



Slovenian Business & Research Association

## Slovensko gospodarsko in raziskovalno združenje Bruselj

# B I L T E N

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### Ustanovni člani SGRZ:

Gospodarska zbornica Slovenije; Univerza v Ljubljani; Univerza v Mariboru; Inštitut Jožef Stefan; Zadrúžna zveza Slovenije; *s finančno podporo Ministrstva za visoko šolstvo, znanost in tehnologijo ter Ministrstva za kmetijstvo, gozdarstvo in prehrano.*

### Pridruženi člani SGRZ:

Krka d.d. Novo mesto; Obrtna zbornica Slovenije; Nova Ljubljanska banka; Zavarovalno združenje Slovenije; Lek d.d.; Sava d.d.; Riko d.d., Univerza na Primorskem, Mestna občina Ljubljana, Mestna občina Maribor; Mestna občina Novo mesto; Mestna občina Nova Gorica, Mestna občina Celje, Holdinška družba Istrabenz d.d.; DDC Družba za svetovanje in inženiring d.o.o., Perutnina Ptuj d.d.; Geoplin Lendava d.d.; Niko transport d.o., Kmetijsko gozdarska zbornica Slovenije, Fakulteta za kemijo in kemijsko tehnologijo, UL; Alianta d.o.o.; Euro Amex d.o.o., Visoka šola za dizajn, Gea College, Korona d.o.

**Sedež SGRZ:** 6, Av. Lloyd George, B-1000 Bruxelles, Belgija. Tel: 32 2 645 19 10, Fax: 32 2 645 19 17

**Ureja:** dr. Boris Cizelj, direktor SGRZ

*Redakcija Biltena je bila zaključena 16. decembra 2007.*

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### Uvodnik

V kratkem se bo zavrtelo še eno, za Evropsko unijo nedvomno uspešno leto. Predsedovanje Nemčije in Portugalske je prineslo veliko sprememb, novosti in napredka. 13. decembra je bila v Lizboni podpisana nova pogodba EU, ki se bo imenovala Lizbonska pogodba.

Slovenija se aktivno pripravlja na obveznosti, ki jo čakajo iz 18-mesečnega programa predsedujoče trojke. Prioritete, ki predstavljajo logično nadaljevanje že pričelih aktivnosti, pa so:

Ratificiranje Lizbonske pogodbe, izvajanje prenovljene Lizbonske strategije, krepitev konkurenčnosti in inovativnosti, spodbujanje raziskav, znanja, rast gospodarstva, razvoj evropskega socialnega modela, trajnostno upravljanje z energijo, varovanje okolja, krepitev svoboščin, varnosti in pravih odnosov in izboljšanje skladnosti politik v korist razvoja. Ena izmed glavnih prioritetev pa je krepitev sodelovanja med EU in Zahodnim Balkanom. V ta namen prilagamo tudi poročilo o Zahodnem Balkanu, ki ga je izdelalo združenje Friends of Europe.

Komisija je pravkar pripravila poročilo o uveljavljanju prenovljene lizbonske strategije, ki bo služilo za usmerjanje zadnjega 3-letnega cikla (2008-2010) in o katerem bo razpravljajal tudi pomladni Evropski svet pod slovenskim predsedstvom.

Zanimiva je ugotovitev iz analize, ki so jo v zvezi s tem pripravili v Komisiji. Podatki, ki kažejo na zaostajanje posameznih držav članic za povprečjem EU-15, so vsekakor zanimivi: po BDP na prebivalca zaostaja skupina novih 10 držav za približno 45%, Slovenija pa za 20%. Če gledamo angažman zaposlenih delamo Slovenci približno 18% več kot v 15 starih članicah (merjeno v delovnih urah opravljenih v letu dni). Ko pa ugotovljamo ustvarjeni BDP na uro smo v zaostanku skoraj 30%. Najbolj zaskrbljujoče je, da se bo po oceni Komisije naš zaostanek za EU-15 v obdobju 2005-2007 povečal za nadaljnih 5%. Skratka, dvigniti moramo kvaliteto gospodarskega razvoja, t.j. produktivnost, več dodane vrednosti in inovacij, kar prinaša višjo konkurenčnost.

Kot smo že najavili, bo EREF-2008, t.j. 4. novogoriški Evropski regionalni gospodarski forum posvečen javno-zasebnemu partnerstvu in zasebnemu financiranju raziskovalne, inovacijske in izobraževalne dejavnosti. Forum bo potekal 5. in 6.junija in pred njim bomo soorganizirali vrsto delavnic o posameznih tematskih področjih, da bi zbrali kvalitetne predloge za priporočila, o katerih bo Forum razpravljal v prisotnosti komisarke za regionalno politiko Danuto Hübner in ministra dr.Žagarja. V naslednjem Biltenu vas bomo seznanili s podrobnostmi programa, že zdaj pa vas vabimo, da si te datume vpišete v vaš koledar, saj upamo, da se boste Foruma udeležili.

Hkrati vas obveščamo, da bo 14.februarja v Ljubljani (najverjetneje v Cankarjevem domu) seminar z dr.Sean McCarthy-jem na temo »Kako napisati uspešen projekt za 7.okvirni program«. Prejeli boste vabilo z navodili za prijavo, po en predstavnik članic SGRZ se udeležuje brezplačno (prejeli boste tudi najnovejšo knjigo-priročnik dr.McCarthy-ja o 7.OP).

Dovolite, da vas obvestim, da se tudi Združenju izteka zelo uspešno leto. V petek 21.decembra bo Upravni odbor sprejel letno poročilo, ki ga boste nato dobili v vašo informacijo.

Vsem bralcem Biltena se želim v imenu SGRZ teama zahvaliti za zaupanje in dobro sodelovanje ter prijetne božične praznike in veliko sreče, zdravja in poslovnih uspehov v novem letu !

**Urednik**

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## 1. AKTUALNE NOVICE

### ■ Sklad za integracijo imigrantov

Evropska komisija je vzpostavila sklad, namenjen vzpodbujanju integracije imigrantov. Proračun sklada je 4.5 milijona € in z njegovo pomočjo bodo države članice lahko povečala svoja prizadevanja za uspešno integracijo imigrantov, jim lažšanje dostop do zaposlitve in osnovnega učenja jezika države, v katero so se priselili.

Preko sklada bodo še posebej financirani projekti, ki bodo povečevali interakcijo med priseljenimi in domačimi prebivalci. Vrednosti projektov bodo varirale med 80.000€ in 500.000€; rok za prijavo je 31. januar 2008.

Celotna sredstva, namenjena za tovrstne aktivnosti v obdobju 2007-2013, pa so 825 milijonov €.

Več o tem:

[http://ec.europa.eu/justice\\_home/funding/integration/funding\\_integration\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/funding/integration/funding_integration_en.htm)

### ■ Prenovljena lizbonska strategija uspešna

Leta 2005 prenovljena Lizbonska strategija kaže določene pozitivne učinke. Strukturne reforme so pospešile potencial za rast in razvoj evropskega gospodarstva; čeprav neenakomernega. Nekatere regije se razvijajo mnogo uspešneje in hitreje od drugih. Tako je Evropska komisija predlagala nov paket ukrepov, s katerimi želi zagotoviti večjo konkurenčnost EU gospodarstva:

- vlaganje v ljudi in posodabljanje trga dela;
- podpora rasti in razvoju MSP;
- prosti pretok znanja kot peta svoboda EU (vključuje evropski raziskovalni prostor in celovito patentno zakonodajo);
- zmanjševanje podnebnih sprememb preko varovanje okolja in energetske učinkovitosti.

Več o tem:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1892&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>  
in  
<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1904&format=HTML&aged=0&language=en&guiLanguage=en>

### ■ Elektronsko carinsko okolje

Evropski parlament je začrtal pot novemu, cenejšemu, elektronskemu carinjenju med državami članicami EU. Evropski carinski sistemi so medsebojno kompatibilni, kar omogoča izmenjavo podatkov in vzpostavitev skupne "carinske platforme"; v prihodnosti.

Naslednji korak, ki bo po pričakovanjih zaključen v roku petih let, pa je vzpostavitev enotne centralne carinske točke za vse poslovne subjekte, ki bo skrajšala carinske postopke.

Več o tem:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1893&format=HTML&aged=0&language=en&guiLanguage=en>

### ■ Listina o temeljnih pravicah

12. decembra so predsedniki Evropske komisije, Evropskega parlamenta ter Sveta slovesno podpisali Listino EU o temeljnih pravicah. Listina predstavlja katalog pravic, ki jih imajo državljani EU in je pravno zavezujoča za vse države članice.

Več o tem:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1916&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

### ■ Državna pomoč: izboljšanje postopkovnih pravil

Evropska komisija je spremenila izvedbeno uredbo, ki določa postopkovne določbe za uporabo pravil o državni pomoči. S tem skuša ustvariti preglednejša pravila o priglasitvi državne pomoči ter pospešitev postopkov.

Sprejela pa je tudi novo metodo določanja referenčnih in diskontnih stopenj, ki se v analizi primerov državne pomoči uporabljajo za izračun ekvivalenta dotacije pomoči in elementa pomoči, ki izhajajo iz shem subvencioniranja obresti.

Uredba bo omogočila zbiranje informacij o neporavnanih nalogih za izterjavo in zahtevala objavo odobrenih shem pomoči na internetnih straneh.

Več o tem:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1911&format=HTML&aged=0&language=en&guiLanguage=en>  
in

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1912&format=HTML&aged=0&language=en&guiLanguage=en>

## **2. KRATKE NOVICE IN VABILA K SODELOVANJU**

### **Predsedovanje: ustvarjalnost v izobraževanju**

Slovenija bo v okviru svojega predsedovanja EU posebno pozornost namenila inovativnosti in ustvarjalnosti v izobraževalnem procesu, vprašanju, kakšno naj bo izobraževanje, ki bo sposobno odgovarjati na izzive sodobne družbe; vprašanju vključevanja podjetniškega in samoiniciativnega duha v pedagoški proces ter doseganju ciljev prenovljene Lisbonske strategije.

### **Galaksija, imenovana po Komisarju Potočniku**

Evropski južni observatorij (ESO), lociran v Čilu, na gori Paranal, je poimenoval eno izmed ozvezdij po komisarju Janezu Potočniku.

Galaksija Potočnik je poznana tudi kot spiralna galaksija s prečko NGC 134.

### **Odprt schengenski mejni prehod**

15. novembra so v Petišovcih odprli nov mednarodni mejni prehod, v celoti zgrajen po schengenskih standardih varovanja meja EU.

Nov mejni prehod odlikujejo tudi posodobljena infrastruktura (cestna in komunalna) ter omogoča boljši nadzor prehoda državne meje za potniški in tovorni promet.

### **RAPEX**

Hitri sistem obveščanja EU o nevarnih proizvodih, ki krožijo na evropskem trgu. Posodobitve za november-december nakazujejo potrebo po večjem nadzoru nad uvoženimi igračami:

[http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/dyna/rapex/create\\_rapex.cfm?rx\\_id=158](http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/dyna/rapex/create_rapex.cfm?rx_id=158)

[http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/dyna/rapex/create\\_rapex.cfm?rx\\_id=159](http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/dyna/rapex/create_rapex.cfm?rx_id=159)

[http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/dyna/rapex/create\\_rapex.cfm?rx\\_id=160](http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/dyna/rapex/create_rapex.cfm?rx_id=160)

[http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/dyna/rapex/create\\_rapex.cfm?rx\\_id=161](http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/dyna/rapex/create_rapex.cfm?rx_id=161)

## **3. NOVA ZAKONODAJA**

### **■ Direktiva o varstvu morja**

Direktiva o varstvu morja je prešla drugo branje v Evropskem parlamentu; poslanci so potrdili besedilo direktive, ki bo zavezala države članice k ukrepom za varovanje in ekološko sprejemljivost, oz. zmanjšano onesnaženost morskih voda, najkasneje do leta 2020.

Pristop, ki ga je ubrala Komisija za doseg tega cilja, je zasnovan na aktivnostih, podrejenih posameznim ekosistemom in trajnostnemu gospodarjenju z morjem ter njegovim biološkim bogastvom.

