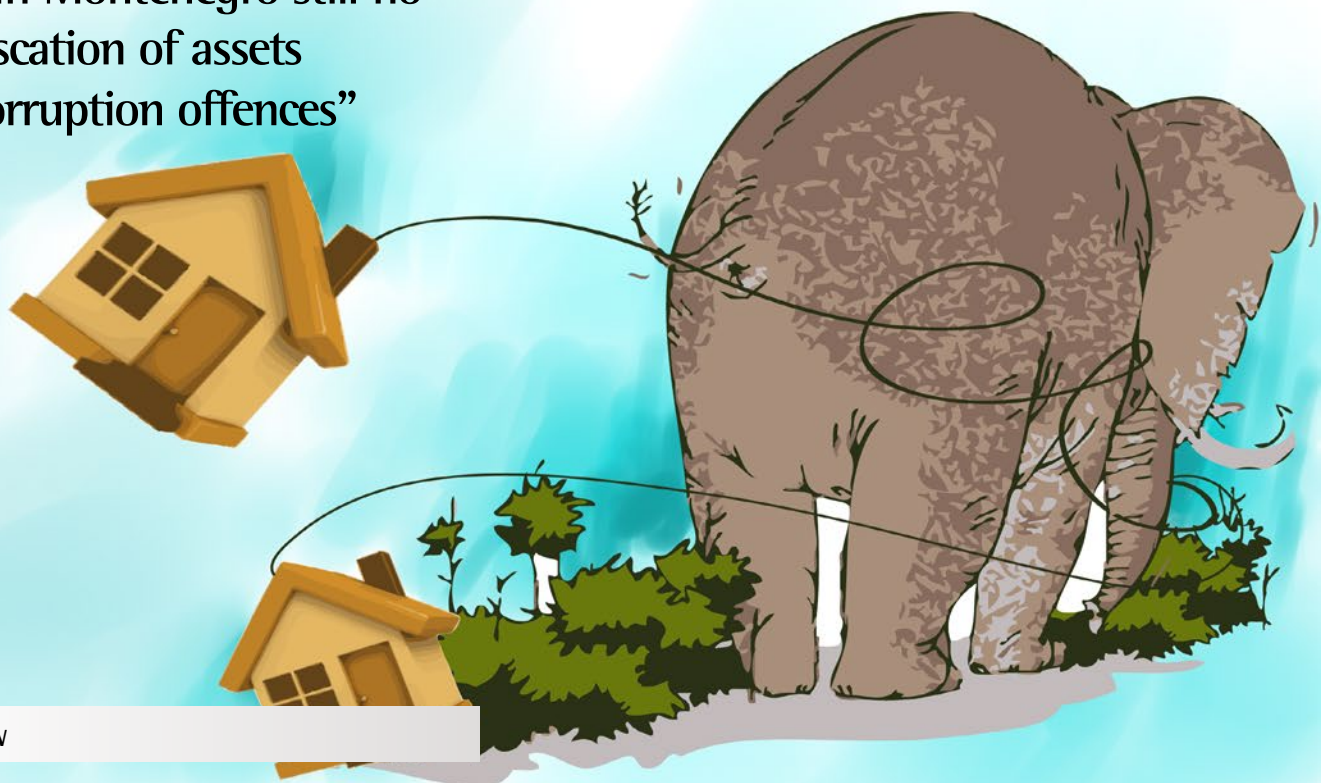


# European pulse

Electronic monthly magazine for European Integration – No 85, October 2012

## FOCUS OF THIS ISSUE

**EC: “In Montenegro still no confiscation of assets for corruption offences”**



## interview

President of the Monitoring Centre  
Zlatko Vujović

## analysis

Will the election of the new  
Prime Minister influence the  
course of negotiations with EU?

## region

How justified are the demands  
to revise EU visa policy  
towards Western Balkans?

Foreword: **No surprises**

Vladan Žugić

Coalition “European Montenegro” won the 14 October parliamentary elections, but for the first time in 11 years the alliance between Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS) and Social-democratic party (SDP) failed to win the absolute majority and will need support of minority parties to form the government. A few days earlier, the European Commission (EC) published its annual progress report on Montenegro, recommending urgent amendments to the constitution in order to push through the reform of judiciary. It also asked for a more substantial track record in the fight against organised crime and high-level corruption. Both were to be expected. The opposition, somewhat refreshed and seemingly more serious, didn’t manage to displace DPS, always prone to abuse of public resources in election campaigns – in the only country member of the Council of Europe which never changed the government since the fall of the Berlin Wall. For many, EC’s 2012 report on Montenegro was too complimentary, but it would have been hard for **Štefan Füle** to reverse the words of praise for Montenegro’s progress that the EC published only a few months earlier, in its May report, to which Montenegro owes the opening of membership negotiations. The Commission now indicated that the adoption of constitutional amendments will be a precondition for the beginning of negotiations on chapters 23 and 24. For every next step in this process, Brussels will keep asking for more and more tangible achievements in the fight against crime and high-level corruption. The conceptual confusion surrounding “high-level corruption” was recently dispelled by the new head of EU Delegation in Montenegro **Mitja Drobnič**: “High-level corruption is the corruption taking place overwhelmingly in relation to large projects, and involving ministers, prime ministers, presidents of local governments and directors of public companies”. For the first time in a series of elections, the ruling coalition didn’t place European integration at the centre of its campaign, although it had a lot to boast about. Perhaps their enthusiasm was somewhat dampened by the realisation that in the years to come they will have to face high-level corruption in their own ranks.

## Calendar

- 02/04 October **Meetings on chapters 6 and 8 in Brussels** / Representatives of European Commission DGs introduced EU’s acquis in the field of company law to the members of the Montenegrin working group for Chapter 6. At the same time, representatives of EU and Montenegro for chapter 8 – Competition policy also held the explanatory screening for this chapter.
- 10 October **EC publishes the Progress Report** / EC’s new Report on the Progress of Montenegro finds that the country continued to successfully meet political criteria for membership in EU. However, it stresses the need for further reforms of public administration and judiciary and recommends adoption of constitutional amendments to guarantee independence of judiciary. The report notes that Montenegro shows a tangible record in combating corruption and organised crime, but that further efforts are needed to produce results in high-level corruption and in the fight against organised crime.
- 18 October **Neighbours must know about the power plants** / European Energy Commissioner **Günther Oettinger** said that every country that plans to build a new power plant must inform its neighbours about it before it starts the construction. The statement was made during his visit to Budva in relation to the plans by Serbia and Republic of Srpska to build hydro-power plants on the rivers Drina and Lim.
- 23 October **Drobnič: Corruption is more difficult than crime** / During the presentation of EC’s latest Progress Report at the University of Montenegro, the Head of EU Delegation to Montenegro **Mitja Drobnič** said it was easier to make progress in the fight against organised crime “because we know who the criminals and drug smugglers are”. “Fighting corruption is more difficult, because corruption is linked to activities of the political and economic elites”, he said, adding that EU’s expectations are very high in this regard.

## Oslo's call



Jürgen Habermas

The author is a German sociologist and philosopher

At the hour of the greatest crisis in its history the European Union has been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Among its reasons, the Nobel Committee congratulates the Union for having "helped transform Europe from a continent at war to a continent at peace." Certainly, it would be difficult to imagine other reasons for giving out a Nobel Peace Prize. However, it's the circumstances of the current crisis that shed light on the significance of giving this Nobel to the European Union, or more precisely the repercussions such a decision may have on the current state of the Union. I interpret the decision to award the Nobel Peace Prize to the EU at the moment when the Union has never been weaker as a petition directed at the European political elites – those same elites who, as

The Nobel Committee refers to the economic crisis that is behind the "unrest and considerable social tensions" in the countries of the eurozone and that is pushing a Europe plagued by a weakness of leadership towards the edge of a rupture. What is at stake, if we read the text well, is the third major achievement of the Union: that is, its social model, grounded in the welfare state.

text then discusses the efforts to build and promote democracy and freedom in the 1980s for Greece, Spain and Portugal, and in 1989-1990 for the countries of central and eastern Europe, which would join the Union later – efforts that Europe must now push ahead with in the Balkans. The Nobel Committee salutes the courage that Europe was able to summon up to overcome historical hostilities and succeed in the civilising mission that is the enlargement of the European Union, which will one day extend to Turkey. But that's not all. One had to wait to read the third reason of the Committee to discover the irony governing the bestowal of the Nobel Peace on the European Union. The Nobel Committee refers to the economic crisis that is behind the "unrest and considerable social tensions" in the countries of the eurozone and that is pushing a Europe plagued by a weakness of leadership towards the edge of a rupture. What is at stake, if we read the text well, is the third major achievement of the Union: that is, its social model, grounded in the welfare state. At the moment, we Europeans persist in remaining quietly and calmly on the threshold of a two-speed EU. That is why I also see the decision to award the Nobel Peace Prize to the European Union as a call for solidarity among its citizens, who must say what kind of Europe they want. Only by deepening the institutions of core Europe will we tame the capitalism that has grown wild and stop the process of the internal destruction of the Union.

