



Special Edition : Post-election season in the Balkans

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The election season in South Eastern Europe is over. As democracy has spread all over the region, we will have to expect regularly such busy election times in the future in a region which is fragmented into many small countries with their own elections cycles.

This cycle opened with the parliamentary elections in Macedonia/FYROM on 15 September. The landslide victory of the opposition party SDSM was widely expected, as was the victory of the newly formed DUI of former KLA fighter Ali Ahmeti, the rising star among the Albanian parties. Surely, this change of government has brought back some of the recently lost trust of the international community. Whether the SDSM, which was already ruling the country 1992 to 1998, will do better this time, together with a coalition partner which is deeply suspicious for many Macedonians, remains to be seen. A real alternative, on the other hand, is not in view, as Saso Ordanoski convincingly argues inside this edition.

Much more complicated and even depressing were the Presidential elections in Serbia. Three times, starting 29 September, Vojislav Kostunica tried to establish himself as the successor of Milan Milutinovic, one of the five major indicted for the war crimes in Kosovo, who has now handed himself over to The Hague. However, three times in a row Kostunica failed, due to widespread and increasing voter apathy combined with a feeling that the position over the last two years proved to be really negligible. Each time the voter turnout was below the obligatory fifty percent. Zoran

Djindjic himself did everything to produce this result, making a mockery of Kostunica, thereby calculating that the election misfortunes might finally give his archrival the image of a permanent loser. The international political and financial community, eager to see a stable Serbia doing its reform job, was not at all amused. Clearly, the democratic process in Serbia is sacrificed for the sake of political bickering and manoeuvring in view of the upcoming election campaign. The loose DOS coalition has been further fragmented through this election drama, as Hansjörg Eiff notes.

The lessons from Belgrade were not lost to the Montenegrin opposition, which decided to boycott the Presidential elections likewise on 22 December, producing a similar low turnout of below fifty percent. The elections have to be repeated in early February this year. However, the surprise was the clear success of President Djukanovic's party in the parliamentary elections earlier on 20 October which surely strengthened his position vis-a-vis Belgrade in the negotiations on the new Union. In a clever coup which dramatically reshuffled the whole political landscape in Montenegro Djukanovic decided to run as the new Prime Minister which he did successfully, thus securing his personal position as effective leader of Montenegrin politics for the years to come. Overall, Montenegro turned out to be more stable than many would have expected after the "shock" of the Belgrade agreement in March. Ron H. Herrmann now sees a window of opportunity to press ahead with the long over-

due reforms in Montenegro.

In Kosovo local elections took place on 26 October. However, given the complex ethnic distribution of the country, these elections - the second after 2000 - would have a major impact especially on the fate of the Serb minority in the enclaves, thus also on the vigorous efforts of UNMIK Chief Michael Steiner to restore at least some multi-ethnic life to the province. Would the Serbs take up their responsibility and try to participate in the administration of the communities, even where only in the minority, or would they continue to boycott the political life in the country, thereby dismissing any chance to restore at least some multi-ethnic governance in mixed areas? As it turned out, the election results were ambivalent, as Neithart Höfer-Wissing comments. How-

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ever, maybe the biggest success came in the wake of the elections when Steiner succeeded to finally gain control of Northern Mitrovica, thereby reducing the chances that at the end of the day partition might be the only option remaining for Kosovo.

Finally, the parliamentary and presidential elections in Bosnia and Her-

zegovina on 5 October left a taste of déjà vu, given the victory of the Croat and Serb nationalist parties in both entities. Even if close observers were able to detect some signs of hope, once again frustration and helplessness prevailed among the "internationals", with Paddy Ashdown determined to use his "Bonn powers" to rid the country of those who are

clinging to the past, not willing to allow the gap to the rest of the Balkans to become even deeper. Suleyman Bosto demonstrates in this issue that progress can hardly be expected without a clear reconfiguration of forces in Bosnia.

Dr. Rafael Biermann, ZEI

Serbia 2002: political infighting, incremental progress

Last year in Serbia, a new President was supposed to be elected after the end of the term of the previous President, Milan Milutinovic. Three election rounds did not suffice, although each time the same candidate, Vojislav Kostunica, the current President of the Republic of Yugoslavia, was clearly the first among the candidates. However, no candidate reached the necessary absolute majority for a victory in the first round on September 29, 2002; the run-off election on October 13, in which Kostunica defeated the economic reformer Miroslav Labus, was declared invalid on account of the low voter turnout (less than 50%). Although Kostunica defeated the Nationalist Vojislav Seselj in a repeated run-off, the election on December 8 failed likewise due to low voter participation. A new run-off election has not yet been determined and whether one will take place at all in accordance with the current Serbian constitution, which is supposed to be amended soon, remains questionable in Belgrade.

This muddled situation does not necessarily signify a blockade of essential governmental functions, since the President of the Parliament, Natasa Micić, has taken over much of the work of the President - which is predominantly of symbolic nature. Furthermore, the executive power in Serbia lies constitutionally and in political reality clearly in the hands of the Prime Minister, Zoran Djindjic. However, the difficulties with the Presidential election characterize a further current problem in Serbia. On the one hand, the election illustrated the fall of the anti-Milosevic-coalition DOS. The diverging aims between both dominant political personalities, the reformer Djindjic and the conservative constitutional lawyer Kostunica, resulted in a power struggle. The Presidential election provided a one of many arenas for this struggle, under which the reform process has

been thwarted and continues to suffer. The Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS) led by Kostunica already left the DOS in 2001 and refused to cooperate on reform legislation. Djindjic responded in 2002 with an ultimately failed attempt to expel DSS representatives from the Parliament. The DOS did not support Kostunica even in the last electoral round, in which his only opponents were right-wing extremists.



