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FOCUS OF THIS ISSUE

Consequences of Croatia's accession to EU for the citizens of Montenegro

interview

Davor Gjenero,
political scientist

region

Is Serbia's road
to EU irreversible?

**CROATIA IN
EU**

Foreword: **Deadlines**

Vladan Žugrić

Draft action plans (APs) for Chapters 23 and 24 adopted by the Government at the 27 June meeting constitute substantial improvements on the previous versions. The latest documents clearly define actors who are responsible for each of the activities, state the amounts allocated for their implementation, and brings forward some of the deadlines, such as the one for the establishment of a Special public prosecutor for the fight against organised crime and corruption. However, the remaining deadlines for the establishment of some institutions clearly suggest that the Government lacks political will to reform judiciary and fight organised crime and corruption. For instance, draft AP for Chapter 23 envisages the establishment of the Judiciary and Prosecutors' Councils in the first quarter of 2015, and sets July 31 as the deadline for amendments to the Constitution, without which we won't even be able to begin negotiations on these two sensitive chapters. Alignment of the laws on Judiciary and Prosecutors' Councils with the new Constitution, organising vacancies for the new posts in the judiciary and the lack of parliamentary consensus on these appointments is no excuse to take almost two years to even set the judiciary on the right track. Another disappointing detail is the Agency for Anti-Corruption which is supposed to merge responsibilities of the Committee for the Prevention of Conflict of Interests, Directorate for Anti-Corruption Initiative and some tasks of the State Electoral Commission. Although this institutions has been in the pipeline for years, according to the Government's plans it will only become operational in January 2016. Until then, the problems of "insufficiently transparent financing of political parties", "widespread corruption", including that on the "highest level" will have to be managed by politically compromised State Electoral Commission and Commission for the prevention of conflicts of interest, and the toothless Agency for Anti-Corruption. This is something the EU members should bear in mind when they consider the draft APs.

Calendar

- 04 June **Marković in Berlin** / After a meeting in Berlin with the German Minister of Justice, **Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger**, her Montenegrin counterpart **Duško Marković** said he is certain that by the end of the year Montenegro will get a positive decision on the opening of Chapters 23 and 24.
- 04 June **The number of asylum seekers halved** / The number of Montenegrin citizens who applied for asylum in countries of the Schengen zone in the first three months of 2013 was lower than in the same period of last year by 57% (93 persons), said EP Rapporteur for visa liberalization, **Tanja Fajon**. According to her, this is not a number that should be considered problematic.
- 23 June **Leko: Prevlaka won't be a problem** / President of the Croatian Parliament **Josip Leko** said there was no reason to worry that Croatia would try to block Montenegro's progress because of the unresolved border at Prevlaka. "The Croatian parliament pledged not to use EU membership to solve bilateral problems", Leko said.
- 26 June **Füle: Opening of Chapters 23 and 24 depends on implementation** / European Enlargement Commissioner **Štefan Füle** said the EU was clear about the conditions for further progress of accession talks with Montenegro: it depends on the adoption of constitutional amendments, investigation into the "Recordings" affair, and implementation of OSCE's recommendations following the presidential elections. He said the action plans for chapters 23 and 24 were almost ready, but the real work is only beginning. "Implementation of the action plans, so we can soon open these two chapters", Füle said, following the meeting of the Council for Stabilisation and Association between Montenegro and EU.
- 27 June **On EU's border** / Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integrations published an information booklet titled "On EU's border", which describes the consequences of Croatia's accession to EU for Montenegrin citizens, including information about travel, education, work, trade, economy, border management etc.
- 27 June **Government adopts APs for Chapters 23 and 24** / Government of Montenegro adopted draft Action Plans for Chapters 23 and 24 which promise that Montenegro will fulfil all membership criteria in these two areas by 2019.
- 27 June **Screening completed** / With the completion of the screening process for Chapter 31 – Foreign Policy, Montenegro finished the assessment of legislative harmonization in all 33 chapters of the EU acquis.

A nation lost in translation



Slavenka Drakulić

The author is a writer.
She lives in Sweden

If Croatia could have chosen the moment for its accession to the European Union, it would not be 1 July 2013. *The Pew Research Centre* has just published the results of polling conducted in eight EU member states. The most disturbing finding is that the percentage of citizens in favour of the European project has plummeted from 60% a year ago to 45% now. A failing economy, Europe's north-south divide and distrust of the political elite have led to such results. Then there are the consequences of Romania and Bulgaria joining the EU in 2007 without adequate preparation. Disappointment with the two new members was followed by a more sceptical approach to further accessions. As it is, the EU has had enough problems with former communist countries, and now yet another one is joining. Yes, Croatia is smaller and perhaps better prepared, but enthusiasm is nevertheless lacking on both sides. When the newly independent nation began the negotiation process, Croatians regarded the EU like a rich aunt. After all, they always thought of membership not as coming in but coming back. But even so, the nationalist opposition was fairly vocal. Why join a new community of states just after leaving Yugoslavia, and a bloody war that had cost thousands of lives? If the 1991-95 wars were for independence, then why give up that newly won political sovereignty? And what about the Croatian national identity that had been reinvented and celebrated with so much energy by the first president, **Franjo Tuđman**? The most serious argument was that the whole region was too volatile. However, the political elite at the time presented it in ideological terms: Croatia does not belong to the Balkans. The Balkans are the Others – Orthodox and Muslims, not Catholics. Joining the EU would reinforce the difference, and "draw the line" between them and us. This must be the only reason Croatia's Catholic church supported the yes vote in last year's referendum, when 66% voted to join the EU. In later years, though, the important if not crucial argument about peace and stability was neglected more and more. Politicians of both right and left chose to perpetuate a rosy picture of economic benefits, investments, employment opportunities and so on. Yet with accession approaching, it became clear that this was not going to happen. The economic crisis in the EU coincided with negative results from the badly handled privatisation of state assets, with



allegations of political corruption. The state bureaucracy is huge and no reform has touched it. Unemployment climbed to 20% and is still rising. Over half those unemployed are young people. In Europe, only Greece and Spain have worse jobless figures. The public debt is almost 60% of GDP. No wonder Germany fears Croatia is a future Greece. Croatians themselves seem not to be in the mood to celebrate. In this last month before joining the EU, the media expressed anxiety, for instance about the likely competitiveness of our products – although our main industry, tourism, is doing well. One could sense an atmosphere of closing instead of opening, of fear instead of joy. When people are faced with uncertainty, they usually turn to traditional values of family and religion. Conservative civil organizations, backed by the Catholic church, held a referendum for to change in the constitution, demanding to that it define marriage as heterosexual. There is also uncertainty about how the new rules and regulations will operate. The only people looking forward to joining the EU seem to be young people, who anticipate the possibilities of study and work abroad – there will be no more customs at our western borders, no more queueing up in non-EU queues for those who have money to shop and to travel. It looks as if in the whole process of accession the most important elements were "lost in transition". Beyond Croatia being Europe's long-lost Catholic child, the fact is that the country was at war only two decades ago, and that peace and security should mean more to it than putative economic gains. Economic survival for this small and poor state would be even harder outside the union. This is why 1 July is a historic date, even if the actual moment of joining is really not the best one either for Croatia or for the EU.

