

European pulse

Electronic monthly magazine

for European Integration

No 97, October 2013



FOCUS OF THIS ISSUE

Why is Montenegro's 2013 Progress report different

interview

Deputy president of ESI
Kristof Bender

challenges in the EU

The Maastricht Treaty
20 years after

region

Balkan politicians
restrict media freedoms



Foreword:

Everyone should do their job



Vladan Žugić

In late 2001, after a very unpleasant meeting with the then High Representative of EU for Foreign and Security Policy **Javier Solana**, the Prime Minister **Milo Đukanović** announced that there is no alternative to the referendum on Montenegrin independence. In March 2002, without a clear announcement, after a late night meeting, we woke up in a new country – the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, which, due to Solana's role in its birth, was often mockingly referred to as Solania. In his first reaction to the EU's 2013 Progress Report on Montenegro, which demands a "political and judicial" epilogue to the "Recording" affair, president of DPS said that, as far as his party was concern, this was a "closed chapter". Only a few days later, after EU reiterated its interest in seeing the "Recording" resolved, Đukanović backed off a little: "Let me make perfectly clear what I meant by that – politically, this process is over. Legally, everyone should do their own job". For those who measure Montenegro's progress in the EU, the next step in the investigation of the "Recording" will be a test of independence of the judiciary, of the new officials who are to be appointed in the next few months, and of their ability to reduce politicization and corruption in public administration. For DPS, prosecution and conviction of any official of this party, or even political sanctions, even if they only serve to offer a public some sacrificial goat in the pretense of political accountability, would mean a blow to the system of party loyalty and hierarchy, and a weakening of the ruling clique. The leaders of DPS know very well that the EU will insist on this case to the last.

Calendar

- 2 October** **EU not so attractive any more** / It is becoming more difficult for the governments of countries which are entering the process of negotiations with European Union (EU) to present the EU as a desirable destination. The EU membership does not promise the same economic benefits as it used to, said **Kristof Bender**, deputy president of the European Stability Initiative (ESI) at the panel discussion "Croatia's integration into EU – lessons for Montenegro", organised by the Centre for Civic Education (CCE) in cooperation with ESI.
- 16 October** **"Recording" in the Progress Report** / European Commission (EC) recommended the opening of negotiations with Montenegro on chapters 23 and 24, but asked the country to ensure "political and judicial" epilogue to the "Recording" affair. "Significant efforts need to be made to prevent the abuse of state resources for electoral campaigns", states the European Commission 2013 Progress Report for Montenegro. It also warns that the country should ensure effective implementation of the action plans for chapters 23 and 24, continue to fight corruption and organised crime, especially at the highest level, and resolve the cases of attacks on journalists. The EC recommends opening negotiations on six chapters, in view of Montenegro's progress in the areas of public procurement, intellectual property rights, information society and media, tax policy, entrepreneurship and industrial policy.
- 28 October** **Still no agreement on the Resolution** / Members of the Montenegrin parliament failed to agree on the final text of the Resolution on the Process of Montenegro's Integration into EU, after DPS representatives have rejected the amendment on the draft Resolution that had been unanimously approved by the Committee for European Integration. According to this amendment, the Government would have to submit new negotiating positions within 30 days in case the first version is rejected by this Committee for EI. The Government proposal only envisages that the Committee should discuss negotiating positions and offer opinions on the matters that arise during negotiations.
- 29 October** **We'll know more in 5 years** / Head of the EU Delegation to Montenegro **Mitja Drobnič** said that "in five years we'll be able to foresee" the date of Montenegro's accession to EU and that there is no point in speculating on it now.

Political will is the key



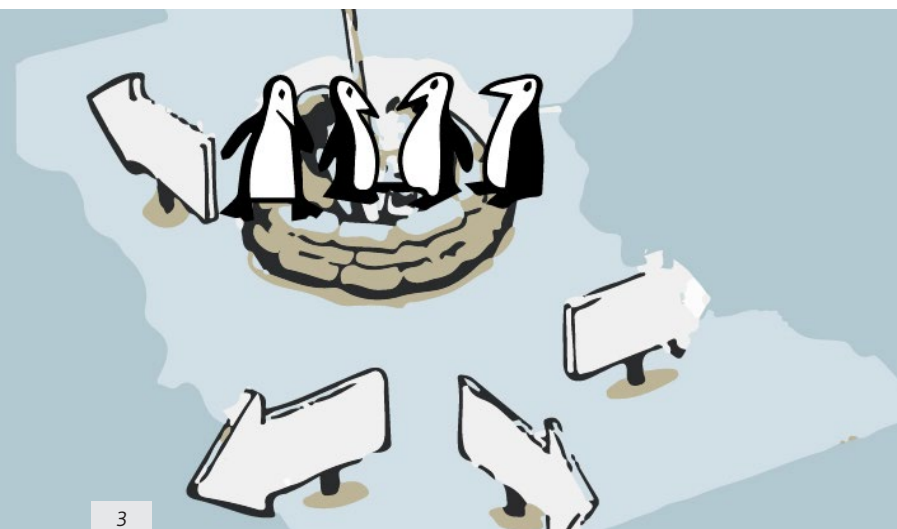
The authors are the EU Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania



Few months ago the European Union grew again. Croatia became the 28th member state. This new enlargement showed once again that the EU project does not stop, nor slows down. It also underlined the credibility of the enlargement policy under which the countries are admitted after they delivered on the necessary criteria. The agenda of the Lithuanian Presidency in this semester is a good proof of the determination to keep this policy going. Despite different dynamics in the enlargement countries we could register very positive developments. The historic agreement between Serbia and Kosovo is of crucial importance since it contributes to the overall stability of the region and ensures that both, Serbia and Kosovo, can proceed on their respective European paths. It is also probably the most striking recent example of the transformative power of the EU accession process and a clear signal that even the most difficult decisions can be made if there is strong motivation and political will. After a ground-breaking agreement on normalisation of relations, both parties now meet regularly under the aegis of the EU to solve outstanding practical issues to the benefit of citizens on both sides. And the EU has started the screening process of first two very important chapters with Serbia in September and is getting ready to launch negotiations on a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Kosovo on 28 October. However a recent attack on the EULEX staff in Kosovo, whose perpetrators we expect to be swiftly brought to justice, also shows how much the EU engagement is needed. Negotiation process with Montenegro gained new momentum and two important negotiating chapters in the accession process

may be opened in the upcoming months. We are also making efforts to get the accession negotiations with Turkey back on track. Albania has ensured a much improved democratic conduct of the recent elections and a peaceful transition of power advancing its chances to get the candidate status. To sustain momentum for reforms, we have continued the high level dialogues with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Of course, the EU accession is not taking place in a vacuum. In the current economic climate, citizens of both, member states and aspirant countries, are increasingly concerned about the impact of the on-going enlargement. And the management of enlargement process itself reflects these concerns. Negotiation process is based on strict conditionality, where each step forward is dependent on tangible progress achieved on the ground. It is not about ticking boxes in check lists but about creating a solid track record in areas such as fundamental rights and freedoms, rule of law, good governance and democracy. Strengthening of the rule of law, improving the capacity to tackle organised crime and corruption, progress in the application of human rights and democratic standards and freedoms brings direct benefits to the citizens across Europe. The enlargement is a success story of the EU, reflected also in the recent Nobel Peace Prize. However, if we want to be both serious and realistic we should not be tempted to paint an unrealistically rosy picture. The examples mentioned earlier demonstrate that progress is possible where there is a political will to focus on reforms and where EU agenda is considered to be a national priority. We are well aware of the fact that not everywhere in the region, and not in all areas, the reforms move ahead at the desired speed. Much more needs to be done, but this should not discourage the EU enlargement process, which has a huge transformative leverage. The threat here is not the enlargement as such, but rather the reform fatigue. The opportunities to move decisively forward on the path to European integration are clearly visible and they are equally open to *all* aspiring countries. It is up to these countries, to make these opportunities a reality to the benefit of their citizens, as Croatia did. We remain fully committed to support them along the way, knowing that this is as much about our joint success as it is about the credibility of the enlargement as one of the key policies of the EU

