

European pulse

Electronic monthly magazine for European Integration

No 92, May 2013



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**Farmers and the Ministry of Agriculture on the road to EU
– spilled milk not a Montenegrin invention**

interview

Head of the EU Delegation to Montenegro
Mitja Drobnič

challenges in EU

Europe in pursuit of balance between
environment and economic competitiveness



Foreword: **The return**

Vladan Žugrić

On the last day of May, Montenegrin MPs passed almost unanimously the decision to establish an inquiry committee to discuss the recordings scandal and the conclusions on restoring the public trust in the election process. The next step is to set up a working group to prepare various amendments related to the election process and to speed up the adoption of constitutional amendments necessary for the opening of accession negotiation Chapters 23 and 24. This was done following European officials' very clear messages that Montenegro's EU path could be blocked for an indefinite period unless we start solving immediately what the Commissioner for Enlargement **Štefan Füle** called "the piled up problems at Montenegro's political stage." Even though they initially rejected the opposition proposals to initiate parliamentary inquiry for the recordings scandal and kept reiterating the presidential elections were fair, the Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS) MPs felt the EU pressure on their backs and raised their hands in favour of the inquiry board and conclusions on the need to restore confidence in the election process. The latter was an implicit acknowledgement that the elections organized and supervised by institutions fully controlled by the DPS can no longer be trusted. At the other side of the fence, the Democratic Front (DF), or at least its biggest part, jumped at the first decent opportunity to end their boycott of the Parliament. One way or the other, Montenegro is now back on its European track and the chances to open Chapters 23 and 24 by this fall now seem likelier. This depends primarily on how the Government will draft the action plans for the chapters, on the prosecution's and Parliament's inquiry in the recordings scandal, and on whether the next two or three months will provide tangible results in the fight against corruption and organized crime.

Calendar

- 09 May **Europe Day celebrations** / European Union is not a gift you get, it's something you need to earn, said the Head of the EU Delegation to Montenegro, Ambassador **Mitja Drobnič** at the Europe Day reception which hosted, among others, Foreign Minister **Lukšić**, Executive Director of Centre for Civic Education (CCE) **Daliborka Uljarević**, and Podgorica Mayor **Miomir Mugoša**. The celebrations also took place on the Republic Square. A number of related events and activities were organized by the EU Delegation to Montenegro, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, and CCE.
- 13 April **Government publishes Draft Action Plans** / Government published Draft Action Plans for Chapters 23 and 24. The public discussion was held until 18 May, by which time all interested parties were expected to send their inputs. A roundtable discussion took place two days later.
- 15 April **Füle: Time to solve piled-up problems** / Enlargement Commissioner **Štefan Füle** noted that 'challenges in the political arena in Montenegro are piling up and that it is now time they start being dealt with.' Füle noted that one of the challenges is citizen's trust in public institutions, thus underlining that some of the other challenges concern laggard reforms, the need to strengthen rule of law and an appropriate court and political follow-up to the 'Recordings' scandal.
- 25 April **Drobnič: First Chapters 23 and 24, then the others** / EU Ambassador to Montenegro **Mitja Drobnič** said that certain EU member states took a position that new negotiating chapters should be opened only after there have been some 'positive trends' concerning constitutional amendments, the 'Recordings' scandal investigation, and removing flaws in the electoral process.
- 31 April **Tread wisely, MPs** / On the last day of May, Montenegrin MPs passed almost unanimously the decision to establish an inquiry committee to discuss the recordings scandal and the conclusions on restoring the public trust in the election process. The next step is to set up a working group to prepare various amendments related to the election process and to speed up the adoption of constitutional amendments necessary for the opening of accession negotiation Chapters 23 and 24.

After Croatia's Accession



Milan Nič

The author is a senior associate at the Central European Policy Institute (CEPI)

There are two big pieces of news about EU enlargement in 2013 – a good and a bad one. The good news is that the euro crisis has not killed the enlargement process. On the contrary, without much fanfare, the accession process of the Western Balkans to the European Union is steadily moving ahead, albeit at a slower pace. The pivotal event this year will be Croatia becoming the 28th EU member-state. The bad news is that the first EU enlargement since the euro crisis will be also the last in this decade, at least for South-Eastern Europe.

One thing is clear: as EU membership for the other Balkan countries becomes a distant prospect, stagnation trends as well as public disenchantment with the EU are going to be reinforced.

Four important trends and challenges can be observed:

The Croatia test. The entry of Croatia into the EU is a big test of the benefits that European integration can still bring to a stagnant Balkan country. The other Balkan candidates will pay close attention. Will the inflow of foreign direct investment to Croatia increase? Will EU funds help to create more growth and infrastructure development even though Zagreb's fiscal space for co-financing is almost non-existent? Will Croatia be relegated to a second-class member state with little or no influence? Much will depend on the Croats themselves.

It is in Croatia's interest to help its neighbours (among them its former enemies) to join the EU as soon as possible, but Croatia could also misuse its seat behind the EU table to score political points, reinforcing new divisions in the region and free riding on the huge credit and political investment behind its own EU membership. If Croatia is unable to leverage the opportunities EU membership brings, it would have wider repercussions for the region.

Exclusion in a multi-speed Europe? The emergence of a multi-speed Europe has downgraded the value of EU membership, and relegated the Western Balkans to the "outermost circle" of European politics. Their economies are closely interconnected with the EU, which is by far the most important source of their financial flows – either in the form of foreign direct investment or labour remittances from abroad. More than 90% of the banking sector in the Balkan countries is owned by banks from Austria, Italy, Greece and Slovenia, which have significantly deleveraged their loans and exposure in the face of huge problems at home. Such interdependence exposes the region to the economic slump in Southern Europe, and to the ongoing problems in the euro zone.



Long-term stagnation? After a sluggish recovery, Balkan economies are now struggling with a doubledip recession, characterised by a decline in outputs and sharp increases in unemployment. The World Bank, in its December 2012 report, warned that no other region in Europe is experiencing greater shocks from the ongoing crisis. Such troubles are to a large extent also due to policy failures at home – lack of competitiveness and reforms, strong monopolies with political patronage, and old infrastructure. New sustainable growth needs to be based on accelerated structural reforms, and on major infrastructure projects of regional significance (highways, rail, energy, gas, tourism).

Strategic adjustment or desperation? The new Balkan approach is a combination of slow EU integration along with a search for new loans and investment from the East. Last year, Turkey was among the top three foreign investors in Croatia and Serbia. The Serbian government is courting new loans from Russia and Asia as it needs \$6 billion this year to service its debt. In addition, state assets in energy and agriculture are being sold to Arab sheiks and Azeri oligarchs. Such diversification of investment partnerships, now common across the region, reflects larger shifts in the global economy, but also shows a degree of desperation. In any case, it will make the EU a less dominant partner than before.