Kostunica, Djindjic: power struggle

Moreover, in Djindjic's catch-all coalition, the election evoked signs of disintegration: Labus, previously one of the key Djindjic supporters on economic reform, left Djindjic's party due to a disappointing lack of campaign support from Djindjic and formed a new political party with other reformers. Should this development continue, Djindjic, his parliamentary majority, and thus his ability to govern will come into question.

In addition to intensified dissension in the governing coalition, the lack of voter participation indicated a general disaffection with politics. At the beginning of 2003, not one single politician deserved a positive remark from 32.1% of the people polled in a survey. Correspondingly low were the positive evaluations for particular politicians (Kostunica 10.5%, Minister of Finance Djelic 9.6%, Prime Minister Djindjic 9.3%, and Vice-Prime

Minister Labus 9.1%), though Djindjic improved his support compared to other politicians.

Concomitant with the dissatisfaction with the reform efforts is a shift to the right in public opinion. The Nationalist Seselj received over one third of the votes in the last electoral round. The general alienation and disappointment with politics is being nourished by economic crime, a scandalously deficient fight against crime, and economic dissatisfaction. The subjective perception in the populace can be better understood by analyzing the available economic data, which are to a small degree even positive. In 2002, the gross national product rose four percent, after an increase of six percent in the previous year. A budget surplus was pursued (\$ 100 million), although the customs income rose from \$220 to \$500 million. Inflation sank from 40% in 2001 to under 20%. Unemployment, often estimated at 30%, actually lies somewhere around 15% according to the World Bank. Privatization of the economic sector in 2001 has brought positive initial results. Nonetheless, the gap between "poor" and "rich" has continued to grow and the portion of the population living under the poverty line remains high. In general the Serbian economy, according to the World Bank, has reached a stage of development that need not fear comparison to other transformation countries.

In the political arena, reform steps were achieved, for instance in the new regulation of the relations of Vojvodina, the strongest economic region, to the country as a whole. First steps for restoring the autonomy undermined during the Milosevic regime were taken. In March 2002, a law introduced European standards regarding the protection of minorities, which fulfilled a considerable condition for Serbian membership in the Council of Europe.

The outstanding political decision of the year was the agreement on the transformation of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia into a confederation between Serbia and Montenegro, ending a long-term conflict, which would have endangered the inclusion of both countries in the European integration process. During the lengthy negotiations for the new constitutional statute, which awaits ratification from the parliaments, the European Union played a decisive role through its High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana. The new union-statute lays down the framework for common executive and legislative institutions limited to defense matters, international issues, and the assurance of free movement. A reservation remains for the loosely bound union, involving the examination of a possibility to secede after three years. This result of the negotiations indicates a particularly weak interest of Montenegro in preserving some kind of close state-union. Indeed the new union may only slightly delay the ongoing trend towards mutual divergence and thus independence. Moreover, for the present the maintenance of the weak connection serves the purpose of avoiding any further precedents, which could strengthen the Kosovo-Albanian aspirations for independence from Serbia/Yugoslavia.

The Serbian relationship to the other former Yugoslav republics consolidated in the previous year. Relations developed particularly with Slovenia, which has begun to utilize its traditionally strong economic position in

Serbia. With Croatia, the ongoing conflict over the peninsula Prevlaka was eliminated and thus the UN-regulation over the region became obsolete; furthermore, Serbia reached a free-trade agreement and an easing of mobility for persons with Croatia. Bilateral relations with Bosnia-Herzegovina normalized as well. However, both the lack of domestic stability in Bosnia with the *de facto* unchanged ethnic triple-division and the questionable loyalty of the Serbs to Bosnia-Herzegovina as a whole pose challenges to the leaders of Serbia and their sense of responsibility to support the integrity of their neighboring country.

The largest open problem for Serbia in context with its neighbors remains the relationship to Kosovo. Neither the issue concerning the return of over 200,000 Serbian refugees, nor the definitive regulation of Serbia-Kosovo relations has come closer to a solution. At the same time, progress in one of the two issues would alleviate the resolution of the other.

Serbia/Yugoslavia has enjoyed nonetheless political and massive financial support from the EU, its member states, and the USA. This assistance remains irreplaceable for Djindjic and his reform course. Yet, critical impatience has grown in the western capitals with the political grave digging in Belgrade. The maximum possible inclusion into the Euro-Atlantic institutions remains the most important foreign policy goal of the Djindjic government. The passage of the constitutional charter should make it possible for Serbia-Montenegro to swiftly

commence with association negotiations with the EU, as well as approach NATO. From Serbia however, the western countries and their institutions expect a reliable course toward these goals, which includes improved cooperation with the International Tribunal in The Hague. The collapse of the DOS coalition and the growth of nostalgic-nationalist trends in Serbia are no help. This underlines the importance of assuring that those forces in Belgrade, which continue to envision a Serbian "Sonderweg", no longer receive access to the political arena.

Dr. Hansjörg Eiff
Former German Ambassador to Belgrade

Hansjörg Eiff:

Serbien - zwei Jahre
nach Milosevics Sturz

ZEI Discussion Paper
C114/2002.