Source: www.delimne.ec.europa.eu



What is different about this year's Progress Report for Montenegro Brussels more specific and critical than ever



Svetlana Pešić

In its 2013 Progress Report on Montenegro, European Commission recommended opening the negotiations on chapters 23 – Judiciary and Fundamental Rights and 24 – Justice, Freedom and Security, as was expected following the Parliament's approval of long-awaited Constitutional amendments on judiciary. Nevertheless – perhaps because Montenegro began negotiations, or because the previous reporting period yielded no improvements with regard to the rule of law – the Commission has never been so eager to point to the outstanding problems. The highlights of the Report thus became the “Recording” affair, with Brussels insisting on its “judicial and political” epilogue in the upcoming period, and the fact that Montenegro had violated the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with EU by giving subsidies to the Aluminum Combine (KAP). “European Commission's 2013 Progress Report is more specific and critical than in the previous ones, because Montenegro is now in the phase of accession where it is expected to make real, measurable progress. The Government can't really boast of such achievements as in the past year it did very little on the key issues of democratization”, says executive director of the Centre for Civic Education (CCE) **Štefan Füle**. In the conclusions of the Report, the Commission states that Montenegro had made progress in the establishment of a functioning market economy, improved its ability to take on the obligations of membership of EU and that it continues to “sufficiently” meet the political criteria. According to the Report, Montenegro should ensure a political and judicial resolution of the alleged misuse of public funds for party political purposes, address the shortcomings identified by the OSCE/ODIHR concerning the electoral legislation, and clearly distinguish between public interests and interests of the parties. It further recalls that Montenegro had adopted Action Plans for chapters 23 and 24, based on which it was asked to submit negotiation positions, which it did in early October. “Implementation of the action plans

“European Commission's 2013 Progress Report is more specific and critical than in the previous ones, because Montenegro is now in the phase of accession where it is expected to make real, measurable progress. The Government can't really boast of such achievements as in the past year it did very little on the key issues of democratization”, says executive director of the Centre for Civic Education (CCE) Daliborka Uljarević.

will decide the further pace of negotiations. It is essential that Montenegro should continue to produce measurable results in this area, especially with regard to high-level corruption and organized crime”, states the Report. European Enlargement Commissioner **Štefan Füle**, who presented the 2013 Progress reports in Brussels, said that the reports show Montenegro and Serbia to be “positive stories”, unlike Bosnia and Herzegovina, but that the documents nevertheless point to widespread corruption in many areas, and that it is likely to represent a major obstacle on Montenegro's road to EU. Füle said that the “Recording” affair remains of great interest to EC. Judging by the report and some statements by the EC officials, the Commission is also very interested in pressing Montenegrin Government to produce a restructuring plan for KAP and making sure that the Prime Minister **Milo Đukanović** returns all blank resignations to the public officials. According to the report, the issue of highest priority for Montenegro now is the reform of public administration, to ensure that the country has enough capacity to implement European Union acquis, reduce politicization and increase transparency and professionalism of public services. “The Report is quite specific in identifying the key problems of the reform process, such as the need to improve



Jovana Marović

certain legal provisions, limited achievements of the existing anti-corruption mechanisms, weak implementation capacities, weak control of public procurement contracts, etc. Public administration is still highly politicized. There was no reduction in the number of public administration employees in the last year, neither on the state nor on the local levels, and the affairs concerning “Recording” and “blank resignations” have cast a shadow on the improvement in employment transparency that had been achieved through the implementation of the 2011 Law on civil servants and public employees. The same problems keep returning to the table, and this is definitely a cause of concern” **Jovana Marović**, research coordinator in Institute Alternative told European Pulse. In the section of the Report dedicated to Chapter 24, the Commission notes that Montenegro ought to increase the number of financial investigations in connection with criminal activities, and warns that the number of suspicious transactions reported remains low. Although the number of verdicts for money laundering is still low, the Commission also noted a degree of progress compared to the previous year. As for the fight

Head of the EU Delegation to Montenegro recently warned that the European Commission is disappointed with the outcome of the Parliamentary investigation on the “Recording” affair, which only produced a technical report. He added that this was a matter of political accountability and that the case remains of significant interest for the European Commission. EU’s ambassador to Montenegro also warned that blank resignations of public servants and officials aren’t in line with EU principles, and that the EC expects them to be returned.

against corruption, EC concludes that there are still no measurable achievements in this area, especially when it comes to high-level corruption, and that this constitutes a serious cause for concern. “In parallel, Montenegro needs to develop its track record regarding the systematic investigation and prosecution of cases of corruption and organised crime, including high level cases, as well as regarding the imposition of sanctions that are commensurate to the gravity of the crimes committed”. States the Report. Montenegro is also reminded of the need to revise the controversial “Article 23” of the agreement it signed with Washington a few years ago, which grants exemption on the territory of Montenegro from the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court to the citizens of the United States who have been charged with war crimes. As before, Montenegro received praise for its exemplary relations with the neighbours and its commitment to regional cooperation, especially in the initiative “the Western Balkans Six”. The author of the initiative, Montenegrin Foreign Affairs Minister **Igor Lukšić** believes that the EC Progress Report has been objective in its assessment of Montenegro’s progress in key reform areas and demonstrates that the country continues to be the frontrunner in the region when it comes to European integration. According to him, the Report “shows that Montenegro has continued to make progress through a clear track record in all areas, which confirms our dedication and responsible approach to European integration

Igor Lukšić



process". In any case, should the Council of Ministers decide to open negotiations with Montenegro in December, which seems very likely, further progress will not be possible without tangible results in the fight against organized crime and corruption, especially high-level corruption, and without definite measures to reform and depoliticize public administration and prevent another "Recording" affair in the future.

Crna Gora će, kako je naveo Mitja Drobnič, morati da razmisli i kako da ojača finansijsku nezavisnost i održivost RTCG, kao nacionalnog javnog servisa. „Dobro funkcionisanje javnog servisa jedan je od ključnih elemenata za obezbjeđivanje medijskog pluralizma“, dodao je Drobnič.

Investigate all cases of violence and threats against journalists

Guarantees of media freedoms are still a top priority, warns the Commission in this year's Progress Report. Recent cases of threats and violence against journalists, including attacks against media property, need to be solved by stepping up investigations and prosecutions. "The recent rise in cases is a cause for concern. Efforts to privatise state-owned print media have been unsuccessful. Some progress has been achieved in introducing a media self-regulation funding model. Promotion of professional and ethical standard should continue", states the Report. According to the statements of the president of European Commission **José Manuel Barroso** and the President of Montenegro **Filip Vujanović**, following their recent meeting, attacks on the journalists and media freedoms have been the main topic of their conversation. Vujanović expressed his concern over the violence against media and said Montenegro was aware of the problem. "The state is doing everything in its power to prevent such events in the future, and to identify the perpetrators of these acts. Unfortunately, this is the reality of our region and I deeply regret it. We are doing everything to provide the media with an environment in which they can act freely. I am convinced that Montenegro will soon demonstrate its commitment to this cause through investigations which are among our top priorities", Vujanović said.

KAP can't go on

With regard to economic criteria, Montenegro was warned in the report that it must adhere to the commitments from the Stabilisation and Association Agreement and reduce subsidies to the Aluminum combine. "KAP-related developments are a risk for the public finances", the EC warned. Moreover, it insists on a new plan for the restructuring of KAP, in order to meet the requirements of SAP. The Report also notes that "unemployment remains very high" and that "the establishment of a sound business environment continues to be hampered by the weak rule of law and corruption". The overall assessment with regard to economic criteria is that Montenegro "progressed towards a functioning market economy". It is also noted that the country has left the recession, largely due to the solid performance of the tourist sector, direct investment and increased electricity exports. The report also notes that the current account deficit remains high, although it is declining. According to the EC, the Government should commission a study of the long-term sustainability of the aluminum concern in the free markets and come up with the best solution which should reduce the burden on the public finances.