Source: *Guardian*

Consequences of Croatia's accession to European Union
for the citizens of Montenegro

The EU next door



Damir Nikočević

Although Croatia's accession to EU was greeted with celebrations on 1 July in Herzeg Novi, on the Croatian border, it is not clear whether Montenegrin citizens living in the border areas have much reason to look forward to this event, at least for the time being. First of all, they will now need a passport to enter Croatia. Unlike them, the Croatian citizens living in the border areas next to Slovenia and Hungary were allowed to enter these two countries with only an ID after 2004, a privilege secured for them by special agreements between the EU and the new accession states. This is, however, only one of the issues that comes up in response to the question – what does Croatia's accession to EU mean for the citizens of Montenegro?

Montenegrin Ministry of Interior Affairs has announced that soon enough there will be a similar agreement granting special permits to the inhabitants of border regions, which they will be able to use instead of passports. To qualify for the permit, however, it is not enough to simply live in the area: Montenegrin citizens must have a good reason for frequent travels to Croatia, such as family members, employment or arable land on the other side of the border.

frequent travels to Croatia, such as family members, employment or arable land on the other side of the border. The same regime will apply to the Croatian citizens travelling to Montenegro. Port-parole of the Ministry of Interior Affairs **Mirjana Bošković** told *European Pulse*: "The same border crossings between Montenegro and Croatia will continue to operate after 1 July: Debeli Brijeg-Karasovići and Kobila-Vitaljina, on the route Herzeg Novi-Dubrovnik. At the Montenegrin border crossings Debeli Brijeg and Kobila, during the procedure of border control, Montenegrin and foreign citizens will be able to enter and exit Montenegro under the same conditions. At the Croatian crossings Karasovići and Vitaljina there will be separate lanes for EU citizens and others, because as of 1 July 2013 crossing these two points will amount to crossing in or out of European Union".



Mirjana Bošković

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EU's arrival to the Montenegrin borders will also affect those citizens who were planning to go on a holiday or a day trip to the Croatian coast. For that, they will now need a biometric passport and 100€ in cash for every day of stay. Customs Administration said they will continue to apply the same

regulation according to which commercial goods in the passengers' personal luggage will be exempted from charges, so long as it is intended for personal use during the journey and is not imported for commercial purposes. Moreover, commercial goods such as tobacco, alcohol and cosmetics up to the val-



Pavle D. Radovanović

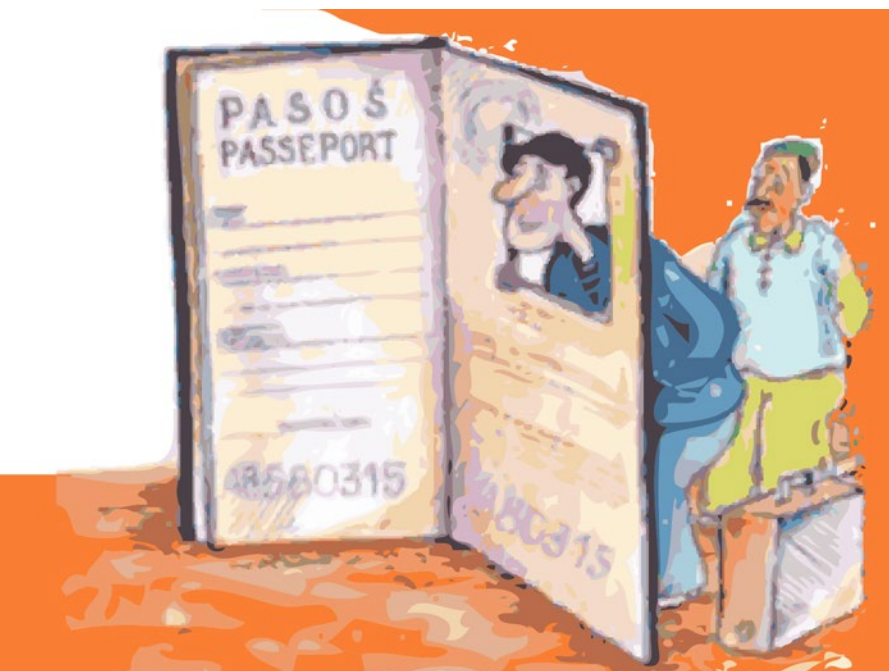
ue of 150€ will be exempt from charges, but cannot be transported by passengers under 17 years of age. Additional concessions are provided with regard to import of agricultural goods grown and collected on the land which belongs to Montenegrin citizens, and is located within 5 km from the border.

However, Montenegro's tourism is unlikely profit from Croatia's membership of EU. A more restrictive visa regime which will be imposed by Croatia on the citizens of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Azerbaijan and Turkey could help to redirect the tourists from these countries towards Montenegrin coast. However, in order to limit the damage, Croatia increased the number of consulates in the Russian Federation and Ukraine. In spite of that, Minister for Sustainable Development and Tourism **Branimir Gvozdenović** said Croatia's membership of EU will at least be good for development of Croatia's tourism, and that we can expect to benefit from the same trends once we get closer to the EU.

Customs Administration said they will continue to apply the same regulation according to which commercial goods in the passengers' personal luggage will be exempted from charges, so long as it is intended for personal use during the journey and is not imported for commercial purposes. Moreover, commercial goods such as tobacco, alcohol and cosmetics up to the value of €150 will be exempt from charges

As for economic cooperation, there will be little change in terms of trade. Croatia's trade with CEFTA (which it left to join the EU) will be governed in accordance with these countries' Stabilisation and Association Agreements (SAA) with EU. Of all the CEFTA members, only Kosovo and Moldova traded less with Croatia than Montenegro. Montenegro's SAA also stipulates the possibility to extend additional concessions for some categories of goods from Croatia if the pre-accession status granted more privileges to Croatian goods with Montenegro. These clauses are based on three-year averages of the amount of goods exported by Croatia to Montenegro under the existing customs tariffs of CEFTA. Most of these are sensitive items which Croatia could not export to Montenegro free of tariff, but the tariffs were lower under CEFTA than those granted to EU under the SAA. The list contains a number of items from the following categories of goods: cheese, dried meats, natural water (with a special quota for bottled water) and water with addition of sugar, as well as canned sardines, tuna and mackerel.

Secretary General of the Montenegrin Chamber of Commerce and the head of the Working Group for the preparation of accession negotiations for Chapter 3, "Right of establishment and freedom to provide services", **Pavle D. Radovanović** told European Pulse that there are still limits to exports of goods of animal origin, since the Montenegrin es-



tablishments which process such goods (meat, milk, fish, eggs and secondary products not fit for human consumption) have not yet been approved by the 'European inspection'.

At the same time, fresh fruit and vegetables can be sold on the EU (and thus Croatian) markets as long as they meet European quality standards and follow the appropriate rules of labelling. It is interesting that Montenegro cannot export potatoes to Croatia, before it implements the programme of monitoring quarantine bacteria. According to Radovanović, we must first "demonstrate that our products are free of quarantine bacteria, which is to be established by the European Food Safety Authority, and afterwards we can request an exception from the ban on potato exports to the EU markets".