Montenegro: Less tactics and more strategy needed

In 2002, Montenegro was 'troubled' with various elections: regular local elections on 15 May, early parliamentary combined with early local elections in Podgorica and in Tivat on 20 October and regular presidential elections on 22 December which have to be repeated on 9 February this year because the voter turnout of 47,8 per cent was below the threshold required by law (50 per cent).¹ In theory elections are one of the most important elements of solid democracies. In practice too many elections reflect only the stage of weakened democracies. Since 1990 Montenegro faced 14 elections and the cabinet of Milo Djukanovic, which was sworn in on 8 January 2003, is already the eighth since a multi-party system was introduced in the coun-

try. Party tactics focusing on power and control superimposed a needed country strategy, ensuring domestic stability, economic reform and progress in the European integration process.

After a decade of conflicts and crises, democratic governments now rule the countries on the Western Balkans, and all countries move from reconstruction towards economic recovery and sustainable development, albeit at different paces. Europe is not only acknowledging but also responding to it. In January the EU Police Mission replaced the UN's International Police Task Force (IPTF) in Bosnia-Herzegovina. A takeover of the international military operation Amber Fox in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is prepared for spring

2003, and some plans have been made to replace NATO's Stabilization Force (SFOR) by a European peace mission in the future. Slovenia will join the EU in 2004 and Croatia is expected to apply formally for EU membership in 2003, hoping to join the EU together with Romania and Bulgaria in 2007. Serbia and Montenegro are awaiting the European commission to prepare a feasibility study, opening the negotiations for a Stabilisation and Associations Agreement (SAA) with the EU. Until then the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia with its remaining two republics Serbia and Montenegro must meet some conditions, such as the adoption of Action plan for the internal market between Serbia and Montenegro. Unfortunately, various

reasons delayed the adoption of the Charter and the Action Plan. Having signed the so-called 'Belgrade Agreement' on 14 March 2002,² everybody was optimistic that the envisioned state-union 'Serbia and Montenegro' would be proclaimed soon after in order to overcome the dualism of power and competences between Belgrade and Podgorica. But unfortunately Montenegro (just like Serbia) was 'troubled' with a creeping institutional crisis and various elections. Just after 14 March all three Ministers of Djukanovic's coalition partner SDP (Social Democratic Party) resigned from office and the LSCG (Liberal Alliance for Montenegro) withdrew its support for the minority government of DPS (Democratic Party of Socialists) and SDP. After regular municipal elections on 15 May, Prime Minister Vujanovic lost a vote of confidence in summer, and the new majority in parliament consisting of LSCG and the pro-Yugoslav tri-party coalition (SNP, SNS and NS, see box) shortened the mandate of parliament, initiating early parliamentary elections. In the meantime the Montenegrin Constitutional Court lost quorum since four of its five judges either retired or resigned. Having had elections on 15 May, on 20 October and on 22 December, Montenegrin politicians have had to campaign continuously, struggling for public support and the goodwill of the electorate. Consequently party tactics dominated over mid-term strategies. During all those months, it was expected that the Belgrade Agreement would be implemented by drafting and adopting a constitutional charter, replacing the federal structure of Yugoslavia by a new, more decentralized state-union. Montenegro and Serbia aimed for fast admission to the Council of Europe, for membership in NATO's Partnership for Peace, and for the beginning of the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) with the EU in earnest.

These three aspirations depended however on a successful creation of the state-union. All political forces in Montenegro and Serbia agreed in principle to the new state-union, giving up the diverting ideas of maintaining FRY or of reaching immediate independence. The most important decision made was to postpone a referendum on independence by at least three years. But other details caused severe problems. Disputes over the modus on electing the joint parliament, the hierarchy of the judiciary, and the mandate of the common court delayed an early agreement. Further complications

arose from specific regulations defined by the law on implementing the Constitutional Charter, such as the property of the joint state, especially of the military, and the future fiscal agent of the state-union towards international financial institutions. The constitutional commission succeeded only on 6 December 2002 in adopting the final draft of the charter and on 16 January 2003 in agreeing on the law on its implementation.



Montenegro:
Results of leg. elections 20 Oct. 02

The European prospect is surely the most credible and prosperous alternative for Montenegro. Europe on the other hand shows its readiness to welcome Montenegro and Serbia in its institutions. On 14 January the new president of the Council of Ministers of the EU, Greek Foreign Minister Iorgos Papandreou, stated in Belgrade that the Balkans would be a EU priority during the Greek presidency. However Montenegro has to do its homework. Decentralisation, effective fight against organised crime, corruption, human trafficking and smuggling, the protection of an independent judiciary, the effective implementation of rule of law, police reform, the effectual transition of state media into public media counterbalanced by truly independent media are projects of absolute priority in 2003. The newly elected Prime Minister of Montenegro, Milo Djukanovic, ensured Mr. Papandreou in January in Belgrade that the priorities of his government would be democratisation, reform and the edification of a European society. These priorities are justified since

Montenegro is still in the process of post-socialistic transition. Milan Popovic, a Montenegrin expert on contemporary political systems, stated in an earlier edition of the SOE Monitor³ that Montenegro had passed a period of negative transition from 1989 to 1997, when the closed communist system had been replaced by a rigid nationalistic system. According to Popovic, Montenegro, since then has entered its second, more positive phase of transition, which started when the government of Montenegro withdrew its support for the Milosevic regime. Much has been achieved since then; however in 2002 the reform process in Montenegro was impeded for the two interconnected reasons explained earlier, the redefinition of the future relations between Montenegro and Serbia and various elections in Montenegro. With the constitutional charter having been adopted and implemented and the realisation of Djukanovic's promises made to the EU, 2003 can mark an important milestone for the country towards Europe and the ongoing positive transition of the country itself. By 21 June Europe and the Montenegrins themselves might learn in Thessalonica how much progress Montenegro has made, together with Serbia. Then the Greek EU Presidency will hold a Summit between the EU, its ten future members, its three candidates and the countries of the SAP. The Thessalonica Summit is to launch a 'Balkan European Integration Process' at which Montenegro can show its advancement towards European integration.