Stanko Marić, a former member of the Judicial Council and president of the Bar Association of Montenegro on the appointment of candidates to judiciary offices by the Parliament

Opposition and the SDP to agree on the SSP and other candidates



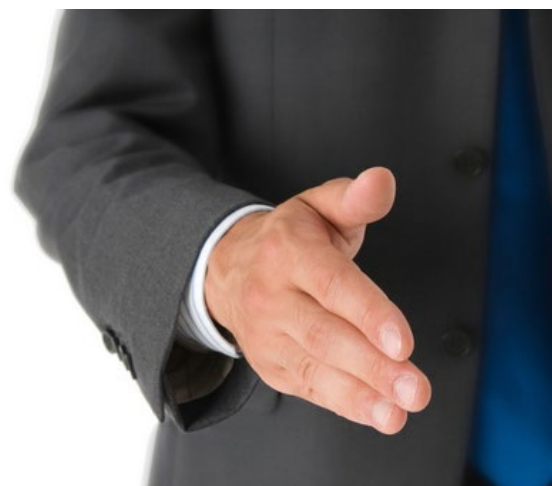
Stanko Marić, a former member of the Judicial Council and president of the Bar Association of Montenegro, thinks it will be impossible for the Parliament to find a two-third majority in the first round of vote on the appointments of the new Supreme State Prosecutor (SSP), members of the Judicial Council and judges of the Constitutional Court. "I think there will be no qualified majority for any of these appointments. Simply, I expect the ruling party to nominate, quite naturally, the people it trusts. However, no opposition party will accept this, because this is not any more a problem for the parties, but a problem for the state, in that it prevents the whole country from making the next step towards integration into European Union. Reform of judiciary is the most fundamental requirement for further progress, and I don't believe that the opposition will accept the nominees who are only trusted by the ruling party. On the other hand, the government will never accept or nominate people it does not trust implicitly", Marić told *European Pulse*.

» *The second round of vote requires a three-fifth majority. DPS could manage this with support of*

one big, or two smaller opposition parties. The other option is for SDP and opposition to forge a common front. What is more likely?

The same obstacles apply to the requirement of three fifths as to the two thirds of the vote.

We can already see the disagreement between DPS and SDP in these and some other issues. I think the only realistic solution is to appoint candidates who are not hand-picked by the ruling party. The opposition parties disagree on many things, but they have a common political interest in the reform of judiciary, so it is realistic to expect them to agree and field candidates who would also be acceptable to SDP. I think this would be the best solution for the country, and above all for these institutions, for the rights and freedoms of citizens and further Europeanization of Montenegro.



» *If the Parliaments fail to appoint all or some of these candidates, what would be the legal and political next steps?*

We can see that there are disagreements over the appointment of judges to the Constitutional Court, because the legal situation concerning the cessation of their appointments is unclear. If it is unclear whether and when their office can end, it is hard to start appointing new ones. This is a huge problem and it is baffling that after all



the work we put into this we still have gaping holes of this kind. This should be the alphabet of our legal and constitutional system. One wonders how it happened at all, what were the political calculations behind it. It is hard to believe that a thing like that was simply overlooked.

As for what happens if there is no agreement on the appointments, well the procedure simply has to be repeated. Still, I believe it will be possible to put together a three-fifths majority to fill such important functions, for the sake of Montenegrin citizens and European integration.

» Montenegrin citizens have very little trust in the judicial system and the Constitutional Court, above all because they don't consider these institutions to be independent and impartial, but also because they are seen to lack administrative capacities. Where do you find this problem to be the most pronounced – in the prosecution, in the courts...?

I think it is wrong to think of it as a lack of capacity or, in simple terms, a shortage of qualified staff. I don't think this is a problem at all, the problem is whether or not these people are willing to do their jobs. In Montenegro there are plenty of people with two or three decades of experience and with a reputation for professionalism and impartiality. This is what matters.

There is no question of whether or not we have enough qualified people. They are all sufficiently qualified, from the prosecutors to the judges of administrative courts and the Constitutional courts, and above all those who are considered for candidacy to the Judicial or Prosecutors' Councils. The only question is their impartiality, and the role that should be performed by the President of the Supreme Court, the Supreme State Prosecutor and the President of the Constitutional Court. Is their role to promote professional, impartial and conscientious work or listen to the politicians and alter the spirit of the law according to their will? There are many people who are professional, conscientious and eager to uphold the law, but the question is, are they ready to do it under the current circumstances? The important thing is to find the people who are willing to remain impartial and conscientious even if it will cost them their job.

» What is your opinion of the current legal solutions for the reform of judiciary?

I find that some of these solutions are still problematic, despite the changes.

It is unacceptable that the Minister of Justice and President of the Supreme Court should be members of the Judicial Council. The task of the Council is to ensure independence and functioning of the court system. What is the point of the Parliament appointing four members to the Judicial Council, if the other 6 come from within the court structures? Already we have among the candidates nominated by the Conference of Judges some who are not exactly known for their independence and impartiality. Those who have been in the business for 20 or 30 years know very well who is independent and who is not.

V.Žugić



Linking 94 harbours and 38 airports

The European Union unveiled plans for a major development of a trans-European transportation network by 2030 in order to create better connections among its members and support development of less developed areas. On 17 October the European Commission presented plans for nine trans-European “corridors” to connect the West to the East and North to the South of EU. The corridors will link together EU’s main harbours and airports. According to the plans, they will stretch from Tallin to Lisbon, from Edinborough to Palermo and from Rostock to Athens; they will be inter-connected and will link altogether 94 harbours and 38 airports. According to the plan, 15.000 km of railway line will be upgraded to high speed. It also includes 35 cross border infrastructure projects to reduce bottlenecks, such as tunnels on the railway connecting Lyon and Turin and another on the Brenner crossing in the Alps. The EU will provide around 40% of financing for the cross-border projects. The plan envisages expansion of inland waterways in Benelux and France, including large-scale projects on the rivers Scheldt and Seine. The Connecting Europe Facility allocated 26 billion euros for the next financial period 2014–2020 for the needs of the project. Among other, it envisages the creation of a Baltic-Adriatic Corridor to connect Gdansk and Szczecin to Trieste and Venice

purchase of land is a sensitive issue in the Union's poorest member country, where farm land sells for nearly ten times lower than the EU average.

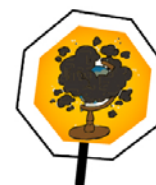
Crisis in Greece hits the healthcare



From now on the private clinics in Greece won't admit patients who are insured by the National Organization for the Healthcare Provision (EOPYY) which already owes them around 800 million euro. The Association of Greek Clinics said the private clinics will withhold care until November 3, or when the EOPYY will pay for its debts. Problems in the Greek healthcare are a consequence of falling expenditures due to the financial crisis. The most severely affected are the vulnerable groups (the homeless, migrants etc.) The president of EOPYY, **Dimitris Kontos**, announced that around 3,1 million people had lost their insurance capability, and that another 3,3 million citizens, for example merchants who are closing their shops, are about to lose their insurance rights. Healthcare cuts due to austerity are not only a Greek “specialty”. According to the official EU statistics, between 2008 and 2011, 17 out of the EU's 28 member states slashed their public spending on healthcare to reduce deficits.

88% of EU city dwellers exposed to pollution

Although emissions of dangerous particulate pollution have fallen in Europe, 88% of urban dwellers are still exposed to concentrations of fine particulate matter and ozone which exceed World Health Organisation guidelines, warned the European Environment Agency (EEA) in a recent report. Another study found that even low levels of particulate matter during pregnancy increased the risk of a baby with a low birthweight. “Large parts of the population do not live in a healthy environment. Europe has to make more efforts to go beyond its current legislation, which is less restrictive than the WHO standards,” said **Hans Bruyninckx**, Executive Director of EEA.



