



## **ANNUAL REPORT 2011**

# **EUROPEAN FORUM FOR DEMOCRACY AND SOLIDARITY**

*The European Forum is dedicated to support the transformation and democratisation processes in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Southeastern Europe. By serving as a platform for co-operation between social democratic parties, organizations and personalities it aims to contribute to the development of (social-) democracy. The European Forum informs the international social democratic movement of the political situation in the countries concerned. In addition, the European Forum co-ordinates projects in these countries.*

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## Foreword

Herewith we are presenting you the Annual Report of the European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity. We are proud to present you the report on our activities supporting democracy in general and social democracy in particular.

We have concluded a regional research seminars in 2011 which we started in 2010 and aimed to acquire knowledge on the development of (social) democracy in Eastern Europe and the challenges that leftist parties face. Moreover, the seminars bring together parties from the region and give them the opportunity to exchange views and experience on (social) democracy. The project has also explored the political field in Central Asia, a work field relatively new for the European Forum. This year we have organized a conference in Kiev Ukraine following two conference held previously in Kazakhstan and Georgia. The results, findings and conclusions of the conferences were published in the book 'The (Social) democratic Map of Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia, and the outlook for th future.'

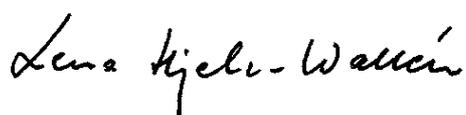
In 2011 we started of the 'Copenhagen revisited' project to take a critical look at the enlargement process of South East European countries and Turkey. As the EU enlargement rounds of 2004 and 2007 led to a sharpening of the membership criteria, the accession procedure of the Balkan countries slowed down. The project aims to look at the real obstacles for further enlargement, the lessons learned from the past, but also to reaffirm and create new legitimacy for extending the borders of the EU. In 2011 a Conference in Brussels and a fact finding mission to Kosovo were part of the project. A further outline of the activities of the 'Copenhagen revisited project' is given in this report.

A second successful and timely fact finding mission was organized to Tunisia, from where the revolution spread to other Arab countries in 2011. We spoke with various political parties, ngo's and related institutions to get better informed about the political situation on the ground. At the same time the aim was to investigate the possibilities to contribute to the democratisation process in Tunisia. Conclusions and recommendations can be found in this annual report.

The CEE Gender Network Task Force concluded its ambitious work plan for 2011, thanks to the great commitment and dedication of Sonja Lokar, Reet Laja, Zita Gurmaj and Dasa Silovic. The activities of the Gender Network have encouraged women to expand their participation in politics. The Arab revolutions have also led to activities of the Gender Network in the Arab world and will continue to do so as there are many requests for the support of gender activities there.

Our successful annual Promising Politicians Course gathered young and promising social democrats from Western Balkan countries, who met in Montenegro, Albania and FYR of Macedonia. Additional a Promising Politicians Course in Moldova was organized. Following the successful Winter Academy in 2010 we brought together young activists from our sister parties in Eastern Europe in two Summer Academies in 2011 in Moldova and Ukraine

We have finalized a fruitful year. The support to our sister parties was made possible through organizational and financial contribution by the member foundations of the European Forum. In addition, our close cooperation with the PES, FEPS and the Socialist Group/ S&D-group, has added much to the quality of the conferences and active participation of our sister parties representatives. Our activities have encouraged social democrats to address actual issues and by means of this, they have contributed to strengthening social democracy.



Lena Hjelm-Wallén; President of the European Forum

## Abbreviations

AMS	Alfred Mozer Stichting
DS	Democratic Party of Serbia
EC	European Commission
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EF	European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity
EP	European Parliament
EU	European Union
FES	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
FEPS	Foundation for European Progressive Studies
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia
ODIHR	OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OSCW	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PES	Party of European Socialists
PCA	Partnership and Cooperation Agreement
PDK	Democratic Party of Kosovo
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NGO	Non Governmental Organisations
SAA	Stabilisation and Association Agreement
SDP-H	Social democratic party of Croatia
SDSM/SDUM	Social Democratic Union of Macedonia
SI	Socialist International
SIW	Socialist International Women

## General information

In January 1993, the social democratic parties and political foundations from EU countries founded the European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity in order to support the transformation and democratization processes in Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. Serving as a platform for co-operation between social democratic parties, organizations and personalities, the European Forum aims to contribute to the development of social democracy in these regions. The European Forum unites 12 social democratic foundations and 19 social democratic parties within its supervision body; the Steering Committee. The Dutch Alfred Mozer Stichting is currently responsible for the implementation of the European Forum's working programme.

### Staff

Arjen Berkvens – secretary general  
Marina Ohanjanyan – project manager  
Danijel Tadić – project manager  
Marianna Tsirelson – information officer

### The Steering Committee

Lena Hjelm Wallén, President  
Jan Marinus Wiersma, vice-President

### In 2011 the Council of the European Forum met on:

June 15<sup>th</sup>

### Members of the European Forum are:

**Parties:** CSSD (Czech Republic), DNA (Norway), DS (Italy), Labour Party (Great Britain), MSzP (Hungary), PS (France), PvdA (The Netherlands), SAP (Sweden), SDL (Poland), SDP (Denmark), SDP (Estonia), SDP (Finland), SPD (Germany), SPÖ (Austria), PES, Unia Pracy (Poland), SD (Slovenia), PASOK (Greece), Partito Democratico (Italy)

**Social democratic foundations:** Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS) Alfred Mozer Stichting (The Netherlands), Dr. Karl Renner Institut (Austria), Fondation Jean Jaurès (France), Foundation for European Education (Poland), FES (Germany), ISTAME A. Papandreou (Greece), Johannes Mihkelson Foundation (Estonia), Kalander Foundation (Slovenia), Olof Palme International Centre (Sweden), Westminster Foundation for Democracy / Labour Party (Great Britain) and Ovidiu Sincai Institute Foundation (Romania),

## Financial situation

### Result of the European Forum

### Result 2011

#### Contributions

Czech Republic; CSSD	5.500*
Finland; SDP	5.500
Austria; SPO	5.500
Norway; DNA	5.500
Sweden; SAP	25.000
Germany; SPD	25.000
Denmark; SDP	5.500
<b>Total</b>	<b>77.500</b>

*Projects covered by sister foundations* **139.642**

**Total** **217.142**

#### Expenditure

Projects European Forum	53.171
Organisational costs & Salaries	154.150

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**207.321**

\* not yet received

## Training activities

### *Promising Politicians Former Yugoslavia*

#### **Political context**

Since the end of the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, the resolution of the conflict in Macedonia and the democratic changes in Serbia, a situation has emerged in which all countries of the former Yugoslavia and Albania share more or less the same basic principles of stability and democracy. In all of these countries social democratic parties are active. They can benefit tremendously from mutual experiences and discussions on issues such as modern social democratic ideology, the harsh realities of governing and coalition forming, party building, election campaigns and other challenges that political parties face.

Since 2003 the European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity, in cooperation with the Alfred Mozer Stichting and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, has been organising annually a series of seminars for young and promising politicians and members of social democratic parties from the former Yugoslav republics (later Albania was included as well). The positive evaluation of the course throughout the years, led to the decision to organise a Promising Politicians Course in 2011 as well. The course includes seminars on ideology, organisation, political campaigning and communication and EU integration. The aim of the course is to introduce young politicians to the various aspects of political leadership, governance and the dynamics and structures of party policies. In addition, the organisers aim to create a network among young and politically active persons and to improve their knowledge on the political developments of countries in the region.

The invited parties in 2011 are DS, SDU, LSV (Serbia), DPS, SDP (Montenegro), PSD, PDK, FER (Kosovo), SDSM, DUI (Macedonia), SNSD, SDP (Bosnia and Herzegovina), SDP (Croatia), SPA, LSI (Albania), and SD (Slovenia).

#### ***Seminar I: Social Democracy and its Policies, Montenegro***

In cooperation with: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Belgrade Office (FES) and AMS

Date: 19-22 May,

Location: Bečići, Montenegro

Trainers: Arjen Berkvens (AMS director, Secretary General of the European Forum )  
Danijel Tadić (AMS and European Forum)  
Milan Živković (Secretary of the National Commission and director political academy 'Novo Društvo' )

Guest Speakers: Vladimir Pavićević (Faculty of Political Sciences, Belgrade University)  
Daliborka Uljarević, director of the Centre for Civic Education , Montenegro

Target group: Young members of social democratic parties in former Yugoslav countries and Albania

#### ***Report***

The first seminar of the 9<sup>th</sup> edition of Promising Politicians was attended by 26 participants. The theme this seminar was 'Social Democracy and its Policies'. Presentations were given on the history and the values of social democracy, the mainstream political theories: liberalism and conservatism and social democratic policies. This was followed by a workshop how to go from theory to practice, in other words, how policies are developed. These theoretical set outs were worked out in a workshop on education in which the participants were divided into three groups, a liberal, conservative and social democratic group.

The second day of the seminar was devoted to political campaigning and how to go from strategy to practice and the importance to have a clear central message. Guest speaker Vladimir Pavićević visited the third day and discussed social democracy versus monitory democracy. In a monitory democracy

the elected people's representatives are monitored by the actors of civil society, civilians, media and the society as a network. Furthermore Daliborka Uljarević, director of the Centre for Civic Education, followed with an presentation on the political situation in Montenegro and the role of civil society. The main challenges for Montenegro are: lack of vision and willingness to reform among the political elite, a weak opposition, organized crime and corruption, no administrative capacity and no independent judiciary. Due to the size of the country (Montenegro has around 500.000 inhabitants) it is easy for the political elite to 'control' the society. It is cheaper to buy votes than to invest in political campaigns. Therefore the role of civil society is to control the government to make the citizens more aware and critical and address certain issues in the public debate.