Dr. Ron H. Herrmann
Head of the Regional Office of the Monitoring Mission of the European Union in Montenegro

¹ The opinions expressed in this article are exclusively those of the author and do not represent those of any organization.

² The 'Proceeding Points for the Restructuring of Relations Between Serbia and Montenegro' were signed by Vojislav Kostunica as President of FRY, by Miroljub Labus as Federal Deputy Prime Minister, by Zoran Djindjic as the Prime Minister of Serbia, by Milo Djukanovic as President of Montenegro, and by Filip Vujanovic as Prime Minister of Montenegro. EU's High Representative Xavier Solana signed as a witness.

³ SOE-Monitor 1/2002.

Local elections in Kosovo

The second local elections on 26 October were the first ones with participation from all communities of Kosovo.¹ Both election campaign and Election Day went smoothly. However, only one day after the elections, the violent killing of Suva Reka/ Suha Reka, Municipal Assembly President Uke Bytyqi and two persons accompanying him overshadowed the campaign and does not bode well for the post election period. Implementation of the elections is more or less completed but has been marked by the deep rifts within the Kosovo society. With approximately 58 percent, participation was lower than in the first local elections in the fall 2000 which had been the first democratic elections ever in Kosovo, and had consequently been marked by widespread enthusiasm. On the other hand, compared to usual European voter behavior or, for that matter, participation in Serbian elections in 2002, election participation was again rather high. It must also be noted that this time 300,000 voters more were registered than in the previous elections. Although the Kosovo Albanians went out in numbers, the participation of all communities rendered it more difficult for one party to win an absolute majority. Only in 17 of Kosovo's 30 municipalities could a government form without the need of a coalition.

The Kosovo Albanian parties

Not unexpectedly, the biggest Kosovo Albanian Party, the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), suffered considerable losses and went down from 57 percent in 2000 to some 46 percent, thus remaining on the level of the general elections 2001. More painfully, it could obtain absolute majorities only in 11 municipalities instead of 19 two years ago. This defeat can be explained through the weak performance of LDK-led municipal administrations. Thus LDK grudgingly had to find coalition partners, mainly among non-Serb minority communities, a stark choice given the LDK's notorious intolerant attitude towards minorities. The Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) managed to slightly increase its share of the electorate but anyway lost the absolute majority in two of the previously held municipalities. In the Dukagjini area in Western Kosovo some former PDK voters have now obviously cast their ballots for the

Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK), besides PDK the other political offspring of the former KLA. AAK again waged the most sophisticated election campaign but could not increase its electorate and, significantly, did not garner the absolute majority in Decan although it had invested huge efforts there. PDK with its one mandate had to help the first AAK President of a municipality into office. AAK blames UNMIK for this disappointing outcome, citing the many court cases that are pending against prominent members, mostly concerning rather grave crimes. Ever since, AAK President Ramush Haradinaj has continued to wage his own vendetta against the UNMIK administered judiciary, thus frustrating all those wishful thinkers who had believed that he was a modern politician with a clear understanding of the rule of law.

The Kosovo Serbs

In one of their first meetings with the incoming SRSG Michael Steiner, the deputies of Coalition Return had requested to hold local elections as soon as possible. In the summer, some of their leaders started to formulate preconditions for election participation by Kosovo Serbs, notably what would have amounted to the creation of ethnically clean Serb municipalities prior to the elections. This was of course entirely out of question for UNMIK, and efforts were started to convince the Kosovo Serbs that their abstention would lead to marginalization and self-isolation for the next four years. The electorate was increasingly irritated by messages from their representatives who called either for total boycott or for participation only where a Kosovo Serb absolute majority seemed to be guaranteed. The question what such

a policy would mean for those Serbs living in minority areas was not answered; obviously they did not count. Only two days before the elections, and encouraged by Belgrade, signals were sent to participate all over Kosovo, with the exception of the northern part of Mitrovica. The participation of the Kosovo Serb voters was therefore rather mixed: more than half of them went to the polls in those municipalities where Serbs are dominating, around one fifth turned out in minority areas, and merely in Mitrovica it came to a boycott when less than a hundred Kosovo Serb voters dared to resist the pressure and cast their ballots.

This outcome forced UNMIK to reassess its position regarding the Seven Point Plan for Mitrovica presented by Steiner at the beginning of October. Furthermore, also Belgrade had to realize that the policy of open obstruction had led to a disaster. Consequently, it was possible to reach agreement to stop the support for the illegal parallel municipal administration in the northern part of Mitrovica. On 25 November, the UNMIK administration was established there for the first time after the conflict. UNMIK has devised a step-by-step strategy, which, based on the original seven points, aims at stabilizing the situation in Mitrovica, taking into account the legitimate concerns of the Kosovo Serbs.

The internal contention among the Kosovo Serb politicians continued and caused a lot of political posturing, most notably the Assembly walkout of Coalition Return and the eventual installation of a new caucus leadership. Moreover, Serb politicians made an announcement of a union of Serbian municipalities which would be based on a purely mono-ethnic basis and aims at giving a new power basis to the northern Kosovo Serb hardliners.