Bulgaria refuses to sell land to foreigners



Defying warnings by the European Union, Bulgaria's parliament has approved an extension of the ban on the sale of farm land to foreigners until 2020. The decision made upon a motion by the nationalist party Ataka could provoke some form of sanction by EU, and open up the possibility of reciprocal restrictions by other EU members towards Bulgaria. The purchase of land is a sensitive issue in the Union's poorest member country, where farm land sells for nearly ten times lower than the EU average. Bulgaria had pledged to allow sale of land to foreigners when it joined the EU in 2007, but imposed a temporary ban that is about to expire on 1 January 2014. The

2013 Progress Reports for West Balkan countries

A good year for all except BiH

In this year's reports on the progress of countries in the EU accession process, the EC recommended granting the status of membership candidate to Albania and, for the fifth time in a row, opening accession negotiations with Macedonia. At the presentation of the Enlargement Package for this year, European Enlargement Commissioner **Štefan Füle** said: "Enlargement is a process in making and despite the economic crisis it is a good policy – it constitutes part of the solution. Enlargement continues to be one of the most effective EU policies. By addressing 'fundamentals' first – such as the fight against corruption, sound economic governance, freedom of expression and media, human rights and protection of minorities – it strengthens political and economic stability in the aspiring countries and the EU as a whole". In addition to reconfirming the importance of Copenhagen criteria and recommending all countries in the accession process to step up their efforts to advance judicial reform and fight organised crime and corruption, this year's enlargement strategy pays special attention to need for all countries to strengthen their economic governance and improve competitiveness. The Commission has set out a number of proposals to support this aim, including the introduction of national economic reform strategies and action plans for public financial management. Moreover, all accession countries need to undertake further reforms to ensure that the principles of freedom of expression and the rights of persons belonging to minorities, especially Roma are respected in practice. Also, more robust measures are needed to protect other vulnerable groups from discrimination, in particular on grounds of sexual orientation. The Commission plans to increase the priority attached to these issues in the accession process, including through better targeted pre-accession funding and increased assistance to support Roma inclusion.

Serbia

2013 was a historic year for relations between the EU and Serbia with the decision to open accession negotiations on 28 June and the entry into force of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) on 1 September. Continued visible and sustainable progress in the normalisation of relations with Kosovo, including the implementation of agreements reached so far, will remain essential. Also, Serbia is expected to sustain the reform momentum in the key areas of the rule of law, particularly judicial reform and anti-corruption policy, independence of key institutions, media freedom, anti-discrimination policy, protection of minorities and business environment. The Commission also expects improved track record in investigating and prosecuting corruption and organised crime, and reforming public administration. The report highlights the need for Serbia to move forward the implementation of the media strategy starting

with the adoption of the expected legislation on public information and the media, on public service broadcasters and on electronic communications. "While some additional efforts were made by the authorities and independent institutions on the protection of other vulnerable groups, in particular LGBTI population, sufficient political support is still lacking in this area", states the report. The Commission expressed the regret that the pride parade had to be cancelled for the third year in a row on security grounds and noted that this was a missed opportunity to show respect for fundamental rights. "Recent progress in improving the situation of minorities, including the Roma, needs to be further built up including with additional financial resources. Consistent implementation of the legal framework on the protection of minorities throughout Serbia remains to be fully ensured, notably in the areas of education, use of language, and access to media and religious services in minority language", notes the Report. The Commission has also noted certain improvements in the sphere of economy, especially as regards exports, but warns that the functioning of market mechanisms continues to be hampered by legal uncertainty and corruption, while the informal sector remains a challenge. As for the alignment with the EU legislation, good progress was made in public procurement with the adoption of a new Law on Public Procurement, and the issue of the Central Bank's independence has been partially addressed with amendments to the law. The Report welcomed the members instituted by the Serbian government to improve the business environment, in particular through business impact assessment for new legislation. Nevertheless, Serbia will need to intensify efforts towards the alignment and implementation of the acquis, especially in the fields of environment, energy, and state aid.

Macedonia

Progress Report on Macedonia confirms that the country continues to sufficiently fulfil the political criteria for EU membership and recommended, for the fifth consecutive year, that negotiations should be opened. The Commission also praised the political agreement reached in March 2013 which resolved the political crisis from December 2012, and demonstrated the political will to find constructive solutions through dialogue and compromise. "The country has already reached a high level of alignment with political criteria, relative to where it is in the EU accession process. The Commission recommends that the priority for the coming year should be the effective implementation and enforcement of existing legal and policy frameworks", states the Report. Economic situation was also evaluated as generally positive, despite mild deterioration in the course of the previous year. "The country should be able to cope with competitive pressures and market forces within the Union in the medium term,

provided that it vigorously implements its reform programme in order to reduce significant structural weaknesses”, notes the Report. The Commission reiterated the importance of a constructive approach to relations with neighbouring EU Member State, and that 20 years after the country's entry into the United Nations, a solution to the 'name issue', will be found under UN auspices.

Albania

The Progress Report on Albania notes that the country made good progress on its path towards EU integration, notably by adopting measures identified as essential for granting candidate country status and by continuing to deliver reforms against the key priorities of the Commission's 2010 Opinion. Among other, the 2013 parliamentary elections were conducted in an overall smooth and orderly manner, according to the international observers. In view of this, the European Commission recommends that Albania be granted EU candidate status on the understanding that Albania continues to take action in the fight against organised crime and corruption. Nevertheless, in order to be able to move to the next stage and open accession negotiations, Albania needs to meet further key priorities, with particular focus on administration reform, the rule of law and fundamental rights. As in the case of Serbia, the Commission stressed the need to improve track record of investigations, prosecution and convictions in corruption cases at all levels. The Report also warns that the Albanian economy remains fragile, with high unemployment and a large budget deficit and public debt, and urges further reforms to improve business and investment environment. “Albania has made moderate progress in improving its ability to assume the obligations of membership by approximating its legislation and standards to the EU, in particular in the areas of public procurement, statistics, justice, freedom and security, and customs union. However, increased efforts are needed as progress has been limited in other areas such as intellectual property law, taxation, energy, environment and climate change”, notes the Report.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Unlike Serbia, Macedonia and Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina has made very limited progress in addressing the political criteria for EU membership. “A shared vision by the political representatives on the overall direction and future of the country, or on how it should function, remains absent. Despite intensive facilitation efforts by the EU, the country's political representatives could not agree on a solution to implement the European Court of Human Rights judgement in the Sejdić-Finci case regarding discrimination against citizens on grounds of ethnicity. Addressing this judgement remains key for the entry into force of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement and for a credible application for EU membership”, warns the Report, and adds that no progress has been achieved either on establishing an effective coordination mechanism on EU-related matters between various levels of

government. One area in which substantial progress has been achieved is the processing of war crimes and reforming the state-level judiciary. “The conclusion of the Protocols on cooperation in prosecution of perpetrators of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide with Serbia and Croatia has been an important development at regional level”, notes the Commission. However, the EC warns that Bosnia and Herzegovina has made only limited progress in the fight against corruption and organised crime. Corruption remains widespread, with an insufficient track record of investigation and prosecution in high-profile cases, which has a negative impact on society and the economy. The economy is still very weak, which is also reflected in high unemployment and a large informal sector. Alignment with EU laws and standards remains limited. The Commission also noted that BiH is the only country in the region which has not aligned its legislation to the 2004 EU directives on public procurement, and expects it to do so as a matter of urgency.