As for industrial products, once Croatia joins the EU, Montenegrin producers who already export to the EU markets will face lower costs for certificates on the harmonisation of their products with EU requirements of older and newer generation. So far, Radovanović explains, Montenegrin exporters could not use the certificates acquired from the EU notified body to export to Croatia, as they needed additional certificates issued by a Croatian equivalent, which won't

According to a recent report by Eurostat, Montenegrin per capita GDP was at 42% of EU average, in this region second only to Croatia with 61%.

be the case in the future.

Radovanović reminds that, due to the changing trade regime between Croatia and CEFTA, which is likely have negative repercussions on Croatia, European Commission had already started the procedure to amend SAAs and accompanying annexes with all CEFTA members in order to preserve the existing export terms for Croatia. This is a common practice in the EU, which did the same for the countries from the previous enlargement rounds (e.g. Slovenia, Bulgaria, Romania). "As for the export of Montenegrin products to Croatia, the new situation is slightly less advantageous for Montenegro, because the current SAA sets quotas for wine, baby beef and some types of fish and fish products, while under CEFTA the Croatian market was fully liberalized also for these products. However, until now Montenegro did not export any meat or fish to the Croatian market, while our wine exports are significantly below the quota which has been set for tariff-free exports to EU. On the other hand, in terms of exports of Croatian goods the situation is somewhat better for Montenegro, because the level of protection for domestic products is higher in the case of EU imports", Radovanović said.

Further liberalization only concerns a small number of products, while for a large number of products Croatia, i.e. the EU, did not ask for additional concessions such as zero-tariff quotas, although the terms of exports for a significant number of goods will be worse for Croatia now than they were under CEFTA. This is especially true of some fruits (tangerines, grapes, melons, raspberries, kiwi, peaches...), vegetables (potatoes, tomatoes, cauliflower, kale, peppers, cucumbers...), wine, some processed meats, olive



Boris Marić

oil, honey, butter, yoghurt, milk, smoked and dried goods, beef and mutton.

Another important issue for Montenegro-Croatia relations is of political, rather than economic nature, and concerns the status of Prevlaka. Although the Croatian Parliament promised not to turn bilateral issues into an obstacle to integration of other West Balkan countries, the question of sea border at Prevlaka has gained new importance with the reports on potentially profitable reserves of oil and natural gas in that part of Adriatic. Although some representatives of Montenegrin parties consider Prevlaka to be a problem, for the time being the transitory agreement functions rather well. Legal advisor to the Centre for Civic Education (CCE) **Boris Marić** says the problem of Prevlaka has been around for decades: "At one point in the 1990s Prevlaka became an excuse to create enmities, mistrust and chaos among the peoples in this territory. Later we realised this was a callous mistake on the Montenegrin part". Marić thinks that Montenegro's position with regard to Prevlaka is much stronger today than we ever thought it would be, and that there is a will to solve that issue without the kind of unnecessary tensions which erupted between Slovenia and Croatia.

In the publication "On the border with EU"

In the first five months of 2013, Montenegro exported goods of the total value of €165.5 million. Croatia was the second largest export destination in this period, accounting for €24.2 million worth of exports. In 2012, the total value of trade with Croatia was 193.9 million, out of which €83.5 million were exports, and €110.4 million imports. The most important exports from Montenegro to Croatia are: aluminium and aluminium products (€80.2 mn), fresh fruit (€0.8 mn), raw hides (€0.5 mn) etc. The biggest import items from Croatia to Montenegro are: mineral fuels (€37 mn), salt, sulphur (€8.7 mn), electrical machinery and equipment (€6.5 mn), various food products (€5.1 mn).

of the Montenegrin Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, the Ministry notes that some of the benefits of Croatia's accession to EU will be "greater border security, possible increase in the EU demand for our workforce, and the possibility to communicate with EU institution in one of Montenegro's official languages".

According to Marić, the main advantage of Croatia's accession to EU is the fact that the citizens of Montenegro will be able to observe the adjustments of Croatian economy, judiciary and overall democratic processes from close by: "It is important that Montenegro will for the first time have a land border with an EU country, and that the citizens will be able to learn from Croatian experience directly, without any language barriers, and apply what they have learned to the needs of Montenegro's own negotiations".



Croats can already work in Ireland, in Slovenia only after two years

Slovenia will introduce a two-year transition period before it fully opens its labour market to the citizens of Croatia, starting with Croatia's accession on 1 July 2013. EU members have the option to impose a transition period during which they will gradually open up their labour markets to the citizens of a new member state, depending on the economic situation. The longest possible transition period is seven years. So far most of the EU member states have abolished all restrictions soon after the new countries joined EU. Ireland now announced its labour market will be open to Croatians from the very first day of accession.



Training for 66% of workers in EU

According to the latest report by Eurostat, in 2010, 66% of EU firms with ten or more employees organised professional training for their workers, 6% more than five years ago.

Most firms in Austria and Sweden offered some training to their workers (87%), but only relatively few did so in Poland (23%). The study, conducted by the Eurostat every five years, also shows that firm-organised trainings cover almost half of the workforce, but more frequently men than women. On average the trainings lasted 25 hours, and were more common in large than in small and medium enterprises.

Down with the €500 bill



German retailers and many experts are demanding that the €500 banknote should be withdrawn because "it is only still attractive to the criminals". However, ECB is not yet convinced that a withdrawal would be justified.

Most Germans anyway know the purple bill only from the TV and the newspapers. Those with a rare chance to have held it in their hands know it is extremely difficult to get rid of it: at the gas stations, for instance, you are met at the entrance with the announcement that they won't accept €500 banknotes, for security reasons. Many shops, especially smaller ones, also refuse to accept it.

€500 bills account for a third of cash circulating in the Eurozone. There are around 600 million of these bills at large, of which 20% in Spain, although this country only contributes 11% of the eurozone. According to the media, this is a sign that the large note is a "favourite" in the grey economy.

The economists believe that the withdrawal of €500 bill might have positive effects on EU's economy. According to them, many people outside of the eurozone keep their savings in these large banknotes, which raises the demand for euros and pushes up the exchange rate. If the large bill were abolished, at least some of the money would be transferred into other currencies, lowering the exchange rate and helping export economies of the crisis-struck Southern Europe. However, German experts who advocate the withdrawal of the purple bill have warned the ECB that it should prepare quietly and suddenly withdraw the bills from the circulation, before the criminals have a chance to react.

Political analyst Davor Gjenero about Croatia's membership of EU and regional relations

Croatia was in a better position when Slovenia joined the EU



The messages from Brussels will become ever harsher the more you advance into negotiations. In the last few months, your position vis-à-vis EU has changed significantly. You are no more simply a European neighbour, where the EU intervenes in the domestic affairs only in extreme circumstances.

According to Croatian political analyst **Davor Gjenero**, compared to Croatia's neighbours now, Croatia was in a better position at the time when Slovenia joined European Union. "In contrast to Croatia's not very skilled politics, Slovenia at the time had the great **Janez Drnovšek**, who understood these processes and who made sure the two countries agreed and ratified a very good agreement on cross-border cooperation before Slovenia joined EU. This agreement resulted in a very soft border between the two countries, allowed Croatians to cross the border with only an ID, and secured significant privileges for Croatia's trade with Slovenia, as well as with Italy. It enable Croatia to access European markets and once Slovenia joined the EU in 2004, the agreement became part of the common legal heritage of European communities. The situation worsened in 2007/2008, when Slovenia joined the Schengen zone, but not dramatically. The changes basically meant that ordinary people crossing the border with an ID card should also have a card which stated the time when they crossed the border. That was it. There were numerous private border crossings, which the people who had property on one side of the border and lived on the other, could open and close themselves, without any official control. In short, Croatia had a very comfortable transition system. Unfortunately, Croatia did not use the last two years of accession to arrange the same kind of agreements on cross-border cooperation with its neighbours", Gjenero told European Pulse.

