news agency Beta, some changes will be introduced in the rules of access to IPA II, to become operational in the period 2014 to 2020. These will make the instrument more flexible and ensure it is more effectively used to prepare the country for membership. Among other, the EU also plans an increase in the size of the overall fund. Right now Serbia receives some 200 million euro per year, and according to the preliminary information, its funding will be increased by some 30%. In the seven-year period from 2007 to 2014 the EU allocated more than 14 billion euro for the countries on the way to European

integration. According to the Commission, with the exception of Iceland, all countries in the process of accession are significantly below the average of the lowest-ranked EU members in terms of per capita GDP and other indicators of socio-economic development. This is why, it argues, large investments are needed to make these countries meet the EU standards and enable them to “cope with the competition in the single market and other obligations of EU membership”. The Commission decided to remove the sometimes awkward division between the five components of the IPA programme and allow faster access to all funds, but also insisted that the countries preparing for EU membership must train their administrations to use these funds more effectively. The details are outlined in the preparatory documents for IPA II which the Commission forwarded to the Council of EU ministers and which were recently discussed at a meeting of the European Parliament. IPA consists of five components: assistance in transition and institution-building (Component I); cross-border cooperation (Component II); regional development (Component III); human resource development (Component IV); and rural development (Component V). Montenegro is currently able to access two IPA components, and their administration is centralised with the EU Delegation to Montenegro. EC allocated 131.3 million euro to Montenegro for the 2007-2010 period, making it the country with the highest per capita amount of EU assistance in the West Balkan region. Ever since it became a candidate, Montenegro should in principle also have access to components III through V, but the funding will only come on line once it receives accreditation for the Decentralized Implementation System (DIS) issued by Brussels. Until then, European Commission remains in charge of issuing calls for projects and monitoring their implementation.

According to the preparatory documents, IPA II will be tailored more closely to the specific needs and abilities of each candidate and potential candidate country. The Commission is planning to draft a “Comprehensive strategic document” for each country that will enable it to continuously monitor the situation and adjust the assistance and reforms to the special needs, problems and abilities of each candidate for EU membership. The necessary programmes will be implemented immediately, without delays created by artificial distinctions. In a recent debate in the European Parliament representatives of the West Balkan countries emphasised the importance of the regional initiative to distribute the funds more evenly, so that more money is available in the early stages for reforms and preparations for membership. They warned that according to the current rules a country that becomes a member can suddenly draw on up to ten times larger amounts, but its administration is typically unprepared to make use of this opportunity. General Director for Enlargement in the European Commission **Stefano Sanino** revealed that IPA II will indeed move in that direction. He added that the distinctions and barriers between the key components three, four and five will be practically removed. Sanino stressed that for every next country the accession negotiations will begin with the chapters on the rule of law, fundamental freedoms and judiciary, which means that the future members will first develop the capacities to fight corruption and organised crime. Progress will be constantly monitored and evaluated for each individual country. It was also planned that the representatives of Serbian and Macedonian governments will be invited to participate in the screening mechanism that will be conducted for Montenegro in anticipation of the beginning of accession negotiations. Sanino explained that an important goal of enlargement and pre-accession funds is to encourage economic development in the Western Balkans through the EU assistance, but also through closer cooperation with other international financial institutions, especially the standing

EU MONEY TO BE SAFE FROM CORRUPTION

During the discussion of the Commission’s proposal for IPA II, representative of the EU Court of Audits Karel Pinxten said it was essential that EU member states can be completely sure that the candidate country is really ready for membership.

Pinxten warned that widespread corruption causes a lot of damage in the West Balkan countries.

He added that although Croatia already signed the membership treaty with EU, it is still under scrutiny until the EU can be completely satisfied that its state administration is really capable of managing the large amounts from EU structural funds.