Kosovo

Although Kosovo is well behind other countries of the region in terms the stage of accession, the Commission concluded that 2013 has been a year of historic progress. Improvement in the relations with Serbia, as well as the fulfilment of requirements set out in the 2012 EC feasibility study contributed to EU's decision to start negotiations on a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Kosovo. The Report also notes that Kosovo has increased its capacity to address the priorities of the European integration process, such as the rule of law, public administration, protection of minorities and trade, and is prepared for the negotiations of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement. In the context of the visa liberalisation dialogue, Kosovo amended and adopted important legislation, including laws on asylum, party financing and human trafficking. However, further efforts are needed to strengthen the rule of law, reform judiciary, public administration and electoral system, and ensure fundamental human and minority rights. Moreover, despite some progress towards establishing a functioning market economy, considerable reforms and investments are needed to enable Kosovo to cope over the long term with competitive pressure. In particular, Kosovo needs to improve its business environment, support the private sector and address structural weaknesses in the labour market so as to reduce unemployment. To successfully conclude the SAA, Kosovo will also have to make certain improvements with regard to trade, competition and internal market. The Commission called on the authorities to enhance their efforts in the fight against the illegal trade and slaughter of animals, strengthen controls at livestock markets and improve food safety and phytosanitary controls. The Report also insists on greater efforts to decommission the lignite-powered Kosovo A power plant.

Prepared by: **V.Šćepanović**

Chapter 10 – Information society and media



Chiara Gaia Iascone

Chapter 10 includes negotiations on the rules of electronic communications, on information society services, electronic commerce and audio-visual policy and media, as well as on the regulations protecting minors from inappropriate content. It also promotes European audio-visual achievements, protects the film heritage and fosters media pluralism, all with the aim of developing a single European information space. The main goal of the Directorate General for Information Society and Media, which has been recently incorporated into the Directorate General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology (DG CONNECT), is to foster activities and policies that, on one hand, will eliminate obstacles to the effective operation of the internal market in telecommunications services and network and, on the other hand, will achieve these goals bearing in mind the need for the protection of sensitive data in the domain of electronic and audio-visual communication,

as well as of the minors and human rights more generally. Chapter 10 covers a wide range of issues within the European Union law. The first priority area for EU is the electronic communication and information technology. The issue is regulated in the



Stabilisation and Association Agreement (Art.106) signed by Montenegro and the European Union, which stipulates that the cooperation in this field shall “primarily focus on priority areas related to the Community acquis in this field (...) with the ultimate objective of the adoption by Montenegro of the Community acquis (..) three years after the entry into force of this Agreement”. Montenegro has recognized the importance of the new technologies and information society by the decision taken in 2010 to move the telecommunications portfolio from the Ministry of Transport and Maritime Affairs to the Ministry of Information Society, thus becoming the Ministry of Information Society and Telecommunications. In 2008, a new Law on Electronic Communications was adopted and the Agency for Telecommunications was transformed into Agency for Electronic Communications and Postal Service, as an independent regulatory authority. However, some concerns have been raised regarding the independence of this body, as the





members to its Council had been earlier appointed by the Government. Now the task has been taken over by the Parliament, but independence of the authority may still be endangered by the fact that the Ministry still entails appellate and supervisory powers. As the SAA entered into force in May 2010, time has now come for the country to align its laws with EU legislation in the field. Some steps have been taken in this direction, for example with regard to guaranteeing consumer protection. The 2011 Progress Report on Montenegro points to the improved record of the Agency for Electronic Communications in upholding the law, for instance by forcing mobile operators to publish their tariffs and general conditions. However, it also notes that there has been a rise in the number of appeals against Agency's decision. Even more appealing to the public interest is increased competition in the field of mobile telephony. With three mobile companies operating in the country, there is a good chance that users will be able to choose the operator that best fits their needs. This is precisely what the free markets and competition are supposed to do, but the absence of affordable alternatives

remains a problem in the market for fixed broadband. Laws and regulations should do more to create an environment where the customer will be able to choose the most suitable operator. With increase in number of variety of demands from the citizens to public institutions, the EU is strongly supporting a revolution (some would call it just a major improvement) in level of usage of new technologies in order to be able to respond adequately to the citizens' needs. This concerns primarily the diffusion of information society services: the buzzwords like e-government, e-registry and e-signature can now more frequently be heard also in Montenegro. According to the World Bank's definition, e-government refers to the use by government agencies of information technologies that can serve a variety of different ends: better delivery of government services to citizens, improved interactions with business and industry, easier access to information, or more efficient government management. The resulting benefits can be less corruption, increased transparency, greater convenience, revenue growth, and/or cost reductions. This suggests that usage of Internet based programmes will be unavoidable in every step of public policies and practices. However, Montenegro is still at an early stage of this process: no progress has been made to further align the Law on electronic signatures and e-commerce with the EU acquis, although this issue is closely related to the necessity of ensuring data protection also by electronic means. Another topic addressed in the chapter 10 is the audio-visual policy that requires legislative alignment with the Television without Frontiers Directive, which creates the conditions for the free movement of television broadcasts within the EU. As one of the fundamental directives this field it seeks to address two main goals: on one hand, guarantee the movement of European television programmes within EU countries and, on the other hand, require the TV channels, when possible, to reserve half of

their transmission time for European works. Member States and negotiating countries must ensure freedom of reception and may not restrict retransmission on their territory of television programmes from other member states. The Directive, however, contains special restrictions related to the protection of minors and, in this regard, Montenegro has adopted two rulebooks for the better protection of minors. In the framework of the audio-visual policy, Montenegro agreed to complete the switchover to digital communication by January, 1st 2013, according to the new Law on digital broadcasting that was passed in July 2011. The question of information society, whether in the form of audiovisual policy or electronic communications, cannot, however, be separated from a fundamental right that lies at the basis of each discussion about information society and media, i.e. freedom of expression. Along with freedom of expressions, the fundamental rights of freedom of media, freedom of reception and transmission of information must be guaranteed. In Montenegro, the 2011 Progress acknowledges that the country has made some progress towards media freedom, which was one of the priorities set

out in the previous Opinion. Specifically, amendments to the Law for enforcement of criminal sanctions and criminal code, adopted in July 2011, are a step forward in enhancing the freedom of expressions, having fully decriminalized defamation and removed it, along with insult, from the Montenegrin Criminal Code. Furthermore, the Supreme Court, in line with the European Court of Human Rights, laid down guidelines regulating the maximum amount of pecuniary compensation in defamation cases. All this contributed to decrease the number of lawsuits against media, even though a big backlog of cases is still pending. The other side of freedom of expression is, however, respect of the privacy and dignity in the media, notably in relation to children. In this sense, the 2011 Progress report states that professional ethics and standards of journalists still represent a matter of concern. The advantages brought by information technologies and electronic communications are numerous: the time of hand-written letters will soon be over; and we have no choice but to prepare ourselves and get used to the new technologies, the digital world and the new e-words and practices.

Chapter 10 includes specific rules which enable effective operation of the internal market in telecommunications services and networks, and promote their development and accessibility. The EU's aim is to safeguard consumer interests in the sector, including affordable access to modern services (mobile and fixed-line telephone connection, Internet, free emergency calls etc.), by promoting market competition and reducing monopolies which are still present in some market areas (e.g. high-speed broadband). It is EU's priority to promote inclusive information society and reduce digital inequalities in various domains. As regards audio-visual policy, the acquis stresses the protection of minors from inappropriate content and advertising, and sets the rules for electronic commerce and advertising.

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.