*Izvor: La Repubblica/Presseurop.eu*

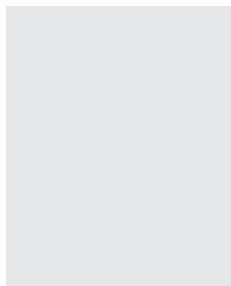


we all see, are conducting themselves in the crisis today with neither courage nor vision. The Nobel Peace Prize makes it clear to the governments that are presently steering the eurozone countries that they must step out from their own shadow and so move the European project forward. It is written in the text of the appeal in black and white, and at least three times. The Nobel Committee begins by praising the reconciliation and the building of peace in Europe after the Second World War. The



EU has a mathematical proof that fighting corruption is a greater challenge to Montenegro than fighting organised crime

## 50 millions from crime, 0 from corruption

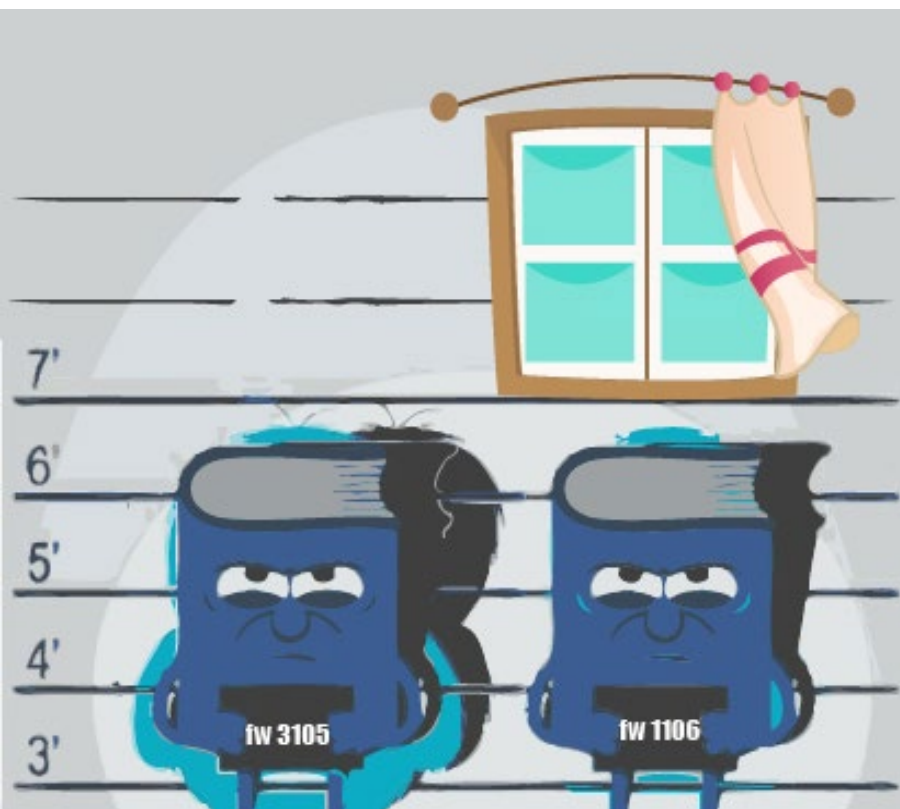


Milica Bogdanović

In its latest progress report on Montenegro, the European Commission for the first time noted that “there are still no corruption cases in which seizure of assets was ordered”. Bearing in mind that the total value of property seized or confiscated from those convicted for organised crime has been estimated at nearly 50 million euro, EC’s observation constitutes an arithmetic proof of the suspicion of many EU officials – that for Montenegro it will be by far more difficult to tackle corruption, especially high-level corruption, than to eradicate organised crime. “Montenegro has developed its track record of investigations, prosecutions and convictions in corruption cases, but their number remains low and there are still no seizure or confiscation of assets ordered for corruption offences”, says the Commission in the Report, reiterating one more time its concern with widespread corruption in Montenegro. According to the director of the Department for Research

In its latest progress report on Montenegro, the European Commission for the first time noted that “there are still no corruption cases in which seizure of assets was ordered”

and Public Policy of the Monitoring Centre (CEMI) **Ana Selić**, the main reason there are still no confiscations of assets from those convicted for instigating corruption lies in the lack of capacity and political will. “This absence of either capacity or political will should soon be eliminated, because this is one of the key areas of chapters 23 and 24 of negotiations for EU membership”, she explained, adding that the Criminal Code provides for seizure of assets also from those convicted of crimes that qualify as corruption. Selić says the fault for not implementing these provisions lies with the responsible institutions: “You should ask the judges and the prosecutors, because it is their responsibility to implement these provisions”. The EC report also warns that Montenegro hasn’t yet developed a satisfactory track record in fighting high-level corruption, and that in spite of the improving track record on investigations, prosecutions and convictions in corruption cases, their number remains low. In the context of repeated urgings to tackle corruption and crime, the head of EU Delegation to Montenegro **Mitja Drobnič** is the first EU official to spell out what is meant by “high level corruption”: “High-level corruption means corruption that takes place mainly in relation to large projects, and involves ministers, prime ministers, MPs, presidents of local governments, heads of public companies...” The same observation – rare instances of prosecution of high-level corruption – has been confirmed already by the report of the National Commission





for the fight against organised crime and corruption which notes that “instigators of corruption-related crimes are largely directors and other responsible figures in private and public companies, bank employees, employees of the Real Estate Agency, public administration, judiciary, Tax Authority and Police...” Court rulings to date also indicate that the hand of justice reaches as far as the lower-rank employees like the treasurer of the Supreme Court, police officers or doctors. The only “high-level” case was that of Zavala, although the final verdict is still pending. Otherwise, in spite of public affairs, charges, investigations and hearings, some of which point to the highest governmental instances, the record remains empty. CEMI’s representative also pointed out that in spite of occasional pats on the shoulder from Brussels, she can hardly see any achievements in this area: “As long as the legal framework doesn’t provide for full independence of the judiciary and prosecution, we cannot expect

many tangible achievements”. On the other hand, the responsible institutions are working on three criminal cases where the total value of confiscated property amounts to 48.5 million euro. In the “Kalić” case alone, the amount of property to be seized is estimated at 28.66 million, followed by the “Šarić” case (12.48 million), and another 3.97 million in the case against the Russian citizen **Khvan Valeriy Evgenievich**. Among the property of the runaway **Safet Kalić** from Rožaje that is currently held by his family there are numerous companies and firms: “Tajson”, “Rožaje”, “Turjak”, “Daut Daut”, as well as real estate, land, vehicles... According to the data of the Real Estate Agency, which is part of the Ministry of Finance, the family of **Darko Šarić** holds such companies as “Tera ing”, “Mat company”, “Mat construction”, and the latter is also the owner of numerous apartments and land, office buildings, night club “Municipijum”, “Cafe 4 rooms”, and a gas station “Mat petrol”. Both Šarić and Kalić are on the run, and have Interpol notices issued after them. The Russian citizen Evgenievich has been cleared by the Higher Court of all charges for long-term involvement in money laundering for lack of evidence, but his property hasn’t been returned because the prosecution appealed against the court’s decision. As the main obstacle to confiscations, CEMI’s representative points to the lack of capacity for management of seized and confiscated assets. “The Real Estate Agency had no institutional mechanisms to handle the existing cases: until April this year there was no methodology nor legal grounds for takeover and management of confiscated property”, Selić explained, adding that the only available basis were two legal acts from 2009: the Rules of custody of confiscated valuables and Rules on registering and taking over property. She notes that in April this year the Parliament adopted the new Law on amendments to the Law on management of seized and confiscated property, with detailed instructions on the procedure of takeover and management of property. “It is too early to talk about its achievements. We should wait



and see what comes out of this year's efforts of the Prosecutor and the Real Estate Agency, and then we'll know whether there is any real political will to confiscate illegally acquired assets and what institutional capacities exist for financial investigations", Selić said. Professor at the Political Science Department in Belgrade **Čedomir Čupić** thinks that the key ingredient for confiscation of property acquired through crime and corruption is the political will of those currently in power because "they decide on whether to adopt the laws and rehabilitate institutions to

implement these laws". According to Čupić, the threat of serious investigations into corruption cases will create disincentives to engage in corruption or acquire property in illegal ways or through legal loopholes. He also believes it would be important for these countries to introduce a constitutional clause to ensure there is no statute of limitation on property acquired through crime, i.e. that such property could always be confiscated if it turns out it was acquired in illegal manner. According to him, such a solution would be aimed against wealth as such, because "people should become wealthy, but only where their wealth is acquired through their own hard work, skill and by legal means. Everything should be written down, reported to the tax authority, and only such wealth can be an example to look up to", he said.