He added that Montenegro's position is the least problematic. "Serbia, probably also BiH,

was ready to grant concessions to Croatia in the negotiations over the new status of its economy after exiting CEFTA, in exchange for softer borders. Croatia decided, wrongly, that both questions were matters of relations between EU and its neighbours, and let the European Commission negotiate in its name. There was little diplomatic activity on Croatia's part and we failed to secure the deals which would have given Croatia some economic advantages, while improving the position of our neighbours on the border of EU", Gjenero said.

» *Why is Montenegro in a better position than Serbia or BiH?*

The relationship between Montenegro and Croatia is among the best in the region. They managed to solve a very complex bilateral problem by agreeing to let an international court decide on the border at Prevlaka and on the sea around Prevlaka. This is all that is now left to be done – to sign that agreement.

» *You don't think that the matter of Prevlaka could resurface again as a problem for Montenegro in its integration with EU?*

Croatia pledged that the border question will never be used to slow down Montenegro's progress in negotiations with EU. Everybody in Croatia believes that Montenegro is in a better position to negotiate than other countries of the region. Montenegro has a number of advantages: it is a relatively small country with very valuable resources. Montenegro also has one big problem – the systemic corruption – but in that it is no different from other countries in the region, or indeed from Croatia in its earlier stages of accession. Because the country is so small, and

there are so few members of the political class, this problem is somewhat more visible and more prominent in Montenegro than elsewhere. This is a problem that demands a systemic solution – you must establish independent mechanisms for the prevention of corruption, get European support for the implementation of these measures... EC also learned something from its negotiations with Croatia, where it opened the chapter on judiciary pretty late, and closed it last. With Montenegro and other Western Balkan countries this will be among the first chapters to be opened.

» Talking about the new approach to negotiations, compared to the period before the beginning of negotiations, EU officials seem to be sending harsher messages to the Montenegrin political elite, especially in relation to the “Recordings” affair. Was this also the case with Croatia?

Yes, and they will only get harsher the more you advance into negotiations. In the last few months, your position vis-à-vis EU has changed significantly. You are no more simply a European neighbour, where the EU intervenes in the domestic affairs only in extreme circumstances.

» Do you agree with the statement that Croatia has a great responsibility towards the European future of the rest of the Balkans?

Yes, Croatia must cease to play “Balkan politics” in the EU, because this would send a bad signal to the political elites, as well as the citizens of its neighbouring countries, that it’s possible to keep the bad old habits even in EU. I am worried about Sabor’s decision to evade its responsibility to comply with the common European arrest warrant. It’s an attempt to evade

the commitments the country undertook when it became an EU member, and to continue playing according to the old rules. This can only earn Croatia sharp criticism from Brussels. Failure to comply with the principles of the rule of law can lead to suspension of Croatia’s access to the structural funds. This has happened before: the EU suspended Austria when Haider joined its federal government, and later Hungary because of its media law. If it fails to play according to the rules, Croatia will be punished in the same way, and will have trouble in fulfilling its role within the EU. This will also send the wrong message to Serbia, Montenegro, BiH, Macedonia and Albania.

» Croatia will now have access to much more money from EU funds, but it seems that its tourism is suffering, and that fewer visitors could arrive this year because of the visa requirements for Russia and Turkey. Are there any more negative implications for Croatia’s economy?

Food and tobacco industries will enter a sharp decline, the service sector will be changing, and some industries which used to do quite well, such as transport, are dying out. However, all these are shocks which are likely to last for a month, or maybe six months or even a year, but after that our citizens can only benefit from this. For the political class, however, the situation is becoming more difficult, they won’t be able to play with the budget deficit – that will now fall under EU’s control. But anything that imposes additional checks on the political class in these countries can only benefit their citizens in the long term.

Do as much as you can before Serbia starts negotiating

According to Gjenaro, it is important for Montenegro use the opportunity while it is still alone in the negotiating process, and to get head as much as possible.

“The moment the accession talks begin properly with Serbia, most of the EC’s capacities will be redirected there. Serbia is a geopolitically more important state, a larger state, and one which has many more problems than Montenegro. The European administration will focus its efforts there. Nobody spent too much time on Croatia until 2007, when Bulgaria and Romania were taken off the agenda. EU showed more interest in Croatia only after Sanader left, after Jadranka Kosor showed she was willing to start dealing with corruption. Kosor had that advantage over Milo Đukanović that she, or rather HDZ, belongs to the family of European conservatives, and she had a lot of support from Viviane Reding, a prominent conservative politician. Đukanović is unlikely to get that kind of support from his fellow parties, as socialists are quite weak now both in the EP and in EC”.

Draft action plans for Chapters 23 and 24

Almost like EU by 2019

In December this year, Montenegro is to create a special committee whose task will be to monitor investigations of past attacks and violence against journalists. From November 2014 it will also have a special prosecutor's office for organised crime and corruption, similar to Croatia's USKOK, from the beginning of 2016 it will introduce the Agency for Anti-Corruption, and by 2019 it will reduce the number of judges and courts. These are all promises the Government made in its draft Action plans (APs) for Chapter 23 – Judiciary and Fundamental Rights, and 24 – Justice, Freedom and Security. In short, the Government promised European Union that within five years at the most it will build up sufficient capacities in the judiciary, police, prosecution and Directorate for the prevention of money laundering to successfully combat corruption and organised crime and guarantee fundamental rights at a level appropriate for an EU member state. Unlike draft APs, the proposals adopted on 27 April clearly stated the amounts earmarked for each activity from the public budget or IPA funds, and the new documents contain much shorter deadlines for the implementation of each activity. Also, they announce that the Government will appoint contact persons in each area, who will report to relevant implementation coordinators for implementation on a quarterly basis, and these coordinators will in turn issue half-yearly reports on the state of implementation. According to the current proposals: "these reports will be then reviewed by the Government and submitted to the European Commission". In the AP for Chapter 23 the government plans to establish the new Prosecutor's Office for the fight against corruption, organised crime, war crimes and terrorism by November 2014. For this project, €662 000 will be earmarked from the public budget. Compared to the initial draft proposal, the deadline for the creation of the new prosecutor body was shortened by a year, after the Government received comments from Brussels. "The Special Public Prosecutor will be responsible for handling all cases with elements of corruption, and will have