The non-Serb minority communities

Those non-Serb minority communities that are politically well organized managed to obtain some influence following the local elections. The Turkish KDTP, being the only political representation of the Kosovo Turks garnered nearly ten percent of the Prizren electorate and became an important coalition partner for LDK. The Bosniak/Gorani coalition VATAN received key seats in two muni-

United States
Institute of Peace:

Kosovo final Status
Special Report 91,
Juli 2002.

Simulating Kosovo
Special Report 95,
November 2002.

[www.usip.org/pubs/
specialreports](http://www.usip.org/pubs/specialreports)

icipalities. It decided to pursue a coalition with LDK, despite tremendous pressure applied by PDK and AAK. These two parties are at present exploiting the obvious mistakes of VATAN's representative in the central Government, the Minister of Health, to wage their vendetta against him, trying to force him out of office and changing the balance within the government in their favor. The Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians were politically split among a variety of parties and thus lost some possible seats.

An outlook

The political landscape of Kosovo has changed, albeit not dramatically. In many municipalities it was difficult to form municipal governments, and practically every party staged a walk-out at some point. As of now, only the tiny municipality of Novo Brdo has

not yet been given a municipal government. The impasse stems from the unwillingness of the Kosovo Albanian parties to accept the new reality that there is now a Kosovo Serb majority. Their threats have led to a situation where the newly elected Kosovo Serb officials could not feel safe in the municipal building. By contrast, the municipality of Strpce seems to experience a smooth transition towards its new Kosovo Serb leadership. All newly elected leaderships must now show that they are up to the task. This will be particularly difficult for those administrations that are supported by a coalition because they have to practice something, which is very rare in the Balkans - the art of compromise.

Upon request of the SRSG, the Council of Europe has accepted to send

an expert mission to work out, in close cooperation with UNMIK and the Provisional Institutions, a concept for a decentralization of local self-government based on modern European concepts. The expert mission will start work on 10 February, and the results of their work should have a lasting positive impact on post-war Kosovo.

Neithart Hoefler-Wissing, UNMIK

¹ The opinions expressed in this article are exclusively those of the author and do not represent those of any organization.

Macedonia's "Guns and Roses" new government

Macedonia's new government, formed at the beginning of November 2002, took an unprecedented step of including posts for former rebels involved in the ethnic Albanian uprising, which brought the country to the brink of civil war in 2001. Following the September 15 election, the moderate Social Democrats, SDSM, became the largest ethnic Macedonian party in parliament and opted to link up with the biggest Albanian political force, the Democratic Union for Integration, DUI.

The DUI sprang from the now disbanded National Liberation Army, NLA, which launched an armed conflict against government forces in February 2001 to demand improved civil rights for Albanians. The conflict ended six months later with the western-sponsored Ohrid agreement, which promised improved rights in exchange for the NLA handing over a portion of their weapons. When an amnesty for the rebels was proclaimed early last year, they formed the DUI and moved into mainstream politics. They won 16 of the 120 seats in parliament in the September elections.

Branko Crvenkovski, prime minister and leader of the SDSM, has offered the DUI four ministerial posts - education, justice, health and transportation - and one vice-premiership. The Social Democrats insisted that no commanders directly involved in fighting could be included in government. The new alliance has immediately been nicknamed "The Guns and

Roses" government - a reference to the DUI's rebel background and SDSM's logo featuring a red rose.

The coalition enraged Macedonian nationalists, especially the ex-governing VMRO which was swept from power in the election. "It's disgraceful," was the regular public mantra of the party spokesman Vlatko Gorcev after the new government was formed. "This government list reflects a military, legal and spiritual capitulation for Macedonia," was VMRO's official stance on the political and human "quality" of the new

government.

But most moderate Macedonians and Albanians believe the arrangement represents real progress. It was seen as an acceptance of the reality, as a genuine compromise between the Macedonian and the Albanian political blocs.

Apart from the Albanians, the rest of the 14 government ministries were divided between the SDSM and their other partner, the Liberal Democratic Party, LDP. The former took the interior, foreign and defence portfolios; the latter finance, labour and agriculture.

The biggest surprise was Crvenkovski's decision to appoint an ethnic Vlach, Hari Kostov, a banker, as interior minister. Analysts claimed that the choice was related to plans to investigate corruption in Ljupco Georgievski's former nationalist government.

That proved to be a good prediction: a month after the government entered office, a big anti-corruption campaign started. It resulted with the incarceration of dozens of ex-state and party functionaries from the previous government, charged with a number of criminal accusations for misuse of state funds and power for personal or party benefits. Among others, a general secretary of VMRO, who was managing one of the richest state funds - the Health state fund - is still detained. The ex-minister of economy, an ethnic Albanian, is being looked after by the police, and the ex-director of the Customs office - widely believed to be one of the

Brenda Pearson,
Putting Peace into
Practice.
Can Macedonia's new
Government Meet the
Challenge?
Special Report of the
United States Institute
of Peace, No. 96,
Nov. 2002

International Crisis
Group,
Moving Macedonia
toward Self-
Sufficiency,
Balkans Report
No. 135, 15 Nov. 2002

most corrupted institutions in the last four years - has left the country in fear of arrest and is believed to be in London or South Africa.

But the new government took another important step on the political front: it accepted an action plan to fully implement the Ohrid agreement. The plan envisages amendments to more than 90 laws to meet the requirements laid down in the agreement, which brought the republic's civil conflict to an end in August 2001. The reforms should be in force by the end of next year.

Decentralisation is not only a main issue outlined in the agreement, but also a general political priority. The government is to prepare a set of laws to begin this process by December 2003 at the very latest, with the transfer of authority from central to local level planned for the end of 2004.