European citizenship as the basis of European integration

Centre for Civic Education (CCE), in cooperation with Friedrich Ebert foundation and NGO Natura, organised on 28 October 2013 in Podgorica a conference titled *“European citizenship as the basis of European integration”*, a closing event of the project *“EU Info Bus – On the Road to EU”*, which is financed by the EU Delegation to Montenegro. The event brought together more than 80 participants from the Montenegrin Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, Montenegrin Parliament, local governments, NGOs, media, political parties, diplomatic corps and students. The conference was opened by **Daliborka Uljarević**, CCE’s executive director, who presented the results of the 11-month long project. The project comprised of 45 events, and a series of publications and promotional materials which comprised the comprehensive information and education campaign in 6 Montenegrin municipalities – *Cetinje, Danilovgrad, Kolašin, Mojkovac, Nikšić and Podgorica*. “Our EU info bus attracted a lot of attention of the citizens in the municipalities it visited – both visually and substantively. In addition to the effective message, the bus brought people who were ready for dialogue, exchange of arguments, information, knowledge and skills – and this is the fundamental basis of democratisation and Europeanisation of every society, including ours. I hope that in the upcoming period we will all continue with ever more intensive European and intra-Montenegrin dialogue”, Uljarević said. **Mitja Drobnič**, head of the EU Delegation to Montenegro, emphasised that 2013 was declared the year of European citizenship, and that this is a good opportunity for the EU citizens to remember what the Union means for them and what rights they have as its citizens. “Montenegrin citizens should also be informed about European Union – its policies, as well as benefits and responsibilities of membership. They should be aware of the fact that the accession to European Union transforms the entire society and requires their active participation and cooperation”, Drobnič said, praising CCE’s work on the implementation of the “EU-info bus – on the road to EU!”. **Milivoje Jurišić**, secretary of the Negotiating Group from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, talked about the importance of communicating European values to the citizens of Montenegro and advocating a society guaranteed by the EU system. Following the introductory speeches was the session *“Where are Montenegrin municipalities in the process of European Integration?”*, with presentations by the heads of municipalities visited by the *EU info Bus*, whose cooperation had been instrumental for the success of this project. The speakers were: Dr. **Miomir Mugoša**, Mayor of Podgorica, **Aleksandar Bogdanović**, Mayor of Cetinje, **Branislav Đuranović**, president of the municipality of Danilovgrad, **Darko Brajušković**, president of the municipality of Kolašin, **Slavenko Blažević**, president of the local parliament of Mojkovac and **Slobodanka Roganović**, from the municipality of Nikšić. They discussed various projects financed by EU Delegation, as well as the importance of the municipal level in informing the citizens about EU and delegating representatives to

Brussels in order to ensure better use of European funds. The speakers all agreed on the need for more intensive support by the Government of Montenegro, as well as by the EU, and for raising the importance of the local level in this process. The closing event of the conference was the book launch of the publication: *“Montenegro and EU: the role and importance of the media in the process of European Integration”*, which offers a comparative overview of media reporting on the key events in Montenegro’s rapprochement with EU, as well as interviews with journalists who are responsible for the coverage of this topic in the leading Montenegrin media, with recommendations for improving the level of European discourse in Montenegro. These issues were further discussed by **Dragan Mugoša**, PR of the EU Delegation to Montenegro, who emphasised the importance of continuous education of journalists, and by **Maja Vujašković Đureinović**, the author of the publication, who stressed the need for the media to have better access to the relevant actors in order to be able to make the process of European integration more intelligible for the citizens.

Montenegrin culture as part of the European cultural heritage

Centre for Civic Education (CCE) organised on 18 October 2013, in Cetinje, a panel discussion titled *“Montenegrin culture as part of the common European heritage”*, in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture and as part of its project “EU Info Bus – on the road to EU”, implemented in cooperation with Friedrich Ebert Foundation and NGO Natura with support of the EU Delegation to Montenegro. The speakers were **Daliborka Uljarević**, executive director of CCE, Prof. **Branislav Mićunović**, Minister of Culture, His Excellency **Mitja Drobnič**, Head of the EU Delegation to Montenegro and Prof. **Janko Ljumović**, director of the Montenegrin National Theatre. The event was attended by the students of University art departments in Cetinje, and representatives of cultural institutions and local governments. During the panel, Uljarević presented the project *“EU Info bus – on the road to EU”*, whose implementation had started in Cetinje, and ends there symbolically, with a discussion on Montenegrin culture as part of the common European cultural heritage. Minister Mićunović emphasised the importance of European integration process for culture, and stressed the efforts made by Montenegro so far to align its legislation with European standards, as evidenced by the preliminary closing of Chapter 26: Education and Culture. Ambassador Drobnič expressed his satisfaction in having a chance to talk about cultural diversity and policy of European Union, stressing its role in the preservation of the cultural heritage, as well as in the promotion of cultural tourism. Professor Ljumović spoke about the importance of the preservation of cultural diversity of Montenegro and the importance of education for arts. The panellists concluded that it will be essential to dedicate more effort to applications for European Union funding in order to develop Montenegrin contemporary art and preserve its cultural heritage.

The Treaty of Maastricht 20 years after EU's last big idea



The Treaty of Maastricht, also known as the Treaty on European Union, which came into force 20 years ago, took the EU a step beyond its original economic goal – the creation of a common market, and for the first time revealed its political ambitions. In the long history of the European project, Maastricht was a major watershed. It created the common currency, a powerful symbol and a great leap forward for the integration of Europe. However, twenty years later, the EU is having a hard time finding another project that would revive the integrative drive, bogged down by the crisis and the growing mistrust of the citizens. The Treaty on European Union, signed in Maastricht on 7 February 1992, entered into force on 1 November 1993. This Treaty was the result of external and internal events. At external level, the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the outlook of German reunification led to a commitment to reinforce the Community's international position. At internal level, the Member States wished to supplement the progress achieved by the previous treaties with other reforms. The Treaty established the three “pillars” of European Union – the European Community, Common Foreign and Security Policy and

Nicolas Veron of the Bruegel Institute think-tank said that already 20 years ago many observers had warned it was “madness” to plan a single currency without the full economic, political and banking union required to make it work.

police and judicial cooperation. These reflected a combination of supranational and inter-governmental approaches, and constitute a structure that was to remain in place until it was superseded by the Treaty of Lisbon on 1 December 2009. The treaty addressed five key goals: strengthen the democratic legitimacy of the institutions; improve the effectiveness of the institutions; establish economic and monetary union; develop the Community social dimension; and establish a common foreign and security policy. It also introduced Community policies in six new areas: trans-European networks, industrial policy, consumer protection, education and vocational training, youth, and culture. Thanks to the social protocol annexed to the Treaty, Community powers were broadened in the social domain, setting new goals regarding promotion of employment, improvement of living and working conditions, adequate social protection and social dialogue. Another major innovation was the creation of European citizenship, which makes citizen who is a national of a Member State also a citizen of the Union. The European citizenship also entailed new rights, such as the right to circulate and reside freely in the Community, the right to vote and to stand as candidates for European and municipal elections in the State in which they reside, the right to protection by the diplomatic or consular authorities of other member states and the right to petition the European Parliament and to submit a complaint to the Ombudsman. The Treaty creates new codecision procedure which allowed better coordination between the European Parliament and the Council, and extended the term of office of the European Commission from four to five years in order to

align it with that of the European Parliament. It also created the Committee of the Regions, advisory body which represents local and regional interests in the legislative process. Most remarkably, however, the Treaty of Maastricht laid down the foundations of the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), which requires the Member States to ensure coordination of their economic policies, provide for multilateral surveillance of this coordination, and imposes financial and budgetary discipline. The Treaty thus opened the way to the introduction of a single European currency, launched in 1999, and became famous precisely for its stringent criteria regarding budgetary deficits and public debt – the criteria routinely breached by most members, starting with France and Germany in the mid-2000s. According to the analysis published by France Press, politicians and analysts today agree that the monetary union was badly designed, as it was not accompanied by a fiscal, let alone economic union. Analyst **Daniel Gros** of the Center for European Political Studies says "the will just wasn't there" for governments to make the hard choices needed. Comparing that generation of leaders to generals who plan for past wars instead of the threats ahead, Gros said the Maastricht set were more concerned with fighting inflation and did not anticipate systemic problems with the banks. The Maastricht Treaty did not prepare Europe for "the major challenges to financial stability" at the heart of the crisis, he said. **Nicolas Veron** of the Bruegel Institute think-tank said that already 20 years ago many observers had warned it was "madness" to plan a single currency without the full economic, political and banking union required to make it work. Everything went well enough until the eruption of the major banking crisis, which soon turned into a debt crisis, then into a euro crisis, and eventually spilled over into the real economy, writes AFP. Faced with a crisis of survival, the EU leaders tried to combat the crisis "on the run", said **Jean-Dominique Giuliani** of the Schuman Foundation. After shovelling in billions to plug the holes and rescue the system, European Union started a number of initiatives in order to avoid another crisis – notably, the projects to strengthen budgetary discipline and establish the banking union. Despite the failings, however, Giuliani feels that Maastricht was still "the

In the long history of the European project, Maastricht was a major watershed. It created the common currency, a powerful symbol and a great leap forward for the integration of Europe, and also introduced a number of innovations, such as the European citizenship

last time the EU set itself a major objective". "Since then, there has been nothing," he said.