Although the EU is still referred as the "indispensable power" in the region, it might have to struggle more to impose its agenda in the near future. Deeper crisis could bring the Balkans region closer to Europe – but only if the EU keeps its door open and reframes the enlargement agenda in economic terms, as a credible blueprint for sustainable growth and new jobs. More than new strategies, however, we first need to renew something fundamental: the ethos of shared responsibility, of Europe for the Western Balkans and of the Balkan countries for themselves.

Excerpt from a text published at CEPI website

Are the farmers and the Ministry of Agriculture ready to adopt standards of the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

Will they milk the cows in vain?

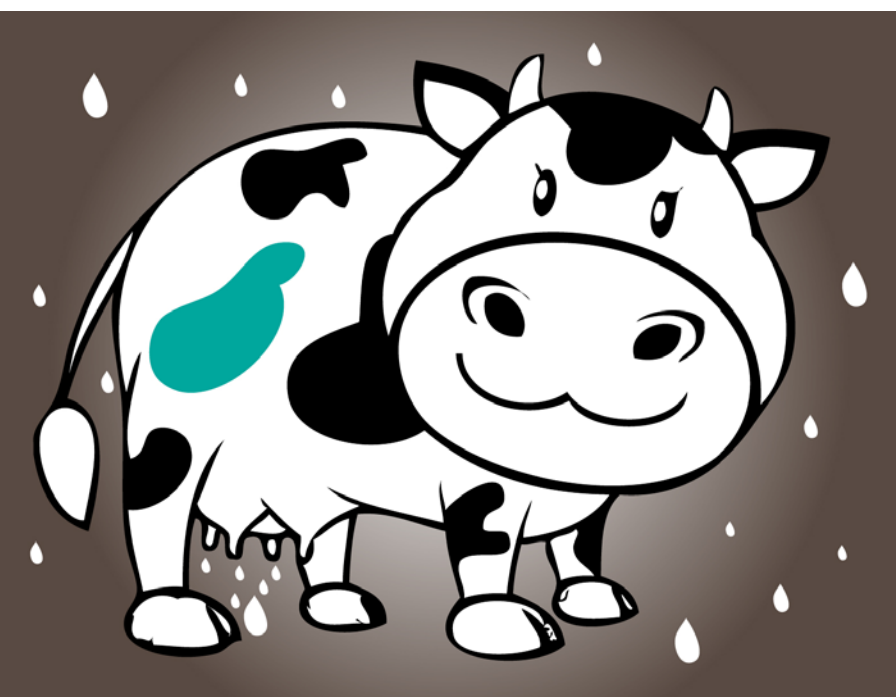


Damir Nikočević

Montenegrin dairy farms do not seem to have a very bright future. Bad government policy in this field – where more attention was paid to the number of votes they could get from rural households than to the number of livestock units and what kind of shape the farms were in – resulted in a very small number of milk farmers who made progress in obtaining the necessary knowledge and technology. It seems that the way out is in smart merging of cattle farms and their modernization, and this will require a great deal of commercial bank loans. In any case, the aflatoxins or the purchase price – the milk is still at the centre of public attention.

The purchase price in Bosnia and Herzegovina is 26 cent per litre, in Serbia 28, in Croatia 33, and in Slovenia – which is an EU member state – as well as in Germany – the most developed EU member state – the purchase price is 30 cent per litre.

When Montenegro joins the EU, it will become part of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) which has been developing and reforming for more than 50 years, and has come to be possibly the most complex of all EU policies.



At five to twelve, the farmers were spilling milk, at five past twelve, new minister for agriculture **Petar Ivanović** stated that farmers should spill less and work more, reduce production cost and pay the taxes. The question is whether the farmers had the right to ask for the increase of milk purchase price from 34 to 37 cent per litre, notably having in mind the prices in the region and in the EU.

Assistant Minister of Agriculture **Danijela Stolica** stated for the *European Pulse* that 'in Montenegro, the average purchase price for milk is already among the highest in the region. The basic premium the farmers get for milk they produce for a registered dairy is seven cent per litre. In addition to this, farmers who produce over 4,000 litres of milk per month get an additional cent per litre. During the second quartile (April-May-June) all farmers get an additional cent per litre to help them overcome the challenges of the increase of cattle food prices. Apart from premiums paid by the Ministry, farmers also get premiums from their respective municipalities (up to 3 cents per litre). Average purchase price for milk paid by dairies is 34 cent per litre (ranging from 30 to 37 cent depending on milk category). This means that farmers get 47 to 48 cent per litre of milk they produce for dairies, while the larger producers even get up to 51 cent. The threat of milk supply interruptions and remarks on 'trade lobby', 'nonexistent profit', and 'somebody else's gain at farmer's expense' are part of the common vocabulary of the farmers. However, Minister Ivanović was the one who was using more arguments. He said that 76% of the agricultural budget was allocated to support livestock and



dairy industries, while the viticulture industry (which makes considerable share of our export activity) got 51 times less.

On the other hand, in 2013 only 20.3 million Euros were allocated from the state budget (1.7%) to support the agricultural sector, which is considerably less than in some larger states. Croatia, for example, allocated 4.45% of its national budget for agricultural sector, Austria 2.8%, Hungary 2.66%, Poland 3.52%, Slovenia 5.1%, France 3.47%, Switzerland 5.8%, Serbia 3.7%, and FYRoM 4%. In addition to this, agriculture budget in Montenegro gets smaller every year. However, Ms Stolica noted that the situation in cattle and dairy industry has been improving. Although the number of livestock units has been decreasing over the past few years, the situation was brought under control in 2012. Although the number of litters of cow milk produced in 2011 was the largest since 2004, the number of cows and calf heifers decreased from 85.000 to 62.000 in the same period. Among the key problems, Ms Stolica underlined small and divided estates, small farms, poor quality of nutrition for animals, and inadequate mechanization.

She also says that the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development plans to support investments in agricultural households. Thus far, the greatest financial support for the development of cattle industry was invested through World Bank's MIDAS project: '155 projects have been supported in the field of cattle industry. The overall investment is worth

In June 2013, the EU introduced The Single Payment Scheme. This means that one does not qualify for subsidies by livestock unit, but by owning the land which is suitable for agricultural activity, regardless of whether one owns a milk farm, a cattle farm, or perennial plantations. Premiums per litre of milk we give to farmers do not exist in the EU, says Assistant Minister Danijela Stolica.

over 2.9 million Euros.' In addition to this, she noted that the farmers need to undergo certain trainings the Ministry has planned to carry out in the following period. Ms Stolica said that she believes the farmers' protests are no more than expected resistance to measures the Ministry wants to implement to 'align the agricultural sector with best practices in Europe and the world.'

When Montenegro enters the EU, it will become part of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), which has been developing and reforming for more than 50 years, and has come to be possibly the most complex of all EU policies. Montenegrin dairy industry should benefit from the opening of the market, having in mind that Montenegro will have access to the market of over 500 million people, where possibilities for selling products are many. The farmers will also have the right to apply for development and structural funds. All of the above are opportunities for further development of cattle and dairy industry in the country, but the question is how to adjust to the new conditions and whether Montenegro and its administration are ready to accept CAP standards. When it became a candidate country, Montenegro became eligible to use the funds from the fifth IPA component, concerning agricultural development. However, it is necessary that state administration prepares for decentralised management of EU funds (Decentralised Implementation System – DIS). CGO has recently reminded the public that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European



Integration announced on several occasions that Montenegro will introduce the DIS by the end of 2011, i.e. get the accreditation to manage EU funds and transfer the ownership over this process from the European Commission to Montenegro.