### First check the assets of policemen, prosecutors and judges

The best way to tackle problems related to high level corruption and organised crime, according to Čupić, would be a Law on the origin of assets. In the first six months, the law should only apply to the employees of public administration: "First investigate those segments of the police force which deal directly with crime and corruption, then the prosecutors, judges, tax administration, customs administration and various inspectorates. Once these people have been screened and their property found to be legally acquired, you'll have a solid proof that these people are also capable of implementing the law".

Those who cannot prove a legal origin of their property would, according to Čupić, leave public service, and their property would be confiscated. The same should be done with the assets of the richest citizens who acquired enormous wealth in the last 20 years. "This doesn't mean such companies should be destroyed, but that the state would take over them", Čupić explained, adding that finally the law should apply to all other citizens as the best possible means of combating the so-called "horizontal corruption".

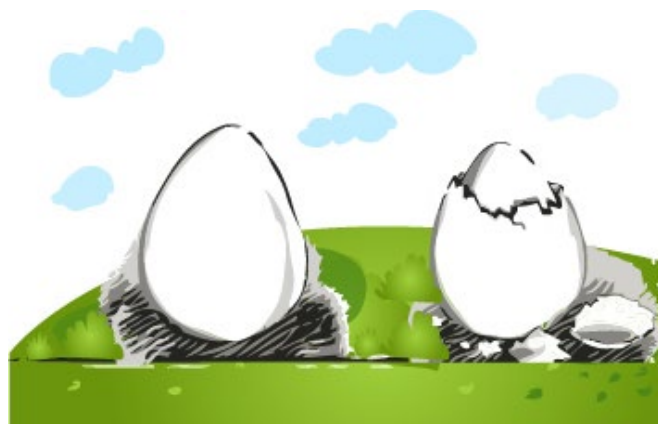
Will the composition of the new Government have an impact on Montenegro's negotiations for EU members?

## More caution with Đukanović, more optimism with Lukšić



Neđeljko Rudović

The outcome of the parliamentary elections suggests the possibility of new personnel reshuffling in the ruling party for the appointments to the new Government. These choices could also slow down Montenegro's negotiations for EU membership, if the chief of DPS **Milo Đukanović** decides to return to the helm of the Government. The option is, however, far from unlikely, given that the party lost its absolute dominance, and the future and the pace of negotiations with EU could become uncertain. At the 14 October elections, the DPS coalition lost absolute majority for the first time in 11 years, and they now need support of minority parties to form the government. The coalition again won more than 160 000 votes, but this time many more voters went to the ballots, and decided to cast their vote in favour of the new parties – Positive Montenegro and Democratic Front, i.e. the coalition of New Serbian Democracy and Movement for Changes, united under leadership of **Miodrag Lekić**, former head of Montenegrin diplomacy. Their success threatens the dominance of DPS, which makes it likely that their leader might try to steady the ship by taking over from **Igor Lukšić** and steering it into the safer waters. The choice between Đukanović and Lukšić is a choice between the return of the “firm fist” and a brutal confrontation with critics of the government and a weak but still flickering hope that Montenegro would finally head towards some reform that might be painful but are necessary if we are to make any progress. This choice, about to be made by the Presidency and the main committee of DPS, will not change too much in the general direction of the Government, but might result in subtle changes to the course which in the crucial moments could acquire sizeable weight. However, the current interests of DPS and Đukanović himself tip the balance towards his return to the main public office. It is a matter of vital interest for Đukanović and his close associates that he remains at the source of information. In his case, it is not only the business interest that is at stake, but also the need to nip in the bud any move towards the Croatian scenario which put



the former Prime Minister **Ivo Sanader** into the dock. For DPS, on the other hand, Đukanović is the guarantee of coherence of the new Government. Revival of the opposition and the difficult economic situation do not bode well, and a good part of DPS would rather not risk a “soft” Prime Minister who could lose the plot due to lack of experience. Lukšić could, however, offer at least a minimum guarantee that the accession talks would lead somewhere. Without the heavy burden of political past, Lukšić appears to the West as a figure likely to enact some changes and pave the way to the genuine rule of law. This is all, of course, premised on the expectation that in due course he would grow stronger and eventually take on the task of liberating DPS and public institutions from the influence of the criminal circles. All this would take place as a result of EU's sustained demands, packaged as criteria for specific chapters over the course of negotiations and the related requirements usually not disclosed to the public. Our sources in the diplomatic circles do not hide the concern that Đukanović's return to the office of Prime Minister would mean a “marked slow-down in negotiations with EU”. Abroad, he enjoys the reputation of a capable politician, but above all of someone willing to protect dirty deals of his friends and some high-ranked members of the criminal circles. The bottom line is that Đukanović doesn't inspire trust in his readiness to enact genuine changes. As a result, the EU, and most of all always suspicious Berlin, could begin reaching for the brake.



President of the Board of Directors of the Monitoring Centre  
Zlatko Vujović on electoral oversight

## New laws to prevent abuse of public resources in elections



The whole institutional framework for the control of political party financing ought to be reformed. The oversight should be entrusted to an agency independent of the executive and political parties, with adequate investigative capacities.

### *of financing and transparency of the political process?*

The most important shortcoming is the fact that the mechanisms at the disposal of State Electoral Commission remain very limited. Also, CEMI believes that the electoral administration is too cumbersome for such a small country – in these elections alone it employed more than 20.000 people. Substantial savings could be made with a more rational organisation of the electoral process. CEMI already offered proposals for the adoption of a separate Law on electoral administration, which would provide a detailed template for their organisation and financing.

### *» CEMI has a long history of campaigning for professionalization of the State Electoral Commission?*

Certainly, the basis of this law should be professionalization of the State Electoral Commission and the municipal electoral commissions. It should also move the clauses on electoral administration from the Law on the election of committee members and MPs to the new Law, in order to introduce completely new regulatory principle to this area, in line with EC's recommendations.

Also, CEMI believes that the provisions of the current Law on the financing of political parties remain insufficient and incapable of limiting another problematic feature that permeates our elections – abuse of public resources.

This is why we have been campaigning for a separate law to regulate this area more strictly, because the current law cannot address all forms

The most important gap in the oversight of electoral campaign financing is still the fact that the State Electoral Commission (DIK) commands limited control mechanisms, while the electoral administration remains too cumbersome and the Law on the financing of political parties insufficient to prevent abuse of public resources, says the President of the Board of Directors of the Monitoring Centre (CEMI) **Zlatko Vujović** in the interview or European Pulse.

The government of Montenegro spent some 2.8 million euro for the financing of parliamentary elections on 14 October. Of this, 1.49 million was spent on the activities of candidates, and another 1.3 million to cover the costs of electoral administration.

In line with the Law on the financing of political parties, 20% of this amount was allocated to the confirmed electoral lists, which means that each of 13 lists received around 20.000 euro to finance the campaign, although some of them complained that they only received the money when the campaign was well under way.

**» Based on your assessment of the campaign, which are the main shortcomings of the rules**





of abuse of public resources in the course of the electoral process. As an example, there is no mention of extraordinary social benefits in the course of the elections campaign which can easily be characterised as abuse of public financial resources, as well as other forms of abuse of public media, for instance, or the parading of projects financed by the state or local governments as achievements of individual parties.

Another serious shortcoming are inappropriately low fines – between 200 and 2000 euro, for abuse of resources that should be regulated by a separate law within the anti-corruption legal framework. The law should tackle exclusively and directly the abuse of public resources in the course of elections as a form of political corruption.

**» What is your assessment of the State Electoral Commission and its achievements in the latest elections? It was recently allocated some new responsibilities, do you think the performance was up to expectations?**

It is high time that the State Electoral Commission was properly reformed to become a genuinely independent and professional institution that would also have the capacity to oversee the financing of political parties in Montenegro.