Več o tem:

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/marine/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/marine/index_en.htm)

Sporočilo Komisije:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1894&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

## ■ Direktiva o kakovosti zraka

Direktiva o kakovosti zraka, ki so jo evropski poslanci sprejeli 11. decembra, je nadomestila pet obstoječih zakonodajnih aktov.

Nova direktiva zavezuje države članice k nadzoru in merjenju stopnje prašnih delcev v zraku ter k uvajanju najvišje mejne vrednosti vsebnosti prašnih delcev (velikosti do 2.5 mikrona), ki določajo kakovosti zraka.

Direktiva tudi določa postopno zmanjševanje stopnje vsebnosti prašnih delcev in sicer:  
25 mikrogramov/m<sup>3</sup> zraka do 2010  
23 mikrogramov/m<sup>3</sup> zraka bo do leta 2015 postala mejna vrednost  
20 mikrogramov/m<sup>3</sup> zraka do 2020

Po mnenju strokovnjakov najmanjši delci, ki jih z zrakom vdihavamo v pljuča, eden najnevarnejših povzročiteljev težkih bolezni, kot je npr. rak.

Evropska zakonodaja je tako nakazala velik napredek, saj je začela urejati tudi maksimalne vrednosti najmanjših delcev, prisotnih v zraku.

Več o tem:

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/public/story\\_page/064-11035-268-09-39-911-20060927STO11034-2006-25-09-2006/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/public/story_page/064-11035-268-09-39-911-20060927STO11034-2006-25-09-2006/default_en.htm)

## ■ Direktiva o nepoštenih poslovnih praksah

12. decembra so v EU pričela veljati nova pravila proti zavajajočemu oglaševanju. V prepoved so vključene tudi agresivne prodajne strategije, lažne »brezplačne« ponudbe, nagovarjanje otrok k nakupom preko interneta, oglaševanje z vabo do piramidnih shem, lažnih trditvev o zdravilnih učinkih, idr.

Sestavni del Direktive so:

- Splošna klavzula s širokim obsegom uporabe, ki opredeljuje nepoštene ter zato prepovedane prakse.
- Podrobno opisane zavajajoče in agresivne prakse.
- Zaščitni ukrepi za potrošnike.
- Podrobna črna lista praks, ki so prepovedane v vseh okoliščinah.

Direktiva je bila uvedena z namenom povečanja zaupanja potrošnikov in podjetij v enotni evropski trg.

Direktivo bodo morale v svoje nacionalne zakonodaje prenesti vse države članice.

Podrobnejše informacije:

[http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/rights/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/rights/index_en.htm)

in

[http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/cons\\_int/safe\\_shop/fair\\_bus\\_pract/ucp\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/cons_int/safe_shop/fair_bus_pract/ucp_en.pdf)

Sporočilo komisije:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1915&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

## 4. GOSPODARSKE NOVICE

### ■ Nova merila za obrambno industrijo

Evropska komisija je 5. decembra predstavila paket iniciativ, ki bodo povezale evropski "obrambni trg" in različne nacionalne politike z namenom spodbuditi inovativnosti in konkurenčnost tudi na tem trgu.

T.i. obrambni paket vsebuje tri elemente:

1. komunikacijo s priporočili za večjo konkurenčnost na tem trgu;
2. direktivo o javnih naročilih na področju obrambe, ki naj bi spodbudila odprtost in konkuriranje na notranjem evropskem trgu;
3. direktivo o notranjem prenosu proizvodov, povezanih z obrambo, ki naj bi olajšala postopke za izdajo dovoljenj za trgovanje.

Več o tem:

[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemlongdetail.cfm?item\\_id=1154](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemlongdetail.cfm?item_id=1154)

in

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1860&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Javna naročila v obrambi:

[http://ec.europa.eu/internal\\_market/publicprocurement/dpp\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/publicprocurement/dpp_en.htm)

Prenos proizvodov:

[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/regulation/inst\\_sp/defense\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/regulation/inst_sp/defense_en.htm)

### ■ Prestrukturiranje malih in srednjih podjetij

Mala in srednja podjetja (MSP) so, enako kot velika, podvržena spremembam, globalizaciji, uvajanju novih tehnologij ter posodabljanju znanja. Konec novembra je tako Evropska komisija odprla forum za prestrukturiranje, z novo temo: privajanje MSP na spremembe.

V okviru foruma so bile predstavljene dobre praksa reagiranja in privajanja MSP na spremembe; posebej so bila izpostavljena naslednja področja:

- pričakovanje in spremljanje sprememb v sektorju MSP;
- podpora MSP v pripravah na spremembe in upravljanja prestrukturiranja;
- izboljšanje sposobnosti, kompetenc in dostopa do usposabljanj v MSP;
- podpiranje MSP s strani velikih podjetij;
- aktivna vloga javnih institucij pri podpori MSP v procesu prestrukturiranja.

Posamezne predstavitve so objavljene na spletni strani Forumu.

Več o tem:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1763&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>  
in  
[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/restructuring/forum\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/restructuring/forum_en.htm)

### ■ Mobilnost v zaposlovanju

Evropska komisija je predstavila nov akcijski načrt za promocijo mobilnosti v zaposlovanju; njegov namen pa je odprava še obstoječih ovir, ki preprečujejo posameznikom, da bi iskali zaposlitev v drugi državi, članici EU. Trenutna mobilnost je nizka – znaša zgolj 2%.

Akcijski načrt zajema 15 aktivnosti za spodbujanje mobilnosti, ki pokrivajo 4 glavna področja. Ta so:

- Izboljšanje obstoječe zakonodaje in administrativnih postopkov s

- področja socialne varnosti in prenosljivosti nadomestnih pokojnin;
- Zagotavljanje politične podpore na vseh nivojih, mednje spada tudi podpora implementaciji Evropskega kvalifikacijskega okvira;
- Okrepitev storitev EURES (Evropski portal za zaposlovanje) in portala kot »Vse na enem mestu« za mobilnost pri zaposlovanju;
- izboljšanje storitev portala za težko zaposljive skupine;
- Izboljšati zavedanje o možnostih in priložnostih, ki jih ponuja mobilnost pri iskanju zaposlitve.

Več o tem:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1879&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Portal EURES: <http://eures.europa.eu>

### ■ Sodobni enotni trg EU

Evropski skupni trg prinaša veliko prednosti; zmanjšanje cen, ustvarjanje inovativnih podjetij, velika izbira za potrošnike in zanimivost EU trga za investitorje idr.

Evropska komisija si želi več. Tako je konec novembra predstavila paket spodbud za modernizacijo skupnega evropskega trga, med njimi posebej izpostavlja:

- Spodbujanje potrošnikov, da uveljavljajo svoje pogodbene pravice, predvsem do povračil oz. odškodnin;
- Izboljšanje dostopa do informacij za potrošnike in MSP;
- Uvedbo »potnega lista za raziskovalce«;
- Razjasnitev pravil opravljanja storitev na skupnem trgu;
- Promocijo kvalitete socialnih storitev v EU, idr.

Izboljšan enotni trg bo prispeval k večji konkurenčnosti evropskega gospodarstva.

Več o tem:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/07/475&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

in  
[http://ec.europa.eu/citizens\\_agenda/](http://ec.europa.eu/citizens_agenda/)

## 5. FINANČNE STORITVE

### ■ Direktiva o plačilnih storitvah

Pred kratkim je bila sprejeta Direktiva o plačilnih storitvah, katere namen je poenostaviti finančne, kreditne, debetne transferje na enotnem EU trgu, odpraviti pravne ovire in omogočiti oblikovanje »enotnega plačilnega območja«.

Cilj direktive je, da postanejo prekomejni finančni transferji tako enostavni, hitri, varni in poceni, kot to velja za plačila znotraj ene države. S tem bo zagotovljen pravičen in neoviran dostop do plačilnih trgov, ugodnejše bančne storitve in povečano varstvo potrošnikov.

Direktivo morajo države članice vključiti v svoje nacionalne politike najkasneje do 1. novembra 2009.

Več o tem:

[http://ec.europa.eu/internal\\_market/payment\\_s/framework/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/payment_s/framework/index_en.htm)

Sporočilo komisije:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1914&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

### ■ Neposredno obdavčenje:

Evropska komisija je v decembru objavila povabilo članicam EU, da izvedejo pregled stanja pravil, ki na nacionalni ravni onemogočajo zlorabo davkov. Nacionalne zakonodaje morajo biti usklajene s pravnim redom EU in v ravnovesju med preprečevanjem zlorab ter prekomernimi administrativnimi zahtevami.

V ta namen želi Komisija spodbuditi sodelovanje in konstruktivno razpravo med državam članicami, v predstavitve dobrih praks usklajevanja in iskanja ravnovesja.

Več o tem:

<http://www.europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1878&format=HT>

<ML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Pogosta vprašanja in odgovori:

<http://www.europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/07/558&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

### ■ Davek na dodano vrednost v finančnih in zavarovalnih storitvah: prenova zakonodaje

Evropska komisija je konec novembra sprejela predlog direktive, katere namen je modernizacija in poenostavitev kompleksnih pravil, povezanih z DDV, predvsem na področju finančnih in zavarovalnih storitev.

Predlog direktive zasleduje cilje, kot so npr. povečati pravno varnost vseh vključenih – od poslovnih subjektov do nacionalnih davčnih uradov; zmanjšati administrativne ovire in pravilno obračunavanje DDV. Aktivnosti, s katerimi želi Komisija cilje doseči, pa so:

- Pregled storitev, za katere ni potrebno obračunati DDV;
- Omogočiti podjetjem iz bančnega in zavarovalnega sektorja izbiro, ali bodo za opravljene storitve zaračunala DDV ali ne;
- Uvedba posebne izjeme glede obračunavanja DDV za dogovore o deljenju stroškov.

Več o tem:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1782&format=HTML&aged=0&language=en&guiLanguage=en>  
in  
[http://europa.eu.int/comm/taxation\\_customs/common/consultations/tax/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/taxation_customs/common/consultations/tax/index_en.htm)

### ■ Investicije EBRD, Evropske banke za razvoj

V zadnjem mesecu je Evropska banka za razvoj investirala sredstva v različna področja, med njimi ustanovitev banke za podjetnike v Belorusiji, v makedonsko proizvodno podjetje za zdravo prehrano, v kmetijski sektor v Tadžikistanu, v podporno okolje za MSP v Kirgistanu, v kosovski mikrofinančni sektor idr. Več o tem: [www.ebrd.com](http://www.ebrd.com)



## 6. REGIONALNA POLITIKA

### ■ Srečanje EU-Afrika

V začetku decembra je potekalo srečanje med poslanci EU parlamenta in predstavniki panafriškega parlamenta na temo skupne strategije in prihodnosti odnosov med obema regijama.

V prihodnjem letu bo prednost namenjena demokraciji, miru, varnosti, človekovim pravicam, odpravi revščine, ekonomskemu in razvojnemu sodelovanju, varovanju okolja, energiji, znanosti, informacijski družbi, zaposlovanju, izobraževanju, idr.

Parlamentarci so prepričani, da lahko zgoraj omenjene aktivnosti pospešimo z razvojem, povečanimi vložki v človekovo zdravje in z izobrazbo.

Več o tem:

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/public/story\\_page/030-14207-341-12-49-903-20071130STO14197-2007-07-12-2007/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/public/story_page/030-14207-341-12-49-903-20071130STO14197-2007-07-12-2007/default_en.htm)

### ■ Normativni okviri za črpanje EU sredstev

Nadzorni odbor za OP krepitev regionalni razvojnih potencialov, razvoja okoljske in prometne infrastrukture je v decembru potrdil merila za izbor projektov iz ESR (Evropski sklad za regionalni razvoj) in kohezijskega sklada.

**Cilj OP regionalni razvojni potenciali:** inovativna, dinamična, razvojno naravnana in odprta Slovenija s konkurenčnim in na znanju temelječim gospodarstvom

**Proračun:** 1.71 milijarde €

**Cilj OP razvoj okoljske in prometne infrastrukture:** infrastruktura, povezana s spodbujanjem gospodarskega razvoja, novimi delovnimi mesti, trajnostnim razvojem ter visoko kakovostjo življenja.

**Proračun:** 1.64 milijarde €

S tem so postavljeni vsi pomembnejši normativi, pomembni za črpanje EU sredstev v obdobju 2007-2013.