Investment Framework for the Western Balkans. The Framework was initiated in 2009 and it draws on EU funds, partner financial institutions, Council of Europe development bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), European Investment Bank and bilateral donors. By the end of 2011 220 million euro worth of projects were channelled through the Framework. European Commission is also planning to dedicate more attention to cooperation with the civil society in the Western Balkans and to regional cooperation. Preparatory documents for IPA II also stressed that “West Balkan countries are still relatively young states, created after dissolution of former Yugoslavia” and that “it is still necessary to strengthen their political stability and ensure that the principles of democracy, respect for human rights and good governance are fully rooted in the region”.

Sources: Beta and EurActiv.rs

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 bring EU closer to the citizens of Montenegro.

Does a citizen of one EU member have to pay tuition when studying in another EU member?

No, if tuition is free for the citizens of the host country. The tuition is regulated nationally by each member state, but the EU mandates that all EU citizens have the right to study in another member state under the same conditions as the citizens of that country.

Once Montenegro becomes an EU member if, for instance, a father of a child goes to work in Germany while the mother and child remain in Montenegro, the mother would be paying social security, but the German system would pay the difference between the family benefits of the two countries

What is Erasmus programme?

Erasmus programme is a student exchange programme which enables the students to complete part of their study (or training) in another EU member state (between 3 and 12 months). In order to participate in this programme, students must be enrolled at least in the second year of an undergraduate programme during the length of their study abroad. The programme is competitive and each student must apply at his or her home institution of higher education. The home institution selects the students on the basis of their academic record and knowledge of foreign languages. Students are also eligible for financial aid during the study abroad, which is covered by their home university. Before leaving, each student should contact the ECTS coordinators at the home and host institutions in order to sign the so-called Learning Agreement, agreeing to attend the courses and exams he or she selected. Countries in the process of accession to EU, such as Montenegro, also participate in this programme, but there are some differences: for instance, all costs are born by the host institution in EU.

If a citizen of one EU member marries a citizen of another EU member, should the marriage be registered in both countries?

No. A marriage registered anywhere in the EU is automatically recognised in all other member states. One exception are the same-sex mar-

riages which are currently recognised by five EU countries – Belgium, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden. The decision to recognise same-sex marriages remains the prerogative of the member states.

What is European Health Insurance Card?

This document allows the citizens of EU, Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway and Switzerland access to complete medical assistance and services under the same conditions as the citizens of their host country. In case the host country charges certain services (stay in hospital, pharmaceutical services etc), which are free in the card bearer's home state, that person is entitled to a lower rate and is reimbursed either during his or her stay or after return to the home country. The card does not cover the costs if the purpose of the stay abroad was medical treatment, as this issue is regulated in a different way. The card is issued free of charge by the country where the citizen has a permanent address, i.e. by the health security institution of that country.

Francuska je plaćala kazne od oko 316.500 eura dnevno jer nije poštovala pravila o Naturi 2000 (koja se odnose na zaštitu životne sredine, dok su Poljskoj iz sličnih razloga uskraćivana sredstva iz EU fondova EU.

Who is responsible for citizen's social security and the social security of his/her family if a citizen takes up a job in another EU member?

If only one partner is employed, and is working in another EU member, social security is covered by the country where that person is employed. If both partners are employed, and only one of them works abroad, social security for the family is paid by the partner who remained in the home country. In case of family benefits, in order to ensure the best possible conditions for the children, the country with higher benefits contributes the difference. So-

Because of urbanisation and infra-structural development in EU 42% of mammals, 15% of birds and 52% of freshwater fish are considered endangered, while around 1000 species of plants is at risk of disappearance

cial security systems vary from one country to another, and the details about each country's system and types of benefits can be found in the database of the Directorate General for Employment and Social Affairs of the European Commission (<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=858&langId=en>).

Which exchange programmes are available to the teachers, professors and others who deal with the young people?