However, for a move in that direction the first precondition is commitment on the part of political parties, of which there has been very little sign. At the moment, the political

parties are unwilling to relinquish their position and influence in the DIK, so the model suggested by CEMI, which would be the optimal solution in our political system, has remained a far-fetched theory.

**» The latest progress report of the European Commission also listed numerous problems related to the financing of political parties. What is, according to you, the best way to regulate this area?**

The whole institutional framework for the control of political party financing ought to be reformed. The oversight should be entrusted to an agency independent of the executive and political parties, with adequate investigative capacities.

We need an Agency for Anti-Corruption, which is only meaningful if it's independent, and if it has the capacity to conduct preliminary investigations. The proliferation of new anti-corruption institutions is meaningless as long as they are attached to the executive. The new independent agency would be charged with overseeing political party finances, but also with the prevention of the conflict of interests, regulation of lobbying activities, and monitoring of the implementation of anti-corruption plans.

**» State Electoral Commission recently published a report on business activities of political parties in 2011, which reveals that this area is almost completely unregulated. What is your view on this?**

CEMI believes there is still a substantial space for improvement of the current legislation on political party financing in Montenegro. The Law adopted last year is a model that doesn't exist anywhere else in the world. It requires urgent changes and improvements to the Law so that we can arrive at an optimal legal and institutional framework that would constitute a satisfactory long-term solution.

As for the need to set up an effective, sustainable system of oversight and audit of political party finances in Montenegro, so far the political elites showed very little interest.



## Most people work in services

Nearly 70% of those working in EU, including employers and the self-employed, worked in the service sector in 2011. This is 8% more than in 2000, with most of them employed in trade, transport and finance, which gave jobs to more than 39% of all employees. According to Eurostat, the second largest sector was public administration, education and health, which employed 30% of all workers, with construction following with 25%. Agriculture only employed 5% of working Europeans. Czech Republic and Slovakia have the largest industrial sectors – 38% and 37%, respectively. The fewest people employed in agriculture – less than 2% – are in Luxembourg, UK, Belgium, Germany and Malta. Agriculture employs the most people in Romania (29%), followed by Poland (13%) and Greece (12%). The average working week in EU included 40.4 hours. The longest hours have been recorded in UK (42.2), Austria (41.8), and Portugal and Cyprus (41.1).

## Teachers paying the crisis bill



From the mid-2010 as many as 16 EU countries lowered or froze the wages in education. The heaviest budget cuts affected the teachers in Ireland, Greece, Spain, Portugal and Slovenia. The EC report on teachers' earnings in 2011/12, published on the occasion of the World Day of Teachers, showed that the crisis not only lowered the teachers' wages in some EU countries, but also affected other sources of income, such as paid holidays and bonuses. According to the report, Greece cut the teachers' wages by 30% and abolished Easter and Christmas bonuses. Ireland lowered the wages of newly employed teachers in 2011 by 13%, and those who started their contracts after 31 January had to face another 20% cut which abolished qualifications-related premiums. In the same period, wages in the education sector grew in the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and Iceland.



## 18 days in jail because of a seashell

Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs will soon initiate a new service – “online consul”, with the aim of informing the Bulgarian compatriots about the possible dangers awaiting them abroad. The move is a reaction to the case of Dimitrije Bojanov, who spent 18 days in a Croatian prison because he took an empty seashell at the local beach and tried to take it home as a souvenir. Providing information to the citizens about other countries is a common practice in all countries of the region and in the EU. The UK authorities, for instance, regularly issue warnings about political tensions, as well as information on the number of citizens deceased, hospitalized and arrested in other countries.

European Commission budget proposal for 2014–2020  
turns into a veritable powder-keg

## A trillion euro clash



As the world economic crisis enters its fifth year, the recovery is nowhere in sight. Economic crisis turned into a debt crisis, and the governments around European Union are tightening the belts to calm down the markets and restore confidence and growth. Negotiations over the multi-annual financial framework – better known as the EU budget – are never easy, but this time they threaten to turn into a veritable powder-keg. Budget proposal by the European Commission for the period 2014–2020 amounts to a total of €1, 033 trillion. This is around 5% more than the amount earmarked for the previous seven-year period, but the relative value of the budget in fact stays the same – around 1% of EU's GNP. Nevertheless, at the time when most EU governments are struggling to cut domestic spending, a number of member states demands that the EU too should join in the austerity. The current EU presidency, Cyprus, has tabled another proposal which takes these demands into account and envisions some €50 billion of cuts compared to Commission's proposal. Instead of striking a compromise, the Cypriot plan only helped into the open the enormous gap between the positions of different parties. The Commission sternly rejected Presidency's draft, warning that a budget like that could only endanger the prospects of growth and competitiveness in EU, and pointed to disproportionate cuts aimed at the budget for science, education and training. On the other

hand, Swedish Foreign Affairs Minister **Brigitta Ohlson** shrugged off the €50 billion offer as too little, announcing that Sweden will demand the budget to be cut by a "three of four times larger amount". Since then the situation has only gotten worse. The UK also demanded a reduction by about 20%, and the Prime Minister **David Cameron** promised to veto any proposal that would exceed the current budget by a single euro. The approval of the EU budget requires a unanimous vote, so the threats coming from UK only spurred other members to dig in to defend their own "red lines". France and Austria threatened to veto any attempt to touch the agricultural budget, while Denmark announced a veto unless it gets a rebate of at least €134 million euro. The struggle over the budget divided the member states into two blocks – the poorer ones, for whom the European funds are essential, especially in the times of crisis, and the net contributors, which would have preferred to spend the money to shore up their own bottom lines. European institutions, such as the European Commission and the Parliament, are also advocating a larger budget, in order to protect their own finances and safeguard the funding for the common policies which are of little interest to any individual member state. European Commissioner for Finance and Budget **Janusz Lewandowski** says the existing budget is already too small, because the European institutions have been given more responsibilities, while the amount of money stayed the same. "You should not forget that in the course of recent years, leaders have handed the EU new obligations," Lewandowski told the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. "Unfortunately it is often the case that the financial aspect is forgotten. We can't finance more Europe with substantially less money". In early September, nearly three months ahead of the budget negotiations, representatives of the "Friends of Cohesion" club, i.e. member states which are net beneficiaries from the EU funds, met in Bratislava to agree on a common position. Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Croatia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Cyprus, Greece, Lithuania, Malta and



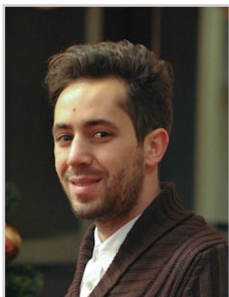
Spain have at least one aim in common: to prevent cuts to the “cohesion funds”, which provide essential assistance to infrastructure, employment and regional development in these countries. In some of them, the cohesion funds are an essential component of public investments: according to the Slovak Prime Minister **Robert Fico** as much as 76% of capital investments in Slovakia had been financed through the European funds. Without these transfers some of them would have never been able to overcome the crisis, nor plug up the large holes in their budgets. Hungary, which had been desperately battling to reduce its public debt, had even cut the expenditure on active labour market policies, hoping the EU funds would cover the outlays on that front. For their part, the richer parties banded together this April into an informal “Friends of Better Spending” group, asking for reforms of the cohesion funds in order to link payments to more rigorous indicators of project performance. They are also looking to raise the threshold for co-financing of EU-funded projects in the beneficiary states from the current 15% back to 25%. Most of the large net contributors have joined the group: Germany, Netherlands, Denmark, Finland, France, Italy, Austria and Sweden. Germany has also recently proposed the new principles of “better spending”, according to which the access to the cohesion funds could be temporarily suspended for the countries with a deficit exceeding 3% of GDP. It has also asked the European Commission to consider replacing grants with development loans. In addition to lecturing poorer members on fiscal

discipline, the richer EU states have also attacked one another because of the unequal status with regard to rebates. The UK, which from the very beginning contributed more than it received from the EU budget, was the first to gain the right to rebate of about two thirds of the difference in payments. Germany, Sweden, Netherlands and Austria have also managed to secure their own rebates, and Denmark is now claiming the same right. For the rest it means not only that they need to support the poorer members, but also to increase their contributions in order to cover up the difference paid back to other richer countries. As a result, France and Italy have also threatened that they too will request some money back. And while all member states are trying to get the best deal out of the budget negotiations, the EC worries that the burden of austerity will fall on those areas that are key to EU’s future growth and competitiveness. There are already signs that this might be happening: in late October, president of the Committee for Budget of the European Parliament **Alain Lamassoure** warned that some important had already ran out of money, more than a year before the end of the budget period. The programmes most severely affected are the European Social Fund, dedicated to retraining and employment of former employees who lost their jobs due to firm bankruptcy or relocation, and the student exchange programme Erasmus Mundus, which provides study abroad possibilities, internships and job placements for more than 230 000 students every year.