### ***Seminar II: Media and communication skills, Tirana - Albania***

In cooperation with: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) Belgrade Office and Alfred Mozer Stichting (AMS)  
 Date: 27-30 October  
 Location: Tirana, Albania  
 Trainers: Žiga Čebulj (Public relations consultant, Socialni Demokrati (SD), Slovenia)  
 Dig Isthia (Director Corporate Affairs RWE Energy)  
 Guest Speakers: Sebastian Reichel (Online-communication expert, SPD Germany)  
 Erion Veliaj (MP of the Socialist Party of Albania)  
 Target group: Young members of social democratic parties in former Yugoslav countries  
 and  
 Albania.

### ***Report***

The first part of the training concentrated on the importance for politicians and political parties to develop a strong public relations plan in order to get voter's trust. This was followed by a workshop on creating a PR strategy, a short introduction on how neuro-marketing is increasingly used in political campaigning and crisis management. Guest speaker Sebastian Reichel discussed the role of online communications in political campaigning and online communication strategies. Furthermore Erion Veliaj, leader of G99, a new Albanian political party, gave a presentation on the political situation in Albania from a perspective of developments in the 90's. He argued the main challenge for Albania is economic development, corruption and the political and societal polarisation. According to him the current DP-led government is focussing on Brussels and Washington while not being able to create decent living conditions for its own citizens. During the last day of the seminar the participants had to present their PR strategy with all its aspects in the framework of the theory presented to them earlier and they had to conducted a one-minute-speech.

### ***Seminar III: European integration, Skopje - Macedonia***

In cooperation with: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) Belgrade and Alfred Mozer Stichting (AMS)  
 Date and venue: 24-27 November, Arka hotel in Skopje, Macedonia  
 Trainers: Bas Batelaan, head of European affairs - SSE Renewable  
 Anne Graumans, former Amsterdam city council member for the PvdA  
 Guest Speakers: Michal Ehrke, director of the FES bureau in Belgrade  
 Radmila Šekarinska, leader of the largest opposition party of Macedonia, the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia and former deputy prime minister for European integration  
 Target group: Young members of social democratic parties in former Yugoslav countries  
 and Albania

### ***Report***

Gerard Ritsema van Eck (intern AMS) started of the seminar by giving a comprehensive summary on how the European Union works by giving an overview of the most important institutions and how they work together to make laws. Subsequently Bas Batelaan shared his experience as lobbyist in Brussels. He discussed the elements of an EU lobby plan, namely: the goal, stakeholder analysis, central message and lobby actions (direct and indirect). Additionally Anne Graumans set out the theory of "chaining a meeting". All the theoretical modules were followed by a workshops. Guest speaker Dr. Michael Ehrke, director of the FES office Belgrade, discussed the crisis in the Euro zone and its

possible -internal- outcomes and its potential effects on the EU integration of the Western Balkans. Radmila Šekarinska, currently leading the largest opposition faction in the Macedonian parliament, the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia (SDSM) mainly discussed her view of the future of the Balkan, a future she clearly sees as European.

Additionally a presentation on the theory of negotiations was given by the AMS trainers in which, among other things, negotiation strategies based on argumentation, power and exchange were presented. This was followed by a successful negotiation workshop on the accession negotiations with Turkey. Moreover a press conference was simulated in which the participants had to defend the agreement they reached to their constituents, adding a further layer of realism to the simulation game.

### ***Conclusions and recommendations***

25 Participants attended the successful 'Promising Politicians' seminars in Montenegro, Albania and Macedonia. The atmosphere in the group was very good from the start. At the evaluation it became clear that the interactive approach and the many workshops were very much appreciated by both the participants, trainers and the organisers. Although the background of the participants regarding their experience differed widely with some already running for city councils and others just having joined a political youth organization, all said to have learned from the sessions. The module on the EU as part of the last seminar has been improved which has resulted in a more positive evaluation.

With regard to the simulation game on Turkey EU candidate status, it would be wise to include more information beforehand on the procedural rules. The impromptu organised press conference the following morning was a great follow-up, that added a layer of realistic pressure to the participants. The one hour movie "on the road to the EU" was evaluated as a very interesting movie, but it better to show it before the negotiation game, so the participants have a clearer view of how negotiations within the EU take place before they start simulating them.

The participants were very satisfied with the organization of the promising politicians seminar and with the content. It was stressed during the evaluation that these seminars are a unique opportunity to meet young people with similar ideas in a setting where one can learn a lot from each other and from the modules provided by the trainers. Networking with other participants, the topic of the seminar and the practical exercises, were considered very useful for their further careers as promising politicians. It was emphasised during the evaluation that it is very important that the participants meet three times in a year as this is vital for the contact between the participants and their parties. Some critical notes and recommendations were noted as well. Generally speaking the second and third seminar were considered as most interesting and interactive. This has mainly to do with the fact that the level of theoretical knowledge amongst the trainees differs greatly.

### ***Promising Politicians Eastern Europe***

Date: 18-20 February 2011  
Location: Chisinau  
Trainers: Suzanne Jansen and Berend Jan van den Boomen  
Partner: FES Moldova and FES Romania  
Participants: young members of the PSD (Romania) and DPM (Moldova)

### ***Report***

The training was the third in a series of three for the Romanian Social Democratic Party (PSD) and the Moldovan Democratic Party (DPM). The topic of this training was European integration and within this global setting, the aim was to improve the participants' skills of chairing a meeting and negotiation. Theory and workshops accumulated to a final simulation game, in which an EU council meeting was imitated that concentrated around the discussion of the initiation of talks with Turkey about accession to the EU. The training was a cooperation project between the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and the Alfred Mozer Foundation. The organisation of this training was taken care of by the FES office in Chisinau.

### ***Conclusions and Recommendations***

Both participants and trainers were satisfied with the training. The atmosphere both in the group and between trainers and participants was good and the participants were concentrated and worked well. Some of the trainees had difficulties distinguishing the content of the simulation game from the process. The participants expressed their wish to have more time for training. The trainers also thought it would be better to have three whole days for the training instead of 2 days, in terms of learning possibilities and the integration process of the group. Quite a few participants lived in Chisinau, which meant they went home after dinner. Again, to make sure the trainees get to know each other well, it would be favourable to have everybody staying in one place. As the participants stressed the fact that they learned many things they could actually use in their political future this was a successful seminar.

### ***Conclusions and Recommendations***

The atmosphere at the summer camp was very good, and the participants were visibly happy with the trainings and lectures they received. The training is quite an intense one, not least of all for the trainers. The group was divided into three smaller rotating groups that each went through the lectures and trainings in a different order. This meant that our trainers had to do their part of the training three times for different groups. Another difficulty is the logical order in which the participants receive the theory and practice of politics: it would make sense to have the theory first and the practice later, but unfortunately because of the rotating groups there is always at least one group that has a reverse order. While these are things that should legitimately be considered, for now we have not been able to find a better formula for this format of training. And even with these minor difficulties the Summer Academy is the most popular and (possibly) effective training for participants in Moldova, who receive a huge amount of new information and skills from just a couple of days. It is seen as a big success, which is why we propose to continue with it in the coming years.

### ***Summer Academy Eastern Europe and South Caucasus***

Date: 25-29 August,  
Location: Yevpatoria (the Crimea), Ukraine  
Trainers: Peter Scheffer and Wouter Kolk  
Partner: UK Labour Party and Institute for Democracy and Social Processes (IDSP) Ukraine  
Participants: Members of partner parties/organisations from Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

### ***Report***

The training was the second annual Summer Academy that we have organised for Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus. It again focused on three main subjects: ideology (what is social democracy?), campaigning (SWOT analysis, central message, communicating the message, personal presentation skills) and the EU and its relevant programs/policies for the countries in question, which ended with a negotiations simulation game on the initiation of talks on Turkey's accession to the EU. The training was organised together with the UK Labour Party, and the local organisation of the event was taken care of by the IDSP. The training was for 28 participants from the countries of Eastern Europe and South Caucasus.

### ***Conclusions and Recommendations***

Participants and trainers were satisfied with the training. The participants were very enthusiastic and excited to be abroad (for most of them), meeting young people with similar interests from other countries. Although they were selected for having some kind of background in politics and having the ambition to go further, most of them learnt many new things, and there were still differences in experience within the group. This, however, did not necessarily obstruct the process, as those with more experience motivated those with little experience. After the training the participants appear to still stay in touch via Facebook and other social networks, which goes towards one of the preferable results: the creation a network of young progressive people who live in countries that go (or have gone) through similar challenging periods of time.

## Copenhagen revisited

Copenhagen revisited is a cooperation project between the Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS), European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity, Alfred Mozer Stichting (AMS), Wiardi Beckman Stichting (WBS), and the S&D Group in the European Parliament.

### Objective

The Copenhagen revisited project will critically assess the EU enlargement process of South East European (SEE) countries and Turkey. The basic criteria for EU membership were formulated at the 1993 Copenhagen Summit but much has changed since then. The enlargements of 2004 and 2007 can be considered a success but they also lead to a sharpening of the existing membership criteria and the addition of important new ones. This has affected the pace of the further enlargement process. Moreover, hesitations have come to the surface in both the EU and the candidate countries. As a consequence the whole effort has lost urgency. It is therefore an opportune moment to discuss the lessons learned in the past, to analyse the real obstacles to progress but also to reaffirm and create new legitimacy for extending the borders of the EU. This will form the basis for concrete conclusions and recommendations that can help the Party of European Socialists (PES), the S&D Group in the European Parliament and the European sister parties both inside and outside the EU to formulate additional policies. Furthermore, it is important to involve social democratic political foundations from SEE countries in this project. A long term objective is to professionalise and strengthen these foundations and to improve the cooperation with their counterparts in the region and the EU.

### Outline of the project

The project consists of several activities: research on the current state of debate and public opinion on the enlargement, fact-finding missions to Kosovo and Turkey, interviews with relevant actors in politics and civil society and three thematic conferences. Finally, a book will be published based on the research, conclusions and recommendations of the activities of the project, and contributions of the Task Force members who will write articles for the book. The project will give policy recommendations to the S&D Group in the European Parliament, PES and sister parties in the EU member states. In addition, with the project the organisers hope to launch a new and open debate about the EU enlargement process.