### ■ Solidarnostni sklad – sredstva za Veliko Britanijo

Evropska komisija bo Veliki Britaniji odobrila sredstva iz Evropskega solidarnostnega sklada v višini 162,4 milijona €. Junjsko-julijske poplave so namreč močno prizadele regije v Angliji, Severni Irski in v Walesu.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1885&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Evropski solidarnostni sklad:  
[http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional\\_policy/funds/solidar/solid\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/funds/solidar/solid_en.htm)

## 7. TRANSPORT IN ENERGETIKA

### ● Biogorivo: nezadostna rešitev pri varovanju okolja?

Strokovnjaki s področja varovanja okolja so pripravili poročilo o vplivu biogoriv na okolje (poročilo sta izdala "World Conservation Union" in Svetovna banka).

Rezultati so nakazali, da biogorivo ni zadovoljiva rešitev za zmanjšanje emisij CO<sub>2</sub>; na lestvici primernosti okolju se je namreč biogorivo znašlo na samem dnu. Večji potencial za zmanjševanje emisij CO<sub>2</sub> imajo solarna, vetrna energija, energija, pridobljena iz biogoriv in jedrska energija.

Več o tem:

<http://www.euractiv.com/en/transport/biofuel-s-viable-solution-climate-survey-reveals/article-169035>

Poročilo (IUCN):  
[http://www.iucn.org/en/news/archive/2007/12/10\\_climate\\_change\\_survey.pdf](http://www.iucn.org/en/news/archive/2007/12/10_climate_change_survey.pdf)

### ● Velika Britanija prisega na priobalno vetrno energijo

Velika Britanija je 10. decembra v Berlinu napovedala izgradnjo vetrnih elektrarn s kapaciteto 33 GW moči. Investicija naj bi bila

dokončana do leta 2020 in je posledica zaveze o izkoriščanju 20% obnovljivih virov energije do leta 2020.

Kapaciteta vetrnih elektrarn, če bodo izgrajene, naj bi zadostovala za oskrbo vseh britanskih gospodinjstev.

Napoved je bila v širši javnosti sprejeta s skepso, zavoljo velikega obsega projekta in potrebnih investicij.

Več o tem:

<http://www.euractiv.com/en/energy/uk-looks-lead-offshore-wind-power/article-169012>  
in  
<http://www.gnn.gov.uk/environment/fullDetail.asp?ReleaseID=337237&NewsAreaID=2&NavigatedFromDepartment=True>

Obnovljivi viri energije:

[http://ec.europa.eu/energy/res/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/energy/res/index_en.htm)

### ● **Fotovoltaika: rezultati projekta PV-LIGHT**

Generalni direktorat za energijo je na svojih spletnih straneh objavil rezultate projekta PV-LIGHT, ki se je ukvarjal z reševanje težav pri pridobivanju sončne energije: statični solarni kolektorji; pregrevanje stavb, zagotavljanje zadostne količine dnevne svetlobe, pridobivanje energije iz vgrajenih celic, izgradnja in testiranje lahkih PV solarnih kontrolnih sistemov.

Poročilo o projektu:

[http://ec.europa.eu/energy/res/sectors/doc/p\\_hotovoltaic/pv\\_light\\_publishable\\_final\\_report.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/energy/res/sectors/doc/p_hotovoltaic/pv_light_publishable_final_report.pdf)

### ● **Geotermalni barometer**

Generalni direktorat za energijo je objavil poročilo o trenutnem stanju geotermalne energije v EU.

Priložnosti, ki jih kaže ta alternativni vir energije, ni zanemarljiv. V svetu, predvsem v ZDA, Filipinih, Indoneziji, Mehiki in Islandiji, poznan že vrsto let. V Evropi je trenutno instaliranih 854.5 MW, ki že uspešno proizvajajo električno energijo ter zaposlujejo približno 25.000 ljudi.

Poročilo:

[http://www.energies-renouvelables.org/observ-er/stat\\_baro/observ/baro181.pdf](http://www.energies-renouvelables.org/observ-er/stat_baro/observ/baro181.pdf)

### ● **Strateški načrt za energetske tehnologije**

Evropska komisija je konec novembra predlagala načrt za pospešen razvoj energetskih tehnologij z nizko vsebnostjo CO<sub>2</sub>.

Za hitrejšo uvajanje sprememb na področju energetskih tehnologij, bo EU morala sprejeti vrsto ukrepov na področju energetske učinkovitosti, standardov, podpornih mehanizmov in na področju trgovanja z emisijami CO<sub>2</sub>.

V ta sklop ukrepov spada tudi zniževanje stroškov za čisto energijo in podpora zeleni industriji; sodelovanje na ravni Evrope ter izkoriščanje razvojnega in inovativnega potenciala.

Več o tem:

[http://ec.europa.eu/energy/res/setplan/communication\\_2007\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/energy/res/setplan/communication_2007_en.htm)  
in  
<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1750&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

## **8. EKOLOGIJA IN TRAJNOSTNI RAZVOJ**

### ● **Inovativno upravljanje z odpadki**

Generalni direktorat za okolje pri EK je na svojih spletnih straneh objavil brošuro "inovativno upravljanje z odpadki".

Publikacija analizira doprinos, ki jih je povzročil program "LIFE" k spreminjanju pogleda na odpadke.

20 izbranih projektov, ki so bili v preteklosti sofinancirani iz omenjenega programa, predstavljajo dobro prakso uporabljanja, recikliranja in koristi, ki jih podjetja lahko dobijo iz odpadkov.

Publikacija Innovative waste management:  
<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/publications/lifepublications/lifefocus/documents/recycling.pdf>

### ● **Poročilo: EU na poti do Kjota**

Poročilo o napredku EU pri zmanjševanju emisij toplogrednih plinov kaže, da je Evropa na dobri poti k doseganju ciljev Kjotskega sporazuma, vendar pa naša prizadevanja še niso zaključena. Nekatere države so že uspele zmanjšati emisije za 7% glede na leto 1990.

Med uspešne ukrepe spadajo npr: načrtno pogozdovanje (za absorpcijo CO<sub>2</sub>) in obnova gozdov, vključitev letalstva v ETS EU; zahteva po zmanjšanju emisij toplogrednih plinov iz transportnih goriv ter zmanjšanje kuponov za trgovanje s toplogrednimi plini.

Sporočilo komisije:  
<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1774&format=HTML&aged=0&language=SL&guiLanguage=en>

### ● **Bali: konferenca o podnebnih spremembah**

Obveznosti do okolja in doseganja ciljev Kjotskega sporazuma zadevajo ves svet. Kljub temu, da je EU na dobri poti, je potreben svetovni sporazum o podnebnih spremembah po letu 2012, časovnih okvirih in glavnih elementih, so končno vendar zaključili v okviru mednarodne konference o podnebnih spremembah.

Poseben poudarek gre pospeševanju svetovnih prizadevanj za omejevanje in zniževanje emisij toplogrednih plinov, omejevanju globalnega segrevanja, razvoju novih tehnologij z nizko vsebnostjo CO<sub>2</sub>, zmanjševanju emisij v mednarodnem letalskem in pomorskem prometu.

Več o tem:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/climat/home\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/climat/home_en.htm)  
in  
<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1773&format=HTML&aged=0&language=en&guiLanguage=en>

### ● **Direktiva o obvladovanju poplavne ogroženosti**

Konec novembra je pričela veljati nova direktiva o obvladovanju poplavne ogroženosti, ki predpisuje čezmejna

pogajanja glede obvladovanja poplavne ogroženosti, večanja preglednosti stanja in vključevanja državljanov v vseh tipih poplav (morska, rečna, jezerska, poplave, ki so posledica neurij ali cunamijev)

Direktiva predpisuje naslednje aktivnosti, ki morajo biti izvedene do leta 2013:

- opredelitev povodij in obalnih območij, na katerih obstaja poplavna ogroženost;
- oblikovanje kart poplavne nevarnosti in poplavne ogroženosti v posamezni državi (definiranje področij z visoko, srednjo in nizko stopnjo ogroženosti);
- načrt za obvladovanje ogroženosti in prepoved ukrepov, ki bi lahko nevarnosti prenašali navzgor ali navzdol po vodnem toku.

Več o tem:

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/flood\\_risk/index.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/flood_risk/index.htm)  
in

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1766&format=HTML&aged=0&language=SL&guiLanguage=en>

## 9. FARMACIJA IN ZDRAVSTVO

### ■ **Javni posvet o redkih boleznih**

Evropska komisija želi oblikovati akcijski načrt za področje redkih bolezni, za katerimi zbolijo ljudje. Prioritetna področja so: hitro in kvalitetno diagnosticiranje, zdravljenje in dostop do informacij o redkih boleznih.

Akcijski plan naj bi bil osnovan na treh stebrih:

1. Krepitev sodelovanja med EU programi;
2. Spodbude državam članicam za oblikovanje nacionalnih zdravstvenih strategij;
3. Sodelovanje držav članic pri razvoju skupnih smernic zdravstvene strategije.

K sodelovanju pri javnem posvetovanju so vabljeni vsi zainteresirani posamezniki, institucije in podjetja.

Posvetovanje je odprto do 14. februarja 2008.

Več o tem:

[http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph\\_threats/non\\_c om/cons\\_rare\\_dis\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_threats/non_c om/cons_rare_dis_en.htm)

Javno posvetovanje:

[http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph\\_threats/non\\_c om/docs/raredis\\_comm\\_draft.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_threats/non_c om/docs/raredis_comm_draft.pdf)

### ■ Znanstvena skupina v okviru EU Foruma za alkohol in zdravje

Junija letošnjega leta je bil ustanovljen Forum za alkohol in zdravje.

V ustanovni listini foruma je predvidena tudi ustanovitev znanstvene skupine, katere namen je:

- članom Foruma zagotavljati strokovne usmeritve;
- zagotavljati usmeritve za nadzor in ocenjevanje aktivnosti, ki bi lahko zmanjšale škodljive posledice alkohola;
- zagotavljati poglobljene analize.

Za zainteresirani posamezniki lahko svoj interes izrazijo preko spletne strani:

[http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph\\_determinants/like\\_style/酒精/Forum/酒精\\_science\\_group\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/like_style/酒精/Forum/酒精_science_group_en.htm)

Rok za prijavo je 31. januar 2008-

Ustanovitvena listina Foruma:

[http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph\\_determinants/like\\_style/酒精/Forum/docs/酒精\\_call\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/like_style/酒精/Forum/docs/酒精_call_en.pdf)

### ■ Odobrena sredstva za boj proti živalskim boleznim

Evropska komisija je namenila finančna sredstva v višini dobrih 186 milijonov € (v letu 2008) za program, namenjen izkoreninjenju in nadzoru živalskih bolezni, kot so npr. steklina, salmonela, ptičja gripa idr. Razlogi za tovrstno podporo se vezani za zaščito živali in javnega zdravja.

Več o tem;

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1828&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN>

## 10. RR IN INOVACIJE

### 🌐 Javno-zasebne raziskovalne iniciative

Evropski parlament je podprl predlog Komisije za lansiranje prvega vseevropskega javno-zasebnega raziskovalnega partnerstva. T.i. Skupne tehnološke pobude (JTI – Joint technology initiatives) bodo povezale sredstva industrije, držav članic in Komisije v usmerjene raziskovalne programe. Prvi štirje, potrjeni s strani Parlamenta, so: miniaturne tehnologije (ENIAC), nevidni računalniki (ARTEMIS), inovativna medicina (INNOVATIVE MEDICINE) in zeleno letalstvo (CLEAN SKY).

Skupne tehnološke pobude bodo tako lahko začele v letu 2008.

Več o tem:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1896&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Vgrajeni sistemi:

<http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ict/esd/>

Nanoelektronika:

<http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ict/nanoelectronics>

Aeronavtika:

[http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/cooperation/transport\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/cooperation/transport_en.html)

Zdravje:

[http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/cooperation/health\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/cooperation/health_en.html)

## **Novi razpisi v 7. okvirnem programu**

Evropska komisija je konec novembra objavila nov sklop razpisov v 7. okvirnem programu. Vrednost tokratnega paketa je 1.75 milijarde €, sredstva pa so namenjena raziskavam na področjih varstva okolja, zdravja, vpliva rabe energije na okolje, boja proti debelosti, čiste proizvodnje ter biogoriv z nizko vsebnostjo CO2.