Ms Stolica explained the situation in Montenegro and the things our farmers can expect upon the country's entering the EU: 'In June 2013, the EU introduced the Single Payment Scheme. This means that one does not qualify for subsidies by livestock unit, but by owning the land which is suitable for agricultural activity, regardless of whether one owns a milk farm, cattle fattening farm, or perennial plantations. Premiums per litre of milk we give to farmers do not exist in EU member states. Croatia, which will enter the EU on 1 July, has also abolished these payments for farmers. In addition to this, in order to exercise the right to subsidies, European farmer has to meet a number of standards which concern animal wellbeing, environmental protection, plants health and production safety.'

Accession of the countries of the fourth and the fifth enlargement resulted in lower agricultural taxes and lower milk prices. However, the production costs in new member states are higher than in the rest of the EU and this

Cost analysis showed that, in most EU countries, farmers need approximately 40 cows to cover their expenses in milk industry and around 70 cows to have an acceptable life. In the EU, only 40% of herds are larger than 40 cows.

has put an additional pressure on the need to increase the number of livestock units, as well as per-animal milk production. **Vedran Stapić**, project leader of Agrokлуб.com – the most visited agricultural portal in Croatia – said for the *European Pulse* that the requests of Croatian milk farmers in the negotiation process with the EU were focused on agreeing the quotas and improving the quality of national products. He underlined that many changes occurred, including investments in new facilities, changes in the system of agricultural production, but also financial decay of many: 'Hoping to create a greater number of farms with more than 50-100 dairy cows, the state subsidized many small investors who had neither sufficient resources (land, mechanization) nor enough knowledge (economic and technical). Today, such investors experience great financial troubles.'

Mr Stapić believes that low prices of milk and meat are a serious problem for livestock breeders, and that many of them are still burdened by loans. He does not expect great progress in this area upon the country's entry to the EU because, as he pointed out, 'the situation in dairy industry is bad in many parts of the EU as well.' One of the ways to facilitate milk production and repayment of loans in times of great production costs, which has also been discussed in Croatia, is the merging of milk farmers' businesses and investment in milk processing plants. Mini-dairies were a response to big milk processing companies with whose purchase prices the farmers were been satisfied. Additional advantage of this approach was the concept of self-employment. The overall situation in the agricultural sector in Croatia resulted in the number of milk farmers decreasing from 58.715 to 23.948 in



the period 2003–2008. Cost analysis showed that in most EU countries farmers need approximately 40 cows to cover their expenses in milk industry and around 70 cows to have an acceptable life. In the EU, only 40% of herds are larger than 40 cows. One of the commitments Montenegro will have to comply with in the course of the negotiation process with the EU is the establishment of a Payments Agency for agriculture, fisheries, and rural development, which will – in the capacity of a public institution – implement market and structural support to the agricultural sector, fisheries industry, and rural development. A similar thing happened in Croatia. Upon Croatia's accession to the EU, the Agency will implement the standards financed from the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), and the European Fisheries Fund (EFF). Apart from this Agency, there is another – Croatian Agricultural Agency – which acts through regional offices across the Croatian territory and implements policies of the Ministry of Agriculture. In response to the question on how Croatia's accession to the EU will affect the export of milk and dairy products, Stapić said that he thinks only big dairies ('Vindija,' 'Dukat,' and 'Meggle') will be able to benefit from access to the big market,

Agroklub.com web portal manager from Croatia Vedran Stapić says that many changes took place in agricultural industry of that country – investment in new facilities, changes in the system of agricultural production, but also financial decay of many: 'Hoping to create a greater number of farms with more than 50–100 dairy cows, the state subsidized many small investors who had neither sufficient resources (land, mechanization) nor enough knowledge (economic and technical). Today, such investors experience great financial troubles.'

because it is difficult to talk about exports when the available quantities are insufficient to cover even the domestic market.

Assistant Minister of Agriculture Danijela Stolica believes that Montenegro's entry to the EU will ensure much greater funds for agricultural sector. She underlined that the farmers who comply with the CAP standards will have access to considerably greater subsidies and added that Montenegrin farmers from the mountainous areas will also be able to use the funds for agro-ecological purposes, such as payments for pasture maintenance. She also said that Montenegrin agriculture, due to its specificities, cannot compete in production volumes at the EU market, thus underlining that the chance of Montenegrin agricultural sector lies in building on its traditional, high-quality and organic national products.

Mr Stapić had a clear recommendation for his Montenegrin colleagues: 'Plan all development measures which you will need to implement carefully in order to increase competitiveness of your products, and use well all manoeuvring possibilities and insurance instruments. It is important that the investments are managed by those who know what entrepreneurship is and have the knowledge of all technological details of milk production.'



Identical tobacco packages

Ireland recently became the first EU member state which introduced uniform cigarette packages. The Irish Ministry of Health said that, according

to the new rules, all labels, logos, markings, colours and graphical images will have to be removed from tobacco products sold in Ireland. Before the law enters into force, it first has to be confirmed in the Parliament. According to the plan, the cigarette brand will be of neutral colour, which is only yet to be decided on.



Four scenarios for EUR cents

The European Union is discussing the future of 1 and 2 EUR cent coins, as their production is clearly a loss-making activity for the euro area

Since 2002, the eurozone members issued more than 45 billion of these coins, while the loss based on the difference between the face value of the coins and the price paid by the state to get them pointed at an estimated total cumulative loss of €1.4 billion. The Commission has suggested four possible scenarios for the future of 1 and 2 euro cent coins. The Commission noted that what should be taken into account are the cost-benefits of producing and issuing the coins, and the attitude of the general public towards the coins. The first scenario forces the status quo, i.e. that the 1 and 2 cent coins continue to be issued under today's conditions. The second scenario foresees issuance at reduced costs by changing the material composition of the coins, or by increasing the efficiency of the coin production, or both. The third suggestion concerns ceasing the issuance of these denominations and withdrawal of coins in circulation through retailers and banks within a pre-established short time period. According to the fourth scenario, the issuance of coins would cease, while the coins would remain legal tender until they gradually disappear from circulation.

Hourly labour cost 23.4 EUR per hour

In 2012, the average hourly labour cost, including in the agricultural sector and public administration, was estimated to 23.4 EUR

per hour in the EU, and 28 EUR per hour in the eurozone. However, the average hourly labour cost estimates mask considerable differences between the EU member states, which range from 3.7 EUR per hour in Bulgaria to 39 EUR in Sweden. Eurostat statistics also showed that from 2008 to 2012 hourly labour cost in both the EU and the eurozone increased by more than 8%. Sector-wise, the highest increase occurred in industry – 24.2 EUR per hour in the EU and 30.3 in eurozone. In services, hourly labour costs were 23.7 EUR in the EU and 27.6 EUR in eurozone, and in construction 21 EUR in the EU and 24.3 EUR in eurozone. Labour costs include employee salaries, social security contributions, and employment taxes.