Two other priorities identified in the government's plan are the need to

build confidence and strengthen security measures in the wake of the conflict and the safe return of around 8.000 displaced persons - mostly ethnic Macedonians - to former crisis regions.

The issue of representation in the state administration is also being tackled, but officials have warned that this will not happen overnight. According to the Ohrid agreement, the representation of ethnic Albanians in the state administration, currently at a level of 10%, should be increased to the proportional representation of around 23%, which is the percentage of ethnic Albanians in the total population of Macedonia. However, being pressed by the IMF and by bare economic needs, the government will have to downsize the number of state employees from the current 100.000 to approximately 70.000 in the next couple of years. That means that, generally speaking, ethnic Macedo-

nians mostly represented in the administration will have to be made redundant in large number, while ethnic Albanians will get new jobs in the state structures. In a country with some 30% of unemployment, there is a danger that political opponents may try to exploit the Ohrid agreement, arguing that it favours Albanians over Macedonians.

This clearly shows that the new Macedonian government will be confronted with difficult challenges: to make further deep economic and political reforms after 12 years of already painful transition, now in a post-conflict environment. That is not an easy task even for much older and wealthier states in Europe.

Saso Ordanoski and Ana Petrusseva, Skopje

After the Elections is Before the Elections: Bosnia and Herzegovina between Ethnocracy and Democracy

From the perspective of an outside viewer, the current situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina appears rather satisfactory, particularly when comparing it to the violent conflicts and the first years immediately thereafter. The viewpoints are well-known: the war has been quelled, unfathomable cruelties have been prevented by the Dayton Peace Accords, Bosnia-Herzegovina exists as an internationally recognized country, the international community has invested considerable military, financial, political, and humanitarian aid there, etc. By and large, the country finds itself in a political and economic transformation process leading toward European integration. In general this tendency is correct and reassuring. However, it is also insufficient, if one wants to achieve a wider and deeper diagnosis as well as an effective developmental strategy for the country. On the one hand, this comparative (even minimalist) analysis in retrospect provides for optimism and above all mollifies the political practitioners. Yet, on the other hand this approach remains superficial and inadequate. This benchmark for assessing the state of affairs in Bosnia-Herzegovina is onesided because

merely the war period, a time of destruction, violence, crime, suffering, persecution, and genocide is used as a comparative criterion. Thus, we are dealing with a comparison to a condition that should be seen rather as "rock bottom". From this vantage point, the current situation in



The Princeps Bridge in Sarajevo

Bosnia-Herzegovina is undoubtedly better; no one could deny that Bosnia-Herzegovina's release from war was a magnificent step. This trivial, self-evident preference of peace over the state of war nevertheless does not suffice in order to be satisfied with the minimal advancements in political development in Bosnia. The mere

absence of war cannot hide the fact that Bosnia-Herzegovina continues to be burdened by complex unresolved conflicts, political and economic contrasts, and multiple consequences from several years of violent discord (destroyed economy and infrastructure, unemployment, poverty, refugee issues, ethnic and political strife, unpunished war criminals, etc.). To that effect the peace, which was secured through the political, financial, and military presence of the international community in any case, is only the elemental requirement for the reconstruction, or rather "renovation" of the country.

Bosnia-Herzegovina is in the midst of a fundamental, double transformation: first, it must overcome the transition from that state of war to peace - what seems to have been reached already; secondly, it must succeed to transform into a democratic state according to the standards of the developed western democratic societies. These conditions include among others public democratic representation, democratic institutions and decision-making processes, rule of law, and the nor-

mative general observance of human rights.

For the optimists, or even for the (supposed realistic) politicians, the democratic transformation has been completed already, or at least put on the correct path. The supporters of the optimistic stance pose the following premises: political pluralism functions, democratic institutions have been established, elementary instruments and institutions of legal order exist, and the main political actors receive their legitimacy from free elections.

Those who view the situation more skeptically see no credible occasion for optimism. All "advancements" in comparison to the "rock bottom" state of war are indeed positive developments. But from the standpoint of a higher normative expectation, as in comparison to the standard set by developed democratic societies, the necessary transformation process in Bosnia is being delayed or even postponed to an uncertain future.

The reasons for this postponement are multi-faceted and require a systematic, interdisciplinary analysis. For the purposes of a personal commentary, it is worthy to mention at this point, what the author understands as a basic systematic hindrance for a real democratic transformation of the political landscape of Bosnia. Apart from the fact, that nominal and formal-procedural political life (through institutions and mechanisms) takes place in Bosnia-Herzegovina, a true democratization remains to be seen. The reasons: Despite the recognized formal and procedural "free" and "democratic" elections, in Bosnia-Herzegovina a type of political culture dominates that corresponds to the political culture of the period before the development of modern liberal societies. In contrast to modern democratic societies, which are built as politically mature communities of free individuals, political awareness in Bosnia is shaped by pre-modern, collectivist ways of thinking. In Bosnia still those ideas are most influential, which stress the primacy and the commitment to the collective, which is bound to the exclusiveness of the respective ethnos and ethnic identity. Ethnos is essentially equated with nation. The own ethnic identity is seen as encompassing, pre-determining all facets of life. A unity is formed which is rooted in a common heritage (which experiences collective, cult-like idolization), in a common fate, and in common goals. All this resembles pre-modern political mythologies.