sub-offices specialised for sensitive areas and high level corruption, as well as for organised crime and corruption, with emphasis on high-level corruption. Organisational structure of the Special Prosecutor will also allow for a functional link with the Financial Investigation Unit of the Police Directorate and a multi-disciplinary team in the new prosecutor's office", states the proposal. According to the draft AP for Chapter 23, the deadline for constitutional amendments in July 2013, which is also when the new constitutional law should be adopted. The earlier version stipulated September 2013 as the final deadline. The deadline for the constitution of the Judicial and Prosecutors' Council is the same as in the earlier versions – first quarter of 2015. Ministry of Justice has this and the next year to develop proposals for the two councils, and a Law on Courts, align them with the amended Constitution and get them through public debates and EU's review. By 2015 there should be a plan for the rationalization of court network and by 2019 the number of judges should be lower than in 2014. For these two items Montenegro is planning to apply for co-financing from IPA funds. By the end of October 2014 the Parliament should adopt a separate law regulating the procedure of financial investigations, property confiscation, its management, and terms of return of confiscated property. By the end of June 2014 the Government promised to establish a new Agency for Anti-corruption, a merger between Directorate for Anti-Corruption and Commission for the prevention of conflict of interests. The Agency should become operational on 1 January 2016, which is when the law comes into force. This project is expected to cost €32 000. As regards the AP for Chapter 24, the proposal covers "10 sub-chapters: migration, asylum, visa policy, external borders and Schengen, judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters, police cooperation and fight against organised crime, fight against terrorism, cooperation on matters related to drugs, customs cooperation and euro counterfeiting (criminal aspects)". The document claims Montenegro will spend

almost three million euro between 2014 and 2018 to fight organised crime, and combat general and economic crimes at central and regional levels. The money will be spent on the purchase of vehicles, IT and technical equipment, and equipment for the collect and preservation of evidence. By 2015 Ministry of Interior Affairs is planning to acquire “N Case” equipment and other machinery necessary for forensic examination of mobile phones and bank accounts screenings, to be used by the information technology research group at the Forensic Centre. Between February 2014 and March 2015, according to the AP, new organisational sub-units will be established within the Police Crime Unit, specialising in financial investigations, high-tech crime, trade in human beings and terrorism. Over the course of four years, the state will earmark some €528 000 in salaries for the employees of these units. The last quarter of 2016 is the final deadline for the replacement and improvement of the information system in the Directorate for

prevention of money laundering and financing of terrorism. The upgrade will cost around half million euro, and will be financed jointly by Montenegro and IPA funds. The action plan also announced establishment of safe communication channels for the exchange of e-mails and other information between Police, Special Prosecutor’s Office and the Higher Court by 2014. This also includes electronic exchanges of secret surveillance documents (initiative, proposals, orders, confirmations...). Capacity-building in the field of intelligence service, hidden surveillance and secret agents will continue in the period 2013-2015, in cooperation with EU, within the already approved IPA 2012 project. Activities related to witness protection in the fight against organised crime and terrorism are also under way, as part of the WINPRO II regional project which began in January 2013 and will take 36 months to complete, states the proposal.

V.Ž.

Commission for investigations of violence against journalists

According to AP, December 2013 is the deadline for establishment of a Government commission in charge of monitoring institutions responsible for “investigation of old and more recent cases of threats and violence against journalists and murders of journalists”. The earlier version of AP for Chapter 23 contained no such proposal, and the Government officials were quite adamant that there was no need for such a commission. According to the current proposal, the commission will consist of representatives of Ministry of Interior, prosecution, police, NGOs and media, and its goal is to collect and review all the relevant documents that could elucidate the reasons for the failure to resolve past murders of journalists. As of January 2014 prosecution and the police will have the task of regularly reporting to the commission about investigations into “older and recent cases of threats and violence against journalists”. The total amount of funding allocated to this item is 19 440 euro. Also, from December 2013 onwards the Police Directorate is expected to introduce “a system of measure and activities aimed at the protection of journalists against threats and violence”.

Tougher Borders

The Government also took up the task of developing a plan for suppression and prevention of corruption at border crossings by early 2014. According to the AP for Chapter 24, the plan will become operational as of January 2015. By May 2014 22 accessory roads towards BiH will be blocked in order to prevent smuggling. “44 such roads were identified, and each side will block 22 roads”, states the AP. This activity will require 30 000 euro. There is also a plan to create mixed teams to investigate possibilities of blocking alternative crossings towards Kosovo, Albania and Serbia. The plan also calls for stronger control and a larger number of checking points along the border.

Chapter 6: Company law



Tamara Milaš

The core of accession negotiations is in harmonizing national legislation with EU's body of common law. The company law *acquis* includes rules on disclosure requirements, formation, maintenance and alteration of capital, merger and division, takeover bids and transparency requirements of companies, as well as corporate governance principles. In the area of financial reporting, the *acquis* specifies rules for the presentation of annual and consolidated accounts, including simplified rules for small and medium-sized enterprises. Particular accounting rules apply to the banking and insurance sectors. The application of International Accounting Standards is mandatory for some public interest entities. In addition, the *acquis* specifies rules for the approval, professional integrity and independence of statutory auditors.

Montenegrin company law is largely consistent with the EU *acquis* on the disclosure requirements for branches, on single-member private limited companies, on the disclosure requirements for public and private limited companies, on the formation of public limited liability companies and the maintenance and alteration of their capital, on mergers and on divisions. As regards administrative structure, the Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Finance are competent for policy proposals in the area covered by the business organisation law. The Central Registry of commercial entities is an independent state body established as part of the Commercial Court in Podgorica and is in charge of implementation of the business organisation law and registration of business organisations in Montenegro.

As regards registration, Montenegro established a one-stop system of registration and continued its plans for the implementation of online registration, preparing new registration forms and Guidelines to the Central Registry, in line with the Law on Commercial Entities.

The area of corporate accounting is regulated by the Law on accounting and auditing of 2008 while by-laws further regulate individual areas of its implementation. Legal entities having control (parent legal companies) over one or more legal entities (subsidiaries) are required to compile, submit and disclose consolidated financial statements, in accordance with the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). Harmonisation with the EU *acquis*, which started in 2002, has not yet been completed, although it was supposed to be finished by 2012.

Under the Law on accounting and auditing, Montenegro set up an Accounting and Auditing Council. The Council is a consultative body whose tasks are to consider and adopt its position on matters such as the development and promotion of accounting and auditing practice





in Montenegro; to provide advice to policy makers, regulators and government bodies; to provide technical assistance for improving the quality of financial reporting and other matters important for the development and promotion of accounting and auditing practice in Montenegro, in line with the IFRS.

As regards statutory audits, the Law on accounting and auditing of 2008 transposes partially the Statutory Audit Directive (2006/43/EC) and takes into account some aspects of the Commission recommendations of 2008 on external quality assurance and limitation of the civil liability of statutory auditors and audit firms. A series of by-laws further regulates particular areas of auditing such as registration of audit firms and authorised auditors, requirements for authorised auditor licensing, and mandatory liability insurance of audit firms and authorised auditors. However, legislation needs to be developed on the establishment and approval of audit firms; the specific requirements for statutory auditors and audit firms which carry out audits of public interest entities such as banks, insurance companies or listed companies; the establishment of an external quality assurance system for statutory

auditors and audit firms; the independent public oversight for auditors; the cooperation and exchange of information with other regulatory and supervisory authorities; the regulation of third-country auditors and audit firms as well as cooperation with competent authorities from third countries.