Southern Europe favourite destination

In 2011, there were 1 billion holiday trips in the EU, ¼ of which outside of the country of origin.

With 13% share in all trips abroad, Spain was the top tourist destination for citizens of the EU. According to Eurostat, other most popular destinations are Italy and France with 9%. Europeans mostly travel to neighbouring countries, with the exception of Romanians who like travelling to Italy the most, Swedes who prefer Greece, and the British who like Spain the best. The highest number of journeys abroad was made by Germans (73 million journeys) and the British (44 million journeys).



Head of the EU Delegation to Montenegro Mitja Drobnič

Chapters 23 and 24 are the key to other chapters



Talking about the allegations that the EU enlargement is not among the priorities while the Eurozone gets back on its feet, Ambassador Drobnič said that ‘when the roof is ruined the priorities are clear’: ‘However, that does not mean that while working on the roof reparations, one couldn’t also plant a new tree in the garden.’

Head of the European Union (EU) Delegation to Montenegro **Mitja Drobnič** noted that the constitutional changes will be an indicator of Montenegro’s success in the European Integration process, thus underlining that – if Chapters 23 and 24 are not opened this year – the opening of other chapters will also have to wait. For an interview to MINA, he stressed that ‘only when know the dynamics of the opening of these two chapters will we be able to assess the possibility of opening the other chapters.’

He also said that he was certain that some other chapters – like Chapter 26 – will also be opened in the next couple of months, but he underlined that ‘the goal is to put an emphasis on creating conditions for opening the Chapters 23 and 24.’

Drobnič said that negotiations are only part of the accession process. ‘The purpose of accession negotiations is to define details on meeting the conditions for full membership of the Union. The emphasis should be on the comprehensive process of meeting the conditions, i.e. the concrete reforms.’

According to Ambassador Drobnič, it is difficult to pinpoint only one or two challenges. ‘I would rather underline political and constitutional reforms by which Montenegro would meet the core political criteria for membership of the EU. ‘Here, I mean progress in the area of the rule of law, notably ensuring judicial independence.’

In this context, he underlined that the constitutional changes have a major role to play. He

also noted that ‘it will be necessary to work on further improvement in the decision making process in the parliament and the government in order to transpose and implement the EU acquis and establish the necessary structures in public administration and the negotiating structure.’

Drobnič also underlined that it will be important to anticipate the consequences of the membership and take long-term decisions accordingly, in a way to limit the costs of the membership and use it to your benefit.

‘It is also important to prepare the people for future membership. Discussed above are the key areas which hide a lot of details. This year, the constitutional changes will be very important in the area of judiciary, and they will be the key indicator of Montenegro’s success in the European Integration process.’

He said that, at the moment, it is difficult to say which chapters will be the most difficult ones, apart from Chapters 23 and 24. He expressed his expectation that all screenings will be over by summer, after which the European Commission will have a clear overview of the state of affairs in individual areas. Only then will we be able to see in which areas we will face the most serious institutional, legal and investment challenges in Montenegro.’

However, he noted that one of the most difficult challenges for other aspiring members was Chapter 27 – Environment, thus underlining that he expects this to be also a challenge for Montenegro.

On the issue of the recent ‘audio recordings’ scandal which suggests possible irregularities which may have occurred in the run up to the parliamentary elections, Ambassador Drobnič said that the publishing of these audio recordings created a situation where the Government, judiciary, the parliament and political parties all have a role to play. ‘It is a question of establishing the facts on potential abuse and determining possible legal and political responsibility. Inactivity of the aforementioned institutions would be a reason for disappointment and would beyond doubt affect the image of Montenegro.’

Commenting on the proposal to establish a special prosecutor’s office and the tribunal for fight against high-level corruption and organized crime, Drobnič said that the progress in this field could be achieved with different institutional solutions. ‘The important thing is to have the results. The EU will monitor the results – i.e. investigations and court processes. It is entirely up to Montenegro to create the mechanisms to achieve the goals. In this context, he said that the EU can interfere in the sense of encouraging good practice and experiences of its member states.

On the issue of allegations that the EU enlargement is not high among the priorities –and will not be until the the Eurozone gets back on its feet – Ambassador Drobnič said that ‘when the roof is ruined the priorities are clear’: ‘However, that does not mean that, while working on the roof reparations, one couldn’t also plant a new tree in the garden. It is much more important that the candidate for the membership is successful in meeting the conditions for full membership’

According to him, the EU cannot let a future member state introduce new problems. ‘The problems should be solved before a country enters the EU. I believe that the problem of certain countries aspiring to join the EU is that they do not meet the criteria, and not that the enlargement is not a priority.’ He also said that he was convinced that the door to the EU will always be opened to those who meet the criteria.

Drobnič underlined that the membership of the Union brought about huge benefits to the citizens and the states. ‘Most people are aware

Drobnič noted that for aspiring members, Chapter 27 – Environment has always been one of the most demanding chapters, thus underlining that he expects this will also be a challenge for Montenegro.

that the dissolution of the Union would have difficult consequences. This is why the Union has to continue to develop and adapt to the new conditions, and develop capacities to resolve new problems as they come along.’

This asks for deepening and widening of integrations in areas which have previously been under the competence of the member states. ‘Perhaps one of the biggest challenges is the lack of understanding within the EU of what the EU means to its citizens and the member states.

In his response to the question on whether the allegations on enlargement fatigue could affect motivation of candidate countries to continue with reforms he said that he hopes Montenegro – i.e. the country, all its people and institutions – will aim for completing the necessary reforms as soon as possible in order to be able to join the EU and use the benefits of the membership in not too distant future.

‘Enlargement fatigue is fueled by difficulties, slow and inadequate reforms. If there are no such things, there is no enlargement fatigue, he said. Drobnič also underlined that one shouldn’t forget that reforms are aimed at improving the quality of citizens’ lives, and that they are needed regardless of the EU integration process.

‘If we understand the membership in this way, the citizens should support political parties which will ensure implementation of reforms.’

Bojana Mučalica (MINA agency journalist)

The interview was published by MINA agency on 31 March 2013. The text reprinted here won the third place in a competition for the best article about European Integration process in Montenegro.

Europe in pursuit of balance between environment and economic competitiveness

Is there a lesser green?