Sredstva pa so namenjena tudi za mednarodno izmenjavo raziskovalcev, kjer lahko sodelujejo tudi nekatere tretje države, med njimi Rusija (področje energije) in Indija (področje materialov).

Več o tem:  
<http://cordis.europa.eu/en/home.html>

Sporočilo komisije:  
<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1821&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

## **Mreženje med EU in Japonskimi raziskovalci**

Evropska komisija je predlagala oblikovanje mreže za sodelovanje med raziskovalci iz EU in Japonske; orodje je poimenovano ERA-LINK/Japan. Mreža bo zagotavljala informacije o raziskovalnih priložnostih in virih financiranja in možnostih za raziskovalno sodelovanje.

Mreža bo predvidoma zaživela v prvi polovici leta 2008.

Več o tem:  
<http://www.deljpn.ec.europa.eu/ERA-Link.in>  
<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1806&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

## **11. KMETIJSTVO**

### **Vinska reforma – premiki na področju dodajanja saharoze**

Kmetijski ministri EU so v zadnjem tednu novembra dosegli napredek pri pogajanjih z Evropsko komisijo glede vinske reforme.

Evropska komisija je pristala na dodajanja saharoze vinu, vendar le pod posebnimi pogoji; semkaj spadajo npr. slabe letine z nižjo vsebnostjo sladkorja v grozdju. Bo pa količina dodanega sladkorja nižja od trenutno dovoljene.

Ministri so dosegli dogovor tudi glede geografskih označb vin, označb sadnega vina, vključitev vinogradov v sheme neposrednih plačil idr.

Več o tem:  
[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/agricult/97269.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/agricult/97269.pdf)

### **Začasna ukinitve uvoznih dajatev za žitarice potrjena**

Kmetijski ministri so na zasedanju koncem novembra sprejeli začasno ukinitve uvoznih dajatev za žitarice (pšenica, ječmen, kuzuza, sirk) za trenutno tržno leto 2007/2008.

Ukrep je bil sprejet z namenom urejanja trga in zmanjševanja cen žitaric, ki so se v letošnjem letu dvignile za približno 30%.

Več o tem:  
<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1768&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

### **Razvoj podeželja: novi razpisi**

Slovensko Ministrstvo za kmetijstvo je objavilo dva nova razpisa:

1. Ukrep dodajanja vrednosti kmetijskim in gozdarskim proizvodom (proračun: 7,9 mio €);
2. diverzifikacija v nekmetijske dejavnosti (proračun 6,5 mio €).

Sredstva iz obeh razpisov so namenjena pravnim in fizičnim osebam, registriranim za opravljanje živilsko-predelovalne dejavnosti, nosilcem dopolnilnih dejavnosti, planinam v zasebni lasti (registrirane za predelavo mleka) ter kmetijam (registriranim za pridelavo vina oz. oljčnega olja).

Višina sofinanciranja s strani Ministrstva je odvisna od velikosti podjetja in hkrati največ 50% celotne vrednosti projekta.

Več o razpisih:

[http://www.mkgp.gov.si/si/javni\\_razpisi/](http://www.mkgp.gov.si/si/javni_razpisi/)

### **Podpora za promocijo perutnine**

Evropska komisija bo finančno podprla 18 programov za promocijo kmetijskih izdelkov v tretjih državah. Med njimi je tudi slovenski projekt, ki ga je prijavilo gospodarsko interesno združenje Meso, cilj le-tega pa je promocija kakovostnega perutninskega mesa in izdelkov.

EU podpira promocijo kmetijskih izdelkov v tretjih državah s sofinanciranjem aktivnosti, kot so npr. informiranje o izdelkih, promocijske aktivnosti, v katerih je poudarjena kakovost izdelkov, higiena, ustrezno označevanje, varnost prehrane ter dobro počutje živali.

Države morajo svoje predloge projektov poslati vsako leto do 30. junija.

Več o tem:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1877&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

### **Posvet o kmetijski politiki EU**

Komisarka za kmetijstvo in razvoj podeželja je odprla spletno stran, preko katere poziva vse zainteresirane posameznike, da podajo svoje predloge, stališča in komentarje o prihodnosti evropske kmetijske politike, tržnih priložnostih, trajnostnemu gospodarjenju, zaščite biološke raznolikosti ter energetskih virov.

Sporočilo komisije:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1720&format=HTML&aged=0&language=SL&guiLanguage=en>  
in

[http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/healthcheck/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/healthcheck/index_en.htm)

e-razprava:

<http://blogs.ec.europa.eu/fischer-boel/>

### **Povračila za izvoz svinjskega mesa**

Evropska komisarka za kmetijstvo in razvoj podeželja je konec novembra predstavila namero, da vzpostavi sistem povračil za izvoz svinjskega mesa.

Ukrep predstavlja odgovor na visoke cene krme in padca dolarja, kar je povzročilo nekonkurenčnost evropskih mesno-predelovalnih podjetij, posebno na trgih ZDA, Kanade in Brazilije.

Več o tem:

<http://www.europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1765&type=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

### **Povečanje mlečnih kvot**

Evropska komisija je 12. decembra predlagala povečanje mlečnih kvot zavoljo večjega povpraševanja na evropskem in svetovnem trgu. Mlečne kvote naj bi se povečale za 2% (2,84 milijona ton) in sicer s 1. aprilom 2008.

Več o tem:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1913&format=HTML&aged=0&language=en&guiLanguage=en>

## **12. JUGOVZHODNA EVROPA**

### **Kosovo – še vedno nerešeno vprašanje**

Vprašanje Kosova je zavoljo različnih močnih interesov še vedno oddaljeno od ustrezne in vsesplošne rešitve.

Evropa je razdeljena v tri skupine: države, ki podpirajo neodvisnost Kosova, države, ki neodvisnosti nasprotujejo ter države, ki zagovarjajo strožjo in ostrejšo politiko do Srbije.

Taka razdelitev EU držav predstavlja dodatno težavo, ZDA želijo problem razrešiti čimprej, sprejemajo pa argument, da je treba počakati na rezultat volitev v Srbiji.

Poročilo o Zahodnem Balkanu:

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/gena/97545.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/gena/97545.pdf)

o Kosovu:

<http://www.euractiv.com/en/enlargement/for-foreign-ministers-delay-kosovo-issue/article-169015>

### ● 10 programov predpristopne pomoči za Hrvaško, Makedonijo in Turčijo

Evropska komisija je decembra odobrila 10 operativnih programov v skupni vrednosti 920 milijonov €. Sredstva so namenjena za regionalni razvoj in človeške vire, za obdobje 2007-2009.

Natančneje:

**Hrvaška:** 4 programi (180.7 milijonov €) za regionalni razvoj in konkurenčnost, transport, varovanje okolja in razvoja človeških virov.

**Makedonija:** 2 programa (56.8 milijonov €) za regionalni razvoj (vključno z okoljem in transportom) ter razvoj človeških virov.

**Turčija:** 4 programi (682.7 milijonov €) za regionalni razvoj in konkurenčnost, okolje, transport in razvoj človeških virov.

V kratkem bodo sprejeti tudi prekomejni programi, ki bodo vključevali tudi nekatere države članice EU – Slovenija, Grčija, Italija, Madžarska, Bolgarija in Ciper.

Več o tem:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1875&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

### ● Krepitev evropske sosedске politike (ESP)

Evropska unija predvideva številne ukrepe za krepitev sodelovanja s sosednjimi državami. V letu 2008 bodo aktivnosti namenjene predvsem:

- krepitvi politične zavezanosti za gospodarsko sodelovanje;
- ambiciozni dolgoročni strategiji obvladovanja migracij;
- sodelovanju med državami partnericami ESP pri reševanju konfliktov;
- krepitvi sodelovanja in sektorskih reform na področjih energetike, podnebni sprememb, ribištva, prometa, pomorske politike,

raziskav, informacijske družbe, izobraževanja, zaposlovanja in socialne politike;

- vzpostavitvi Sklada za spodbujanje naložb v sosedstvo, v katerega bo Komisija do konca leta 2007 vložila 50 milijonov €; pričakovane pa so investicije tudi nekaterih držav članic EU;
- nadaljevanju sodelovanja v okviru sinergije Črnega morja;
- sodelovanju na področju raziskav in razvoja, osnovanih na podpisanih protokolih o razvojnem sodelovanju (Izrael, Maroko, Ukrajina), idr.

Več o tem:

[http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/index_en.htm)  
in  
<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1843&format=HTML&aged=0&language=en&guiLanguage=en>

## 13. NAJAVE DOGODKOV



Digital Libraries and Technology-enhanced Learning

Luksemburg, 17. – 18. december 2007

[http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ict/telearn-digicult/call3-infodays\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ict/telearn-digicult/call3-infodays_en.html)



World Entrepreneurship Summit

London, 10. – 11. januar 2008

<http://www.wes08.net/content.php?11~About+wes08>



The Added Value of Diversity for Regions and Municipalities: Current Challenges of Immigration Policy

Barcelona, 28. januar – 1. februar 2008

<http://www.eipa.eu/en/activities/show/&tid=2383>



Managerenergy Annual Conference 2008


Bruselj, 28. januar – 1. februar 2008

[http://www.managerenergy.net/events\\_me.html#2008](http://www.managerenergy.net/events_me.html#2008)




4th Annual European Climate Change Conference 2008


Bruselj, 29. – 30. januar 2008  
<http://www.climate-policy.eu/>

 International Conference on Waste Management and Climate Change


London, 31. januar- 1.februar 2008  
[http://www.euractiv.com/25/images/London\\_Call%20for%20papers\\_tcm25-166167.pdf](http://www.euractiv.com/25/images/London_Call%20for%20papers_tcm25-166167.pdf)

 Recent Developments in European Policies and Programmes


Bruselj, 1. februar 2008  
<http://www.aca-secretariat.be/08events/Seminars/Seminars%202008/whatsnew2008.htm>

 How to Develop a Convincing Project Strategy for EU Funding: DO's and Don'ts for Local and Regional Actors


Barcelona, 4. – 6. februar 2008  
<http://www.eipa.eu/en/activities/show/&tid=2384>

 The Sixth Banking Forum


Athens, 7. februar 2008  
[http://www.economistconferences.com/Rountable/Public/con\\_common.asp?rtid=1221&tRegion=4&area=1](http://www.economistconferences.com/Rountable/Public/con_common.asp?rtid=1221&tRegion=4&area=1)

 4th Forum Meeting »Partnerships for Skills and Competitiveness«


Dunaj, 18. – 19. februar 2008  
[http://www.oecd.org/document/62/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_201185\\_39651966\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/62/0,3343,en_2649_201185_39651966_1_1_1_1,00.html)

 Greening the Economy: New Energy for Business

Bruselj, 21. – 22. februar 2008  
[www.ebsummit.eu](http://www.ebsummit.eu)

 4th Annual Brussels Climate Change Conference: EU Climate Change after Bali


Bruselj, 26. – 27. februar 2008  
<http://www.climate-policy.eu/>

 INTED 2008 (International Technology, Education and Development Conference)


Valencia, 3. – 5. marec 2008  
[www.iated.org/inted2008](http://www.iated.org/inted2008)

 Nanotec 2008


Benetke, 10. – 13. marec 2008  
<http://www.nanotec2008.it/Homeeng/Homeeng.html>

 World Biofuels Markets Congress

Bruselj, 12. – 14. marec 2008  
<http://www.worldbiofuelsmarkets.com/>

 Project Cycle Management: a Technical Guide


Maastricht, 12. – 14. marec 2008  
<http://www.eipa.nl/en/activities/calendar/&tid=3>

 The European Energy Policy: Renewable Energies and Energy Efficiency – How to reach the Targets


Maastricht, 17. – 18. marec 2008  
<http://www.eipa.nl/en/activities/calendar/&tid=4>

 The OECD Global Forum on international Investment »Best Practices in Promoting Investment for Development«

Paris, 27. – 28. marec 2008  
[http://www.oecd.org/document/45/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_201185\\_39395821\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/45/0,3343,en_2649_201185_39395821_1_1_1_1,00.html)