There are three main EU programmes dedicated to those responsible for youth education (primary and secondary education) and adult education. Comenius programme is reserved for those active in primary and secondary education, associations dedicated to education, advanced students of education-related programmes, teachers without work experience and unemployed teachers. The programme finances visits, seminars, training programmes, courses, workshops etc. in different EU member states. Leonardo da Vinci programme also works along similar principles, and is dedicated to teachers of secondary schools and institutes of vocational education. Grudtvig programme is open to all those involved in adult education. Calls for participation in these programmes are regularly announced by the European Commission, and published on the website of the Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes, which is also in charge of selecting the participants. The participants can also apply for funding to cover the travel and living costs, as well as costs of preparation for the programme.

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

Diplomas for the XIII Generation of Human Rights School

XIII generation of the Human Rights School successfully ended the programme with a diploma award ceremony on 08.05.2012 in Podgorica. The School is organised by Centre for Civic Education (CCE) as part of its programme “Education for human rights and active citizenship in the Western Balkans”, supported by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The diplomas were awarded to the successful participants by **Daliborka Uljarević**, executive director of CCE. She stressed that “Montenegro is not yet a society fully imbued by the human rights culture. Basic rights are still violated as we speak, the institutions often fail to react adequately, and there is limited awareness among the citizens of the rights they are entitled to and the ways to fight for them. Through education about human rights Montenegro stands to gain active citizens, with highly developed democratic awareness, who can constitute a powerful impulse for the implementation of European standards”.

Human Rights School took place during March and April 2012, and offered education about the concept, culture and principles of human rights, detailed analysis of the international documents in the field of human rights, standards and recommendations by international organisations, as well as mechanisms and instruments of human rights protection and an overview of the state of human rights in Montenegro today. The programme was successfully completed by 26 high-school and university students.

The lecturers at the schools were academics and professors of Montenegrin and other universities, renowned lawyers, judges, researchers, MPs, representatives of political and non-governmental organisations, as well as of institutions dealing with the protection of human rights in Montenegro.

Regional cooperation for democratization of the Western Balkans

Between 7 and 11 May, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), in cooperation with the Centre for International Relations from Banja Luka and Centre for International Studies in Zagreb, organised *10th Democracy School* for students from Zagreb, Podgorica, Tuzla and Banja Luka.

The programme consisted of lectures on issues such as democracy and European integration of the West Balkan countries, confrontation with the past, the culture of dialogue, political system in BiH and many others, combined with dynamic discussions. The School brought together 10 students from Zagreb, 10 from Banja Luka and two students each from Tuzla and Podgorica. Montenegrin participants were **Radoš Mušović**, a volunteer in CCE and **Valentina Četković**, member of the CCE Youth Group.

The road ahead for women's activism

On 04.05.2012 in Podgorica, NGO NOVA organised a panel discussion titled “*The road ahead for women's activism*”, with support of UNDP. The panel was organised as the second event in a series of activities began in February 2012, when the organiser conducted an opinion poll among NGO representatives concerning various aspects of the current state of women's activism in Montenegro. CCE also participated in the research.

The poll was the result of the assessment that the new political circumstances in Montenegro, initiated by the process of accession to EU, are changing the environment also with respect to the function of women's NGOs and that there is a need for dialogue on the change of policies and strategies of women's NGOs in the new circumstances.

The panel was attended by a CCE associate **Tamara Milaš**.

“What does it do for ME, what does it do for my TOWN?”

Centre for Civic Education (CCE), in cooperation with the Monitoring Centre (CEMI) from Podgorica and Civic Initiative (CI) from Belgrade, has been implementing the project “**Europe in my town**”, supported by the EU Delegation in Montenegro.

“Europe in my town” aims to strengthen the capacities and role of local communities and civil society organisations in Montenegro in the process of European integration, and ensure their long-term, effective contribution to this process. More specifically, the project aims to raise the level of understanding and support for the process of EU accession among the Montenegrin citizens, by creating conditions for their effective participation in public discussions and offering a platform for cooperation between local governments, local civil society organisations and citizens of nine Montenegrin municipalities: Podgorica, Nikšić, Cetinje, Ulcinj, Budva, Herceg Novi, Bijelo Polje, Pljevlja, Kolašin.