### *Conference I: "EU enlargement: lessons learned"*

**Date:** 7 September,

**Location:** FEPS office, Brussels

**Guest speakers:** Jan Marinus Wiersma, vice-president of the European Forum; Ernst Stetter, FEPS Secretary General; Prof. András Inotai, director at the Institute for World Economics of the Hungarian academy of Sciences; Daša Silović, CEE Network for Gender Issues; Prof. Dr. Vasile Puscas, director at the Institute for International Studies, "Babes-Bolyai" University, Cluj-Napoca; Yasen Georgiev, director at the Economic Policy Institute of Bulgaria; Milan Živković, director of Novo društvo Croatia; Martin Demirovski, Open Society Institute Brussels; Hannes Swoboda, vice-president of the S&D Group in the European Parliament.

### Report:

The first conference of the project centered around the lessons learned from previous enlargement rounds. Distinguished speakers and participants from the EU, CEE and SEE countries and Turkey contributed to an interesting and lively debate.

The conference was opened by **Stetter** and **Wiersma** after which **Prof. András Inotai** discussed the lessons learned from previous enlargements. Inotai argued that the new member states of 2004 and 2006 enlargement only had a strategy on joining the EU and no strategy once they were part of the EU. Furthermore, he said that as a consequence of the enlargement, the trade between the new member

states increased, the new countries advocated further enlargement towards the Western Balkans, they fell short in implementing the new EU rules and had difficulties in defining and defending their interests in the framework of the EU institutions. According to Inotai, important lessons learned from the 2004 enlargement are: deepening and widening of the EU should go together, more awareness should be raised among politicians in the EU about the advantages of the newly created geo-political situation and the EU should develop mechanisms which will protect the basic EU values in the member states. Inotai concluded by arguing that the lack of internal solidarity is damaging the EU. For example, funds for Greece have been reserved in order to save the German and French banks, while Hungary was told to knock on the door of the IMF for financial support.

The next speaker, **Daša Silović**, stated that the EU project is a political design that is in need of new life in order to maximise its potential in the global order - of which the centre is shifting towards Asia. Currently our political, economic and social structures are not able to tackle the challenges we face, for example the demographic challenges. In order to tackle current global challenges, the EU has to strengthen itself internally and reform the economic and social structures. At the world scale the main strength of the EU is knowledge. At the same time governments are making cuts in education.

After the two presentations the floor opened for discussion and questions. **Dimitris Tsarouhas** (Bilkent University) shortly set out the case of Turkey that economically and geo-strategically differs from the Western Balkans. The potential of EU accession has strongly increased the FDI's (Foreign Direct Investment) in Turkey and led to economic growth. In economic and political sense Turkey is following a different path, it makes its own *acquis* (Ankara criteria) and makes the necessary reforms – despite the lack of progress in the enlargement process and discouraging rhetoric from Paris and Berlin – in order to strengthen itself internally.

Wiersma argued that new life has to be brought in the debate on enlargement. Not only economic arguments (new markets will open for our companies) but also political ones should form the debate: enlargement makes the EU stronger and brings peace and stability in South East Europe and beyond. Prof. Inotai confirmed this and argued that the EU should remain a political and economic project. The EU in 21<sup>st</sup> century should be proactive, future oriented and sustainable, he added.

### **The case of Romania, Bulgaria and Croatia – lessons learned and future perspectives**

After the lunch Prof. Vasile Puscas (Babes-Bolyai University and former chief negotiator of Romania with the EU) discussed the EU accession process and lessons learned of his country. He argued that good preparation is of crucial importance in order to smoothen the accession process. Continuous effort is needed as once part of the EU the job is not over for the new member states, he said, adding that rule of law and reform in public administration should be more emphasised in future enlargements.

**Yasen Georgiev** (director Economic Policy Institute of Bulgaria) and **Milan Živković** (director of Novo društvo Croatia) elaborated on the situation in their countries. Georgiev argued that due to accession of his country many good things happened. For example, the Bulgarian government is pressured from both the EU as well as their own citizens to perform well and fight the corruption and organised crime. Furthermore, macro economic stability improved, economic development in border regions was boosted and the efficiency and quality of public administration increased. On the other hand, brain drain increased as more talented young people sought after a career in Western European countries. Bulgaria still has to work hard to improve their image in the EU, Georgiev said.

Živković started his contribution by saying that the accession of former Yugoslavia informally started in 1989, as at that time Yugoslavia declared that European integration was the first policy goal. Živković warned that EU accession of Croatia is a process driven by the elites who do not explain to Croatian citizens what EU accession means for them and what it actually includes. He also noted that the EU project is alive as long as enlargement goes on. Furthermore, Živković argued that the national perspective should be less important in Brussels and that a more federalist approach is needed in order

to tackle current challenges. The director of the Croatian social democratic political foundation concluded by saying that the democratic deficit is a serious problem (the concept of decision-making within the EU institutions should be changed) and that the neo-liberal economic integration agenda can not work without social and political integration.

### **EU Enlargement: case of Roma**

The conference ended with the presentation of the book: *Roma: a European minority; the challenge of diversity*. **Martin Demirovski** (Open Society Institute), **Hannes Swoboda** and **Tanja Fajon** (MEP's for the S&D Group in the European Parliament) discussed this important topic. The S&D Group will continue to strongly support initiatives that will improve the political and socio-economic position of Roma in EU member states and candidate and future candidate countries. Among others, Swoboda stated that EU enlargement is of crucial importance for aspirant countries and the EU itself. However, the enlargement process should not be an elite project and should be supported widely by the civil society.

## **Fact finding mission Kosovo**

Date:	19-22 September
Location:	Kosovo
Organisers:	EF and FEPS
Delegation:	Jan Marinus Wiersma (Vice-President of the European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity), Danijel Tadic (European Forum en AMS), Judit Tanczos (FEPS)

The European Forum and FEPS visited Kosovo in the framework of the Copenhagen Revisited project and held meetings with (local) government officials, civil society and international organizations. Among others the delegation talked to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of European Integration, European Rule-of-Law Mission (EULEX), International Civilian Office, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, National Democratic Institute, Mayor of Mitrovica South and NGO's KIPRED and SPARK. The aim of the visit was to assess the political situation in Kosovo in light of the European perspective of the country. The delegation of the mission was headed by Jan Marinus Wiersma.

### **Political context**

In an extraordinary parliamentary session in Pristina on 17 February 2008, Kosovo unilaterally declared its independence from Serbia. Kosovo's Prime Minister Hashim Thaci read the declaration that stated that Kosovo is created along the lines of the UN plan drawn up by special representative Martti Ahtisaari, and calls for Kosovo's supervised independence by an international presence. Serbia was, and remains, strongly opposed an independent Kosovo. Pressured by the international community, Belgrade and Pristina have engaged in direct talks since March of 2011, in order to find solutions for practical issues, such as: freedom of movement, trade, energy and telecom distribution, cadastral documents, air traffic and Kosovo's participation in regional initiatives.

In July 2011 tensions increased after Kosovo's special police forces tried to take control of the two border crossings in Serb-dominated northern Kosovo. Prime Minister Thaci decided to send in the police after the EU Rule-of-Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) failed to impose Kosovo's government ban on import of Serbian goods and to establish the Republic of Kosovo customs at the border. The situation on the ground remained tense without major incidents until 27 of September when KFOR troops decided to remove the barricade set up by Kosovo's Serbs at the Jarinje crossing and to close the alternative routes to Serbia which local Serbs tried to prevent. As a result the dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo had been put on a hold until December 2011 when talks in Brussels resulted in progress on finding solutions for practical issues. The EU has decided to grant Serbia EU candidate status only when concrete progress is made in the dialogue and the agreements are implemented on the ground.

### **European perspective**

The official EU policy regarding Kosovo is that the country has an European perspective. Due to the fact that 5 EU member states have not recognised Kosovo it is not possible for the EU to develop a more concrete policy towards Kosovo. Therefore the focus lies on bilateral trade relations which are complicated by the export ban of Kosovo goods by Serbia. The economic development of Kosovo has a great potential due to its young population and natural resources in the ground (coal, zinc, tin, lead, gold and silver).

Officials in Pristina argue that Kosovo and Serbia should have the same EU prospect. The status of Kosovo has to be solved and the joint future within the EU has to be underlined before Serbia enters the EU as, once member of the EU, Serbia will certainly block further Kosovo accession steps, they argue. Officially Pristina remains strongly committed to the EU path, however, certain initiatives are not in line with the EU conditions. For example, the government has committed itself to a 40 year project which will monopolise the energy sector.

The Ministry of European Integration has been established in order to coordinate the work of other ministries that is relevant for the European integration process. In addition, the ministry aims to raise

awareness about what the EU integration process means for its citizens. Generally speaking people in Kosovo tend to equal European integration with visa liberalisation. For the moment it is not possible for the ministry to develop a concrete strategy and policies towards the Union, as the EU – due to its division – does not have a clear strategy towards Kosovo.

According to public opinion research over 90 % of the citizens of Kosovo support EU accession. This strong support was confirmed during our meetings in Kosovo. The European perspective still creates a leverage in the Western Balkans and Kosovo, although credibility of the EU has slightly been damaged by Union's performance in Kosovo and the political inability to solve the current economic and Euro crisis.

### **Rule of law and organized crime**

The European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) is the largest civilian mission ever launched under the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). The main aim of EULEX is to assist and support the Kosovo authorities in establishing the rule of law, specifically in the police, judiciary and customs areas. It is a technical mission which monitors, mentors and advises whilst retaining a number of limited executive powers. EULEX works under the general framework of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244.

The weakness of EULEX is caused by its internal division. Countries that have not recognized Kosovo – especially Cyprus – make it extremely difficult for EULEX to function properly. As a consequence EULEX increasingly has a reputation among Kosovo citizens of being an inefficient EU organ that is not able to strengthen the rule of law in Kosovo and fight corruption and organised crime. As a consequence of the above mentioned complexities EULEX is, on the one hand, not able to answer to the high expectations of establishing a stable democracy in Kosovo. On the other hand, democratic changes have to come from within the country, from the local political elite, civil society and Kosovo citizens.