 The European Energy Policy: Renewable Energies and Energy Efficiency – How to reach the Targets

Maastricht, 17. – 18. marec 2008  
<http://www.eipa.nl/en/activities/calendar/&tid=4>

 Update on the Reform of Comitology



Bruselj, 15. maj 2008  
<http://www.eipa.nl/en/activities/calendar/&tid=5>



Higher Education and Research:  
Addressing Local and Global Needs

Utrecht, 15.- 18. juli 2008  
<http://www.unesco.org/iau/conferences/Utrecht/index.html>

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- ❖ The EU Information Handbook 2008, AMCHAM, November 2008  
<http://www.amchameu.be/Pubs/order.htm>
- ❖ The ICT Activity Index 2007, EU Commission, October 2007  
[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/document.cfm?action=display&doc\\_id=568](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/document.cfm?action=display&doc_id=568)
- ❖ State-Building and Regional Cooperation in the Western Balkans: Europe's Engagements Twelve Years after Dayton, Foreign Policy in Dialogue Volume 8 – Issue 23, Deutsche Aussenpolitik, November 2007  
<http://www.deutsche-aussenpolitik.de/newsletter/issue23.pdf>
- ❖ The Treaty of Lisbon: Implementing the Institutional Innovations, Special CEPS Report, November 2007  
[http://shop.ceps.eu/BookDetail.php?item\\_id=1554](http://shop.ceps.eu/BookDetail.php?item_id=1554)
- ❖ Event Review: A Roadmap for the Western Balkans – Using IPA and Other EU Funds to accelerate Convergence and Integration, Elke Dall, See-Science, October 2007  
<http://see-science.eu/news/2376.html>
- ❖ The Annual report on RTD Activities of the EU in 2006, EU Commission, December 2007  
[http://ec.europa.eu/research/reports/2007/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/research/reports/2007/index_en.html)
- ❖ A European Strategy Energy Technology Plan (Set-Plan), COM(2007) 723 final, EU Commission, November 2007  
[http://ec.europa.eu/energy/res/setplan/doc/com\\_2007/com\\_2007\\_0723\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/energy/res/setplan/doc/com_2007/com_2007_0723_en.pdf)
- ❖ Regions delivering innovation through Cohesion Policy, SEC (2007) 1547, EU Commission, November 2007  
[http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/docoffic/working/doc/SEC-2007-1547.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/working/doc/SEC-2007-1547.pdf)
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[http://www.ec.europa.eu/growthandjobs/pdf/nrp2007/SL\\_nrp\\_sl.pdf](http://www.ec.europa.eu/growthandjobs/pdf/nrp2007/SL_nrp_sl.pdf)
- ❖ Innovative Strategies and Actions: Results from 15 years of Experimentation, European Commission November 2007  
[http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/innovation/2007/guide\\_innovation\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/innovation/2007/guide_innovation_en.pdf)
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[http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs\\_282\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_282_en.pdf)
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[http://ec.europa.eu/research/conferences/2007/bcn2007/overview\\_of\\_science\\_reporting\\_eu\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/conferences/2007/bcn2007/overview_of_science_reporting_eu_en.pdf)
- ❖ Financing Innovation conference in Lisbon: Presentations of the participants, October 2007  
<http://www.brandera.eu/iapmei/forum/default.htm#self>
- ❖ The Enlarged European Union, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Euroconfidentiel, November 2007 [christiane.hunt@skynet.be](mailto:christiane.hunt@skynet.be)

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[christiane.hunt@skynet.be](mailto:christiane.hunt@skynet.be)
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[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page?\\_pageid=1073.46587259&\\_dad=portal&\\_schema=PORTAL&p\\_product\\_code=KS-DL-07-004](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page?_pageid=1073.46587259&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&p_product_code=KS-DL-07-004)
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## 15. PRILOGA 1.

### **Europe's defence and its new security strategy by Tomas Valasek**

The European Union is starting work on a new security strategy. France's president, Nicolas Sarkozy, wants it approved in the second half of 2008, during his country's EU presidency. The original 2003 European security strategy (ESS) is generally considered to be a good document, but Sarkozy is right to point out that the world has changed. For example, the 2003 ESS says little about Russia, energy security or climate change - or defence.

The circumstances for rethinking the security strategy are propitious. The EU member-states no longer view foreign policy and defence mainly through the prism of EU-US relations as they did in 2003. America's closest allies have ceased to defend the US as unquestioningly as before, while its critics no longer attack it gratuitously. France is even thinking of rejoining NATO military structures.

The most obvious change to Europe's security environment since 2003 is the return of state-based threats. In particular, Russia's economic and military revival, and its growing resort to aggressive nationalism, have made it a force to be reckoned with. The Arctic's mineral wealth, to which Russia lays claim alongside Canada, Denmark and Norway, is a possible flash point. Norway, Sweden and Finland have begun discussing closer military co-operation, in part to strengthen themselves vis-à-vis Russia. This is not to say that the 2008 ESS should be all about Russia, but it needs to be included as one of the new challenges for European security.

For any kind of military planning and operations with regard to Russia, the Europeans will prefer to act through NATO rather than the EU. But the EU will feel the impact nevertheless. Countries that are not in NATO will seek to work more closely with - and possibly join - the alliance. Countries that are in it are likely to prioritise NATO commitments over EU commitments. This matters because defence budgets are stretched extremely thin. If governments devote more resources to NATO, they will have less available for the EU. The ESS should therefore put far greater emphasis on aligning EU and NATO military requirements. This would help avoid a costly competition for resources - a competition that a resurgent Russia would decide in NATO's favour.

Another major change since 2003 is America's military overstretch. The US' travails in Iraq mean that Europe may have to take care of Kosovo or Bosnia alone. Worse, there is a risk of growing isolationism on the US side. Knowledgeable Americans warn that the US will focus on rebuilding its armed forces at home, rather than deploying them abroad (see Kori Schake's CER essay, 'The US elections and Europe: The coming crisis of high expectations').

The ESS needs to encourage America to stay involved. A massive crisis in Kosovo or Bosnia could be more than Europeans can handle alone (not to mention a conflict involving Russia). One useful way to keep the US engaged in Europe would be for both sides to work jointly on new strategies for counter-terrorism and for post-conflict reconstruction. Both those tasks are turning out to be vastly more difficult and expensive than originally thought.

Ultimately, the best way for Europeans to keep America engaged, and to handle problems close to home, is to increase Europe's military strength. But in recent years the EU has placed too much emphasis on the non-military side of security, as opposed to hard power; and on military reform, rather than larger defence budgets. Yes, the EU's strength lies in its ability to deploy judges or policemen to

post-conflict zones. However, those civilians need reasonably secure conditions to work. And this task more often than not requires a military presence on the ground. On current trends, the EU member-states are unlikely to have enough soldiers to fulfil the likely demand.

Defence budgets continue to contract across the continent, with a few exceptions. In the meantime, the cost of new military equipment is rising at 8 per cent a year, according to some estimates. To make things worse, Iraq and Afghanistan are sapping European defence budgets and ruining existing hardware. As a result, NATO's rapid-reaction forces are only 75 per cent full. Since many countries earmark the same troops for both NATO and the EU's battlegroups, the EU may not have sufficient forces to intervene militarily when the situation requires it.

The new ESS should stress the necessity of funding defence. It should adopt NATO's requirement that member-states spend 2 per cent of their GDP on defence, as Sarkozy is said to favour. It should call on politicians to make a greater effort to explain to their publics that the world is dangerous, and that it would be less so if Europeans gave themselves the means to tackle those dangers.

The new ESS should encourage NATO and the EU to work together as complementary organisations, not rivals. For all kinds of complex and silly reasons, the two bureaucracies seldom talk. This damages both, and weakens Europe's ability to project power. In particular, the 2008 ESS needs to address the problem of co-ordinating the work of civilian experts and militaries in conflict areas. This is a tricky task, especially if done on a battlefield. The new ESS should therefore call on the EU and NATO to start working together at the planning stage of an operation, on the assumption that they may both become involved. They will need to harmonise procedures. This will be a difficult process because different and deeply entrenched institutional cultures are involved. But it is absolutely necessary, if Europe is going to tackle the wide range of threats that it faces, with such limited military resources.

The last ESS served a useful role in trying to forge a common strategic culture in the EU. The new one needs to carry on this work, encouraging European politicians - and the publics they represent - to take security threats more seriously, and to understand the need for strong defence.

**Tomas Valasek is director of foreign policy & defence at the CER.**

## **PRILOGA 2.**

A Friends of Europe Background Report

### **Balkans crossroads The Policy Challenges Ahead”**

Organised by *Friends of Europe*, the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung,  
the Constantinos Karamanlis Institute for Democracy and Gallup Europe

*Europe’s World* and *EUobserver.com*

**By Elitsa Vucheva, *EUobserver.com***

#### **Executive Summary**

The prospect of EU membership was offered to the Western Balkan countries during a meeting of EU leaders in Santa Maria da Feira (Portugal) in June 2000. The subsequent conclusion of the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) in November 2000 in Zagreb as “the route to a progressively closer relationship with the EU” reaffirmed “a long-term [EU] commitment to the region both in terms of political effort and financial and human resources”<sup>1</sup>. Today, while the region’s EU perspective is not in doubt, some questions do remain concerning its future, and a number of important challenges lie ahead, including “the Kosovo status process, Serbia’s democratic development and state-building in Bosnia and Herzegovina”<sup>2</sup>.

This report aims to present the current political and economic situation in the Balkans while at the same time highlighting the unresolved issues there. While EU engagement in the region came relatively late, it is now very pronounced, both economically through the different funding and aid programmes, and politically with the criteria required in order for the Western Balkans to be allowed closer EU ties.

The EU is today the Balkans’ most important trade partner, while intra-regional trade is not yet strongly developed. Yet the Western Balkans are still failing to attract satisfactory levels of foreign direct investment, and while all the countries have reached a certain level of economic growth, unemployment is still an important problem in the region and the so-called grey sector of the economy remains very large. Corruption also continues to poison the functioning of the different states. Last but not least, significant political challenges have not been solved – despite considerable progress, Serbia is still not judged as cooperating fully with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), as key war crime suspects remain at large.

The deadlock over Kosovo’s future status is far from being broken, despite the fast approaching UN Security Council meeting on 10 December. While Serbia considers the breakaway province an integral part of its territory and Pristina is holding out for full independence, the international community is, for its part, still divided on the issue. It remains unclear how it would react to possible unilateral proclamation of independence by Kosovo.

Finally, Bosnia and Herzegovina is still failing to introduce important reforms and amend its complex constitutional structure, which “prevents swift decision-making [in the country] and therefore hinders reform and the capacity to make progress towards the EU”.<sup>3</sup> All elements considered, it is difficult to

predict what consequences the outcome of the “Kosovo process” could have on the region as a whole. But it is clear that the EU in particular will have an important role to play in the whole process and will have to overcome its internal divisions and speak with one voice when the time comes.

### **EU engagement in the Western Balkans**

Today the Western Balkans constitute the main part of the EU’s enlargement policy. At the European Council in Santa Maria da Feira in June 2000, EU leaders stated that all countries that are part of the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP), i.e. the Western Balkan countries, are “potential candidates” for EU membership. At the Thessaloniki summit in June 2003, they reiterated this commitment.

The EU has made some political efforts to encourage democratic developments in the region. Since 1991, the European Union has been the largest donor in South East Europe and has committed €6.8 billion to the Western Balkans more particularly through its various assistance programmes in areas such as reconstruction, the building of institutions and the strengthening of democracy. Cooperating with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and handing over wanted war crimes suspects is a condition imposed on the countries concerned in order to let them develop closer ties with the EU.

EU Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn recently expressed hopes that “in 2008 conditions will be fulfilled and thus we will be able to complete SAAs with all countries in the region”<sup>4</sup>.

Indeed, despite the supposed “enlargement fatigue” observed in the EU in the last few years, it is unlikely that the Balkan countries could be left out of the European club, as this would be extremely risky for the region’s stability as well as for the EU.