### Both too much and too little

Whether one trillion euro is enough or too little all depends on the point of view. The Commission, for instance, insists that in view of all the benefits, the price of 250 euro per person per year isn’t really all that much. The EU budget has been growing more slowly than the national budgets, and more than 90% of it anyway ends up being invested in the member states through various community programmes. The EU budget is roughly divided into three parts: one third is spent on the Common Agricultural Policy, another third goes to the cohesion and development funds, while the third covers various activities under competition policy (science and research, education, youth and energy etc.). Some 9% is spent on the foreign and interior security policies, and only 6% goes to cover the expenses of running EU administration. These are, however, just provisional numbers. The EU budget isn’t really a budget, but a system of “ceilings” for spending in various policy areas. This means that in practice it is almost never fully spent. However, the Commission has no right to redirect unspent funds to another purpose or roll them over to the next year – instead, every year the leftover money is returned to the member states. Only in the last five years the EC already returned some 60 billion euro.

## Visions for the future of the Euro-Atlantic concept



Vladimir Vučković

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Following adoption of the Lisbon Principles (2007), the question of EU's real potential on the international stage became a hot topic among the analysts, as well as the related question of the capacity for independent military action without the US involvement. The answer to this question follows from the observation that a leadership in international affairs requires the following characteristics: financial resources, military power, strong political will and developed diplomacy. The EU, according to this definition, possesses ample financial resources, but doesn't invest in development of military capacities. As for the military force, the EU commands around two million soldiers, or about half a million more than the US. Also, the EU's military has been very active in South-Eastern Europe, as well as in Africa. The political will of the member states is also reflected in their obvious desire to influence international decision-making through their membership of EU. Although the Union itself is still incapable of concrete international political action, strengthening of institutional capacities and growing cohesion will result in strong political will for the creation of a single Europe as a powerful international actor capable of handling international problems and challenges. By the same token, depending on the development of a single political will, the EU will develop strong diplomacy. All this indicates that, through its financial resources, military power, political will and development of formal diplomatic channels, the EU is increasingly becoming one of the most influential international actors. However, its position is made more difficult by the frozen relations between the EU and NATO, to a large extent due to the position of USA. Given the evident differences in attitude between the EU and US, the question becomes: what are the possibilities for development of Euro-Atlantic relations and what can be expected from this relationship in the future? One option is a split between the Old and New Europe, whereby a "core" group of EU countries becomes more strongly integrated. These countries, most likely Germany, France, Benelux states and Austria, are approximately at the same level of development and could merge their economic, political and security activities. The emergence of this

core would leave other members in a number of concentric circles depending on the level of integration, and some of them could be expected to share the same primary ally – Russia, which would create a platform for joint action. Members of the outer circle would merely remain within a free trade zone, or the lowest level of integration, without committing to the political aims of the core group. In simple terms, we would have a Europe A, Europe B and Europe C, broadly corresponding to the economic status and political interests of individual members. In response to this differentiation within EU and the alliance with Russia, the US would probably respond by forging another alliance with the UK, Australia and New Zealand. This configuration would reveal the deep divisions and signal that the difference of opinion between Europe and US has become so large that the US feels bound to gather new allies which have proven their trustworthiness in the course of the Iraq war, and also share the same language. If the interests diverge, it is to be expected that the US will stick to its tried and tested allies, amounting to a civilisational, political, economic, security and cultural unity. The USA could also try to strengthen its alliance with East European countries, who could be expected to join out of gratitude and conviction that the US did the most to return them to freedom. This American scenario is a pessimist one and there is little chance it would come true in the near future. Bearing in mind that the EU and US make up 15% of the world population and 50% of its GDP; that 85% of capital and investments flow within or between the EU and USA; that 60% of US capital abroad goes to EU, and that every day 450 000 people travel between the two, the bonds between the EU and US appear to be strong enough. To see how these bonds would break one would require great visionary capabilities, but in the world of today it is almost impossible to speak of a break-up between the US and EU. Although plenty of disagreements exist, it is hard to imagine EU's exit from the Euro-Atlantic alliance or an interruption of their relations. For the West Balkan countries, the EU remains the best perspective, both in political and in security terms.

The background to the demands of six EU members  
to discuss reintroduction of visas for countries of the region

## This time the problem is not with the Balkans



Gerald Knaus



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The interior ministers of six EU countries - Germany, Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Sweden - are pushing for a reversal of the most significant decision made in the past decade to further the European integration of the Western Balkans - to allow visa-free travel of the region's citizens to EU. In late October, the issue landed on the agenda of the justice and home affairs council of EU ministers. Such a decision would be a bad blow to the EU's credibility in southeast Europe. It would also be deeply unfair to the citizens in the countries concerned. Reintroducing visa requirements for citizens of Serbia, Macedonia, Albania, Montenegro or Bosnia would also signal that other countries patiently fulfilling their roadmaps to attain visa liberalisation - from Kosovo to Turkey to Moldova - stand no real chance of success. How did the EU get to this point? What would be the implications of such a step for the EU and the region? And how can the EU solve its own legitimate concerns without reintroducing visas? To answer these questions, one must first understand the nature of the acute crisis that is pushing (some) EU interior ministers to advocate such measures. After the EU lifted the Schengen visa requirement for Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro in December 2009, thousands of Serbians and Macedonians travelled to the EU to submit asylum claims. Already by 2010, Serbia became the country with the third-largest number of claims - almost 18,000 - in the EU; citizens from small Macedonia alone filed 7,550 claims. Although only three EU countries were affected - Germany, Sweden and Belgium, with Luxembourg becoming a fourth target in 2011 - almost immediately there were warnings that unless Balkan leaders find ways to "solve" the asylum problem, the EU might have to reverse its decision to allow Balkan citizens visa-free travel. Since then the situation has deteriorated further. The case of Germany illustrates the dynamic. In

From July this year, the stipend for a four-member family of asylum seekers in Germany was raised to at least €420 a month. If the family has to purchase its food and clothing itself, it will now receive more than €1,100 a month. This is many times the average monthly income in Serbia and Macedonia. In Germany, the basic asylum procedure for Balkan nationals takes at least two-and-a-half months. Then a rejected asylum seeker appeals, which means he or she can stay on average another five months. If Germany wants to reduce the number of Balkan asylum applications, it need only look at its neighbours. Austria had put all Western Balkan states on a list of "countries of safe origin," shortening the decision period on asylum claims to a week.



2010, citizens of Serbia and Macedonia made 10,300 asylum requests in Germany. In 2011 the number was 8,500. However, in September 2012 the number of Serbian and Macedonian citizens submitting asylum requests reached 4,000 in one month. This was a record and the reaction in Germany was predictable. *Bild*, Germany's largest tabloid, picked up the issue. In the interview, German interior minister **Hans-Peter Friedrich** declared: "The massive inflow of Serbian and Macedonian nationals must be stopped without delay." Friedrich told *Bild Zeitung* that "We have to send a clear





signal to the relevant countries: people who are really persecuted will be accepted, economic refugees won't." In the first six months of this year, the recognition rate of claims in Germany was close to zero. Of some 5,000 asylum claims which were examined in this period, only 11 persons received humanitarian protection (which is not political asylum and is granted due to serious medical problems). Yet the number of applications continues to rise. Why are Serbian and Macedonian citizens, who are not persecuted in their countries, applying for asylum in Germany despite the clear sign that they have little chance of getting asylum? The explanation is obvious. In July 2012, the German Constitutional Court ruled that the benefits for all asylum seekers in Germany must be increased. Usually, asylum seekers in Germany are accommodated in collective centres and receive food and clothes in kind. In the past a family of four also received a stipend of €120 a month. The July ruling has increased that stipend to at least €420 a month. If the family has to purchase its food and clothing itself, it will now receive more than €1,100 a month. This is many times the average monthly income in Serbia