It is worthwhile to mention the position of the civil society in Kosovo. Despite the fact that the non-governmental structures are better developed in other countries in the region, in Kosovo civil society has proved to be able to strongly influence the policy making and public debate.

### **Role of the United States**

During our meetings the US role in Kosovo has been criticised by different actors. Washington – represented by ambassador Dell – pursues its own interests, sometimes, at the cost of the EU and Kosovo's path towards the EU. Unlike the divided Union, it is able to act promptly in the political arena and is willing to make deals with corrupt officials in order to achieve their goals. The US is pressuring the EU to get some movement in Kosovo and to achieve concrete goals while at the same time Kosovo politicians are supported as long as they act in line with the US interests. Besides the US, other major EU countries (UK, France and Germany) tend to act outside the EU institutions in Kosovo.

### **North Kosovo**

The European Rule of Law Mission is criticised for not being able to strengthen the rule of law in Kosovo and extend its mission to north Kosovo. Especially in this part of the country it is in the interest of organised crime groups to remain the status quo and to create an environment in which organised crime flourishes and criminals cooperate smoothly with their counterparts in the region. As it has been argued by an EULEX representative, in order to impose rule of law in north Kosovo, EULEX needs a more robust mandate, more resources (mainly personnel) and closer cooperation with Belgrade to deal with organised crime.

It is rather difficult to expose the power dynamics in north Kosovo. It is clear that individuals related to organised crime groups control the economic activities. Besides the organised crime two other important actors can be distinguished: local Serbs and Belgrade. It is unclear who are the main coordinators of the road blockades but it seems that local Serbs strongly support them. They hold protests and guard the blockades. At the same time they increasingly isolate themselves from Serbia as KFOR is trying to shut down the alternative gravel roads. Belgrade as the third actor is still relevant in north Kosovo. The Serbian government supports the peaceful resistance of local Serbs and determines

their future as the negotiator at the table with Pristina. The Serbian opposition nationalist party of Tomislav Nikolic (Srpska Napredna Stranka, SNS) is the most popular party in north Kosovo.

The Kosovo government is not able to exercise any control in this part of Kosovo. By investing money they try to involve the Serb citizens in the Kosovo institutions. As a consequence some citizens have double government benefits from the Kosovo and the Serbian institutions. However, this has not resulted in increased willingness of Serbs in north Kosovo to accept the Kosovo institutions and, with that, an independent Kosovo. Therefore, it was of great importance for Kosovo Prime Minister Thaci to get control over the border crossings and to protect the territorial integrity of the country. Now Thaci at least can say that a Kosovo police officer, together with KFOR troops, is controlling the border.

### **Best practises**

The International Business College Mitrovica (IBCM) can be seen as an example of how bridges can be built between young people in the divided Kosovar society. The non-profit educational foundation was established in 2010 by ngo SPARK. IBCM offers EU licensed two-year vocational professional qualifications in line with the Bologna Declaration. After 2 years, it is possible for students to expand their qualification to a Bachelor degree. For the moment IBCM has two buildings, one in mainly Albanian Mitrovica south and one in mainly Serb Mitrovica north. There have already been exchanges and joint meetings between the two buildings and in the future there will be one library and one campus where students, regardless their ethnic background, will meet each other. As the education is in English language IBCM aims to have ethnically mixed classes in the future. In order for the College to function properly in difficult political environment support from officials from Serbia and Kosovo is necessary.

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

The situation in north Kosovo is quite tense and worrying. Passive civil resistance by local Serbs – supported and partly controlled by Belgrade – seems only to be possible as long as the road blockades are intact. However, blocking roads is not a solution and a political solution should be found. Unilateral actions by the Kosovo government to take control over the territory have increased the tensions, undermine the role of the EU and are not helpful for the continuation of the dialogue.

Strengthening the rule of law in Kosovo is not only important for the country itself and its EU aspiration, but also for the credibility of the EU and the international community. Kosovo is a product of international effort and cooperation between all relevant actors is needed in order to achieve progress. International partners in Kosovo should cooperate more closely and should not undermine each other by taking unilateral actions. Customs control in Serb-dominated north Kosovo should be exercised by EULEX in order to collect taxes and prevent illegal activities. Collected money should go on a special account and should be invested in development projects in Kosovo supported by both Serbia and Kosovo.

The dream of a multi-ethnic and democratic Kosovo seems far away but there are no alternatives. The international community has invested a lot in Kosovo and will not allow the country to become a failed state. Political solutions through direct dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina are the only way forward. Concrete steps forward are needed on the short term in order to prevent Kosovo becoming a frozen conflict, something which would only benefit organised crime groups in the region. In order to fight organised crime and corruption close cooperation with Belgrade on the one hand is needed. On the other hand Pristina has to deal with political corruption and organised crime groups (that have close links with Serbian and Albanian groups) in order to give a good example and to strengthen the rule of law.

## **(Social) Democracy mapping project**

In 2010 and 2011 the European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity, together with the Party of European Socialists (PES) and the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament (S&D Group), and with the support and advices of the UK Labour Party and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, organized three thematic conferences in Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia. At the conferences representatives of political parties, the civil society and the academic world discussed with European colleagues the historic development of democracy and of social democracy as well as the current situation in their respective countries. The conferences were concluded with a publication that presented the results, findings and conclusions of those conferences. Drawing on these conferences recommendations were drawn up for the different actors that have a stake in the mentioned region. The conferences were a snapshot of a situation that may have evolved since, and often has. Nevertheless, we believe the analyses will be of value for anyone interested in the region and its accomplishments or lack thereof.

### **Goals**

The regional research aims to acquire knowledge on the development of (social) democracy in these regions, and the challenges that leftist parties face. Moreover, the seminars aim to bring together parties from the region and give them the opportunity to exchange views and experience on (social) democracy. The project also aims to explore the political field in Central Asia, a work field relatively new for the European Forum, and look for potential (social) democratic partners.

### **Program 2011**

In the year 2011 the (Social) Democracy mapping project comprised a conference in Kiev and the publication of the book 'The social democratic map of Eastern Europe South Caucasus and Central Asia; and the outlook for the future.' It was decided to separate the discussions of Eastern Europe (Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine) and Russia, and address the latter in a separate part. The other components of the mapping project (South Caucasus and Central Asia) had been dealt with in 2010 by way of conferences and reports thereof. They were also included in the publication.

### ***Conference Social Democracy in Eastern Europe***

Date: 22-23 October

Location: Kiev, Ukraine

Organisers: European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity in cooperation with the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Kiev.

The aim of the conference was to discuss the current situation and the historical background of the democratic institution building in the Eastern European countries and to identify the challenges and prospects of social democracy, and their relationship with the European Union. Therefore the conference brought together representatives of social democratic political parties and organisations, as well as independent political scientists and experts from the civil society from the European Union and four Eastern European countries: Belarus, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine. The conference was led by three chairs: Jan Marinus Wiersma, Vice-President of the European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity; André Gerrits, Chairman of the Alfred Mozer Stichting; and Alain Richard, Senator, Former Defence Minister of France and Member of Presidency of the Party of European Socialists.

### **The case of Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine:**

#### **Summary of discussions:**

#### **DAY I. Current political and economic situation in the Eastern European countries**

In the first panel the effects of the economic crisis on the economies in Moldova, Belarus, Ukraine and Russia were discussed. **Aleksandr Muravschi** (economist, consultant for Deputy Prime Minister (of economy), Moldova), focussed especially on the Moldovan situation which he characterised as growing but also in the need of reform. The presentation of the second speaker, a **Belarus economist**, centered around the historic factors of the economic decline in Belarus. **Vladimir Dubrovsky** (Senior economist at the Center for Social and Economic Research, Ukraine) remarked that the economic crisis severely impacted Ukraine and Russia, but that the internal factors of the crisis were different.

The second panel was a round-table discussion, in which representatives of Social Democratic political parties from the region presented their parties and elaborated on their current challenges and prospects. A representative of the **Just World Party** (Belarus) said that the party as all other Belarus political parties, cannot fully enjoy its rights of assembly and Belarusian authorities are doing everything possible to block the activity of political parties and the parties' efforts to unite. He also mentioned recent changes in Belarusian legislation, according to which public demonstrations in the streets including those organized by political parties are prohibited. A representative of the **Belarusian Social Democratic Party (Hramada)**, confirmed the unfavourable conditions for the activity of political parties in Belarus. He also expressed his concern about the interference of the government in internal party affairs. A representative of the **Young Social Democrats 'Maladaya Hramada' (MSD-MH)**, Belarus, said that one of the main problems of both the government and the opposition in Belarus is that none of them is able to propose any clear scheme for reform of the Belarusian society. **Oleg Tulea** (MP from the Democratic Party of Moldova) said that the discussion on whether the political system - which is now parliamentary - should be parliamentary or presidential is very topical in Moldova at the moment because of a deadlock in parliament between the Communist Party and the democratic parties when it comes to the election of the next president. **Alexander Antonov** (Social-Democratic Party of Ukraine) said that the dismantling of democratic structures can be observed now in Ukraine and called this process an attempt to return to Russian and Belarusian standards.

The third panel discusses the Eastern Partnership and the perspectives of EU enlargement. **Jan Marinus Wiersma** (Vice-President European Forum) said that a reference to membership of Ukraine in the future agreement will encourage the country to proceed with reforms. However, he noted that Ukraine is involved in a struggle about its democratic future the outcome of which is unclear. As far as the strategic direction of Ukraine is concerned – to the West or to the East - this is a decision the country has to make independently. Speaking about the progress Ukraine has made on its way to EU integration, **Vsevolod Chentsov** (Acting Director-General at the Directorate-General for the EU of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine) noted that the legislative basis of cooperation in areas like energy and a free visa regime has already been prepared, and Ukraine hopes to enter the implementation stage. He also said that cooperation between the EU and Ukraine in the framework of the Eastern Partnership Summits makes Ukraine less enthusiastic as this kind of cooperation has less impact than bilateral cooperation. An extensive discussion ensued in which amongst other things the participants further discussed the eligibility of Eastern European countries for EU membership by emphasizing the need of a mentality change, so that EU integration can be internalized and not be a wholly external process.