Vera Šćepanović

For the last two decades, European Union had led the fight against climate change among developed nations of the world. But at the European Council summit this May it looked like the European leaders might be ready to sacrifice some of their environmental ideals to save the economy. European businesses are demanding an energy policy that focuses less on the climate and more on costs. Talking to the business leaders ahead of the meeting of the European heads of state and government, president of the European Council **Herman van Rompuy** admitted that Europe has a serious problem with energy. “Eventually Europe may well be the only continent in the world to depend on imported energy,” he said. “Already by 2035 our dependence on oil and gas imports will reach more than 80 per

Energy prices in Europe rose on average about 40% since 2005. Last year, energy prices in Europe were twice those in the US

prices in Europe were almost twice as high as those in the US. EU’s preferred solution in the last decades was to try to limit its dependency on imported fossil fuels by switching to “green”, renewable energy. In 2004, European member states pledged to increase the share of energy from renewable sources in total consumption to 20%, increasing the target to 30% by 2030. The move was accompanied by a flurry of measures to facilitate investments in development of green technologies, including subsidies to wind and solar industries. Such measures may still yield substantial benefits in the long run, but are unlikely to lower energy prices for at least a few decades. According to the European Commission, to reduce imports by only a few percentage points the EU will have to make additional investments – around 1 trillion – into new plants and distribution networks. In other words, whether it stays with imports or invests in greater energy efficiency and development of renewable energy sources, the costs of energy in the EU will increase over the next 30 years – by 2050, the EU is projected to spend more than 14% of its GDP on energy, compared to today’s 12%. This is clearly not good enough for the European businesses, which are already reeling from the financial crisis. Just before the European Council summit, the most powerful employers’ group BusinessEurope called on European Commission President **José Manuel Barroso** to make a radical shift in the EU’s energy policy away from climate change mitigation towards cost-competitiveness and security of supply. The “magic bullet” is supposed to come from exploitation of shale gas, of which there are sizeable reserves in the Netherlands, Germany, Poland, and around the Baltic Sea. Shale gas



cent.” EU’s energy trade deficit has already reached 400 billion euros. Among the results of import dependency are higher energy prices, which are undermining competitiveness of European exports. According to the European Commission, energy prices increased some 35% on average since 2005 – in 2012, electricity

was long considered difficult and expensive to extract, but new technologies, known as hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, had made exploitation profitable. Fracking involves high-pressure injection of water, sand, and chemicals into the ground in order to fracture the rock and release gas. In the US, fracking brought about a small revolution in energy supply – in only a couple of years between 2005 and 2012, the price of industrial gas fell by 66%, while in the EU it rose by 35%. In the same period, the share of imports in US energy consumption decreased from 60% to 46%. There are, however, many reasons why the EU is unlikely to repeat the US success story. European geological composition is very different. The existing shale fields are deeper underground than in the U.S., more fragmented, thinner, and more likely to be rich in clay, which makes the extraction and processing of gas less profitable – some estimate that the costs of shale gas extraction might be up to twice as high in Europe as in the US. According to the European Commission, in the most optimistic scenario, shale gas exploitation would only bring EU's import dependence to about 60%. But this is only part of the problem. The EU is also much more densely populated, experimenting with fracking close to inhabited areas faces a lot of resistance from environmental groups, due to the fears that the pumping of water and chemicals into the earth might contaminate

underground waters. Some EU member states, such as France, have completely banned the practice. Others are more willing to experiment. Poland, which draws most of its energy from highly polluting coal, and imports two thirds of its gas from Russia, is more than eager to tap the sizeable reserves of shale gas around the Baltic Sea. European environmental groups consider this to be an extremely dangerous side track. Although it looks like a quick and easy solution, they maintain, fracking is not only dangerous, it is also a temporary patch, because shale reserves are also not endless. In the long run, Europe needs to learn to exploit renewable energy sources, and in the short run it should cut the costs by using its energy more efficiently. So far, the EU has simply shrugged and said each member state should decide on its own energy mix. The conclusions of the May summit repeated the importance of “green” energy development, but also emphasized the danger of high energy costs to industry competitiveness and called on a strategy to exploit other energy sources “safely and sustainably,” including shale gas. The European Commission is to develop a legislative framework to guide regulation of shale gas exploration, but the proposal will not be ready until the end of 2014. In the meantime, the EU has somewhat backed down on its climate change priorities, allowing member states to handle their energy problems as they see most fit.

Shale can also cause other problems

As always, however, what one EU member state does is never only its own concern. The industry is still in the exploratory phase, and it is unclear whether exploitation of shale gas reserves, many of which are shared between neighbouring countries, will bring up new conflicts among European nations. Nuclear energy has already become a source of cross-border feuds. Austria, which decided not to develop nuclear energy, recently brought up a complaint to the European Commission about potential health and environmental risks from the Mochovce and Temelín nuclear plants, sited just across the border in neighbouring Slovakia and the Czech Republic. Countries which decide to commit to green energy, as opposed to cheap but much “dirtier” nuclear or fossil sources also feel that they need to reach for additional measures to protect their industries. Germany already has an extremely high share of renewable energy in its consumption mix, and had recently decided to increase it further after promising to close all its nuclear plants by 2022. However, this also means that Germany has the highest energy prices in the EU. To prevent the costs from affecting its competitiveness, the government has exempted energy-intensive firms from part of the charges, but this brought an avalanche of complaints from other EU member states, who accuse Germany of rigging the competition with unfair subsidies. The European Commission may not have enough strength to impose a common energy policy at this moment, but it certainly has its hands full trying to mediate the conflicts of interests between its member states, each of which holds a different view on the desired balance between environment and economic competitiveness.

Europe Day in Montenegro



Under the framework of the project 'EU info Bus on the road to the EU' – in cooperation with Friedrich Ebert Foundation and NGO Natura and with the support of the EU Delegation to Montenegro – Centre for Civic Education (CGO) organized Europe Day celebrations in three towns in Montenegro: Kolašin, Cetinje and Podgorica, on 7, 8 and 9 May respectively. Celebrations in Kolašin – titled '**Let's Play for Europe!**' – had a number of different features. A blue-and-yellow branded *EU info bus* took representatives of the EU Delegation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration (MFAEI), Italian Embassy, CGO, and a number of students to Kolašin and sparked a great curiosity among the citizens. The programme began at the main town at 11h, where the info-points were offering educational leaflets on the EU, followed by an EU quiz with prizes, and finally an EU puzzle-game for the youngest among the crowd. The opening cultural event was a performance by the "Mijat Mašković" culture society. Head of Delegation **Mitja Drobnič** opened the celebrations with an introductory speech, followed by the Kolašin Municipality President **Darko Brajušković**, and CGO Executive Director **Daliborka Uljarević**. The main activity of the day was a game of football between teams from town's two high-schools, which took place in the town sport hall, rebuilt with EU funds. Ambassador Drobnič marked the beginning of the game by symbolically kicking the ball from the kick-off spot. Four teams took part in the games, and the winner was the SS Selić Brothers squad, who were awarded by EU promotional items, and the other three teams won symbolic prizes for taking part in the competition. In an attempt to meet the desires of the citizens of Kolašin to receive more information on the EU integration