The adulation of the ethnic collective in political life contradicts and obstructs any actual political transformation to a democratic order. The last elections resulted once again in victory for the ethnic (nationalist) parties. The procedural-democratic legitimacy of the elections and the political "elite's" declared intention to modernize and democratize, changes nothing in the essence of these parties which are incapable of overcoming the principles of their creation and functioning - namely as narrowly-defined ethnic parties. They will remain captive in their own ethno-mythological and collectivist visions and norms. Ethnos or nation becomes absolute and the first and final standard for each political decision, action, and judgment.

In this context, the formation of a liberal democratic culture is not possible. This, of course, would have to be thoroughly verified. Here I have to concentrate on only the following theses:

First: "Nationally" oriented parties cannot be the carriers of the democratization process because their political life is based on collectivist visions, which ultimately generate totalitarian, homogenizing, and authoritarian mentalities. This directly contradicts the vision of an individualistic, liberal-oriented political culture as well as the globalization process of modern societies.

Second: A strongly nationalistic and ethno-centric/ethnocratically conceived policy is supported by a pre-modern, ethno-mythological political culture. This ethno-mythology and its exploitation (through historical reference, fascination and exaltation of the past, etc.) must be critically analyzed and evaluated. In the political sphere, national homogenization

attempts repress individual competency and free competition, and conversely promote adaptability, conformity, and adherence.

Third: The flipside and the consequences of the realization of such ethno-nationalistically conceived policy is the homogenization of ethnicities through strategic political manipulation. The generation and exploitation of xenophobia, stirring of fears of foreigners, argumentation in the friend vs. foe scheme, and finally control and usage of violence and terror are often consequences of such policy.

Fourth: Power and interest appropriation in these national "elites" can also be seen as an expression of the attempt to secure and increase the profits of war.

Fifth: Nationalistic politics from the perspective of culture is monocultural, exclusivist, and isolationist - in contrast to the multi-, inter-, or trans-cultural mindset of tolerance, understanding, and cooperation.

Consequently, one may not frivolously view formal-procedural, but in content problematic election results as the fulfillment of democratic expectations. After years of bitter experience, the ethnocratic dominance fails to offer Bosnia-Herzegovina a promising future, theoretically as well as practically. From the author's perspective, a certain amount of skepticism is necessary, if one wants to assess the true state of affairs in the country. This might be more fruitful than being content with small steps of «progress» and short-term twists.

Prof . Dr. Sulejman Bosto
University of Sarajevo

International Crisis Group:
The continuing Challenge of Refugee Return to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Balkans Report
No. 137, 13 Dezember 2002

International Crisis Group:
Bosnia's Alliance for (Smallish) Change, Balkans Report
No. 132, 2 August 2002



European and South East European Studies in Montenegro

Usually, this time of the year is not a period of harvesting. However, research institutes follow their own schedules, which are sometimes hard to grasp, dictated more by sponsors and academic inertia than by the cycle of nature. For the "Network of European Studies in South Eastern Europe" at ZEI, these months *are* times of harvesting. After starting the Bulgarian-Romanian Inter-University European Center in October, our entire relevant workforce was out in the field again when on 24 to 26 January 2002 the new M.A. Programme in European and South East European Studies at the University of Montenegro was inaugurated, the climax of more than two years of intensive joint preparation.

The Programme was launched during an international conference on "Perspectives of European Integration in South Eastern Europe", co-organized by the University of Montenegro and ZEI and financed by the German Foreign Office. Dr. Dragisa Burzan, the new Montenegrin Foreign Minister, as well as Dr. Jelica Minic, Assistant Minister of the Yugoslav Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, gave their assessments on the prospects for starting the negotiations on a Stabilization and Association Agreement for "Serbia and Montenegro". Tereza Sobieski from the Directorate Western Balkans of the EU Commission contributed a similar assessment. All of them emphasized the need to foster a new generation of European minded people in Montenegro capable of working as experts on all aspects of European integration in media, business, science and politics. Replacing the unfortunately ill Dr. Rafael Biermann who will in future represent ZEI in the International Board of the Programme, Dr. Emil Mintchev spoke about "Teaching Europe in South Eastern Europe", applauding Prof. Milenko Popovic for the excellent job in launching this ambitious Programme.

In February, 16 Montenegrin students will start their studies in the first European Studies Programme in Montenegro. This Programme not only incorporates the best traditions of European Studies throughout Western Europe, striving to become an in-

terdisciplinary, cross-national, multi-lingual programme of excellence which covers all the main dimensions of European integration in history, politics, economics, and law. The curriculum also reflects the specific needs and perspectives of South Eastern Europe and its growing rapprochement with the ongoing European integration process. Precisely this fusion of perspectives will make the Programme in Podgorica attractive for students as well as lecturers both from Montenegro and abroad.

Some of the facets of the M.A. Programme are noteworthy, for they are indeed future-oriented and attractive beyond this country. The Programme places a specific focus on languages. More than fifty per cent of the courses will be taught in English. As Europe grows ever closer together, knowing several European languages becomes the backbone of professional interaction. And increasing progressively the courses taught in English will make the Programme more and more attractive to students from abroad. Another laudable feature is the intention to attract students from different nationalities and countries of the region, even applying affirmative action, thus making a contribution to overcoming the dreadful decade of segregation and conflict. Thus, we are expecting more and more Albanian students to enroll in the Programme. Fruitful mutual cooperation with other European Studies Programmes in the neighbouring countries like in Tirana will further strengthen this approach. The Programme in Podgorica might thus become a model of interethnic learning in South Eastern Europe. An evaluation by international experts in two years time will decide whether the programme in Podgorica might become a truly Regional European Studies Center.