## **DAY II. Historical background of democratic institution building and the development of social democracy in Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine**

In the first panel the democratic institution building and the development of social democracy in Belarus after independence was discussed. A **political scientist from Belarus** started out by naming the factors that negatively influence the development of the democratic political system in Belarus, which is centered around the fact that since President Alexander Lukashenka came to power in 1994 the democratic institutions were destroyed or their functions devaluated. Touching on the question whether the **Belarusian Social Democratic Party (Hramada)** supports the integration of Belarus in the EU, its representative said that he is a Eurosceptic, but that the future of Belarus in the EU is incorporated in the programme of the party.

In the second panel democratic institution building and the development of social democracy in Moldova after independence was discussed. **Mr. Vitali Andrievski** (Director of AVA.MD news portal, Moldova) started his presentation on a positive note stating that Moldova is one of the leaders of democracy transformation in the post-Soviet arena. However he named many problems that hinder

further democratic transformation like the clan system of elites, the oligarchs and the influence of Romania. **Corneliu Ciurea** (Political expert at IDIS Viitorul Institute for Development and Social Initiatives) argued that the situation of social democracy in Moldova is determined by the relationship between the Democratic Party of Moldova (DPM, leader Marian Lupu) and the Party of Communists (leader Vladimir Voronin). The communists do not recognize the Democratic Party as left-wing and call the DPM leaders henchmen of Western capitalism. Concerning European integration, he said that right-wing parties in Moldova are bigger supporters of this process, which is part of the reason why the Democratic Party feels more comfortable with them. **Oleg Tulea** (DPM) commented by adding that the problem of the recent power of the oligarchs is relevant for all the parties in Moldova and that it should be solved in a systematic way. He mentioned the Law on Political parties adopted in 2009, according to which parties will get financial assistance from the state, and said it can be considered as a first step to solve the problem, as parties that have official state financing are less likely to resort to oligarchic support. Mr. Tulea pointed out that there is a need to establish an ideological informational platform as there is no clear understanding of right-wing or left-wing politics, and people largely think that right-wing parties are pro-Romanian or pro-European and leftist parties are pro-Russian.

The third panel discussed the democratic institution building and the development of social democracy in Ukraine after independence. **Vitaly Shybko** (Head of the Institute for Democracy and Social Processes (IDSP), Ukraine) noted that one of the major legislative problems that hinder democratic reforms in Ukraine is the Constitution of 1996, which gives more power to the president and less to the parliament. **Olexiy Haran** (Professor of Political Science at the Kyiv Mohyla Academy, Ukraine) described the current state of affairs as a drift into deep authoritarianism. People are disappointed in the Orange revolution and therefore reluctant to take to the streets. **Mr. Antonov** (Social Democratic Party of Ukraine) expressed his hope that Ukraine will see a change of elites soon and that a democratic transformation will follow. **Mr. Haran** also discussed the falling ratings of the Communist Party since 2004, the failure of the Socialist Party to catch the moment in order to become popular, and the existence of a niche for social democracy which, according to him, nobody can fill at the moment. **Jan Marinus Wiersma** (European Forum) pointed out that it is very difficult for European social democrats to identify partners to work with in Ukraine. Further discussions concerned the question of leadership and its role in building social democracy within the country. Some argued that there is a necessity for a strong leader who would be able to unite people around him/her. Others rejected the necessity of building socialist structures around one leader and suggested to concentrate on clear goals and plans of what a social democratic party as a whole can offer to society.

## **The Case of Russia**

The situation in the Russian Federation was also discussed during the seminar in Kiev. However, given the importance of the country and its special position in Europe we created a separate chapter dealing with it.

### **Summary of discussions:**

**Boris Guseletov** (head of the International Department of the Just Russia Party) said the Russian regime is authoritarian and that out of seven officially registered parties in Russia only four may have a chance to enter parliament in the upcoming elections. **Alexey Karpov** (International Secretary of the Russian Social-Democratic Union of Youth RSDUY) said that the political process is completely paralysed, there are no transparent elections and the people have lost trust in the government to such a degree that a lot of them are waiting to escape from the country. Referring to his RSDUY he said that although its activities are prohibited in Russia, it still carries out its projects. However, the party is not fighting against the system as it believes the system will kill itself. Mr. Karpov also spoke out in favour of travel abroad, calling it the best instrument of democratic change: once people start to see and experience true democratic development, they will start wanting the same in Russia.

**Boris Guseletov** (Just Russia party) spoke about the major difficulties the social democrats face in post-Soviet Russia like amongst other things: the absence of a broad social basis for social democracy, the negative image of its ideology because of the Soviet heritage, and related to that the problem of identification because people hardly distinguish social democrats from communists.

Speaking about the position of his Just Russia party, Mr. Guseletov noted that during the last four years the support for the party among the population had increased, while the popularity of the Communist Party decreased. Mr. Guseletov said that his party stands for liberalization of the political sphere proposing a simplification of the party registration procedure and the establishment of parliamentary control.

Describing the political environment in Russia, **Andrey Ryabov** (Scholar-in-residence of the East East: Partnership Beyond Borders Program of the Carnegie Moscow Center) said that there are almost no institutions independent from the government, and those that are do not have access to resources. He, however, assured that Russia is moving towards democracy in its own way. Speaking about the challenges and future prospects of the political system, he said that the country is coming into a period of total uncertainties, characterized by no public competition and silence of the opposition. He stated that negative attitudes to the authorities are growing, but unfortunately they do not lead to demands for more democracy, and that instead another threat to the government is appearing: nationalism. Mr. Ryabov added that it would be difficult to find a new leader who is able to preserve the stability of the current political system while conducting reforms because Vladimir Putin made the system into one of manual management that relies on concrete rule by concrete people.

### **Recommendations:**

Taking into account the results of our mapping effort we present the following recommendations to the different actors that have a stake in Eastern Europe, the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia.

#### *Overall*

As a general principle, we should take care to differentiate our approach to the countries in question depending on their democratic and social democratic development.

#### *The European Union*

The European Union has extensive relations with all the countries that have been examined here. Existing treaties offer the basis for human rights dialogues which should include the topic of democratic development. They should get the priority they deserve and not be considered secondary to economic or other interests. Through existing financial instruments and the future European Endowment for Democracy more funds will have to be made available for democracy promotion. The EU member states should defend the competences of the OSCE and the Council of Europe in the field of human rights and democracy.

#### *The OSCE and the Council of Europe*

For obvious reasons the European social democrats should seek closer cooperation with the OSCE and the Council of Europe and especially with their parliamentary assemblies.

#### *Party of European Socialists*

- In countries of the first category (authoritarian regimes) the PES should show clear solidarity to progressive and left-wing parties, affiliated or not, that strive for democracy and support social democratic values and are facing very difficult circumstances. It should promptly respond to any repression by the authorities of the states concerned. The PES should promote cross-border communication and cooperation between the parties in similar circumstances by offering them a meeting place for example during important PES events and creating a platform on which such cooperation can be built.
- In countries of the second category (relatively free with authoritarian tendencies) the PES should keep open lines of communication and make regular assessments of developments on the ground. As this category involves countries where the state of democracy is shaky, the party landscape volatile and (political) corruption often rampant, the PES should also assess its partners regularly to make sure they are not diverging from the standards of (social) democracy as laid down in official documents of the PES and the SI. This approach should also be applied to Russia.
- In countries of the third category (on a democratic path), the PES should cement the existing partnerships in view of eventual closer cooperation with the EU (even if membership of the EU is

not opportune at the moment). A regular assessment of the democratic development of the country in question and of the policies of affiliated parties is called for.

#### *The Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats of the European Parliament*

- In general the S&D Group should use the many possibilities that the European Parliament offers to maintain open lines of communication to the countries in question. Where partners are represented in parliament working relationships should be established.
- Through the relevant European Parliament committees, the interparliamentary delegations and the plenary pressure can be exerted on states that disrespect democracy and human rights.
- For the countries of the first category, the S&D Group should remain a strong advocate of democratic change and reject any attempt to let economic interests dominate the relations with these countries. Repression of democratic rights and basic freedoms should be promptly condemned. Opportunities to visit these countries – which still exist for parliamentarians – should be used to promote more democracy and for contacts with the opposition.
- As regards the countries of the second category, the S&D Group should focus on the development of more substantive relations aimed at stimulating reform but also demanding attention to the social dimension of the transition processes. In order to achieve this the Group should maintain contact both with the governments and opposition parties, including of course relevant social democratic ones. Again this approach is also appropriate in the case of Russia.
- For countries of the third category, the S&D Group should act as an advocate for further European integration (even if not membership) and closer ties. Supporting countries of this category with their often difficult and necessary reforms will consolidate the democratic progress they have made.

#### *European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity*

- In countries of the first category the European Forum should adopt a double strategy: wherever possible support existing social democratic forces and create alliances with NGOs, independent personalities, youth and gender movements and active users of the social media to promote democracy in general. The Forum should work with other political families, international institutions and NGOs to establish multi-party platforms. If appropriate, the Forum should facilitate the exchange of democratic experiences. In the past people from the successful Serbian OTPOR movement have provided their expertise to opposition organizations in Azerbaijan.
- In countries of the second category and Russia the European Forum should establish and strengthen ties with social democratic political parties but also with other progressive organisations, like NGOs or youth movements, to build support for the social democratic ideals. The party political foundations linked to the Forum should support the parties or organizations in question through training and exchange of knowledge.
- In countries of the third category the European Forum and the foundations should provide extensive support to social democratic parties, that have established relations with the PES or the Socialist International, through training programmes and exchange of knowledge aiming to build long-lasting partnerships with them. When basic trainings are no longer necessary, more advanced trainings should be developed.

## **CEE Network for Gender Issues**

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### **Activities, Advocacy, Partnerships and Outreach**

CEE Network further strengthened its cooperation with PES W, European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity, with the FEPS and the LP Westminster Foundation. It contributed to the PES W campaign 'women and pension reforms' and provided the Slovenian case study on the same. Together the Network and PES W supported SD women organizations in several countries ahead of general elections, e.g. Croatia and Slovenia or in changing their electoral legislation before general elections (Serbia in April 2012, Montenegro in 2013). The PES W President strongly contributed to the successful outcomes of the Network program for 2011 and the relationship has been mutually reinforcing.