Europe’s “powder keg” – as the Balkans are sometimes called – has proved to be a region which is characterized by high levels of nationalism and which is very reluctant to compromise on issues considered to touch upon national identities. Leaving the Balkan countries out of the EU would increase the risk of isolation – or “ghettoisation” as some analysts refer to it – and of boosting nationalism, which could eventually lead to renewed hostilities. This is all the more true and visible during the current discussions on the future status of Kosovo.

By contrast, possible EU membership could contribute to smoothing the differences and to calming both internal, inter-ethnic tensions, as well as animosities between the different countries of the region. Pacific coexistence and good neighbourly relations are a key condition for the Balkans to join the EU. In addition, commentators have pointed out that if these countries all become part of the same bloc – namely the EU – the various national questions would eventually cease to matter so much.

According to Marie-Janine Calic, professor for Eastern and South Eastern European History at the Ludwig-Maximilians University in Munich and former political adviser within the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, this approach has borne some fruit as “the prospect of accession has contributed strongly to improving good neighbourly relations and regional cooperation in South East Europe”<sup>5</sup>.

In this light, the planned shift from the international community's Stability Pact for South East Europe, established in 1999 to a Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) run by the Balkan states at the beginning of 2008 has reignited hopes that the region may be moving towards a higher level of self-governance and cooperation.

But according to Hido Bišćević, a senior Croatian diplomat who will head the RCC from February 2008 onwards, the EU still has a big role to play in the Balkans:

*“There are re-emerging reasons for concern [in the region]. They point to the urgency of devising a new, resolute and long-term strategy for the EU and the international community, which should take a firmer lead in managing the processes, moving further from mere conflict prevention and post-conflict resolution to the designing of a visionary and durable future security and stability landscape”*<sup>6</sup>.

### **Challenges towards EU Membership**

The Western Balkans have reached a level of relative political stability and have advanced in many fields. The Commission sees enlargement as “one of the EU's most powerful policy tools”, serving its “strategic interests in stability, security and conflict prevention”<sup>7</sup>.

The European Commission's most recent report on the progress in these countries praises their efforts and encourages them to continue on their EU path.

Nevertheless, much work remains to be done as the countries of the former Yugoslavia (except for Slovenia which entered the EU in 2004) and Albania are still far from fulfilling all of the criteria required for EU membership. Aside from Croatia, none of them is likely to accede to the bloc in the next five years.

Croatia is currently the most advanced Western Balkan state as regards EU integration. It started accession talks in October 2005 and is hoping to achieve full membership in the near future. So far, negotiations with Zagreb have been opened on fourteen chapters<sup>8</sup> and have been provisionally closed on two chapters (science and research, education and culture).<sup>9</sup>

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was granted candidate country status in December 2005, although it has not yet opened membership negotiations. It is hoping to do so under the Slovenian EU presidency in the first half of 2008, but its most recent progress report notes several shortcomings, in particular political ones, that it still has to overcome.

For instance, due to internal political disputes, the functioning of the Macedonian parliament has been disturbed and there has not been enough dialogue between the party in power and the opposition for a long time, according to the annual commission evaluation report<sup>10</sup>. As a result many laws are still blocked, in particular concerning the reform of the judicial system<sup>11</sup>.

Among the potential Balkan candidates, Albania and Montenegro have signed a Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA), the necessary first step on the road to EU membership.

Albania, which signed its SAA in June 2006, has made some progress as regards democracy and the rule of law, but still has much to do concerning the fight against corruption and the reform of the judiciary, before moving further on its EU path<sup>12</sup>.

Montenegro has achieved a lot after seceding from Serbia in May 2006, notably concerning the process of institution-building. Its SAA was signed in October 2007 and it is hoping to lodge an official application for EU membership in the first half of 2008. But it is still lagging behind in other fields, such as the fight against corruption<sup>13</sup>.

Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina have finalised the technical talks on their respective SAAs. On 7 November 2007, Serbia initialled its SAA, which formally puts Serbia ahead of Bosnia and Herzegovina in terms of their contractual relationship with the EU. Yet before the agreements can be signed, the EU would like to see full cooperation with the ICTY for both, and greater efforts towards political stability for the latter.

In particular, the failure to reach political stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina – illustrated among other things by the difficulty of Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks to agree on a common police force – is proving challenging. Furthermore, the political fragility of Bosnia and Herzegovina is starting to be used by some fractions in Serbia in the “fight” over Kosovo. In October this year, Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica openly linked the two issues saying that “preserving Kosovo and Republika Srpska are now the most important goals of our [Serbian] state and national policy”<sup>14</sup>.

*“South Eastern Europe is today a more stable, economically viable and secure region. Individual countries and the region as a whole still face a number of complex challenges, starting with the issue of defining the future status of Kosovo. However, general progress in democratic standards, macroeconomic stability and the improvement of the security environment imply that the region is ready to take matters into its own hands, including in the field of regional cooperation.”*

**Erhard Busek**, Special Coordinator, Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe

### ***State-building in Bosnia and Herzegovina***

EU engagement in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) represents one of the bloc’s biggest challenges. Inter-ethnic atrocities have taken place in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the Srebrenica massacre (July 1995), and the risk of new outbreaks of violence is not taken lightly.

Furthermore, as a state composed of two entities which often refuse to collaborate on important issues – such as setting up a common police force – it constitutes a major political challenge for the EU, which is trying to make Republika Srpska (comprising primarily Serbs) and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (comprising mainly Bosniaks and Croats) work together towards a final goal of full EU integration.

The constitutional imbroglio caused by the Dayton agreement – signed in 1995 and putting an end to a three-year war – does not make the work any easier, while the presence of a High Representative with the right to intervene in the country’s affairs does not facilitate the so-called “ownership” issues, i.e. the self-government of Bosnia and Herzegovina.



An international conference of the Peace Implementation Council, meeting in Germany in 1997, granted real authority to the High Representative in the form of the so-called "Bonn powers". The "Bonn powers" made it possible for this international community representative to impose legislation and sack officials judged to be obstructing the peace implementation process.

Today, powers in Bosnia and Herzegovina are still shared between state- and entity-level governments. At the entity level, Republika Srpska and the Bosniak-Croat Federation each have their own presidencies and governments – headed by a prime minister, including police and other bodies. At the state level, Bosnia and Herzegovina also has a government and a rotating collective presidency, composed of one representative of each constituent group.

The High Representative still supervises the implementation of the civilian aspects of the peace treaty and has a legal mandate to ensure that the country evolves into a viable democracy on its course towards integration into the Euro-Atlantic institutions.

While Dayton had the indisputable merit of having put an end to a bloody war 12 years ago, it is today being called into question by some analysts who note that the country should move progressively towards a more unified and a more "self-owned" government.

On the other hand, the difficulty in agreeing on the necessary police reform as well as Republika Srpska's opposition to the political reforms proposed by current High Representative Miroslav Lajcak are only two examples of how lengthy negotiations are within BiH. Moreover, the complexity of its governmental structure makes it very hard to pass laws or implement reforms without the consensus of the three ethnic groups.

While Republika Srpska's leaders have said they are "not interested" in proclaiming independence even if Kosovo does so<sup>15</sup>, they insist that the changes to the voting system in the country's council of ministers and parliament, imposed by Mr Lajcak, have prompted a genuine internal political crisis. Reducing the number of votes needed to pass a law from two, as it is now, to one per constituent group – Bosniaks, Serbs or Croats – would make it very easy for one entity within BiH to outvote another, which would be unacceptable and dangerous in a multi-ethnic society such as that of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska argues<sup>16</sup>. The government of Republika Srpska is still hoping that another solution can be found and is not ready to agree on the reform as it is.

All facts considered, despite the increasing domestic pressure, in particular from Republika Srpska, for the closure of the Office of the High Representative, it is hard to predict when this will occur – something which would be related to positive developments in BiH.

**Table 1 – The Western Balkans' EU integration process**

	<b>Independent from Yugoslavia</b>	<b>SAA</b>	<b>Application for EU membership</b>	<b>Candidate country since</b>	<b>Opening of EU accession negotiations</b>
<b>Croatia</b>	1991	Signed Oct 2001, enters into force 1 Feb 2005	March 2004	Dec 2005	
<b>Former</b>	1991	Signed April	-	-	--

<b>Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</b>		2001, enters into force April 2004			
<b>Albania</b>	Was not part of Yugoslavia	Signed June 2006	-	-	-
<b>Montenegro</b>	Part of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia 1992 – 2003, then of a state union with Serbia 2003 – 2006. Independent since May 2006.	Signed October 2007	Planned by Montenegro's government for first half of 2008	-	-
<b>Serbia</b>	Part of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia 1992 – 2003, then of a State Union with Montenegro 2003 – 2006. Serbia is the legal successor of the State Union.	Initialed November 2007	-	-	-
<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	1992	Technical talks for a SAA were finalised in 2006, but initialling and launching the agreement depends on political conditions	-	-	-

***EU and regional cooperation in the Balkans***

***From the Stability Pact to the Regional Cooperation Council***

The promotion of regional cooperation has been one of the cornerstones of EU policies towards the Balkans since the second half of the 1990s. Regional cooperation has been used as a tool for underpinning peace agreements, promoting reconciliation and reconstruction and, lately, as a training ground and a precondition for future EU membership by the Balkan countries. The rationale of this approach stems from the regional scope of some of the bitter legacies of the conflicts of the 1990s, such as the issues of refugees' return and the protection of minorities. Regional cooperation is seen as

an extension of the EU's own philosophy that deeper cooperation with neighbouring countries is a route to national as well as regional stability and growth.<sup>18</sup> At the Thessaloniki Summit in June 2003, the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe was mandated to support and complement the regional dimension of the EU's Stabilisation and Association Process. It was mainly conceived as a forum to bring together donors, international financial institutions and countries in the region. However, EU-sponsored efforts towards regional cooperation have not always been entirely welcome in the Balkans, and the Stability Pact was often misperceived as a waiting room or an alternative to full EU membership, especially by those countries which have advanced further along the path towards EU accession.

Yet, despite lacking its own resources and the status of a proper international organisation, since 1999 the Stability Pact has been working as a confidence-building mechanism, providing a forum for discussion on problematic issues on a regional level. The Pact was instrumental in laying the foundations for an articulated regional cooperation agenda. Examples include the successful negotiation, ratification and entry into force of an enlarged and modernised free trade agreement, CEFTA 2006, which makes all of SEE a single free trade area, making it much more attractive for investors. Another milestone of regional cooperation is the Energy Community Treaty between the EU and the SEE, which entered into force in July 2006 and created the legal framework for a regional electricity and gas market to be integrated in the wider EU market.

Progress on the ground has been matched by increasing political and financial ownership by countries of the region. A major shift towards ownership is happening with the transformation of the Stability Pact into a regionally owned and led framework, the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC). This will be led by a Secretary-General chosen by the SEE countries, Hido Bišćević, currently Croatian State Secretary for Political Affairs, and will be supported by a Secretariat located in Sarajevo and co-funded by SEE countries, the European Commission and other international donors. The RCC will inherit the functions of the Stability Pact and will work towards promoting and supporting regional cooperation in SEE by providing political guidance and receiving input from relevant task forces and initiatives active in specific thematic areas. Through its Secretariat, the RCC will also provide operational capacities to the South East European Cooperation Process (SEECP), the main framework for political consultations in SEE and in many ways "the voice of the region". SEE countries and UNMIK/Kosovo have already agreed on the main political and financial arrangements for the RCC, which also has a legal basis in a form of a Host Country Agreement between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the other SEECP parties. The final handover between the Stability Pact and the RCC is scheduled for February 2008, when the last Regional Table of the Stability Pact and the first Annual Meeting of the RCC will take place.

### **How encouraging are the Balkans region's economic indicators?**

*"One fact has to be crystal clear for everyone. Economic development is fundamental to the solution of most of the problems in the Balkans. The EU can, and should – much more vigorously than so far – be instrumental in encouraging such development."*

**Ilinka Mitreva**, former Foreign Minister of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia<sup>19</sup>

The Western Balkans region is facing economic difficulties as well. The standard of living is much lower than that of the EU countries, and the lack of transparency and the so-called "grey economy" still

constitute an important part of the region's economic challenges. Furthermore, political instability and the slow pace of reforms have resulted in only modest inflows of foreign direct investment in recent years.