As almost all the asylum seekers are Roma, it is hard to avoid ethnic profiling and open discrimination if the principle of "exit controls" were systematically implemented. And all that after one of the conditions for lifting the visa barrier was for the Balkan countries to provide access to travel and identity documents for all citizens including Roma and other minorities

and Macedonia. In Germany, the basic asylum procedure for Balkan nationals takes at least two-and-a-half months. Then a rejected asylum seeker appeals, which means he or she can stay on average another five months. To understand what Germany would actually need to do to reduce the number of Balkan asylum applications, just look at its neighbours. Last year in Austria, which is even closer to the Balkans and also has large communities of Balkan people, only 380 Balkan nationals asked for asylum. Austria had put all Western Balkan states on a list of "countries of safe origin." Today it decides on asylum claims of Balkan citizens in a week. Germany could also look to the Netherlands. A few years ago, the Netherlands reformed its asylum system and now resolves most claims, including those from Balkan citizens, in an expedited fashion (eight working days after a preparation period of a few days). If a rejected asylum





seeker appeals a negative decision, the court decides within four weeks. The Netherlands registered 430 claims by Balkan citizens in 2011. In short, the solution is obvious, and it is also in the hands of concerned EU member states. Instead of advocating such solutions, however, which are in line with EU legislation and the UN Refugee Convention, the European Commission has put the blame on the governments of the Western Balkans. On 15 October this year, the commission's spokesman for home affairs, **Michele Cercone**, explained once again that visa liberalisation for the Western Balkans "comes with huge responsibilities. It is more than time now for these countries, their authorities and their citizens, to prove they can handle this huge responsibility." But what can Serb, Macedonian or Albanian politicians do to "act responsibly"? The commission demands that Balkan governments run "information awareness campaigns," carry out "exit controls" and "investigation of facilitators." Information campaigns? The potential asylum seekers know that their chances to receive international protection are minimal, but they also know what the different asylum systems

offer. Which information would prevent them from using the generous ones? Facilitators largely do not exist since there is not much money to be made with cheap bus tickets to Berlin or Luxembourg. The suggestion of "exit controls" is also insidious. As almost all the asylum seekers are Roma, it is hard to avoid ethnic profiling and open discrimination if this were systematically implemented. In fact one of the conditions for lifting the visa barrier was for the Balkan countries to provide access to travel and identity documents for all citizens including Roma and other minorities. The best way forward for reforming visa requirements would be for all countries benefiting from visa-free travel following a liberalisation process - which includes a focus on human rights - to be declared "safe countries of origin" at the EU level. Under EU asylum legislation, claims from citizens originating in safe countries of origin can be prioritised and dealt with under an accelerated procedure, as is the case in Austria today. In 1997, EU member states negotiated a protocol to the Amsterdam Treaty under which they agreed to treat each other as safe countries of origin. The asylum procedures directive, which was adopted in late 2005, mentioned Romania and Bulgaria - not yet EU members at the time - as safe countries of origin. The same directive also allowed member states to compose their own lists of safe countries. As long as the Commission continues to advocate pointless measures, and member states refuse to address the underlying issue, which is generous asylum systems that can be abused, this problem cannot be solved. Nor would a suspension of visa-free travel work unless it is permanent. The only viable and effective solution would be for EU member states to reform their own systems. EU interior ministers need to admit, and the European Commission needs to remind them, that for once it is not the Balkan countries which are failing.

## EU Enlargement Strategy

## Good news for Albania

In this year's Enlargement strategy, which is accompanied by annual reports on the progress of individual countries in the accession process, the European Commission for the fourth time recommends the opening of accession negotiations with Macedonia, and proposes that Albania should be granted a candidate status and that negotiations with Turkey should be continued. The Commission also judges feasible the opening of negotiations on the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Kosovo, upon fulfilment of some short-term priorities. Bosnia and Herzegovina, on the other hand, made only limited progress in fulfilling the political criteria. The Commission notes that Serbia's progress towards EU will depend on the development of its relations with Kosovo, and reminds that it has continued to monitor Croatia's reforms and will prepare the final report for the spring. The Strategy maintains that the enlargement is an effective tool for economic consolidation, as well as for promotion of reforms and fostering economic growth in the region. In the times of crisis, a framework of strict but fair conditionality combined with the prospect of accession drives political and economic reforms, and mitigates the risk of resistance to essential reforms. However, the Commission is also determined to take stock of the lessons learned in the earlier enlargements: "The rule of law is firmly anchored at the heart of enlargement policy. From now on, accession negotiations on these chapters will be opened early in the process and closed at the end to allow maximum time for solid track records to be developed with the aim of irreversibility of reforms", explains the Commission. In addition to the rule of law, the Commission is concerned about the freedom of expression in a number of these countries. "The Commission plans to hold a conference for the media and civil society stakeholders from the Western Balkans and Turkey. The results and follow-up of this conference will be taken into account in the Commission's monitoring and reporting", warns the Strategy. The Commission reiterated that regional cooperation is an essential element of the Stabilisation and Association process, and that some issues in this area remain a serious concern, such as war

crimes, refugee return, treatment of minorities



and ensuring equal rights for all citizens. It also warns that strengthening economic recovery in the enlargement countries is paramount, and that the EU will continue financial assistance to the region, especially to the newly established Western Balkans Investment Framework, which will be used to help prepare and support, in close cooperation with the international financial institutions, those investments most needed for boosting growth and jobs. "In view of the far reaching changes to the economic governance of the EU underway, the Commission will continue to inform and further associate enlargement countries to this process. It will gradually adapt in this respect the existing economic surveillance of enlargement countries and examine the possibility of more targeted approach to the issues of competitiveness and employment", reads the Enlargement Strategy.

## Croatia

The Commission concludes that Croatia has continued to make progress in adopting and implementing EU legislation and is now completing its alignment with the *acquis*. The Commission has nonetheless highlighted areas where further efforts are still necessary and a limited number of issues where increased efforts are required in the coming months. This concerns in particular the areas of competition policy, judiciary and fundamental rights – especially judicial efficiency – and justice, freedom and security. It is essential that Croatia



sharpens its focus to ensure that its preparations are completed on time for the final monitoring report to be presented by the Commission in spring 2013.

## FYR Macedonia

The political criteria continue to be sufficiently met. The government has put the EU agenda at the centre of its activity. The High Level Accession Dialogue with the Commission served as a catalyst for accelerating reforms and has contributed to substantial progress in a number of key policy areas. The reform momentum needs to be sustained in all areas in particular to ensure implementation. Focus on the rule of law, including as regards freedom of expression, and on inter-ethnic relations and reconciliation needs to be maintained. The Commission recommends for a fourth time that accession negotiations be opened with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The Commission believes that moving the accession process of this country to its next stage is necessary in order to consolidate the pace and sustainability of reforms, mitigating the risk of any reversal in this process. It will also bolster the credibility of the EU and act as an encouragement to reform efforts elsewhere in the region. The Commission underlines that maintaining good neighbourly relations, including a negotiated and mutually acceptable solution to the name issue, under the auspices of the UN, remains essential. A decision of the European Council to open accession negotiations would contribute to creating the conditions conducive to finding such a solution.

## Serbia

The European Council of March 2012 granted Serbia the status of candidate country. Serbia continues on its way to sufficiently fulfilling the political criteria and the conditions of the Stabilisation and Association process. Serbia needs however to pay particular attention to the rule of law, notably the judiciary where recent setbacks underline the need for renewed commitment to pursue reforms, and ensure its independence, impartiality and efficiency. Also in light of recent events, special attention must be paid to the rights of vulnerable groups and to the independence of key institutions such as the Central Bank. Serbia should also continue



to constructively engage in regional cooperation and strengthen relations with neighbouring countries. The momentum of reforms needs to be re-invigorated and further progress made towards a visible and sustainable improvement of relations with Kosovo. In line with the Council Conclusions of 5 December 2011 as endorsed by the European Council of 9 December 2011 on the conditions for opening accession negotiations with Serbia, the Commission will present a report as soon as it will have assessed that Serbia has achieved the necessary degree of compliance with the membership criteria, in particular the key priority of taking steps towards a visible and sustainable improvement of relations with Kosovo. The Commission hopes that constructive engagement on the full range of issues between Serbia and Kosovo will ensure that both of them can continue on their respective paths towards the EU, avoiding that either can block the other in these efforts. This process should gradually result in the full normalisation of relations between Serbia and Kosovo with the prospect of both able to fully exercise their rights and fulfil their responsibilities within the EU. Addressing the problems in northern Kosovo, while respecting the territorial integrity of Kosovo and the particular needs of the local population, will be an essential element of this process.