It also contributed to a consultation on discrimination of women in the labour market at the regional seminar of the FEPS and Forum on new SD economic policies. The CEE Network Chair gave one of the key note presentations at the FEPS conference on EU enlargement and wrote an analytical article for the FEPS publication on the New Left.

A number of important capacity development and outreach/advocacy activities were also carried out in partnerships and through additional resources from other partners, for instance the support to SD women activists in Arab spring countries; development of the ODIHR manual for empowerment of women within political parties and enhancing the parity movement, especially in Albania, in Serbia in Montenegro and in Slovenia.

CEE Network has been working with OSCE and ODIHR in different projects since 1998. Cooperation intensified in 2011 and the Network Executive Director became member of the expert team working on a special toolkit, to be published in 2012, for women's empowerment within political parties. She also took part in the OSCE-ODIHR gatherings with Georgian, Bosnian, Serbian, Kosovo, and Albanian women. The biggest result of this cooperation is a successful mediation of the CEE Network in tailoring and leading preparatory meeting for public talks of Serbian and Kosovo women parliamentarians scheduled to take place in Priština in March 2011 and in Belgrade in April 2012.

The CEE Network continued also to cooperate with the EC by participating at the main session of the EC Network of women in political and economic decision. The Network delivered an analytical presentation on the role of men in leading positions to promote women at high political decision making levels. It also took part in the DG Justice yearly EU gender equality conference, dealing this time with the issue of the gender pay gap.

The Network participated in the seminars, workshops and other activities of partners like the OSCE, NDI or UNDP, Turkish government and contributed substantively to the development of objectives, agendas and structures for discussion negotiating in the process its own expert role in the dialogue. While CEE Network activities were mostly not covered by the media they received visibility through that of other partners. Network experts and Board members also gave a number of TV, radio and press interviews.

The participation of SIW President, PES Women President, CEE Network President and Executive Director at the UN Commission on the Status of Women (February 2011) provided a platform for visibility and SD/SDP affirmation on gender equality, last but not least in the CEE region. This served for an exchange of experience and best practice, to get information, to make personal contacts with the

UN and other important international institutions dealing with gender equality, as well as with regional women movements from all continents. At the 2011 UN CSW, the Network participated at the SIW panel on “Beijing+15 – What’s next”; presented the experience of Balkan women in combating political violence against women at an International Parliamentary Union panel and met in person with newly elected head of the UN Women; distributed 300 copies of the 2010 publication.

The Network regional seminar in Skopje focused on mentoring young social democratic women politicians. The discussion was also opened up with the male leadership through the activities of women politicians from SP/SDP in Romania, Albania, Serbia, Montenegro, B&H and Croatia.

Network activities in Hungary focused on building up a firm socialist opposition to undemocratic and women hostile policies of the ultra-conservative government particularly in relation to the diminishing overall democratic standard, women social, economic, reproductive and minority rights.

Estonian SDP started a party initiative to support women entrepreneurship; Ukraine will include Network experiences in their future activities; in B&H they are working towards the inclusion of Network experiences and positions in their governmental action plan; in Montenegro the focus continues to be on rural women and gender concerns in municipalities; in Serbia, there is no change in terms of gender in SDP; WF of SDP in Croatia is insisting to include their proposals in the work of the newly elected Croatian coalition government.

The development of women’s human rights in Turkey remained in the CEE Network focus also in 2011. Due to limited human and financial resources the CEE Network sought to have impact through cooperation in the gender equality activities of Turkish NGOs, government, parliament and UNDP. This year the Network contributed to a presentation on experiences of Balkan women in the processes of political empowerment of women at a national conference in Turkey with prominent international gender equality experts. The Network used this event also as an opportunity to renew cooperation with women from SI sister party and with the KADER, most important Turkish women human rights NGO.

There is a growing demand from gender NGOs for cooperation with the Network:

- Cooperation was established with two well renowned women NGOs from Croatia (Centre for Women’s Studies) and Serbia (Belgrade Fund for Political Excellency). The former uses the Network expertise for training prominent women NGO activists from the Balkan region and for consultancy in parallel electoral campaigning, while the latter asked for support in training of men and women parliamentarians dealing with implementation of the UN SC Resolution 1325 and as mediators in the BFPE and in two OSCE Missions from Priština and Belgrade joint project of launching the first public bilateral talks of Kosovo and Serbia women MPs.
- In Slovenia, the CEE Network is continuing its excellent co-operation with the Women’s Lobby of Slovenia. The president of this crucial umbrella NGO is a member of our Network. In 2011 we had a visible role in two main actions of this lobby. It is also cooperating with the Dobrnič Association. (The association keeps alive the tradition of massive left oriented antifascist’s women movement which brought together progressive women against fascism in World War II. CEE Network Executive Director’s intervention at the annual memorial organized by the Foundation was quoted in mainstream print and electronic media.)
- CEE Network has also engaged with the European Gender Equality Institute from its inception and participated in regional consultations of the Institute with journalists and stakeholders.

## **Key Observations**

1. The political and social turmoil bubbling in the region and in Europe in general as a result of financial crisis and economic challenges needs additional and urgent political engagement, last but not least with women’s organizations in SP/SDP. Xenophobia and a conservative turn in some countries demands additional efforts.
2. Women in the region face similar political, economic and social problems. SP/SDP parties generally do not have specially elaborated policies to prevent gender based discrimination,

particularly of the most vulnerable women's groups. The Network conducted an analysis of the status of four vulnerable groups of women (young, highly educated first job seekers, over 45, and rural women). A capacity building seminar was organized and a questionnaire/survey was conducted on the issue. The seminar offered good practices for economic empowerment of women from Slovenia and Montenegro.

3. The mostly neo-liberal approach to job creation policies prevalent in the region did not give results and SP/SDP need to advocate a move from active employment policy to active industrial and rural development policies.
4. There is still a great lack of systematic policy formulation support to women's party organizations and a systematic way to address capacity needs due to turnover in party leaderships and those in women's organizations within parties.
5. There continues to be weak engagement of party male leaders and results are difficult to achieve with joint action. It has been proven that party-to-party peer pressure gives results and joint activities of the Network and PES W with the European Forum, FEPS and the PES itself are of crucial importance. A successful example was the joint lobbying action of the CEE Network Board members and Socialist International Women (SIW) President and regional vice president targeting male party leaders in sister parties in Serbia and Montenegro was crucial for the enactment of improved legal quota in Serbia and for the first legal quota ever enacted in Montenegro.
6. While the share of women MPs has increased in many countries the main obstacles remain in electoral systems that are not conducive to the impact of positive measures demanding continued lobbying and advocacy of the women's movement.
7. There is a need to strengthen cooperation and peer learning among young SD women activists. This warrants stronger Network cooperation with ECOSY, but also with youth organizations at SP/SDP party level.

## **Key Results**

The CEE Network project financed by the Olov Palme Center was fully implemented and the 2011 financial report audited and found to be in full compliance with reporting requirements.

The Network strengthened its cooperation, outreach and capacity building activities both substantively (policies, manuals) and in terms of partnerships, with ODIHIR, UNDP, OSCE and a number of foundations. A significant step forward was the outreach to women in Arab states (Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco) through a partnership with NDI which created ground for 2012 Network activities in that region.

While focusing on women leaders from the left and social-democratic political parties, the Network broadened the dialogue and capacity development activities with like-minded NGOs and those that can influence the political discourse on gender equality in their countries. Through these partnerships and outreach activities the Network managed also to leverage limited resources from the Olov Palme Center and Westminster Foundation and strengthen the impact of its activities and objectives.

The CEE Network continued the tradition of publishing special annual reports and the 2011 publication is forthcoming. It will be presented at the upcoming 2012 UN CSW session in New York. The publication focuses on the gender aspects of pension reforms, an issue that has been discussed in various Network activities.

It should be noted that the Network operates with a very limited budget and that, apart from the Olov Palme project outputs, most of the activities were conducted by women volunteers. Network participation at events was provided by the Forum, FEPS and partner organizations.

### **Sharing Experiences with Women in Arab States in Transition**

Looking at new developments in European, and indeed SEE neighbourhood, the Network embarked on consultations with long term partners (SIW, NDI, OSCE) on the evolving situation in the Arab countries and the implications for the status of women. It was concluded that the CEE Network for Gender Issues with fifteen years of activism for empowerment of women in transition and post conflict situations could be a very useful interlocutor to women politicians and civil society actors in Arab countries. As a result the Network was invited to assist the SIW Council to analyze the situation and prepare for future action; to formulate a joint project with the European Forum on women in the Arab spring; to submit a project on the same to the Westminster Foundation; to share experiences with NDI in Tunisia, in Morocco; to observe elections in Tunisia; to help formulate gender aspects of the support that OSCE and ODIHR were planning to give to their Mediterranean partners.

The results of this cooperation are: clearer understanding of issues relating to the status of Arab women and the need to support them in the formulation of demands for constitutional and electoral and party legislation changes to reflect their concerns. Their movement is growing, albeit slowly, across women networks in Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt. The process of forming or transforming women organizations in left wing parties has been started. Together these organizations and movements have better chances to influence mainstream politics.

### **Project Proposals:**

Based on the insight of the most urgent needs of women in Arab spring the CEE Network Board has prepared two project proposals: a joint venture project was proposed to SIDA, in order to help strengthen youth and women wings of secular left wing oriented parties in Egypt and Yemen, and a project with LP Westminster Foundation, regional exchange of experience of Balkan and Turkish women on gender aspects of the changing of constitutions and electoral legislation in transition with left wing women politicians and NGO leaders from Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt. The latter project has been approved. It should be completed by the end of March 2012.)

In 2011 CEE Network Executive Board was increasingly active to be able to promptly respond to the emergencies of women in Arab spring countries as well as to better support PESW in their policies to counter the tide of conservative austerity politics within European Union.