Among the activities of the project was the organisation of public debate on “*EU funds, Montenegro's absorption capacities*” and “*Employment and social policy in EU: policies and standards*”. The debate took place on 24.05.2012 in Kolašin. The speakers were: **Daliborka Uljarević**, executive director of CCE; **Zoran Rakočević**, advisor for EU integration issues in the Municipality of Kolašin; **Aleksandar Drljević**, head of Directorate for Programming, Monitoring and Evaluation of financial and technical assistance (IPA) in the Ministry of Foreign Relations and European Integration; and **Vojin Golubović**, Institute for Strategic Studies and Projections. The debate was chaired by **Mikan Medenica** from the local NGO “Natura”.

Regional gathering of political scientists in Croatia

Between 9 and 13 May the Political Science Department of the University of Belgrade organised a regional seminar in Rovinj, Croatia, bringing together political science students from across the region.

The opening ceremony was attended by **Stanimir Vukićević**, ambassador of the Republic of Serbia in Croatia, representative of the President of the Republic of Croatia Prof Dr. **Siniša Tatalović**, the county prefect of Istria **Ivan Jakovčić**, and the Mayor of Rovinj **Giovanni Sponza**.

Among the participants was also **Damir Nikočević**, student of the specialist programme at the Political Science Department of the University of Montenegro and the PR/Programme Associate of Centre for Civic Education.

Second generation of “Political Philosophy School Dr. Zoran Đinđić”

Between 21 and 26 May 2012, Foundation “Dr. Zoran Đinđić” and the Political Science Department in Belgrade organised the second regional “School of Political Philosophy Dr. Zoran Đinđić”, with support of the Balkan Trust for Democracy and Centre for the Promotion of Science. The school brought together 30 young people from Croatia, BiH, Montenegro, Serbia and Macedonia. During the five-day school, the participants had a chance to hear about the basics of political philosophy, as well as about the role of a philosopher - **Zoran Đinđić**, in the democratisation of Serbia and the Region. The lecturers were professors from the Political Science Department in Belgrade **Vladimir Pavićević**, **Đorđe Pavićević**, **Vukašin Pavlović**, **Milan Podunavac**, as well as historian **Latinka Perović**, director of the Office for EU integration of Serbia **Milica Delević**; **Dejan Jović**, senior analyst in the office of the Croatian President Ivo Josipović; **Nermina Mujagić** from the Political Science Department in Sarajevo, etc.

Among the participants were also representatives of CCE **Mirela Rebronja**, programme coordinator, **Damir Nikočević**, PR/programme associate, and **Radoš Mušović**, volunteer.

“One World” – International Photo Contest

The Technical Image Press Association (TIPA), a nonprofit based in Madrid, Spain, is launching its first international photo contest on the theme of “One World.” TIPA’s contest aims to help photographers showcase their work to an international community of publishers, agencies and galleries that are always on the lookout for new talented artists.

There are two categories in the ONE WORLD photo contest and both professional and amateur photographers are eligible to enter.

Participants may only submit their photograph(s) in one of the two categories as listed below:

- » **Amateur Category.** In this category participants may enter 1, 2 or 3 photographs portraying the ONE WORLD theme. Photographs will be judged individually, and only one image will be considered for the contest.
- » **Professional Category.** In this category participants must enter a series of three photographs that visually tells a story that incorporates and represents the ONE WORLD theme of the contest. The photographs submitted should encapsulate a coherent body of work that will be judged as a portfolio.

Deadline: July 14 2012

Prize: In professional category – EU€6,000 (about US\$7,900), in amateur category EU€4.000 (about US\$5,000)

Read more: <http://www.internationalpeaceandconflict.org/forum>

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