With the EU perspective becoming clearer, however, this tendency may be reversed. The experience of previous candidate countries has shown that the prospect of EU membership attracts investors, consequently boosting the country's economy. For instance, trade between the EU and the Western Balkan countries has continued to increase in the last few years and the EU is today by far the most important trading partner for South East European (SEE) countries<sup>20</sup>. Intra-regional trade has also been increasing, although more could be done in this respect.

### ***The region's economic indicators***

Recent economic developments in the region were assessed as "overall favourable" by a European Commission paper from December 2006.

In the last two years, the Western Balkans have enjoyed a sustained average growth rate of around 5% and the inflationary tensions that had been noted before subsided in 2006.

Fiscal consolidation was built up and average deficits were reduced. Moreover, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia enjoyed budget surpluses during that year.

As regards structural reforms, the countries have progressed at uneven speeds, according to the Commission's paper. In most countries, privatisation programmes are now relatively advanced, except for Serbia and Montenegro which are still lagging behind in this respect.

The Balkan states have also started restructuring their energy utilities and markets, a process which was especially encouraged by the signing on 25 October 2005 of the South Eastern Europe Energy Treaty.

But in the telecom and utilities sectors, privatisation has been insufficient and important enterprises remain state-owned. Moreover, and despite the progress, inflation remains a challenge to overcome – although not to the same extent in all the countries – and external imbalances are still high.

Albania, Montenegro, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina registered growth rates of between 5% and 7% in 2005 and 2006, while in Croatia and former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the growth was less pronounced – between 4% and 4.5%. In Kosovo, economic performance has been the weakest in the region, with an estimated growth of -0.2% of GDP in 2005, followed by a period of 3% growth in 2006.

**Table 2 – Main economic indicators in the Western Balkans, 2001-2005**

		<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
<b>Real GDP growth</b>	%	4.0	4.3	3.9	5.7	4.7
<b>Inflation (average)</b>	%	24.9	6.7	4.5	3.9	6.4

<b>Total revenues</b>	% of GDP	40.3	41.0	42.1	42.6	41.3
<b>Total expenditures</b>	% of GDP	45.3	45.0	45.4	45.5	43.0
<b>General government balance</b>	% of GDP	-5.0	-3.9	-3.3	-2.9	-1.7
<b>Exports</b>	Billion EUR	10.2	10.2	11.1	12.9	13.0
<b>Imports</b>	Billion EUR	22.9	26.6	29.0	32.5	31.8
<b>Trade balance with world</b>	Billion EUR	-12.8	-16.4	-17.9	-19.6	-18.8
<b>Trade balance with EU</b>	Billion EUR	-8.6	-10.5	-10.6	-11.7	-11.9
<b>Current account balance</b>	% of GDP	-5.3	-9.8	-8.5	-8.8	-8.3
<b>Foreign direct investment</b>	Million EUR	2.317	1.796	3.572	2.397	3.854

Source: European Commission, DG for Economic and Financial Affairs, "Western Balkans in transition", European Economy. Enlargement papers, Nr 30, December 2006

### **Foreign investment in the Balkans**

Following the political instability caused by the wars in the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s, foreign direct investment in the Western Balkans has only started increasing in recent years, but has still not reached satisfactory levels.

**Table 3 – Foreign direct investment in the Western Balkans (% of GDP)**

	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
<b>Albania</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>3.1</b>
<b>BiH</b>	<b>7.1</b>	<b>5.2</b>
<b>Croatia</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>3.9</b>
<b>FYROM</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>0.5</b>
<b>Kosovo (UN 1244)</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>2.7</b>
<b>Montenegro</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>22.8*</b>
<b>Serbia</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>5.9</b>

\*The high level of FDI in Montenegro in 2005 should be interpreted as a one-time effect rather than a long-term positive phenomenon, due among other things to large privatisation deals in that year which, considering the size of the Montenegrin economy, constitute a considerable boost to its FDI figures.

Source: European Commission, DG for Economic and Financial Affairs, "Western Balkans in transition", European Economy. Enlargement papers, Nr 30, December 2006

The increase in foreign investment in the region three years ago to an average of 4.5% of GDP was a positive sign, but the level was much lower than in Bulgaria (8.4%) or Romania (8.5%), the two most recent EU members. Today investment is still lower than it could be. Indeed, given the state and the sizes of the Balkan economies, and as foreign direct investment is measured as a percentage of GDP, their investment should be closer to 10% rather than the current level of 5%. For instance, the level of foreign direct investment in 2005 in Ireland was 18.2%, with Hong Kong at 15.2%, Singapore at 14.1% and Sweden at 8.2%. By contrast, investment percentages were lower in bigger economies such as Germany (2.7% of GDP) or Canada (3.8%).<sup>21</sup>

The high levels of unemployment in the Western Balkan countries – although to be treated with caution as a large number of those officially unemployed actually hold jobs in the informal sector – and the large share of companies operating in the grey economy, as well as the corruption rates and the lack of transparency, are some of the factors discouraging foreign investment.

**Table 4 – Unemployment in the Western Balkans, 2001-2005 (% of workforce)**

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
<b>Albania</b>	15.2	16.0	15.2	14.7	14.3
<b>BiH</b>	40.3	40.9	42.0	43.1	44.1
<b>Croatia</b>	16.3	14.8	14.3	13.8	12.7
<b>FYROM</b>	30.1	31.9	36.7	37.2	37.3
<b>Kosovo (UN 1244)</b>	n.a.	47.0	49.7	39.7	42.2
<b>Montenegro</b>	30.9	28.9	26.0	22.3	18.5
<b>Serbia</b>	12.2	13.3	14.6	18.5	20.8

*Source: European Commission, DG for Economic and Financial Affairs, “Western Balkans in transition”, European Economy. Enlargement papers, Nr 30, December 2006*

To improve the region’s economic growth and performance, the countries of the region should, among other things, work to make themselves more attractive to foreign investment. One way to do this would be to increase regional cooperation, thus creating a larger economic area appealing to investors. As mentioned previously, the prospect of EU membership is also an important element for attracting investment, both directly and indirectly.

EU funding instruments – such as CARDS, but also the Phare and SAPARD programmes – have been playing a role in making the Balkans more attractive by contributing to their economic development. Moreover, as a fundamental part of the Stabilisation and Association Process, trade preferences known as “autonomous trade measures” and introduced by the EU in September 2000 have provided the Balkan countries with free, wide-ranging access to the EU market for “nearly all products”, leading to concrete benefits in economic terms.

*“The main challenge for the region now is to increase the competitiveness of SEE relative to other regions of the world, in particular by pursuing reforms to fight corruption, reducing nontariff barriers to trade and through concrete action to further promote the development of skills adapted to market*

needs. [...] Regional institutions such as the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), CEFTA and the SEE Investment Committee help ensure that SEE countries follow a strategy and process for reform that is sustainable and driven by the region.”

**Anthony O'Sullivan**, Head of the Investment Compact for South East Europe, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)<sup>22</sup>

### **EU – Western Balkans trade**

The EU is by far the most important trading partner for the South Eastern European countries today. Imports from the Western Balkans region to the EU started increasing in particular after the autonomous trade preferences entered into force. In the 2001-2005 period those imports increased by 38%, reaching €8,449 million. However, trade between the EU and the Balkan countries still accounts for only around 1% of the bloc's global trade, as illustrated by the figures below.

**Table 5 – EU trade with the Western Balkans, 2001-2005**

	EU exports to (in €m)			EU imports from (in €m)			EU trade with (in €m)		
	2001	2005	Growth	2001	2005	Growth	2001	2005	Growth
<b>Total</b>	895,850	1,071,860	19.65%	983,810	1,183,780	20.33%	1,879,660	2,255,640	20.00%
<b>Albania</b>	1,114	1,320	18.49%	336	459	36.61%	1,451	1,779	22.61%
<b>BiH</b>	2,047	2,703	32.05%	696	1,324	90.23%	2,743	4,027	46.81%
<b>Croatia</b>	7,042	10,371	47.27%	3,128	3,968	26.85%	10,169	14,340	41.02%
<b>Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</b>	1,409	1,340	-4.90%	693	954	37.66%	2,102	2,294	9.13%
<b>Serbia &amp; Montenegro</b>	3,179	4,945	55.55%	1,266	1,744	37.76%	4,444	6,688	50.50%
<b>Total WB</b>	<b>14,791</b>	<b>20,679</b>	<b>39.81%</b>	<b>6,119</b>	<b>8,449</b>	<b>38.08%</b>	<b>20,909</b>	<b>29,128</b>	<b>39.31%</b>

	% of total EU exports		% of total EU imports		% of total EU trade	
	2001	2005	2001	2005	2001	2005
<b>Albania</b>	0.12%	0.12%	0.03%	0.04%	0.08%	0.08%
<b>BiH</b>	0.23%	0.25%	0.07%	0.11%	0.15%	0.18%
<b>Croatia</b>	0.79%	0.97%	0.32%	0.34%	0.54%	0.64%
<b>Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</b>	0.16%	0.13%	0.07%	0.08%	0.11%	0.10%
<b>Serbia &amp; Montenegro</b>	0.35%	0.46%	0.13%	0.15%	0.24%	0.30%
<b>Total WB</b>	<b>1.65%</b>	<b>1.93%</b>	<b>0.62%</b>	<b>0.71%</b>	<b>1.11%</b>	<b>1.29%</b>

Source: Eurostat

### **Trade within the region**

Boosting cooperation in South Eastern Europe has been a declared objective of the EU since 1996, when it formulated its 'Regional Approach' for the Western Balkan countries<sup>23</sup>. Due to the difficult political conditions in the region at that time, however, progress has only started recently.

Following the implementation of free trade agreements between the different Balkan countries, as well as the entry into force of the new Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA 2006) which aims to establish a free trade zone in the region by the end of 2010, trade relations within the Balkans have finally seen an improvement in recent years.

Trade liberalisation in South-Eastern Europe has been promoted by the EU – as a possible stimulator for regional trade – both for economic and political reasons. It is expected to lead to an increase in intra-regional trade flows, which if added to a sufficient increase in foreign trade could create solid ground for sustainable economic development and growth.

All in all however, intra-regional trade in the Balkans remains far below its potential. Albania trades the least with its neighbours, according to 2005 figures, while the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina trade the most. Moreover, intra-regional trade remains to date much lower than trade between the countries of the region and the EU.

However, available data suggest a certain link between the progress of "internal" trade relations and the process of EU integration. For instance, commission figures show that those Balkan countries whose bilateral trade with the EU has grown the most are those which have also been active on intra-regional trade.

It continues to be in the EU's best interests to keep encouraging and aiding economic prosperity in the Balkans, if it wants to contribute to lasting peace and stability in the region. As persistent poverty and unemployment could translate into civil unrest, it is even more important to work on the economic indicators of a region such as the Balkans, where stability is so fragile and tensions so easily ignited.

**Table 6 – Intra-regional trade in the Western Balkans**

	Intra-regional imports in %*					Intra-regional exports in %*				
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
<b>Albania</b>	5.82	7.19	6.10	5.65	7.27	5.48	3.78	3.18	6.67	7.51
<b>BiH</b>	22.97	24.22	25.79	25.67	29.38	16.94	19.51	19.34	23.37	21.63
<b>Croatia</b>	2.47	2.74	3.40	4.28	5.63	13.89	16.43	16.95	15.89	17.33
<b>Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</b>	19.29	19.76	19.78	22.35	20.83	32.34	32.32	29.99	32.11	34.25
<b>Serbia and Montenegro</b>	16.18	11.48	11.52	12.57	16.47	16.32	15.02	14.60	14.48	18.68



\*Trade between Serbia and Croatia and between Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina not included  
Source: IMF (2006), *Direction of Trade Statistics Yearbook 2006*, International Monetary Fund, Washington DC.

### **Serbia and the Kosovo issue**

*"An agreement between Serbia and the Kosovo-Albanians must remain the ultimate goal. If this fails and there is a unilateral declaration of independence, the EU and its member states must adopt a unified position. As a condition for recognising an independent Kosovo, they must ensure that the substance of the Ahtisaari plan is implemented and – with a mission that preferably has the support of the global community – secure a peaceful transition. Kosovo can only have a European perspective if its government conducts itself in a constructive manner on this issue."*<sup>24</sup>

**Elmar Brok MEP**, Member of the European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs and Friends of Europe Trustee

During the presentation of the countries' EU progress reports on 6 November 2007, EU enlargement commissioner Olli Rehn cited "the Kosovo status process, Serbia's democratic development and state-building in Bosnia and Herzegovina"<sup>25</sup> as the three biggest challenges that must be tackled in the region.