process in a direct communication with those leading this process, a panel discussion entitled '*The Importance of the EU Integration Process for the Development of Montenegro*' was held at 12 noon at the main hall of the town's Cultural Centre. In addition to Mr Drobnič, Mr Brajušković, and Ms Uljarević, other panel speakers were **Nevena Vulićević**, the Director for Legislation Alignment at the MFAEI and **Vincenzo Del Monaco**, Italy's Ambassador to Montenegro. The panel, which sparked a lively debate, was attended by over a hundred townsfolk, including municipality councillors, businessmen, political parties' representatives, NGOs, media, students, pupils, and other citizens of Kolašin. Europe Day in Cetinje, the historic and cultural capital of Montenegro, was celebrated on 8 May at the King Nikola square, and it focused on youth and was culture-oriented. Students and pupils expressed their artistic side under a slogan '*Let's Paint Europe!*' and they drew the Union the way they see it. In addition to the painting competition, the square featured EU info-points, an EU quiz,



and EU puzzle-game. Some of the participants showed a considerable degree of knowledge about the EU and they won EU-branded prizes. The celebration event was opened by CGO Executive Director **Daliborka Uljarević**, followed by **Damir Šabanović** from the MFAEI's EU Accession Negotiation Group Secretariat. The awarding committee, consisting of CGO and MFAEI representatives, chose three among 32 paintings representing the EU, and in addition to awarding the top three contenders, other participants received symbolic prizes. The best drawings will adorn the CGO premises in Podgorica.

Chapter 5: Public procurement



Marko Sošić

In the environment of free market competition, civil administration bodies play an important role, handling enormous amounts of money from the budget or other public funds. In order to prevent misuse of public authority at the expense of the public interest, the EU has established certain principles (of non-discrimination, equal treatment, transparency, proportionality, mutual recognition) and standards that must be applied to all public procurement procedures and equally to all participants in the procedure. The said principles are the broadest framework of the *acquis* in the chapter on public procurement. Special EU regulations are applied to coordination of awarding public contracts for tasks, services, and procurement, for traditional contracting entities, and special sectors (utility services,

defence, and security). The *acquis* also sets rules for audit and availability of legal remedies.

The goal of EU regulation in this area is: to ensure that those who provide services, deliver goods, and perform tasks can compete in the public procurement procedures in the EU member-states; to boost economic development and productivity; and to give full meaning to the single market. The institutions established for that end should ensure there is a working system of legal protection in public procurement procedures and that the legal framework is applied at all levels.

In the past 10 years, Montenegro adopted three laws on public procurement. The legal framework for public procurement procedure has been greatly improved following the adoption of the Law on Public Procurement in the first half of 2011, which is to a great extent aligned with the EU *acquis*. However, harmonization with the *acquis* in this chapter is still not complete, whereas secondary legislation needed for its application has yet to be adopted.

An upside of the new law is increase in transparency, mainly through the requirement to publish all public procurement contracts. The law makes clearer the distinctions regarding authorities and competences of state institutions in charge of public procurement. In addition, the law provides a basis for the uniformity of all public procurements in accordance with Government or local authority regulations. The new law also enhances oversight of the procedure, by requiring that the Commission oversees the procedure for contracts worth more than EUR 500,000. Implementation of such a contract is controlled by the competent inspection body pursuant to the norms of the new Law on Public Procurement.

Some downsides of the new law are bad provisions on anti-corruption and conflict of





interest. The capacities of the Public Procurement Administration and the Commission for the Control of Public Procurement Procedure are limited. The public procurement development strategy 2016 was adopted in 2011 but has not adequately prescribed how goals are to be pursued, in particular those related to suppression of corruption and irregularities in the public procurement procedure, harmonization with European standards in the long run, etc. Improvement is notable as regards transparency and fight against corruption and the management of tenders. In addition, the number of contracts concluded without a negotiating procedure has been reduced, and the number of applications and complaints per tender has risen. Administrative capacity for public procurement is gradually improving. However, two key institutions – the Administration and the Commission – have limited human and financial resources, which has a bearing on the implementation of the law.

The 2009 Law on Concessions is incompatible with the applicable EU directive and with key provisions of the directive on legal means. An issue that will surely be raised during negotiations on this chapter is the autonomy of the bodies responsible for the control of concessions – the Commission for Concessions – which needs to be ensured. The competences of this Commission are defined broadly, its members are not professionally recruited, and institutional capacities are at a low level.

The Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) reads, in addition to the general norm that public contracts will be awarded on principles of non-discrimination and reciprocity, that the companies from the EU, regardless of whether they are founded in Montenegro, must have access to contracting procedures in Montenegro under conditions no less favourable than those applied to Montenegrin companies. In turn, the coming into force of the SAA allows Montenegrin companies an access to similar procedures in the EU under conditions no less favourable than those applied to companies from the EU.

As regards the normative framework, additional efforts are needed to align Montenegro's legislation fully with the EU acquis. This is primarily the case for regulations concerning utility services, concessions, and the new directive on legal remedies.

The main reason for concern as regards the chapter, in addition to insufficient implementation of legislation, is poor implementation of and alterations to contracts taking place after the signing. Implementation of State Audit Institution (who audits public procurement procedures) recommendations is questionable and insufficiently monitored. In addition, there remains an issue of keeping track of all direct contracts signed without a tender. The Administrative Court has annulled an overwhelming majority of decisions by the Commission for the Control of Public Procurement Procedure (60 out of 76) which

calls for great concern. In the past 10 years, the police have brought in a negligible number of cases, the state prosecution has made a small number of indictments, and there are still no rulings passed concerning corruption in public procurement. In addition, not a single penalty has been imposed for breaching the law, nor is it known whether any civil servant dealing with public procurements has gone through

a disciplinary procedure. Just in the past four years, over EUR 1.67 billion has been spent for public procurement in Montenegro, and there are 5.000 public procurement contracts being signed each year. These numbers speak volumes about the importance of public procurement for the overall public finance system and the funds from the state budget used for these purposes.

Enormous funds being used for public procurement are, in the conditions of poor regulation, vulnerable to corruptive practices, wherein public authority could potentially be misused for individual gain at the expense of the public interest. Therefore, transparency and fight against corruption in public procurement brought about by the process of harmonization with EU legislation, principles, and best practices are key benefits for citizens. Implementation of adopted norms will lead to a more efficient and economically sound usage of budget funds, i.e. to an improvement of public services that will ensure greater “value for money” for the citizens by cutting down corruption, irregularities, and misuse. By harmonizing the regulations and procedures of the public procurement system with those in force in the EU, more business opportunities will arise for Montenegrin companies, which would then be in a position to access the market on an equal footing throughout the EU.

A very common prejudice among the citizens of Montenegro vis-a-vis the EU is that the reform of the public procurement process will harm citizens if it allows easier access to the process for foreign companies, or that those companies' interests will prevail over the public interest, or that it is impossible to limit the misuse of public authority at the expense of the public interest in the existing political environment. But, as shown already, the EU has established certain principles (of non-discrimination, equal treatment, transparency, proportionality, mutual recognition) and standards that must be applied to all public procurement procedures and equally to all participants in the procedure, and those principles and standards are under high scrutiny of the EU institutions, which dramatically limits the room for misuse.