### **Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation**

During training activities, workshops and consultations evaluation was conducted through:

- Workshop direct surveys with responses from participants; Participants filled in anonymous evaluation forms at the capacity building seminar and the analysis of their answers was sent to all stakeholders together with the report from the seminar.
- Feedback from participants after the event; Written reports received from Ukraine, Estonia, BiH, Montenegro, Serbia and personal insight at the WF of SDP Croatia conference in Zagreb (January) on how they used the new knowledge for the initiatives to change their party policies for the four vulnerable women groups.
- Reports and analysis conducted by the Network and other cooperating organizations that informed the Board meetings;
- Independent financial audit of the Network financial management that was fully satisfactory for 2011. Conducted according to the requirements of the financing foundation/organization.

While the Network Board was fully seized of all activities and made decision on these, regular information sharing was conducted with the European Forum, PES W, FEPS and the respective

financing foundation. Main activities and results were also shared with participating partners and invited women party organizations and their party presidents.

Evaluation seminar, co-organized with FEPS in Brussels (November) confirmed the findings and conclusions from the capacity building seminar emphasizing the urgent need to address neo-liberal austerity measures that may lead to the further deterioration of the four vulnerable women groups we have identified. (Attached manual on mentoring: “Passing the torch” in electronic version and the Narrative report from the Evaluation seminar.

## Tunisia Fact Finding Mission

Date: 27 en 28 April  
Location: Tunis  
Delegation: Jan Marinus Wiersma (Vice-President of the European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity)  
Lo Breemer (AMS board member)  
Marina Ohanjanyan (AMS and European Forum project manager).

In the light of the Tunisian revolution the AMS organised a small fact-finding mission to Tunisia tied to the PES Euromed Conference on 28 and 29 April. The aims of the fact-finding mission were to see how Tunisia is developing politically after the revolution and to investigate how and if there are possibilities for the European Union, the Netherlands, the European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity and the AMS to contribute to the democratisation process. Therefore we spoke with different political left-wing parties, NGO's or related organisations. Meetings were set up with the following organisations:

- **Ettajdid** (former Communist Party): Ahmed Brahim (leader) and Mahmoud Ben Romdhane (member of the secretariat).
- **Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES)**, Tunis office: Dr Ralf Melzer (Head of office)
- **General Tunisian Labour Union (UGTT)**: Abdesslem Jerad (Secretary General) and Mohamed S'himi (International Secretary).
- **Dutch Embassy lunch**: Our delegation met with H.E. Ambassador Caroline Weijers, Mr. Arjuna Kannangara, Mr. Pim de Keizer (adj.dir. ADB), Ms. Yvette Berghuijs (Bui.Za), Ms. Stephanie Willman Bordat (Global Rights, Morocco) .
- **Democratic Forum for Labour and Liberty (FDTL)**: Our delegation spoke with Abdellatif Abid (director of training) and Mouldi Riahi (Member of FDTL Political Bureau)
- **National Democratic Institute (NDI)**: Les Campbell (Director for Middle East and North Africa). Nicole Rowsell (Senior Project Manager, Washington DC, to be stationed in Tunis).
- **Ennahda**: Abdallah Zouari (Communications team)
- **Messaoud Romdhani**: Member of the High Commission for the Realisation of the Objectives of the Revolution, Political Reform and Transition.

### Political Context

In December 2010 wide protests erupted in Tunisia over the high unemployment rate, living conditions, the economic situation and dissatisfaction with the ruling elite. As a result President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali fled the country on 14 January 2011 after being in power for 23 years. This inspired uprisings across the region that became known as the Arab Spring.

On 23 October 2011 the first free elections for the National Constituent Assembly (NCA) were held. The formerly forbidden moderate Islamist party Ennahda won the elections with 89 seats out of 217. The NCA is given the task to write a new constitution within approximately one year and to govern the country. Ennahda formed a coalition with the centre-left secular party Congress for the Republic (CPR) and the social-democratic Democratic Forum for Labour and Liberties (FDTL)/ Ettakatol. The coalition holds a comfortable 138 seats. Moncef Marzouki who lived in France after his party the CPR was banned by Ben Ali's ruling Constitutional Democratic Rally (RCD), returned to Tunisia after the ouster of Ben Ali and was elected interim President on 12 December 2011.

### Conclusions that came out of the meetings

- The country and its political and civil representatives seem to be very open to contacts, support and advice from the EU, which presents us with a great opportunity to contribute.
- Our delegation did not especially notice any anti-EU sentiments during meetings or on the streets of Tunis.
- Predictions for the upcoming elections: the turnout will be big, the Islamic Ennahda party will come out as the biggest party gaining anywhere between 20% and 30% or even more of the votes.

- A big question is what role the young people, who initiated and participated in the protests that led to the revolution, will be given in the political and electoral process?
- There are some dangers to the success of the democratic revolution. The main and most serious one is probably the phenomenon we have already observed in countries like Ukraine, where the election and overly high expectations at the time and directly after the revolution, can in several years lead to an equally high level of disappointment. There are two forthcoming dangers from this. First, that the former RCD elites can take over again in a new disguise, riding the wave of disillusionment. It seems unlikely that they will try to rebuild the RCD in the near future, considering the negative sentiments in society towards it. However, we should not forget the 100.000s of people that have been linked with it: it is simply impossible to just get rid of all those people that have worked for the former regime in some capacity or other. The other perceived danger is the Islamists gaining influence and reversing some of the positive achievements (e.g. women's rights) of the past.
- In terms of possible partners for European social democrats, two main candidates seem to emerge: the FDTL and the Ettajdid parties. the FDTL, already being a partner of the PES, among others, seems a particularly viable candidate.

### ***Recommendations***

Considering the conclusions above our delegation made the following recommendations:

- The EU and its institutions should do everything in their power to support the secular democratic movements in Tunisia, to help ensure a positive outcome of the revolution. This may mean economic measures (e.g. financial aid, opening the agricultural markets), political support, and logistical support (e.g. technical organisation of elections, supporting parties in their organisation, monitoring elections, technical assistance with the work of parliament, government, civil society, media and other democratic institutions, assistance, where needed, in writing the new constitution).
- The Netherlands and its Ministry of Foreign Affairs should unconditionally support the democratic development of Tunisia. This includes the higher political level, but also the grass-roots level of party and civil society building. Funds should be made available for the agents at hand to implement such projects. The Netherlands should also seek involvement in the form of sending election observers, and offering to assist with expertise in organising the elections.
- The Dutch civil society in general has a role to play as well, as its experience would be helpful to the process of civil society building that is occurring now in Tunisia. Especially when it comes to media, much can be done to train professional, objective reporters, where previously all mainstream media had been pro-government. Organisations like Radio Netherlands Wereldomroep (RNW) and Press Now can play a significant role here.
- The European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity should keep paying close attention to the developments in Tunisia, and send fact-finding missions should the situation change.
- The Alfred Mozer Stichting should invest in a long-term relationship with the Tunisian sister party/ies by way of its usual offer of trainings. Party building, campaigning, activating women in politics seem to be some of the subjects of great importance at the moment in Tunisia. This is knowledge and skills that we have much experience with and can share very well.

## The Information Service in 2011

### Political developments

In 2011 several important political developments took place in the countries of Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans. Parliamentary elections were held in Russia. The ruling United Russia party gained 49.3% of the votes, which indicates a decrease in support in comparison with the 2007 elections (64,1%). The party has still secured the majority of seats in the parliament. Large-scale fraud took place and demonstrators went out on the streets to protest against the results. Early parliamentary elections were held in FYR Macedonia. SDSM finished second winning 42 seats in parliament and by this the Social Democrats have more than doubled their number of seats. The conservative VMRO DPMNE won 56 seats. A coalition with VMRO DPMNE and the smaller ethnic Albanian Democratic Union for Integration (DUI) was formed. Parliamentary elections were held in Croatia. The 'Kukuriku' coalition led by the Social Democratic Party of Croatia (SDP) won convincingly 80 out of 151 seats in the parliament. SDP leader Zoran Milanović became Croatia's new Prime Minister.

Several groundbreaking developments took place in the countries in the Middle East and North Africa. In Tunis former President Ben Ali fled the country after holding power for 23 years, following popular uprisings over the economic situation and dissatisfaction with the ruling elite. In October the first free elections were held in Tunisia. The formerly forbidden moderate Islamist party Ennahda won the elections with 89 out of 217 seats. After 18 days of violent protests and losing the support of the military, former Egyptian leader Mubarak resigned in February, ending 30 years of autocratic rule. The military took over power, until a new government and parliament will be installed. Elections for a People's Assembly were held in 3 stages. The Islamists performed extremely well, obtaining over two-third of the votes. The social democratic parties, like other non-religious parties, won only a few seats. The Egyptian Social Democratic Party that was part of the Egyptian Bloc Alliance won 16 out of 508 seats.

In Libya leader Qadhafi was killed after a civil war that lasted for months. Furthermore, violent protests have been raging over Syria. What started as peaceful demonstrations for democracy and reforms has turned into everyday violence by the government led by President Al-Asad against civilians. In Morocco, following the pro-democracy demonstrations that swept the country since the beginning of 2011, early parliamentary elections were held. The largest left-wing party in the country, the Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP), won 39 out of 395 seats and remained the fifth largest party in the parliament.

Parliamentary elections were held in Turkey. The ruling AK party won with nearly 50% of the votes, gaining 326 seats in parliament. The main opposition party CHP of Kemal Kilicdaroglu increased its vote share to 25.9 percent, winning 135 seats.

In Central Asia no remarkable developments occurred. Presidential and parliamentary elections were held in Kazakhstan. President Nursultan Nazarbayev secured 95.5 per cent of the votes in elections that were marred by fraud. The ruling Nur Otan party gained control of 83 of the parliament's 107 seats in elections that international observers said did not meet democratic standards. Hundreds of opposition supporters have protested the results, among which the opposition All-National Social Democratic Party that gained 2 percent of the ballot, short of the 7% needed to win representation in parliament

## **Information Service**

### **Aims for 2011**

In the Information Service proposal of 2011, several aims were outlined:

#### **Country Updates**

1. To update all the dynamic Country Updates, whenever it is needed, especially after elections, changes in party leadership and developments in society with a big impact on the political developments;
2. To publish 8 mini “rough guides to social democracy” in Turkey, Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Montenegro & Croatia;
3. To introduce a News Alert service for elections and political crisis situations;
4. To link up our website with many different websites in order to increase our visibility and the number of visitors;
5. To improve the quality of the Country Updates by including a new chapter in all of them with biographies of the most important leaders in the different countries.