Finding a solution for the future status of Kosovo, a province of Serbia which has been under UN administration since 1999, has proven even more difficult than expected. Pristina wants nothing short of full independence, while Belgrade is ready to offer the province the widest autonomy but not full independence. And while neither of them seems willing to concede their positions, the clock is ticking and some observers have started warning that hostilities may resume in the region, prompted by an unsatisfactory outcome of the "Kosovo process". In September this year, US deputy assistant secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs David J. Kramer said that the Kosovo deadlock should be broken "sooner rather than later", as "we have concerns that an endless process will lead to a resumption of hostilities that none of us wants to see"<sup>26</sup>.

Serbia has been increasing its efforts to achieve a closer relationship with the EU, and the recent initialling of a Stabilisation and Association Agreement by Belgrade constitutes a political success for the country. Despite considerable progress, it is still not judged as cooperating fully with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), as four important war crime suspects remain at large. Moreover, the results of the January 2007 parliamentary elections in Serbia, where the radical SRS Party became the strongest group with nearly 30% of the votes, could prove challenging for the country's progress towards EU integration especially in some areas – such as cooperation with the ICTY.

#### ***The future status of Kosovo***

Kosovo is currently a Serbian breakaway province which has been under UN administration since the end of the war in 1999. It has some two million inhabitants, 90% of whom are ethnic Albanians. Serbs constitute the second largest ethnic group in Kosovo, with the 120,000- 150,000 Serbs living in the province forming 7-8% of its population .

The province is the seventh entity to demand independence following the break-up of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s. However, the difficulty here comes from the fact that unlike Croatia, Slovenia or Montenegro, Kosovo has been an integral part of Serbia since the days of pre-war Yugoslavia.

This was explicitly stated in the preamble to Serbia's 2006 constitution, which was confirmed by referendum. Thus, Belgrade estimates that an independent Kosovo would breach Serbian territorial integrity. It says it is offering Pristina "the largest autonomy in the world [including] some elements of sovereign countries, for example access to international financial institutions"<sup>27</sup>, but stops short of granting it independence.

In February 2007, the UN's special envoy at the Kosovo status process negotiations, Martti Ahtisaari, presented a plan for the province's future paving the way for its independence after a period of international supervision<sup>28</sup>. While accepted by the Kosovo-Albanian government, however, the proposal was rejected by Serbia.

Given the stalemate and the difficulty of keeping the status quo, the international community is hoping to find a solution for Kosovo's future status by 10 December, when diplomats from the EU, the US and Russia – known as the international troika – are due to submit their report to the UN on what their efforts have led to.

However, as no significant progress seems to have been made towards a negotiated solution since talks on the future of Kosovo opened under the auspices of the UN in February 2006, scepticism about the possibility of reaching a solution by the 10 December is rising.

Kosovo-Albanian politicians, on the other hand, have repeatedly claimed that they are running out of patience and that they will proclaim unilateral independence shortly after 10 December if no solution is found by then. "We will not accept more talks on the issue. We insist that the process be concluded as soon as possible. Kosovo cannot be held hostage," Kosovo's president Fatmir Sejdiu said recently<sup>29</sup>. Another Kosovar representative, Veton Surroi, a member of the Kosovo negotiating delegation, went even further, saying that "Kosovo should have its independence before Christmas"<sup>30</sup>. But Serbia has stated that such a move would be nothing more than a violation of its territorial integrity and that any other state recognising the possible independence of Kosovo would be violating international law.

The international community itself is still divided on the issue. While the US has indicated it would recognise an independent Kosovo, Russia has been firmly opposed to it. Besides being a traditional Serbian ally, Moscow fears that allowing the unilaterally declared independence of Kosovo outside the UN framework may set a precedent with potentially negative effects in its own neighbourhood. Together with Serbia, Russia has been pushing for a negotiated solution of the Kosovo issue, even if talks have to continue after 10 December – a deadline Russia has dubbed as "artificial"<sup>31</sup>.

For its part, the EU has been facing some internal divisions on the matter as well. After a meeting of EU foreign ministers in Brussels on 19-20 November, Britain's Minister of State for Europe, Jim Murphy, stated that "a substantial majority [of EU countries] want to recognise [an independent] Kosovo ... certainly well above 20, but we haven't got to 27 yet"<sup>32</sup>.

But some EU members – such as Greece, Cyprus and Spain – fear that recognising a unilaterally declared Kosovar independence could boost some secessionist minorities' feelings in their own territories.

Moreover, after the legislative elections in Kosovo on 17 November 2007, many EU ministers urged Pristina to refrain from declaring independence unilaterally. Following the victory of former Kosovar guerrilla leader Hashim Thaçi's Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) and statements by Mr Thaçi that independence would be declared "immediately" after 10 December, several foreign ministers called for restraint<sup>33</sup>.

Bulgarian foreign minister Ivailo Kalfin said he "would not recommend" such a move, while his Swedish counterpart Carl Bildt expressed concerns that if Kosovo proclaims unilateral independence, there might be in fact "two unilateral declarations of independence – one in Pristina, one in [the ethnic Serb area of] Mitrovica"<sup>34</sup>.

For its part, the European Commission has so far adopted a cautious approach as regards taking positions on the province's future, saying that it supports the efforts of international diplomats working to obtain a negotiated solution and that there should be no "speculating" on the future of Kosovo before 10 December.

Nonetheless, the EU – which is already present in Kosovo within the framework of the broader international community engagement, wants to increase its presence and role in the province. A European Union Planning Team is preparing a future civilian European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) mission in the area of the rule of law (police, justice and customs)<sup>35</sup>, and according to reports in the media, the EU is planning to progressively take over the role of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) established on 10 June 1999 by Security Council Resolution 1244<sup>36</sup>.

*"The UK firmly believes that dealing with outstanding legacy issues from the conflicts of the 1990s – especially the status of Kosovo – is essential for regional and European security. This is one of the most important issues facing the EU today. We want to see Kosovo and the Western Balkans as a whole moving towards EU and NATO membership. After so much conflict, the citizens of the region deserve a sustainable, stable and multi-ethnic future in which everyone's right to peace and security is respected."*

**Jim Murphy**, UK's Europe Minister, 37

## **Key steps in Kosovo status definition after 1998**

### **March –Sept 1998**

Open conflict between Serb police and separatist Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). Serb forces launch a crackdown. Civilians are driven from their homes.

### **March 1999**

Peace talks mediated by the international community fail. Launching of 78-day unilateral NATO air strikes against Yugoslavia. Regional refugee crisis breaks out.

### **June 1999**

President Milošević agrees to withdraw troops from Kosovo and NATO calls off the air strikes. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 establishes the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). The UN also sets up a Kosovo Peace Implementation Force (KFOR) and NATO forces arrive in the province. The KLA agrees to disarm, while Serb civilians flee revenge attacks.

#### **February 2002**

The Provisional Institutions for Self-government are established (a President, a government with a Prime Minister and ministers, and an Assembly).

#### **December 2003**

The UN sets out conditions for final status talks in 2005.

#### **February 2006**

Status negotiations begin under the auspices of the UN.

#### **July 2006**

First direct talks since 1999 between ethnic Serbian and Kosovar leaders on future status of Kosovo take place in Vienna.

#### **October 2006**

Voters in a referendum in Serbia approve a new constitution which declares that Kosovo is an integral part of the country. Kosovo's Albanian majority boycotts the vote, while UN sponsored talks on the future of the province continue.

#### **February 2007**

United Nations envoy Martti Ahtisaari unveils a plan to set Kosovo on a path to independence, which is immediately rejected by Serbia.

#### **July 2007**

Following Russian insistence, the US and EU redraft a UN resolution dropping the promise of independence, replacing it with a pledge to review the situation if there is no breakthrough after four months of talks with Serbia.

#### **Sept–Nov 2007**

Direct talks between Serbian and Kosovar leaders under the international troika's auspices. No substantial progress made.

#### **October 2007**

The international troika proposes a 14-point document to serve as a basis for a compromise solution. Kosovo continues to call for full independence.

#### **December 2007**

Deadline set by the international community for completion of talks on Kosovo's future status.

*Sources: BBC, EUobserver.com, European Commission*

### ***Serbia's democratic development***

The future of Kosovo is of crucial importance for Serbia and its unresolved status has been fuelling a certain nationalistic rhetoric in the country.

This is illustrated among other things by the results of the most recent parliamentary elections in the country – those of January 2007 – where the ultranationalist Serbian Radical Party obtained the most votes (28.7%). The party is currently led by Tomislav Nikolić in the absence of its formal leader Vojislav Šešelj, currently on trial in The Hague accused of war crimes and of making several inflammatory speeches calling for the creation of a "Greater Serbia". In her opening statement at the

trial, prosecutor Christine Dahl said that Serb forces had been indoctrinated by Mr Šešelj with "poisonous ideas" and sent to commit "unspeakable crimes" in Bosnia and Croatia. 38

The Democratic Party of Serbian president Boris Tadić followed with 22.71% of the votes, while Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica's Democratic Party of Serbia-New Serbia came third with 16.55%.

The failure to break the deadlock on Kosovo has also strengthened some tendencies in Serbia to see a Western anti-Serbian conspiracy in the international community's actions. In October, Prime Minister Koštunica said that a Western-backed plan for a sovereign Kosovo and moves by Bosnia's international administrator Miroslav Lajcak aimed at making the country's political system more efficient, represented an "open threat to the essential interests of the Serb people"<sup>39</sup>. Alongside the subsistence of a certain degree of nationalistic rhetoric in Serbia – illustrated notably by the Radical Party's popularity – cooperation with the ICTY constitutes another hurdle in the country's democratic development.

As one of the conditions for EU membership, Serbia has to cooperate fully with this UN war crime tribunal, i.e. by arresting wanted suspects or at least by showing that it is doing its best to do so. While it has so far handed over 20 out of the 24 fugitives wanted by the ICTY, four remain at large: former Bosnian Serb military chief Ratko Mladić, who has been indicted on charges of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide; former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadžić; former Croatian Serb rebel leader Goran Hadžić; and Bosnian Serb police commander Stojan Župljanin

Nevertheless, ICTY prosecutor Carla del Ponte indicated in early November that she had seen improvements in Serbia's behaviour, following which the EU decided to initial a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Belgrade<sup>40</sup>. The European Commission has repeatedly stated that the two issues – Serbia's EU integration and the "Kosovo process" – are not and will not be linked. When presenting the Balkan countries' progress reports in early November, enlargement commissioner Olli Rehn once again stressed he was not considering such an option<sup>41</sup>.

It nevertheless remains tempting to believe that the timing of the SAA initialling was not a coincidence. The political step came at an important moment in the Kosovo talks and this move may be hoped to achieve a reignition of pro-EU feelings in Serbia, raising the chances of a political compromise on Kosovo and of improved cooperation with the ICTY. However, there has been no sign so far that such a compromise would be possible in the coming weeks. The "Kosovo process" and how it will end remains an open question.

*"The present state of play in South East Europe in many aspects calls for additional efforts and advanced input by the European Union. In the face of the remaining challenges, the EU and international community should change their attitude and try to manage the process instead of running after the events. The unsettled Kosovo issue and negative ramifications in the region, including in particular the present troublesome and disturbing developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, may put in jeopardy the achieved level of stability, security and cooperation in the region. That may cast a dark shadow over the much broader interests of Europe and the international community as a whole. That may bring back a prolonged economic crisis and social instability, internal political crisis and might have a negative impact on different strategic outcomes in terms of the present Euro-Atlantic*

*enlargement policy. Therefore, these issues need to be addressed and resolved by a cohesive approach on the part of the international community, as they are evidently becoming a historical test for the EU and the Transatlantic community, but also for the continuation of the policy of creating a new undivided Europe and a cooperative world order”.*

**Hido Bišćević**, Croatian State Secretary for Political Affairs and incoming Secretary-General of the Regional Cooperation Council<sup>42</sup>.

## Notes

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