Advances in European integration always came in periodic spurts, but they always set ambitious goals. After the World War II, it was to create peace after the ravages of two wars, and later to establish a single market and abolish the borders for citizens and goods. Last came the currency. As a haven of democracy and prosperity, the EU also continued to attract new members, including the former Communist East European countries in the mid-2000s. However, with the crisis and rising Europhobia, the European leaders are increasingly playing safe, and national egoisms are again on the rise. Former French president and a key figure in the creation of the euro, **Valéry Giscard d'Estaing** also says there is no longer any "Big Idea" driving the EU. His suggestion -- "build Europe up as an economic power" on a par with United States and China. European Union must find a way to remain "one of the three main world powers" until 2050, agrees Giuliani. This ambition should be accompanied by a firm timetable, he says, calling for more economic coordination, especially in the areas of fiscal and social policy. President of the European Council **Herman Van Rompuy** thinks a powerful Europe is only possible if it is based on a "strong economy" with "more economic harmonisation within the Eurozone". But he also adds that Europe must preserve its social model. Veron, however, thinks that when integration reaches into the "core of sovereignty" it is essential to maintain democratic legitimacy. In its absence, the citizens will continue to lose the trust in the system. For former European Central Bank head **Jean-Claude Trichet** that means integration requires "reinforcing" the still limited powers of the European Parliament, the EU's only directly elected representative body. In other words, another treaty.

Politicians in the Balkans
filed hundreds of lawsuits against the media and journalists

Force against facts



On October 20th, a Macedonian court sentenced journalist Tomislav Kezarovski to 4 1/2 years in prison for revealing the identity of a protected witness in a murder trial, in a case which has raised fears about media freedom in Macedonia. On October 18th, a local court in Banja Luka awarded damages of approximately 2,500 euros to Republika Srpska (RS) President Milorad Dodik in his lawsuit against journalist Ljiljana Kovačević. Dodik sued Kovačević after she published a story about the BiH State Investigation and Protection Agency's 2009 report that charged Dodik with abuse of power and embezzlement of 70 million euros

Politicians in the Balkans filed hundreds of lawsuits against the media and journalists, which according to experts could lead to a stifling of media freedom in the region. On October 18th, a local court in Banja Luka awarded damages of approximately 2,500 euros to Republika Srpska (RS) President **Milorad Dodik** in his lawsuit against journalist **Ljiljana Kovačević**. Dodik sued Kovačević after she published a story about the BiH State Investigation and Protection Agency's 2009 report that charged Dodik with abuse of power and embezzlement of 70 million euros. The BiH court passed the investigation to the RS Special Prosecutor's Office and it was dropped at the end of 2012. "This ruling is a green light to all the politicians who do not like how journalists write about them. The court said to them: Sue the journalists and make a profit. I am convicted of publishing completely correct news. Naturally, I will appeal, but the appeal does not delay the execution of the verdict,

and therefore, I need to pay the money," Kovačević, a correspondent for Beta news agency in Belgrade, told *SETimes*. Some experts said such judgments go against international commitments to develop and protect media freedom and freedom of expression.

Media freedom is a central indicator of a country's readiness to join the EU. It implies a commitment to democracy, good governance and political accountability, the Union said in its enlargement policy.

"No journalist should be held liable for reporting on the activities of prosecutors and the judiciary," **Dunja Mijatović**, Office of Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) representative for freedom of the media, told *SETimes*. "Politicians must stop pursuing civil defamation lawsuits against journalists and must display a higher degree of tolerance than ordinary citizens. These



suits stifle media freedom." According to data from Serbia's State Institute of Statistics, the country's courts ruled on 553 cases of libel and insult last year, of which a significant number were against the media. On October 20th, a Macedonian court sentenced journalist **Tomislav Kezarovski** to 4 1/2 years in prison for revealing the identity of a protected witness in a murder trial, in a case which has raised fears about media freedom in Macedonia.

Last year, attorney **Ana Kolarević**, the sister of seven-term Prime Minister **Milo Đukanović**, filed a lawsuit against three newspapers over articles alleging that she took bribes during the purchase of Montenegrin Telekom by Magyar Telekom. Kolarević demanded payment of 100,000 euros from each newspaper as compensation for current and future emotional distress resulting from the articles. In August, the court ordered the daily newspaper *Vijesti* to pay Kolarević 5,000 euros, but cleared the other two papers in the case. "Information about the corruption of high officials is of public importance. The lawsuit is trying to stop

this information. Damages are very high and affect the already weak financial situation in the media," **Milka Tadić Mijović**, executive director of weekly *Monitor*, one of the sued newspapers, told *SETimes*.

According to Reporters Without Borders, BiH is ranked 68th on the 2013 press freedom Index, 10 places down from last year. Serbia is ranked 64th, Croatia 65th, while Kosovo and Bulgaria took 85th and 87th place. Montenegro fell seven places to 113th

According to Reporters Without Borders, BiH is ranked 68th on the 2013 press freedom Index, 10 places down from last year. Serbia is ranked 64th, Croatia 65th, while Kosovo and Bulgaria took 85th and 87th place. Montenegro fell seven places to 113th, while Turkey sits at 154th place out of 179 total countries.

Borka Rudić, secretary general of the BiH journalists' association, said that journalists and citizens need a higher degree of protection from judicial institutions. "Politicians are public persons and they are the subject of critics. Journalists and citizens have the right to judge their work. Unfortunately, the situation in this field is very bad. More than 500 lawsuits against journalists have been filed in the past 10 years just in Sarajevo's courts," Rudić said.

Source: *SETimes.com*

Twenty young people successfully complete the Human Rights School – XVIII Generation

In October 2013, in Podgorica, Centre for Civic Education (CCE) organised the Human Rights School – XVIII Generation, as part of its regular regional *programme Education for human rights and active citizenship in the Western Balkans*, with support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Norway. Twenty high-school students who were selected out of 80 applicants came to the School from Podgorica, Nikšić, Cetinje and Danilovgrad. The goal of the School is to introduce the young people to the theory and idea of human rights, principles of democracy, tolerance, solidarity, and non-violent communication and help them to develop critical thinking. Also, the School seeks to encourage and empower young people to uphold human rights and apply the values and culture of human rights through an active stance towards negative social phenomena in their everyday lives. The Human Rights School maintains an open, inter-active concept of teaching, where the participants also take part in workshops, and watch and discuss films and documentaries about human rights. Numerous lecturers and workshop facilitators participate in the working of the school, many of them representatives of institutions and NGOs which deal with human rights related issues. Moreover, the participants had a chance to *visit the Police Directorate*, during which they were introduced to the organisation and activities of this institution whose main task is to protect human rights on the ground. XVIII Generation of Human Rights School was successfully completed by **Nikola Bošković, Maša Vujović, Jovana Perić, Marija Marković, Filip Đelević, Anja Avramović, Marija Boljević, Jelena Lalić, Iva Tomašević, Marija Milikić, Nina Rašović, Milica Jovanović, Džana Mucević, Nikola Knežević, Dragana Miladinović, Itana Bulatović, Jovana Ivanović, Valentina Ostojić, Martina Ivanović and Lenka Mirković.**

“I run for RECOM” in Podgorica

As part of the 20th Podgorica Marathon, on 27 October Centre for Civic Education (CCE) organised the campaign “I run for RECOM”, on behalf of the Coalition for RECOM. The action took place simultaneously in Podgorica and Ljubljana, and its goal was to draw the attention of decision makers, as well as of the larger public, to the urgent need to establish RECOM. Podgorica run for RECOM was attended by a large number of young people, who carried RECOM insignia during the high-school marathon and thus contributed to the promotion of the initiative for RECOM, demonstrating their commitment to the establishment of a regional commission with a mandate to reveal the truth about past conflicts and rebuild trust and peace on the territory of former Yugoslavia.