Stabilisation and Association Agreement binds Montenegro facilitate the setting-up of operations on its territory by Community companies and nationals. To that end, Montenegro grants, as regards the establishment of Community companies on the territory of Montenegro, treatment no less favourable than that accorded to its own companies or to any third country company, whichever is the better. The same applies to the operation of subsidiaries and branches already established on the territory of Montenegro. In respect of financial services, notwithstanding other provisions of the SAA, the Agreement does not prevent any of the parties from taking measures for prudential reasons, including for the protection of investors, depositors, policy holders or persons to whom a fiduciary duty is owed by a financial service supplier, or to ensure the integrity and stability of the financial system. However, such measures mustn't be used as a means of avoiding the obligations undertaken under SAA.

2007 Action plan for the implementation of recommendations from European partnership envisages new improvements with regard to financial accounting, especially by the financial institutions, but also by companies with publicly traded shares.

As for negotiations, it should be noted that for the most part Montenegrin company law is already aligned with the EU. Amendments to the Law on Accounting and Auditing are another step in the right direction. However, it is still necessary to establish an independent public oversight body for auditors and a related quality control system, as well as an effective system to conduct investigations and implement sanctions.

Beyond alignment, Montenegro faces additional challenges relating to effective implementation and enforcement in areas such as the electronic operation of business registers. All appropriate measures need to be taken to improve the corporate culture and further develop systems of corporate governance. Some progress was also made in the strengthening of the legal framework for the protection of intellectual property, but is still far from satisfactory. The results of investigations and trials of piracy and counterfeiting are insufficient, and the level of public awareness with regard to intellectual property rights is still low, and will require a lot of additional work.

Particular attention needs to be paid to alignment with the *acquis* grounds for nullity of companies, electronic operation of business register, disclosure requirements of companies, capital maintenance and alteration, shareholders' rights, takeover bids and corporate accounting. Further alignment is needed on important aspects of the Statutory Audit Directive.

In most areas concerning company law, Montenegrin legislation has made a lot of progress in aligning with the EU *acquis*. For example, concerning electronic signatures, Montenegro established a Root Certificate Authority at the national level (Montenegro Post) which had already issued more than 2,500 digital certificates, mostly to legal entities. Following the first wave of digital certificate issuance, the certificate authority receives 4-5 requests per day. The cost of certificate is €110 for a period for three years. Certification authority for public administration has also been actively issuing digital certificates, so far around 170 of them.

The common prejudice related to company law is that the EU institutions don't have the time or the will to deal with the Montenegrin economy, or to fight against the well preserved monopolies from the socialist times. However, Montenegro's company law made a lot of progress in harmonization with EU *acquis*. The *acquis* in this area contains very clear rules on disclosure requirements, formation, maintenance and alteration of capital, merger and division, takeover bids and transparency requirements of companies, as well as corporate governance principles.

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.

EU info bus on the road to EU in Danilovgrad and Nikšić



In June, EU info bus visited Danilovgrad and Nikšić. On 6 June, in Danilovgrad, in the gymnasium “Petar I Petrović Njegoš”, the organisers showed documentary “Europe in my town” by Danilo Marunović, which talks about the new rules, the new system of values, the world which Montenegro is hoping to join through integration into EU. The screening was followed by a quiz about European integrations,

distributing brochures and other promotional material with information about European Union, its policies and values. All interested participants, and especially the youth, could also take part in games, puzzles and quizzes which tested their knowledge about EU. The programme was opened at 12:00 by Ambassador **Mitja Drobnič**, head of the EU Delegation to Montenegro. As part of the information campaign for the citizens of Nikšić about European integration process, a panel discussion was co-organised with Municipality of Nikšić, titled “*What does the EU integration process mean for the citizens of Nikšić?*”, where the participants could get direct answers to their questions about European integration. Among panellists were **Daliborka Uljarević**, executive director of CCE, **Veselin Grbović**, president of Nikšić municipality, Mitja Drobnič, Head of EU Delegation to Montenegro, **Snežana**



and the three students who answered all the questions correctly won prizes. **Boris Marić**, CCE’s senior legal advisor, answered student questions which were not already answered by the documentary, and pointed the students to some of the answers in the brochures about negotiating chapters which were distributed to all participants. In the meantime, EU info bus was parked on the square in front of the school, with info-stands offering a variety of materials and activities between 12:30 and 14:00. The event was primarily focused on young people, with the aim of introducing them more closely to the process of European integrations and to EU itself. The next stop of the EU info bus was Nikšić, where it arrived on 11 June. The EU info bus arrived to the main square and was parked there between 12:00 and 13:00h,

Radović, general director for European integration in MFAEI. Project “EU info Bus – on the road to EU” is implemented by Centre for Civic Education (CCE) in cooperation with Friedrich Ebert Foundation and NGO Natura, with support of the EU Delegation to Montenegro. Its goal is to strengthen the capacities and role of local communities and civil society organisations in Montenegro for a long-term, effective contribution to EU integration. More specifically, it aims to increase the knowledge, understanding and support for EU integration among the citizens of Montenegro, through the education-information campaign conducted in 6 municipalities of the central region of Montenegro: Podgorica, Nikšić, Danilovgrad, Cetinje, Kolašin and Mojkovac.

European Parliament approves political agreement on EU's multi-annual financial framework

Leftover money for science and youth

European Parliament (EP) has approved the political compromise on the multi-annual financial framework, the EU's budget for 2014-2020, ending several months of blockade. The MEPs agreed to support the budget agreement which was already given the green light by the Council, but only after they were promised additional concessions such as greater flexibility in the deployment of funds and a new mid-term budget review. This is only a preliminary approval: the final vote will be taken in the fall, and the MEPs promised to support the framework only if the member states agree to add more funding to this year's budget, so that the outstanding amount for next year will remain unchanged. The resolution was supported by 474 MEPs: 193 were against it, 42 abstained. It was rejected by Greens who criticised the conservatives, socialist and liberals for their agreement to a significantly reduced budget. The agreement on the financial framework between EU's institutions was struck minutes before the beginning of the June summit, after a discussion between EP President **Martin Schulz**, Irish Prime Minister **Enda Kenny**, and European Commission President **Jose Manuel Barroso**. The outcome of the negotiations will be enshrined in a regulation and an accompanying inter-institutional agreement to which Parliament will have to give its consent. The final legally binding vote in Parliament will take place in September or October, but only after €11.2 billion needed to balance the 2013 budget is confirmed by the Council, to make sure the budget for 2014 stays intact. France, for instance, will have to add another 1.8 billion to 20.4 billion it already cashed out into the European coffers in 2013. Finance ministers of EU member states will adopt the formal decision to release the first instalment of 7.3 billion euro by 9 July at the latest, and will decide about the second instalment in the fall. Commission's proposal for 2014 budget is 142 billion euro in commitments and 135.9 billion in real expenses. This is yet to be approved by the member states and the EP. European Parliament managed to secure several concessions which mainly concern greater flexibility in the management of funds. For instance, the EP asked to allow unpaid funds to be moved more easily between years and categories of expenditure, to make it easier to finance youth employment and research policies, the Erasmus programme and support for small and medium-sized firms. A key achievement for Parliament was to insert a "revision clause" in order to give the next Parliament and Commission a say on a budget that they would otherwise be stuck with until the end of their terms. The revision should take place in 2016, and the EC will present a review of the functioning of the multi-annual

The final legally binding vote in Parliament will take place in September or October, but only after €11.2 billion needed to balance the 2013 budget is confirmed by the Council, to make sure the budget for 2014 stays intact. France, for instance, will have to add another 1.8 billion to 20.4 billion it already cashed out into the European coffers in 2013.