Source: publication "Europe in my town – what are we negotiating and what the negotiations with the EU are bringing to us?", published as part of the project "Europe in my town", which was implemented by the Centre for Civic Education (CCE) during 2011 and 2012, in cooperation with the Centre for Monitoring (CEMI) from Podgorica and Civic Initiatives (CI) from Belgrade, with the support of the EU Delegation in Montenegro.

Europe in the World – Montenegro in Europe!



This year's Europe Day celebration motto in Podgorica was *'Europe in the World – Montenegro in Europe!'*, symbolising integration as our future, Europe as unity in diversity, but also Montenegro's progress in EU integration. Wishing to inform the citizens on the EU integration process and its importance, a wide array of activities were hosted related to the *'EU info Bus on the road to the EU'* project, implemented by the Centre for Civic Education (CGO) in cooperation with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and NGO Natura, and supported by the EU Delegation to Montenegro. A day-long programme, including cultural, sports, education, and information activities, started at the Republic Square at 10.30h with a performance of the anthems of Montenegro and the European Union by the 'Vasa Pavić' Secondary Music School Choir. The event was inaugurated by Ambassador **Mitja Drobnič**, Head of EU Delegation to Montenegro, and the speakers were: **Igor Lukšić**, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Government of Montenegro, **Miomir Mugoša**, Mayor of Podgorica, and **Daliborka Uljarević**, Executive Director of CGO. The citizens of Podgorica met and chatted with EU member-states' ambassadors, learned about the EU integration process, received information leaflets and other promotional items from the info-points, took part in the EU quiz, play the

EU puzzle-game, and win a great number of prizes. Ambassadors who met with the citizens were Germany's **Pius Fischer**, Austria's **Martin Pammer**, Hungary's **Tibor Császár**, Poland's **Grazina Sikorska**, Romania's **Mihail Florovici**, Slovenia's **Vladimir Gasparič**, and **Natalia Panourgia**, chargé d'affaires at the Embassy of Greece. The main stage hosted a multimedia ballet performance 'Rhapsody 29' by the 'Princess Ksenija' ballet school, dedicated to the 200th anniversary of the birth of a great Romantic era composer Robert Schumann, whereas the other protagonist was another Robert Schumann, a French statesman who was one of the principal founders of the idea of united Europe. Following the programme at the Republic Square, the participants boarded the EU Info Bus and headed for the University of Donja Gorica to attend the panel discussion entitled *'Europe in the World – Montenegro in Europe!'*. Before the panel, there was an awarding ceremony for the best news article on European integration in Montenegro. Prizes were awarded to **Nikša Grgurović** ('Vijesti', 1st place), **Esad Krčić** (Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, 2nd place), and **Bojana Mučalica** (MINA news agency, 3rd place). The speakers at the panel discussion, in addition to **Mitja Drobnič**, **Daliborka Uljarević**, **Miomir Mugoša**, were **Veselin Vukotić**, rector of the University, and **Milivoje Jurišić**, Secretary of the Negotiation Group. The panel speeches sparked a lively debate and a great number of questions were asked related to various facets of Montenegro's EU integration. A symbolic sporting event – EU–Montenegro football game, supported by the Football Association of Montenegro whose professional referee was in charge of the match, saw a number of great moves and surprising talent from the two very dedicated sides, and the score was 7:3 for the Montenegro side. The Europe Day in Podgorica ended with a great rock concert of the 'Neon' band from Podgorica at the 'Soul II Soul' club in the city centre, which gathered the representatives of the EU Delegation, the MFAEI, the Ministry of Education, the Municipality of Podgorica, the Old Royal Capital of Cetinje, political parties, the UNDP, the UNICED, EU member-states' embassies, media, NGOs, etc.

A survey by the audit company Ernst and Young shows widespread business corruption in the region

The Balkan management



One out of three directors in Serbia is aware of unethical business behaviour in their company, and 83% believe that bribery and corruption are widespread in business, according to the latest survey by international audit company Ernst and Young. At the same time, the most corrupt state out of 36 is Slovenia, an EU and eurozone member, followed closely by Croatia, set to join the EU on 1 July. The least corrupt state is Switzerland, where only 10% of those interviewed believe that graft is commonplace in business. The European average is 39%, and top of the list is occupied, alongside Serbia, Slovenia, and Croatia, by Ukraine, Slovakia, and Greece.

Ernst and Young interviewed via phone, the Internet, or in person 3,459 members of management and oversight boards, directors, and associates from 36 countries, 22 of which are from the EU. The study showed that a bit less than one half of the directors interviewed fear from irregularities in financial reports of the companies they run, and more than a half

fear that corruption has gained ground in their countries. At the same time, only 26% say that in order to seal the deal one must offer bribe.

“The message from our survey is this: businesses face significant threats and must be aware and take action to navigate these risks,” Ernst and Young have emphasized in their report.

Serbia

A survey on the extent of graft, bribery, and corruption shows that one out of three interviewees from Serbia is aware of unethical behaviour in their company. At the same time, 54% believe that companies in the region overrate their financial results (the average for 36 states interviewed is 38%).

The survey results show that 83% believe bribery and corruption are widespread in the country's business (the average is 57%). In addition, the study shows that 44% consider graft to be commonplace when closing new business deals (the average for 36 European states is 26%).

About 23% believe that observing anti-corruption policies in doing business would be detrimental for their market competitiveness. According to the survey, around half of the interviewees (49%) are pessimistic as regards the prospect of improvement of domestic business in the following year, which is well above the average perception in Europe (27%).

The audit company's press release states that most interviewees are aware that their companies have anti-corruption policies and that various organizations have differing views of the importance and efficiency of these policies. Of all those interviewed in Serbia, 44% believe that their company would back them if they were to report on instances of unethical business behaviour.

Slovenia

As high as 96% of company directors interviewed in Slovenia believe graft is normal. Such a score is a disgrace both for those who commit such practices and for the society in which they take place and which allows this to be a *modus operandi*, says **Sonja Šmuc**, executive director of the Managers' Association of Slovenia. According to her, as Ljubljana's "Delo" writes, the response given by managers from Slovenia was affected by the fact that such undesired practices are rarely punished in Slovenia, and sometimes even have a root in the legal framework, primarily in public procurement where systemic corruption is encouraged.

In addition, says she, there is a problem of corporate management where internal oversight is oftentimes very bad and the oversight bodies do not do their job well. Ms Šmuc also thinks that Slovenians are susceptible to perceive bad things as even worse, and thus the perception is worse than things actually are.

Slovenia's Commission for the Prevention of Corruption still did not receive the report and would not comment on it, but they noted that the government will have to face the fact that there is a deep-rooted and grave problem of systemic corruption in Slovenia, which bears negatively on the business environment in the country.

Former chair of the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption **Drago Kos** is less prone to criticism and believes Slovenia is not among the states where it is completely normal to pay a fee, i.e. a bribe, when closing the deal.