Montenegrin premiere of the documentary “The majority starts here”

Documentary film “*The majority starts here*” was screened for the first time in Podgorica on 30 October 2013. The event was organised by *Centre for Civic Education (CCE)* and *Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN)*. The screening was followed by a panel discussion moderated by **Mirela Rebronja**, CCE programme coordinator. Documentary “The majority starts here”, by Belgian director **Lode Desmet**, produced by BIRN, talks about the role of young people in the process of reconciliation with the past. It shows how much the youth knows about the past and the war years, and how important it is to talk about it today. The film follows six young people from BiH, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia and Kosovo on their journey through the countries of former Yugoslavia. Montenegrin premier of this documentary was attended by more than 80 representatives of the NGO sector, media, political party youth sections, students of CCE’s Human Rights School and Democracy School, as well as students and interested citizens.

Signed Memorandum on Cooperation with State Inspectorate

As part of the project “Inspectorates against corruption”, on 30 September 2013 **Daliborka Uljarević**, executive director of the Centre for Civic Education (CCE) and **Božidar Vuksanović**, director of the State Inspectorate signed a Memorandum on Cooperation, which specifies modes of cooperation, coordination and exchange of information during implementation of this project. The overall goal of the project is to increase the trust of the public in the institutions of criminal justice through efficient implementation of sanctions against illegal activities and corruption. Its aim is to monitor activities and strengthen the capacities of the State Inspectorate as the most immediate source of redress for the citizens who encounter corruption and malpractices in Montenegrin public institutions. The project is implemented with support of the The Criminal Justice Civil Society Program (CJCSP), financed by the US State Department.

Political academy

Friedrich Ebert foundation and Association for Development of Social Democracy *New Society* from Zadar (Croatia) organized, between 11 and 13 October, the fourth seminar of *Political Academy*, which brings together participants from Croatia together with one representative from Montenegro, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia. The focus of the latest seminar of *Political Academy* was development of public policies in the field of economy and education, as well as the future of the left as a political and social force. The lecturers were professors of Political Science Department of the University of Zadar **Prof. Dr. Zdravko Petak** and **Dr. Tonči Kursar**. The seminar was also a good opportunity to review the previous meetings of this year's Political Academy, at the round table *Society, Politics and Economy of Croatia in European Union*, which also featured presentations by **Tonino Picula**, member of the European Parliament, and **Prof. Dr. Nenad Zakošek**, dean of the Political Science Department. Two CCE programme associates attended the meetings of the Academy: **Damir Nikočević**, the first three and **Željka Četković** the concluding one.

Training on discrimination for the teachers of Civic Education and Healthy Lifestyles

Between 11 and 13 October 2013, Centre for Civic Education (CCE) and Ministry of Education organized, with support of the Council of Europe, a two-day seminar in Podgorica for teachers of Civic Education and Healthy Lifestyles about discrimination. Thirty teachers from all over Montenegro participated in the seminar, whose goal was to strengthen the capacity of schools and teachers to prevent or respond to discrimination based on sexual orientation. Representatives of CCE and Ministry of Education presented the results of a recently published study on the prevalence of LGBT topics in school programmes and textbooks, and conducted practical sessions, including workshops, team work and case studies. The teachers evaluated the seminar very positively, stressing the importance of applicability of the skills they acquired in their everyday work.

Public procurement at the local level in Montenegro

On 10 October in Rožaje, *Centre for Civic Education (CCE)* organised a panel discussion on public procurement and the implementation of the Law on public procurement at the local level, as part of its project "Corruption at the local level – zero tolerance!". The project is implemented in cooperation with *Institute Alternative*, NGO *Bonum* from Pljevlja and NGO *Nada* from Herceg Novi, with support of the EU Delegation to Montenegro. The panellists were **Jovana Marović**, research coordinator in Institute Alternative (IA), **Mara Bogavac**, deputy director of Directorate for Public Procurement, **Aleksandar Mitrović**, head of the Sector for Legal and General Affairs of the Chamber of Commerce and **Boris Marić**, senior legal advisor to CCE. During the discussion the participants analysed the difficulties encountered by the municipalities due to inadequate planning of public procurement, and with the control of implementation of existing contracts.

The future of EU – national sovereignty and/or centralization

On 25 October in Budapest *Central European Policy Centre (CEPC)* organised a conference titled "**The Future of European Union – national sovereignty and/or centralization?**" whose goal was to initiate discussion on the future of EU with regard to institutional and political cooperation among the Member States, from the perspective of Central European countries. The event was attended by renowned figures from the Hungarian political life, as well as those from other Central European states. **Vladimir Vučković**, CCE programme assistant, and winner of the scholarship of the Hungarian Government, also attended the conference.

European Citizenship in Youth Work Training in Spain

The Training Course on European Citizenship in youth work (ECTC) is aimed at supporting the professional development of youth workers and youth leaders by extending their critical understanding of European Citizenship, exploring and experiencing its potential, and enabling them to recognise and integrate European Citizenship in their youth work. The training course puts into practice the priority European Citizenship of the Youth in Action programme and the new programme from 2014, by aiming to:

- To critically explore the meaning, relevance and implications of European citizenship in youth work in all its dimensions;
- To promote and facilitate the active use of programmes and structures in support of youth work on European Citizenship, including Youth in Action;
- To experiment and explore the potential of European Citizenship for active democratic change in society;
- To associate the participants with the current discourse on European Citizenship (its concepts, formal meanings and expressions)
- To exemplify the connection between European Citizenship, Human Rights, Democracy and ICL and the underlying values.
- To update participants on how European Citizenship will be addressed in Erasmus+ Youth in Action from 2014.

It will take place in Mollina, in the province of Malaga (Spain) between February 24 and March 2 2014.

The course is intended to address individuals working with young people in a professional capacity on a paid or voluntary basis (e.g. youth workers, youth leaders, community and social workers, teachers), who:

- have experience in directly developing and managing a project with and for young people;
- have organised or co-organised at least one youth project with a European dimension;
- are committed and motivated to work directly with young people on issues related to European Citizenship;
- are supported by their organisation in their current and future work;
- have a general knowledge and understanding of youth and youth work realities in their contexts;
- are motivated to undergo training and able to attend the course for its full duration;
- are able to work in English.

Application deadline is 24 November 24, 2013.

For more information please visit:

<https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/european-training-calendar/training/european-citizenship-in-youth-work-training-course-in-spain.3768/>

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.

Editor-in-chief: Vladan Žugić

Editorial board: Vera Šćepanović, Daliborka Uljarević, Damir Nikochević

Translation and proofreading: CGO

Art director: Ilija Perić

Illustrator: Dragana Koprivica

Produced by: identity & promotion

Address: Njegoševa 36/I Tel/fax: +382 20 665 112, 665 327 ep@cgo-cce.org, info@cgo-cce.org

You can download European Pulse at www.cgo-cce.org

or subscribe to our monthly e-mail by contacting ep@cgo-cce.org

The content of the publication is exclusive responsibility of the Centre for Civic Education (CCE) and can not be taken to represent the views of the European Union.