financial framework, taking full account of the economic situation at the time. Particular emphasis will be given to aligning the future duration of the MFF - currently seven years - with the 5-year political cycles of the EU institutions. In the final talks it was agreed that the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived would be increased from €2.5 billion to €3.5 billion. The additional €1 billion can be used by Member States on a voluntary basis for the food distribution scheme. A high-level group of members of the three institutions will review the current EU "own resources" system, guided by the overall objectives of simplicity, transparency, equity and democratic accountability, and organise an inter-institutional conference about it in 2016, to which the national parliaments will be invited. EU budget finances activities, policies and programmes of European Union. It is adopted for a period of 7 years and stipulates the amounts and basic categories of expenditures, while the real expenses are calculated on the annual basis. The first multi-annual financial framework was adopted in 1988, and this is the fourth such financial framework. The next one, programmed for the period 2014-2020, amounts to 908 billion euro in real expenses, i.e. 960 billion in commitments. The debates about EU budget are always long and complicated. Agricultural policy is the usual bone of contention, and right now the biggest problem is the fact that most member states are constrained by the national-level austerity measures. The Lisbon Treaty gave the European Parliament the right to participate in the decisions on the budget. The EU budget is mostly financed by the contributions of EU member states, which are calculated according to their share in total GDP. Another part is collected in the form of taxes: customs on imports from third countries, for example, as well as part of the national VAT go directly into the EU budget. For each year, the EU institutions can also count on some additional sources, such as leftover money from the previous year, and contributions from third countries which allow them to participate in some European programmes.

Source: AFP and EurActiv.rs

European Council decides to open negotiations with Belgrade

Is Serbia's road to EU irreversible?



Andreas Polterman

Author is the director of the Heinrich Boll Stiftung in Belgrade

On 28 June the European Council agreed that the European Commission should begin preparations for the accession talks with Serbia without further delay. However, the conference on accession and the opening of the first negotiation chapter will have to wait at least until January 2014. Before that, the European Council will meet once more in December to examine whether Serbia has indeed fulfilled all the commitments it undertook as part of the agreement with Kosovo on 22 May. The end of negotiations between Serbia and Kosovo on 19 April truly deserves recognition.

Will they continue with the method of all Serbian governments, finding jobs for their members in the already overstaffed public sector? This too is a form of corruption, privileges for party affiliates and discrimination against highly qualified young people whose only recommendation for a job in the public sector or a state owned company is the fact that they have been educated for it and would do it well.



last election campaign, finally took political centre stage, and are demanding effective solutions. Accession negotiations, cleverly used by European Commission, can help to initiate a comprehensive transformation of Serbia. The award of the starting date is the right signal in that sense. However, the agreement does not guarantee that the agreed goals will be implemented. Admission of grave economic problems and public debate about them does not mean that the politics is really heading in the right direction. Has Serbia really “done everything”, as its Government keeps repeating, that the European Union could possibly expect of it? Has it done everything that Serbia needed?

Kosovo

There is visible progress towards normalisation of relations with Kosovo. International recognition is still pending, but communications offices had been set up in both countries, together with the staff, and the Kosovo police and customs officers are free move in the north of the country without interference. It was agreed that the police and judiciary in the north will be incorporated into the Kosovo legal system and institutions, and that Kosovar Serbs will participate in elections in November 2013. The first Serbian police stations have been closed down. On the

With it, Serbia has abandoned the politics which for years had only brought trouble to the whole region. It also freed up the space to tackle major problems within Serbia itself – from corruption to overwhelming budget deficit which is the result of excessive expenditure in the enormous public sector, but also of the large number of state-owned companies posting continuous losses. Deindustrialization and mismanagement, main topics of the



other hand, in order to get the Serbs from the north of Kosovo to agree, Kosovo accepted significant compromises. Serbia is still free to finance organisations and persons in the north of Kosovo – except that from now on it will be done publicly. Kosovo will adopt a far-reaching amnesty law which relieves of all culpability the Serbs who had not paid taxes for years or even those who are suspected of some felonies. They will also be eligible for employment in Kosovo's public institutions. It is still unclear whether all Serbs from the overstuffed public institutions of the North will be guaranteed employment in Kosovo's institutions. Municipalities with majority Serb population now have the right to set up a Union of Serb Municipalities with extensive autonomy in areas of health, education and local administration/urban development, which is much more than was expected of Kosovo under Ahtisaari's plan.

Corruption

In Serbia itself, much more has been announced than achieved. There is some progress in the fight against corruption. Many investigations were started and the first criminal proceedings initiated. The arrest of **Miroslav Mišković**, and ally of Milošević and the riches tycoon in Serbia today definitely carries a great symbolic weight. But are there really strong grounds for charges against him? There is much to suggest that he is in fact arrested for crimes which did not exist as crimes at the time they were committed. The ban on retroactive application of the law is one of the foundations of free and democratic societies. *Nullum crime sine lege*.

Doubts

So there are many doubts about irreversibility of Serbia's path towards European Union and towards becoming peaceful neighbour in the region. The doubts are only made worse with the threat that the normalization process might be stopped if the membership negotiations do not begin soon enough.

More doubts about democratic and European orientation of the biggest party in power have come up as a consequence the coalition partnership between SNS and the extreme right wing Dveri in Novi Sad, the second largest city in Serbia. Adding to them are the threats that, in case the accession negotiations are refused or set to begin too far in the future, new elections will be called. What would that change? Plan for the implementation of agreement between Serbia and Kosovo would almost certainly be suspended. Was Serbia only playing for time when it signed the agreement? Will it continue with the old approach of all Serbian governments, finding jobs for its members in the already overstuffed public sector? This too is a form of corruption, privileges for party affiliates and discrimination against highly qualified young people whose only recommendation for a job in the public sector or a state owned company is the fact that they have been educated for it and would do it well. For EU, the best would be to wait for the visible sings of progress and forget about the many statements of intentions, action plans, or even new laws. This is not about setting new conditions – it is about waiting for existing commitments to be fulfilled. The decision of EU to postpone the beginning of negotiations for next year is a good one. First it should wait for Serbia to fulfil its own part of the bargain. After that, it should also fulfil its own promise to the citizens of Serbia, and show that Serbia is welcome to the European community of values, where it can take up new commitments and expect assistance and solidarity.

Source: *Peščanik.net*

Agreement signed between representative trade unions and NGOs

On 31 May 2013 in Podgorica representative trade unions on the national level and non-governmental organisations signed the Cooperation Agreement. In line with the conclusions of the 2011 conference which was dedicated to the possibilities for cooperation between trade unions and NGOs, the two parties formed a Working Group to prepare the document that would define the areas and mechanisms of cooperation between representative trade unions and NGOs in Montenegro. The working group, appointed by the participants at the conference, consisted of: **Aleksandar Saša Zeković** (human rights violations researcher), **Vidak Labović** (NGO Spona Berane), **Ivan Delević** (Women's organisation Fenix Berane), **Marina Vuković** (Centre for Development of Non-Governmental Organisations), **Momčilo Radulović** (European Movement in Montenegro), **Ivana Mihajlović** (Union of Free Trade Unions of Montenegro), and **Srđa Keković** (Union of Free Trade Unions of Montenegro). At the event, signatory parties emphasised their mutual desire for greater communication, co-operation and partnerships. On behalf of the Centre for Civic Education, the agreement was signed by Tamara Milaš, CCE programme associate.