## Albania

Improved dialogue between government and opposition, especially after the November 2011 agreement, has allowed Albania to make good progress towards fulfilling the political criteria for membership of the EU. Albania has

delivered on a number of substantial reforms against the 12 key priorities identified by the Commission as a precondition for the opening of accession negotiations. Albania has met four of the key priorities, namely those concerning the proper functioning of parliament, the adoption of pending laws requiring reinforced majority, the appointment of the ombudsman and the hearing and voting processes for key institutions and the modification of the legislative framework for elections. Albania is well on its way towards meeting the two key priorities regarding public administration reform and improving the treatment of detainees. Progress against the remaining key priorities included some significant steps, notably the adoption of the law on administrative courts, lifting of immunities for high-level public officials and judges, increase of seizures of criminal assets, the adoption of a comprehensive strategy on property reform, and amendments to the criminal code strengthening sanctions for domestic violence. In view of this progress, the Commission recommends that the Council should grant Albania the status of a candidate country subject to completion of key measures in the areas of judicial and public administration reform and revision of the parliamentary rules of procedure. The Commission will report to the Council as soon as the necessary progress has been achieved. In its report, the Commission will also take into account the commitment demonstrated by Albania to fight corruption and organised crime, including by pro-active investigations and prosecutions of such cases. In order for the Commission to recommend the opening of accession negotiations, it would need in particular to see sustained implementation of commitments already undertaken and completion of the remaining key priorities which have not been met in full. A particular focus is required on: conducting elections in line with European and international standards; strengthening the independence, efficiency and accountability of judicial institutions; determined efforts in the fight against corruption and organised crime, including pro-active investigations and prosecution; effective measures to reinforce the protection of human rights and antidiscrimination policies; and, implementation of property rights. The successful conduct of Parliamentary elections in 2013 will be a crucial test of cross-party

commitment to the new electoral reform and a pre-condition for any recommendation to open negotiations. Sustainable political dialogue and continued efforts in all the areas covered by the key priorities will remain essential to implement reform and secure Albania's EU future.

## Bosnia and Herzegovina

Limited progress has been made towards meeting the political criteria and achieving more functional, coordinated and sustainable institutional structures. Within the framework of the Stabilisation and Association Process, Bosnia and Herzegovina continued to engage constructively with the EU on a Structured Dialogue on Justice. The High level Dialogue on the Accession Process launched in June is the key forum for engagement on requirements for the EU integration process. In this respect, the Commission regrets that the results so far remain below expectations. A shared vision among the political representatives on the overall direction and future of the country and its institutional set-up remains absent. Meeting the conditions for the entry into force of the SAA and for a credible EU membership application remains a matter of priority, as does the establishment of an effective coordination mechanism between various levels of government so that the country can speak with one voice on EU matters. The country's leaders need to demonstrate the political will to reach consensus and to realise with concrete actions the EU aspirations of the country and its citizens.

## Kosovo

In parallel to this Communication, the Commission has adopted a Communication on a Feasibility Study for a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Kosovo. This study confirms that an SAA can be concluded between the EU and Kosovo in a situation where EU Member States maintain different views on status. The Commission will propose negotiating directives for an SAA once Kosovo has made progress in meeting a number of short term priorities. It is essential that Kosovo continues implementing in good faith all agreements reached between Belgrade and Pristina to date and that it engages constructively on the full range of issues with the facilitation of the EU.

CCE study on the municipal spending on media and related services

## “Pobjeda” privileged, Nikšić generous

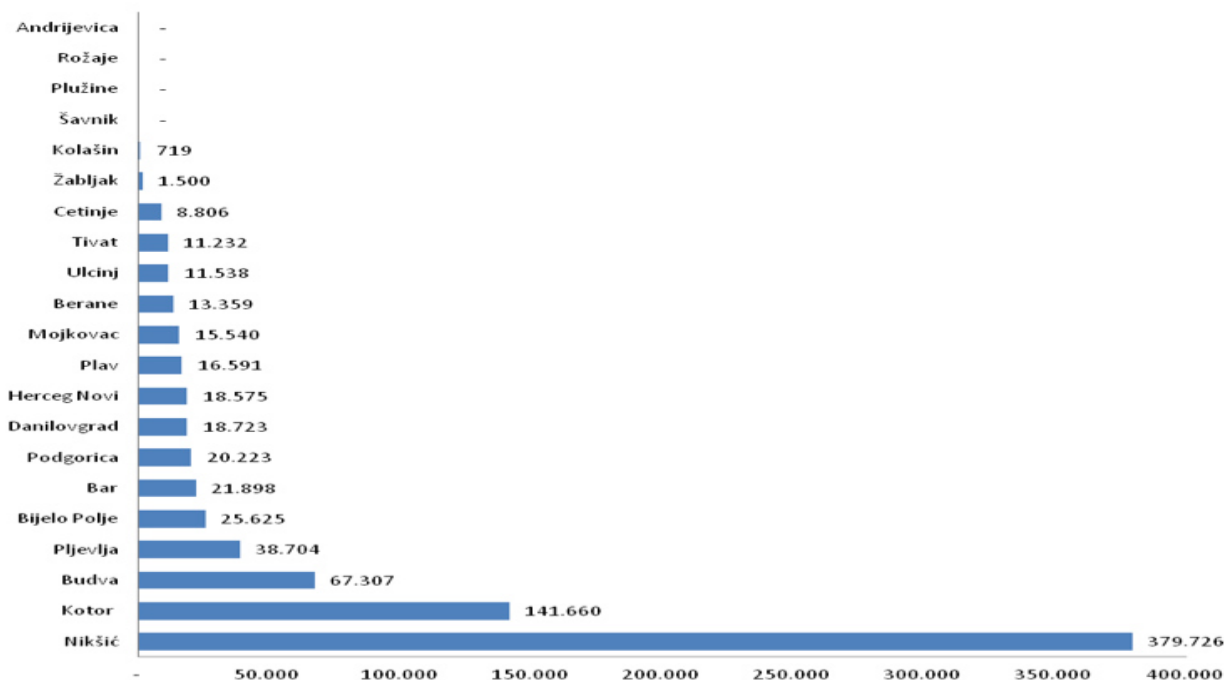
Montenegrin municipalities do not treat all media equally, and the criteria by which they choose where to advertise or commission other services are extremely unclear, and do not seem to correspond to the quality or availability of the medium or its popularity. These are the conclusions of a study conducted by the Centre for Civic Education (CCE) on the amounts, purpose and direction of spending on the media and related services by the local governments. CCE warns that the citizens should know how their money is spent and what benefits they have from it.

The research shows that over the last years Montenegrin municipalities spent 811 726 euro on media and related services. Adding similar spending by other agencies, such as Ministries, the Government and the Parliament, the overall public outlays for such purposes amount to 2 641 485.83 euro.

Municipality of Nikšić is the record spender, having spent 380 000 euro for media and related services in 2011. Municipality of Kotor is the far second with 17.45% of total spending, or a little above 141 500 euro, followed by Budva (67 307 euro) and Pljevlja (38 804 euro). At the other extreme, Kolašin spent only 719 euro on media and advertisement, and Žabljak 1 500.

According to CCE's study, Šavnik, Plužine, Rožaje and Andrijevica didn't spend any money for these purposes. The data have been collected directly from municipalities through requests for free access to information.

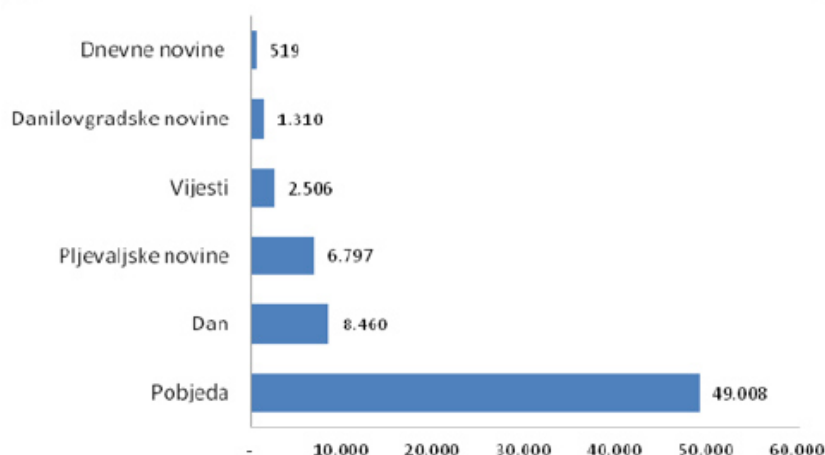
Most of the funding in support of media activities or for advertisement of municipality's programmes in radio and TV went to RTV “Nikšić” (63.3% of the total). This establishment received as much as 358 320 euro from the Municipality of Nikšić, while radio “Ko-



Total expenditure per municipality



## Printed media



tor” got some 94 000 from its municipality.