ZEI was granted the opportunity to assist in the establishment of the M.A. Programme in Podgorica almost from the beginning, building on several years of experience of our Network of European Studies in South Eastern Europe. The programme in Podgorica is based on very profound, fruitful and inspiring discussions. The curriculum as well as the very direction and

structure of the Programme have very much been inspired by the "Core Curriculum for European Studies in South Eastern Europe" which was designed exactly for such purposes by the Network in early 2002. The library of the programme, sponsored by the German Rectors Conference, includes a comprehensive catalog of core literature on European integration. A brochure, sponsored by the German Foreign Office (the German Ambassador contributed introductory remarks), allows for the promotion of the Programme in the country and beyond. Since 2001, we have striven to bring a variety of German lecturers to Montenegro in order to help the professional staff of the emerging Programme to catch up, after years of neglect, with the state of art of European Studies in Western Europe. The Train the Trainers Seminars, the Flying Faculty and the Network conferences and workshops, sponsored by the German Academic Exchange Service, have thus contributed to raising the level of competence of this new Programme long before the inauguration took place.

In the future, ZEI will continue to invest heavily in this Programme. For the upcoming summer, we will start with an International Summer School at Kotor Bay, obligatory for all the students from Podgorica, integrating also students from nearby Tirana. By employing the method of co-teaching, we will try to raise the level of competence in Podgorica even further. This year, a separate Flying Faculty for Montenegro will also "take off", bringing lecturers from ZEI for up to a week to Podgorica to teach especially those subjects where expertise is still lacking. Some of the lecturers will travel on to Tirana, where the programme there could profit from the Flying Faculty. As experience has demonstrated already, Podgorica will benefit from all the products emanating from the Network. It is an investment, which will surely bear fruit in the lives of those who study in Montenegro in the years to come. Indeed, the time of harvesting has just started.

Dr. Rafael Biermann

Task Force South Eastern Europe

The Network of European Studies Yearly Conference in Edirne

From 16 to 18 January the fifth yearly conference of the ZEI Network of European Studies in South Eastern Europe took place. The Network met on the Turkish border to Bulgaria, in Edirne. The ancient city with its marvellously decorated mosques still testifies to the century when the city, at that time called Adrianopol, was the center of the expanding Ottoman Empire (before the conquest of Constantinople in 1453). The conference was held in cooperation with the University of Thrace,

Eastern Europe after the Prague Summit" (Prof. Ludger Kühnhardt, ZEI; Prof. Huseyin Bagci and Prof. Attila Eralp, Ankara; Prof. Radovan Vukadinovic, Zagreb, Dr. Emil Mintchev, ZEI), the Network activities of last year were presented and plans discussed for this year.

Thus, the Network could report on several achievements since the Belgrade conference in January 2001:

- Two weekly Train the Trainer Seminars in Budva/Montenegro (May) and in Rousse/Bulgaria (October);

- Three meetings of the Working Group "Europe at Schools" in Zagreb and Ankara, concentrating on two topics: writing and discussing "country profiles" about what is going on concerning "Europe at Schools" in the individual countries of the region; and drafting a curriculum (together with the University of Münster) for an International Center for European Teacher Education and European Studies in Zagreb;

- Opening of the European Studies Programme (BRIE) in Rousse in October 2002 and of European and South East European Studies in Podgorica in January 2003 (see last page); to this effect a Hertie Coordination Office, headed by Dr. Emil Mintchev, was established at ZEI;

- Several ZEI lecturers again sent to different European Studies Programmes throughout the year as part of the "Flying Faculty" of the Network.

In addition, the first two "Readers"

of the Network were presented in Edirne. The monographs (see box) are specifically designed for use in classes of European Studies Programmes throughout South Eastern Europe. The Readers are freely available as pdf files on the Homepage of ZEI (www.zei.de).

This year, the Network will once again have a highly ambitious schedule. Financing of the main projects was secured through national German Stability Pact funds, administered by the German DAAD. Much of the efforts will be concentrated on the new European Studies Centers in Rousse/Giurgiu and Podgorica. At both places ZEI will organize an International Summer School and send its "Flying Faculty" for intensive courses. A close cooperation among the programmes in Podgorica and Tirana is envisaged. Support will also be given to the emerging Regional European Studies Center in Subotica, Serbia. The Working Group "Europe at Schools" will soon publish its "country profiles", a publication about "Europe Schools in Germany" and a curriculum for training "Europe teachers". The group intends to start Train the Trainer courses for school principals and school administration officials and to edit basic teaching and learning material for use at schools throughout the region. Several new "Readers" are planned. The sixth annual conference will take place in Rousse in early 2004.

Ana Devic:
Nationalism, Regional
Multiculturalism and
Democracy,
ZEI European Integration
and South Eastern Europe,
SEE 2/2002

Nail Alkan:
Borders in Europe,
ZEI European Integration
and South Eastern Europe,
SEE 3/ 2002

Edirne, and the Middle East Technical University, Ankara, with financing by the German DAAD. Participants gathered in the old train station where the Treaty of Lausanne was signed in 1923. Once again Network partners from all over the region participated. After an inspiring panel discussion on "The security of South

Next edition : EU Enlargement beyond Copenhagen



Chief Editor:
Assistant Editor:
Editorial Assistants:

Dr. Rafael Biermann
Dr. Emil Mintchev
Simon Backovsky
Jared Sonnicksen

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Zentrum für Europäische Integrationsforschung
Center for European Integration Studies
Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms- Universität Bonn

ZEI
Walter-Flex-Str. 3
D- 53113 Bonn
Fax: 0228/ 731894
e- mail: soe.monitor@uni-bonn.de