Protecting human rights of LGBT persons

On 4 and 5 June 2013 LGBT Forum Progress organised an LGBT training for policemen, in cooperation with the Government of Montenegro, and with financial support of the Government of Netherlands. The training was successfully completed by 54 police officers, who thereby acquired new skills for work with the LGBT community. The trainers were experienced police instructors from Canada and representatives of the Canadian organisation EGALÉ whose mission is to advance quality and has internationally recognised extensive experience working with the police and educational institutions. Tamara Milaš, CCE programme associate, attended the opening ceremony of the training.

Between 17 and 19 June 2013, as part of the People 2 People programme, the office of the Serbian Ombudsman for Human and Minority Rights and ILA Europe organised a workshop titled *"Human Rights of Lesbians, Bisexuals, Gay and Transgender persons with a focus on equal treatment and fight against discrimination"*. The workshop brought together more than 100 representatives of civil society organisations and public institutions from Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Turkey, Croatia and Island. The goal of the workshop was to introduce the participants to EU programmes and policies in the area of anti-discrimination and protection of rights of LGBT persons, and to offer them an opportunity to meet and network with similar organisations and institutions from the region and EU. The overall assessment was that in terms of anti-discrimination in general, as well as with regard to the rights of LGBT persons, there has been significant progress which brought new anti-discrimination laws and institutional mechanisms. However, there is still a lot of space for improvement with regard of the quality of life of LGBT persons in the West Balkan countries. **Petar Đukanović**, CCE programme coordinator for human rights, also participated in the workshop.

Round table on Europeanization

Political Science Department of the University of Montenegro organised on 28 June in Podgorica a round table titled *"Citizens and the Europeanization process"*. The organiser presented a study about the way the regional media report on the process of European integration, with a special focus on Montenegro. In addition to Montenegro, the study also covered Serbia, Macedonia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The round table was opened by **Sonja Tomović Šundić**, dean of the Political Science Department, **Alberto Cammarata**, Head of Political, European Integration and Trade Section in EU Delegation to Montenegro, and **Nataša Ružić**, deputy dean at the Political Science Department. The results of the study were presented by **Dejan Lučić**, project associate, and his presentation was followed by discussions by **Gordana Đurović**, professor of the Department of Economics of the University of Montenegro, **Srđan Milić**, president of the Socialist People's Party (SNP) and member of the Committee for European Integration in the Parliament for Montenegro, and **Daliborka Uljarević**, executive director of the Centre for Civic Education (CCE). The meeting was attended by a large number of media representatives, NGOs and academic community, and was marked by constructive discussion about challenges facing the citizens of the region on their road to EU.

Speak UP!2 in Brussels

On 20 June 2013, representatives of Montenegrin media and non-governmental organisations participated in the conference “*Speak UP!2*” in Brussels, which addressed the problem of freedom of expression and media in Western Balkans and Turkey. The conference, organised by the European Commission with direct involvement of the European Enlargement Commissioner, **Štefan Füle**, brought together over 450 participants and is one of the largest events of this kind. Freedom of expression and media is among the top priorities on the road to EU, and the main challenges in this direction are, according to the participants: political intervention, insufficiently effective judiciary, threat of economic suffocation of certain independent media, influence of the public media, lack of competition, and violence against journalists. The participants also discussed the role of new and social media, and the role of parliament in the advancement of media freedoms. Füle said that the EC has been providing technical and financial support to improve media freedom to the countries in the process of EU accession, and urged authorities to resolve all cases of violence against journalists, strengthen the rights of journalists, but also to increase professionalism and ethical behaviour within the profession. CCE was represented at the conference by **Daliborka Uljarević**, CCE executive director.

Handbook for support of civil society in EU enlargement countries (2014–2020)

On 14 June 2013 in Podgorica, European Union Delegation to Montenegro and TACSO office organised consultations with Montenegrin NGOs on draft *Guidelines for support to civil society organisations (CSOs) in Western Balkans and Turkey*. The document contains proposals for the goals, results, and indicators to be monitored over the period 2014 to 2020, based on which it is possible to measure the extent to which the environment is conducive to the work of CSOs in candidate countries. TACSO and EU delegations organised such consultations in every country of the West Balkan and Turkey, in order to identify results and indicators which could be applied to that country. **Ana Vujošević**, CCE programme coordinator for European integration, participated in the consultations on behalf of CCE.

CSOs and media

On 12 June 2013, in Prishtina, TACSO regional office organised a workshop titled “*Capacities and relations between civil society organisations and media*”. The aim was to develop short-term and long-term plans for capacity development of CSOs and media in relation to procedures, standards and strategies in the local context, with an emphasis on the NGO sector. The meeting was opened by **Nicola Bertolini**, head of department for regional cooperation in European Commission DG Enlargement and **Flaka Suroi**, secretary general of *Koha*. As noted in the introductory speeches, media and CSOs have many interests in common and to achieve them they should cooperate more closely and develop joint strategies. Recent studies on the region have demonstrated a clear trajectory in the relations between civil society and the media, which suggest that there is little trust between the two parties, and that the media do not see civil society organisations as partners in democracy-building. The workshop covered four areas: *Capacities of CSOs to get involved and become visible in the media*; *Capacities of CSOs to use new technologies, new and social media for various purposes (social marketing)*; *Ability of CSOs to use media for campaigns, advocacy and community mobilisations (changing communication and behaviour)*; *How to improve relations between CSOs and media (strategic orientation)*. **Nikola Đonović**, CCE programme coordinator, participated in the workshop on behalf of CCE.

Translation traineeships for university graduates

European Parliament offers several options for **traineeships** within its Secretariat, to provide opportunities for vocational training and for learning more about what the European Parliament is and does. These traineeships are awarded only to graduates of universities or equivalent institutions. Their purpose is to enable trainees to supplement the knowledge acquired during their studies and to familiarise themselves with the activities of the European Union and, in particular, the European Parliament.

Applicants for a translation traineeship for university graduates must:

- » be nationals of a Member State of the European Union or a candidate country;
- » be aged 18 or over on the traineeship start date;
- » have obtained, before the deadline for submission of applications, a university degree following a course of study of at least three years' duration;
- » have a perfect knowledge of one of the official languages of the European Union or the official language of an candidate country and a thorough knowledge of two other official languages of the European Union;
- » not have been awarded any other traineeship or have been in paid employment for more than four consecutive weeks at the expense of the European Union budget.

Translation traineeships for university graduates are awarded for a period of three months. Exceptionally, they may be extended for a maximum period of three months. **Application period for traineeship which starts on 1st January 2014 is 15 June – 15 August (midnight).**

Translation trainees are assigned to Luxembourg. By way of indication, in 2013 the scholarship represents EUR 1 213.55 per month. Please note the conditions of admission. If you are preselected, the following will be required as supporting documents:

- » the application form, duly completed and signed,
- » a copy of your passport or identity card,
- » copies of your diplomas and certificates,
- » a copy of your university results, if you have them.

Read more:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/aboutparliament/en/007cecd1cc/Traineeships.html>

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