Of all electronic media the least money went to the national broadcaster RTCG – 0.38%, or only 2 155 euro. “This entire sum came from the Municipality of Danilovgrad – 1 755 euro to broadcast New Year’s greetings and 400 euro for promotion services in the public broadcaster”.

Of the total amount spent on the printed media, “Pobjeda” received 71.4%, or 49 000, while “Dan” got 8 406 euro, local “Pljevaljske novine” 6 798, and “Vijesti” only 2 500 euro, or 3.65% of the total.

“According to our earlier study, Parliament of Montenegro spent 11 319 euro on the printed media in 2011 (2 116 on “Vijesti”, 1 785 for “Dan” and 7 418 for “Pobjeda”. If we add up 49 008 euro from the local governments, 7 418 from the Parliament and 189 369 from the central Government and its agencies, we can see that in 2011 alone “Pobjeda” received 245 795 euro of public money, which is more than all other printed media put together”, says CCE.

The research, says CCE, showed that only a handful of municipalities used online media services: Budva, Bar, Bijelo Polje, Danilovgrad and Cetinje. “According to information available to CCE, news portal “Analitika” received

5 728 euro from the local governments: 1 989 from Danilovgrad and Cetinje and 1 750 from Bijelo Polje”.

In the course of 2011 municipalities also used the services of marketing agencies as well as production companies. Municipality of Budva paid 45 603 euro to the production company “MM production” for the TV-show “Budva on the sea foam”. “Media pro”, which, according to CCE’s information, offers photographing services, received 7 901 euro from the municipality of Bar, while the municipality of Berane paid “Grand production” 2 650 euro for a “performance contract”.

Local governments spent little on public opinion polls: only Budva and the Capital City commissioned a polling agency “Damar”, and spent 3 509 and 10 723 euro respectively on their services.

CCE’s research project on the amounts, purpose and direction of spending for media and related services by Montenegrin local governments is an activity within the broader “Media and democracy” programme. The project lasted between June and October 2012 and covered all municipalities in the country. The aim of the project was to examine the attitude of the local governments towards the media and similar service providers, and contribute to raising awareness on responsible spending of public money.

## XV Generation of Human Rights School completes the programme

Between 4 and 7 October in Tivat Centre for Civic Education (CCE), with support of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs organised *XV Generation of Human Rights School*, as part of the Regional Programme of Education for Human Rights and Active Citizenship in the Western Balkans. The school brought together 19 high school students from Podgorica, Cetinje, Nikšić, Bar, Ulcinj, Bijelo Polje, Pljevlja and Rožaje. The programme offered an overview of the concept, culture and principles of human rights, a detailed analysis of the international documents in the field of human rights, standards and recommendations of international organizations, and an introduction to mechanisms and instruments of human rights protection, as well as an overview of the state of human rights in Montenegro. In addition to lectures, the participants had a chance to discuss various aspects of human rights through workshops, forum theatre and film screenings. During the final session the organisers presented the work of CCE's Youth Group.

During these four days the participant worked with renowned experts in the field of human rights, representatives of public institutions in charge of the promotion and protection of human rights, NGO activists campaigning for the rights of LGBT persons, persons with disabilities, women and Roma, film directors, journalists and psychologists. The participants were especially eager to learn about the role of young people in the processes of transitional justice and reconciliation with the past. The School's major contribution is that it offers young people from different environments a chance to meet and discuss issues which are otherwise absent from their formal curriculum, as well as to develop new friendships, which according to most participants are a lasting achievement of the School. The School was led by **Petar Đukanović**, CCE programme coordinator.

## Getting to know Berlin

Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and the Centre for Study of Social Democracy from Belgrade organised a study visit to Berlin between 20 and 26 October. The participants were representatives of political parties with a social-democratic profile, non-governmental organisations and trade unions, as well as interested individuals from Serbia, Montenegro and Croatia. The goal of the visit was to promote ideas and values of social democracy by getting to know various German institutions, and through lectures and discussions with the representative of these institutions, as well as with experts on the South-East European region.

CCE's representatives in the study visit were: Željka Četković (programme associate), **Tamara Milaš** (programme associate) and Radoš Mušović (volunteer), and among the other representatives of Montenegro were also CCE alumni Blagota Marunović (advisor to the Parliament of Montenegro) and Mijat Tomić (advisor to the Ministry of Defence). In addition to the official programme, they attended a separate meeting in the Montenegrin Embassy in Berlin, where they were received by the Ambassador **Vera Kuliš**.

## European adult education and life-long learning

Between 15 and 19 October in Brussels the *European Association for Adult Education* organised training for young cadres in the field of adult education. The participants were members of organisations active in adult education and of those involving, directly or indirectly, adult persons in

their programmes. The programme consisted of lectures, visits to institutions such as the European Parliament, European Commission etc, as well as exchange of experiences to give the participants a comprehensive picture of the state of adult education in Europe, as well as in the South-East European region. The participants were representatives of non-governmental organisations, as well as of state and local governments from Sweden, Germany, UK, Turkey, Serbia, Macedonia, Belarus, Norway, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro.

**Nikola Donović**, CCE programme coordinator, participated on behalf of CCE. CCE's participation was financed by the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association (DvV International).

### Strengthening the role of NGO in politics

Between 15 and 19 October, NGO activists from the Western Balkans and Turkey had a chance to visit the most influential civil society organisations in Romania. The study visit "*Partnership for development and improvement of your organisation's role in tackling political problems*", aimed to strengthen the capacities of these organisations, through exchange of experiences, to step up their involvement in the resolution of various political problems and development of partnership between organisations. The key areas covered by the study visit were: economic and social development, human rights, civic education and activism, philanthropy and volunteering, environment, women's rights and gender equality, education and a research. Among the participants was also **Damir Nikočević**, CCE's PR and programme coordinator.

### Prevention and response to genocide and related crimes

On 11 and 12 October in Budva, Centre for Post-Conflict Research from Sarajevo, with support of the UN Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, organised a seminar "*Framework for the prevention and response to genocide and related crimes and violations*". The participants were representatives of civil society organisations in the region interested in the prevention of genocide in the Western Balkans. They were offered an overview of the prevention institutions in the region, as well as of the possible entry points for the prevention and response to the risks of war crimes. The participants also discussed policies, legal and operational framework of the Office of the Special Adviser from the socio-historical point of view, analysed genocide and mass violence, and in the course of the discussion mapped the activities of civil society organisations as part of the early warning system and genocide prevention. The meeting was moderated by renowned experts Dr **Adam Jones** from the University of Columbia and Dr **David Simon** from the University of Yale, as well as representatives of the UN Office of the Special Adviser for the Prevention of Genocide. **Mirela Rebronja**, CCE programme coordinator, also participated in the seminar.

## DAAD-OSI Masters and PhD Scholarships for Balkan Students

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and Open Society Scholarship Programs are collaborating on a joint program for graduates from the Balkans. The DAAD/OSI Scholarships aim to bolster the capacity of the participating countries to provide quality instruction and research in the social sciences and humanities, and to create a network of scholars from these countries in these fields with colleagues in Germany to enhance the international exchange of ideas and academic best practice. A variety of academic opportunities are available to scholars in participating countries to pursue advanced degrees and training at top level universities in Germany. Grantees will be clustered at host institutions to build cohorts of graduates and professors with a common frame of reference, generating international and intra-regional connections into the future. The grants are aimed at students with either a Bachelors degree or a Masters degree or who have completed 5 years of a diploma. The Program is open to scholars from the following countries in 2013: Albania, Bosnia, Kosovo, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia. Grants are issued for Masters' level studies (2 years) and for Doctoral studies (3 years). Written applications will be collected up to the generic deadline of the 1 November, each year by the local DAAD-IC office representatives or the German Embassy directly. In January or February of the following year, selection committees and interviews will commence for all applicants. For more information, please visit: <http://www.daad.de/en/index.html>

## UN Alliance of civilizations Forum

The 5th Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations **will take place in** Vienna, Austria, from February 26 to 28, 2013. This forum will bring together a vast array of participants including youth, political and corporate leaders, civil society activists, representatives of faith communities, journalists, etc. to work together and agree on joint actions to improve relations across cultures and religions and build a lasting peace. All selected youth participants will be provided with a round-trip international ticket to Vienna (most direct route, economy class) and accommodation once in Vienna. Meals and coffee breaks will be provided. For more information, please visit: <http://vienna5unaoc.org/>

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