#### **Newsflash and Calendar**

6. To continue the Newsflash and the Calendar for the foundations and political parties in our network.

#### **Social media**

7. To maintain and further develop our Facebook and Twitter accounts.

#### **Annual report**

8. To publish online the European Forum Annual Report.

Below we will outline the developments in our work according to the aims set out for 2011.

#### **- Country Updates**

On the website there is a total of 30 Country Updates. Between February 2011 and January 2012 we have updated a lot of country updates concerning countries in Northern Africa and the Middle East, following major turbulent political developments in these regions. There have also been several elections in different countries, which have also been added to the Country Updates. In the scheme below, you can find an overview of all the present Country Updates and the most important events that have been revised or added to these Country Updates. In the second column the status of changes of 2011-2012 is given. We have chosen to discriminate between ‘partly revised’ and ‘fully revised’. In the case of partly revised Country Updates, the most recent events have been added. In the case of fully revised updates, the whole text has been checked to test whether it is still accurate and complete, and a considerable amount of changes has been made. For Libya we have also included the status ‘under construction’. After the fall of leader Qadhafi the entire country update became outdated. We will write a complete new Country Update as soon as there is more news on elections, the political system and political parties. In the third column, you find an overview of the most important events added to the Country Updates.

#### **- Biographies in Country Updates**

In 2010 we have started investing in a new item of the Country Updates: biographies of the most important leaders in the different countries. From February 2011 to January 2012 biographies have been added to the following Country Updates: Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Egypt, FYR Macedonia, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Territories, Syria and Tunisia.

#### **- New structure**

In 2011 we have changed the structure of the Country Updates. The Country Updates used to give an overview of the political developments in a country, focusing on the most recent (presidential and parliamentary) elections, and important political issues in the concerning country. Experience has

showed that certain information becomes outdated very quickly. For instance, political developments may change very rapidly in a certain period (e.g. revolution, civil war etc.). Therefore, we decided to exclude the section on “Important Political Issues” from the Country Updates and focus only on elections, political (social democratic) parties and biographies. This way we can keep the Country Updates updated for a longer period of time and bring our network really exclusive information. In the “Introduction” section the political situation will be described briefly. Besides, it is still possible for our readers to easily consult political news of a more temporary nature. On a Country Update page one can find all the headlines on a country (which contain recent articles on political news). Also, in the section “Sources” we will arrange the sources according to different topics and will include sources with background information on political issues. In some of the Country Updates the sources have already been arranged. News on the political situation of a more temporary nature can also be found in the newsflash, which is published every two weeks.

The new structure of the Country Updates is as follows:

- a) Introduction
- b) Elections and political situation
- c) Social democratic parties
- d) Other political parties
- e) Biographies

In 2011 the new structure has been applied in several Country Updates.

#### **Overview changes in Country Updates February 2011– January 2012**

Albania	Fully revised	Local elections 2011, political situation, political parties, new structure
Algeria	Partly revised	Protests 2011
Armenia	Partly revised	New structure
Azerbaijan	-	-
Belarus	Partly revised	Biographies, new structure
Bosnia Herzegovina	Fully revised	Elections, new government, political situation, gender, parties, biographies, new structure
Croatia	Partly revised	Parliamentary elections 2011, referendum on EU accession, new structure
Egypt	Fully revised	Elections and political situation, revolution 2011, referendum, biographies, new structure
FYR Macedonia	Partly revised	Introduction, parliamentary elections 2011, political parties, biographies
Georgia	-	-
Israel	-	-
Jordan	Partly revised	Popular uprisings 2011, dissolution government, biographies
Kazakhstan	Partly revised	Presidential elections 2011, presidential term
Kosovo	-	-
Kyrgyzstan	Fully revised	Presidential elections 2011, new government, gender representation, parliamentary elections 2010, parties biographies, new structure

Lebanon	Fully revised	Elections, political parties, biographies, new structure
Libya	Under construction	Under construction until elections June 2012
Moldova	Partly revised	Local elections 2011
Montenegro	-	-
Morocco	Partly revised	Latest developments, constitutional referendum, parliamentary elections 2011, biographies
Palestinian Territories	Fully revised	Elections and political situation, political parties, biographies, new structure
Republic of Tunisia	Fully revised	Parliamentary elections, new government, parties biographies
Russia	Partly revised	Parliamentary elections December 2011
Serbia	Partly revised	Cooperation with ICTY, arrest <b>Ratko Mladic</b> , EU integration process, political parties
Syrian Arab Republic	Partly revised	Introduction, latest developments - unrest 2011, biographies
Tajikistan	-	-
Turkey	Partly revised	Parliamentary elections 2011
Turkmenistan	-	-
Ukraine	-	-
Uzbekistan	-	-

#### **- Mini guides to social democracy**

In 2011 we have been working on “mini guides to social democracy” (previously titled: “rough guides”). We have drafted mini guides on Turkey, Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Montenegro and Croatia. The relevance for these mini guides is that these countries are potential EU members and therefore it is necessary to increase our knowledge about them. Per mini guide we have included the following elements: disintegration of Yugoslavia (not in the case of Turkey and Albania); brief history of social democracy; current political situation and role of social democracy and update on social democratic parties. These mini guides are in PDF format and will be sent out via email to the European Forum network in the beginning of 2012.

#### **- News Alert**

In 2011 we continued sending out a so-called News Alert on countries where elections are taking place. On a daily basis we monitor the news in the pre-election period and the elections in a country. According to the web statistics these News Alerts appeared to be very popular among our network of readers. In 2011 we have sent out News Alerts on the elections in Croatia, Egypt and Russia (see appendix).

#### **- Website**

In 2010 we continued investing in increasing the visibility of our website and the number of our website visitors. We continued placing external and internal links in our news articles. We have also been actively making use of Twitter. Every news item that we post on the website we also post on Twitter. This contributes to the fact that a wider public receives our news items. In 2010 we have created a European Forum Facebook profile, which is linked to our website. Every news item that we publish on the website also appears on the Facebook profile. This has caused many reactions to our news items and increased the number of our website visitors. Our Facebook page currently has 999 fans. This means that every day at least 999 people read our news articles. In the period February

2011-January 2012, 287 news items were published on the website. Below we will give an overview of these news messages per country:

Albania: 10	Israel: 4	Palestinian Territories: 6
Algeria: 1	Jordan: 4	Republic of Tunisia: 9
Armenia: 10	Kazakhstan: 5	Russia: 18
Azerbaijan: 11	Kosovo: 18	Serbia: 26
Belarus: 9	Kyrgyzstan: 3	Syrian Arab Republic: 13
Bosnia Herzegovina: 15	Lebanon: 0	Tajikistan: 2
Croatia: 15	Libya: 10	Turkey: 20
Egypt: 29	Moldova: 4	Turkmenistan: 2
FYR Macedonia: 12	Montenegro: 7	Ukraine: 6
Georgia: 6	Morocco: 10	Uzbekistan: 2

#### **- Newsflash**

Between February 2011 and January 2012 we have sent out 26 issues of the newsflash (see appendix). The number of subscriptions to the newsflash has risen from 860 people in December 2008 to 1575 in January 2012. Compared to December 2010 (1500) we have 75 more subscribers. This means that our network of readers is still expanding! Although not to the same extent as in the previous years, we are happy to see that still a lot of readers show growing interest in the newsflash.

#### **Appendix**

- Newsflash #1-24 (2011)
- Newsflash #1-2 (2012)
- News Alert Croatia
- News Alert Egypt
- News Alert Russia

#### **Website statistics**

**From February 2011 to January 2012 in total 294.465 individual visits were paid to our website.**

The monthly (February – January) average in 2011/2012 was: 24.538

This amount is much higher than in 2010 for the months January-December (21.472). This means that since the introduction of our website we have increased our visibility and attracted an enormous flow of visitors to the website.

**Summary Period: Last 12 Months**  
**Generated 10-Feb-2012 00:28 CET**

Summary by Month										
Month	Daily Avg				Monthly Totals					
	Hits	Files	Pages	Visits	Sites	KBytes	Visits	Pages	Files	Hits
<a href="#">Jan 2012</a>	10361	9511	2357	762	10862	2954307	23624	73085	294843	321198
<a href="#">Dec 2011</a>	11182	10331	2722	841	11110	3063441	26092	84411	320270	346644
<a href="#">Nov 2011</a>	11751	10812	2588	883	11206	3240327	26502	77659	324384	352536
<a href="#">Oct 2011</a>	11229	10246	2589	785	10403	2991830	24360	80289	317628	348123
<a href="#">Sep 2011</a>	9871	9067	2432	728	8572	2618997	21855	72988	272014	296145
<a href="#">Aug 2011</a>	7709	7189	2653	767	7742	2297589	23800	82244	222871	239009
<a href="#">Jul 2011</a>	8327	7623	2997	794	7720	2530022	24640	92917	236336	258167
<a href="#">Jun 2011</a>	10429	9576	2735	786	10179	2781548	23583	82061	287290	312872
<a href="#">May 2011</a>	12140	11089	2885	814	12717	3090309	25246	89461	343781	376355
<a href="#">Apr 2011</a>	12854	12084	5089	760	10083	3160311	22807	152697	362523	385636
<a href="#">Mar 2011</a>	13812	12889	4393	827	11037	3449569	25638	136185	399577	428179
<a href="#">Feb 2011</a>	16069	15128	4993	939	12613	4307438	26318	139805	423589	449959
<b>Totals</b>						<b>37447559</b>	<b>294465</b>	<b>1163802</b>	<b>3805106</b>	<b>4114823</b>

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