Our managers are more sensitive to unethical practices than those in Kenya and similar states, and what is a normal business practice in Kenya or elsewhere is unacceptable here, Mr Kos told *Delo*. He believes Slovenians have recently become overly critical of themselves when it comes to corruption, but also that the private sector has done little in that area.

Croatia

In corruption perception, Croatia stands side-by-side Slovenia, Europe's "record-holder." As much as 90% of managers in Croatia said "yes" when asked whether corruption and bribery are commonplace in business.

At the same time, 40% of Croatia's managers said graft is commonplace when winning a tender in their respective areas. The study shows that 64% of directors in Croatia are under strong pressure to improve their financial results in the next 12 months.

When asked whether companies often make their financial results look better than they are, 58% of all the directors interviewed in Croatia said "yes."

Europe

In Greece and Slovenia, 84% of the interviewees said bribery and corruption are commonplace in their countries. The score in the Czech Republic, Portugal, Hungary, Spain, Romania, and Italy varies between 60% and 70%.

The top three economies in Europe fared better in the survey. In France, only 27% believe there is widespread corruption, in Germany 30%, in the UK 37%. There was also a very low level of corruption perception in Finland and Sweden – only 12%.

Sources: *Beta, Euractiv.rs*

Western Balkans at a crossroads: The challenge of European integration in the time of crisis

A conference entitled '*Western Balkans at a crossroads: The challenge of European integration in the time of crisis*' took place in Podgorica on 13 May 2013, organized by Austro French Centre for Rapprochement in Europe (AFC), Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe, Austrian Embassy in Podgorica, Centre for Civic Education (CGO), Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of Montenegro, and Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs of Austria. The conference gathered an impressive number of panellists from the region and the EU and over 200 participants.

The conference was opened by **Peter Jankowitsch**, Director General of the AFC, **Pierre Cochard**, Deputy Director General for policy and security at the French Foreign Ministry, **Johannes Kyrle**, Secretary General for foreign affairs at the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs of Austria, and Igor Lukšić, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Government of Montenegro. Following the opening speeches, there were four round tables opened and chaired by, respectively: **Dirk Lange**, Head of Unit for Croatia and Montenegro at the DG Enlargement ('*The effects of Croatia's EU accession*'), **Milorad Katnić**, formerly Finance Minister and now adviser to the Prime Minister of Montenegro for economy and finance ('*The effects of the economic and financial crisis on the prospects for enlargement*'), **Daliborka Uljarević**, CGO Executive Director ('*Rule of law: many challenges, few achievements*'), and **Dinka Živalj**, spokesperson of the Regional Cooperation Council ('*EU and the promotion of regional cooperation*').

The conference was unique given its programme and participants, as such events are usually held in EU member states. In this way, Montenegro has become a destination where decision-makers and those influencing the enlargement process meet. The round tables provided for a better understanding of the broader regional and European perspective in which Montenegro dwells and which affect Montenegro's EU prospects greatly, but are oftentimes overlooked due to an overwhelming focus on domestic issues. This focus on the broader context, which is also in the focus of EU decision-makers when they contemplate the region, could be beneficial in ensuring a faster and better democratization process in Montenegro.



Without facing the past there is no lasting peace

Ninth international transitional justice forum *'Reconciliation in post-Yugoslav countries'* was held 17-18 May 2013 on Jahorina Mountain in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was organized by the coalition for RECOM, whose reference point in Montenegro is CGO, and it gathered more than 200 participants from the region and beyond. This year's forum was inaugurated by **Željko Komšić**, Bosnia and Herzegovina Presidency member and **Dino Mustafić**, film director, followed by a panel on the achievements in transitional justice in post-Yugoslav countries. The focus of the first day was the role of religious communities in the reconciliation process.

The participants at the Forum, who were invited to share their views on regional reconciliation, came from various backgrounds: politicians, religious leaders, artists, art critics, university professors, and NGO representatives.

Montenegro's delegation comprised the following representatives of the RECOM coalition members: **Daliborka Uljarević**, and **Mirela Rebronja** of CGO, journalist **Dragoljub Vuković**, human rights expert **Aleksandar Saša Zeković**, **Milena Janketić** from the Alternativa Institute, **Slobodan Dumnić** from the Human Rights Action, **Tamara Srbijanović** from Bona Fide, and **Jakub Durgut** from the Association of the citizens of Bukovica and Pljevlja. Other participants from Montenegro were **Darka Džabasan**, Secretary of the Missing Persons Commission of the Government of Montenegro, and **Mirko Bošković**, RTCG journalist.

Attendants of the 'MAPSS political science forum' visit CGO

As part of the *'MAPSS political science forum'* conference, organized by the Montenegrin Association of Political Science Students (MAPSS), the attendants visited CGO on 9 May 2013 to hear a lecture given by CGO Executive Director **Daliborka Uljarević** and Programme Associate **Damir Nikočević**. The lecture was entitled 'Political memory in Montenegro,' with a special emphasis on the political deals made during 2008 and 2013 presidential elections. The participants discussed the legal context of the presidential elections, the candidates' platforms, their campaigns, their attitudes towards key issues, and the effects the election outcomes had on the overall political climate in the country. The conference was organized by MAPSS together with the Faculty of Political Science and in cooperation with universities from the region, state institutions, embassies, NGOs, and media, and the aim was to improve the discipline of political science in Montenegro.



ALF Internship Programme

The Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF) announces the reopening of its Internship Programme for the year 2013 offering young people the opportunity for a training at the Headquarters of the Anna Lindh Foundation in Alexandria.

The ALF Internship Programme aims at fostering interdisciplinary knowledge as well as practical know-how building, targeting young talented undergraduate and graduate students, willing to gain practical experience in a field relevant to the Foundation through their full involvement in daily work.

Moreover, the Internship Programme seeks to support the internal human resources capacity of the Anna Lindh Foundation with students or graduates between 19 and 32 years old, fluent in two or more of the official languages of the Union for the Mediterranean countries, and qualified in areas relevant to the ALF strategic interventions.

The training received at the Anna Lindh Foundation intends to orient and enhance the chances of talented youth in the labor market, as well as to exchange experience or skills with experienced seconded staff.

Applications for internship are welcome from residents of the 42 Euro-Med countries. Any application from a resident outside the 42 countries can be accepted provided that their cost will not be covered by ALF. North-South Regional balance in the selection of the interns will be among the selection criteria.

Please send your application and motivation letter not later than Saturday, 1st June 2013 – 5 pm Cairo Time to ALFinternship@bibalex.org

Read more: <http://www.euromedalex.org/about/job-vacancies>

Published by: Centre for Civic Education (CCE)

EIC Bulletin – European Pulse – is an electronic monthly published since 2005 with support of Friedrich Ebert Foundation. Since 2013 European Pulse is published as part of the project “EU Info bus – on the road to EU!” which is funded by the communication budget of the EU Delegation to Montenegro, and co-funded by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. Registered under no. 578 with the Ministry of Culture of Montenegro.

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