



European
Commission
Delegation
to BiH

EU Newsletter



European Commission Recommends Opening Negotiations With BiH

- Prime Minister Adnan Terzic meets Commissioner for Enlargement Olli Rehn in Brussels
- Negotiations could start before the end of this year

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- Entity Civil Protection Administrations receive specialised equipment worth 220,000 Euro
- Seventh phase of the EU-funded de-mining programme worth a total of 660,000 Euro





European Commission recommends opening negotiations with BiH

The European Commission has recommended the opening of negotiations with Bosnia and Herzegovina on a Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA). This is the first major step in the European integration process for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

On October 19, Prime Minister Adnan Terzic visited Brussels and met with Commissioner for Enlargement Olli Rehn, to discuss progress on the sixteen Feasibility Study priorities. Following the meeting, Commissioner Rehn announced he would recommend the opening of negotiations with BiH and stated:

“I welcome the recent progress on the police reform. I understand that the police restructuring (Agreement on Restructuring the Police Structures) has now been approved by both the Entity Parliaments and by the State Parliament. This is positive news and will allow me to recommend to the Commission and the Council to open the negotiations on a Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) with Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It is important that there is proper follow-up to the police agreement. It is urgent that the “Directorate for Implementation of the Police Restructuring” is established on time and that the

authorities continue to pay full attention to the reform.

The Commission will continue to monitor the police reform closely and we will want to see progress in the implementation during the SAA negotiations and further on. A failure for BiH to progress and to honour her commitments may result in delays in concluding the negotiations.

I also welcome the recent adoption of the Public Broadcasting System (PBS) Law. This is another important step towards the opening of the SAA negotiations. It is now urgent that also the PBS Service Law is adopted without delays by the BiH House of Peoples.”

On Friday, 21 October, Ambassador Michael B. Humphreys delivered the news to Prime Minister Adnan Terzic, confirming that if the Council agrees with the recommendation, the negotiations could start this year. He added: *“Bosnia and Herzegovina must, in particular:*

Milestones on BiH’s Road to Europe

- **1997:** Regional Approach. The EU establishes political and economic conditionality for the development of bilateral relations.
- **June 1998:** the EU/BiH Consultative Task Force (CTF) is established.
- **1999:** The EU proposes the new Stabilisation and Association Process for five countries of South-Eastern Europe, including BiH.
- **June 2000:** Feira European Council states that all the Stabilisation and Association countries are “potential candidates” for EU membership.
- **November 2000:** Zagreb Summit; the Stabilisation and Association Process is officially endorsed by the EU and the Western Balkan countries (including BiH).
- **2001:** First year of the new CARDS programme, specifically designed for the Stabilisation and Association countries.
- **June 2003:** Thessaloniki Summit; the Stabilisation and Association Process is confirmed as the EU policy for the Western Balkans. The EU perspective for these countries is confirmed.
- **November 2003:** The European Commission produces a Feasibility Study assessing BiH’s capacity to implement a future Stabilisation and Association Agreement. The study concludes that negotiations should start once BiH has made progress on 16 key priorities.
- **June 2004:** EU adopts the European Partnership for BiH.
- **October 2004:** The European Commission assesses Bosnia and Herzegovina has made progress in the implementation of the Feasibility Study reforms and recommends starting SAA negotiations.

- continue to improve co-operation with the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia,
- adopt the remaining Law on Public Broadcasting Service
- and we need to see continued implementation of the police reform and of the public broadcasting legislation, both on the State and Entities level.

These are very important issues and, a lack of progress in these areas may delay the opening of SAA negotiations, or lead to their suspension. This would be a very negative message to the whole process. We will be very closely following these areas to see continued progress. We will also be closely following progress on all Feasibility Study recommendations - all of the 16 points require follow-up actions.

What is important today is that the process has now started.”

The European Commission's decision to recommend to the Council to start Stabilisation and Association Agreement negotiations is recognition of the progress Bosnia and Herzegovina has made in the implementation of the Feasibility Study reforms. The Feasibility Study, published in November 2003, concluded that progress needed to be made in 16 areas, before Bosnia and Herzegovina would be ready to negotiate a Stabilisation and Association Agreement. It is now clear that over the last two years progress has been achieved: on some issues more than on others, but the overall progress is adequate.

The aim of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement negotiations is to conclude the first comprehensive agreement between the EU and Bosnia and Herzegovina, providing for wide-ranging co-operation to foster the integration of the country into EU programmes and structures.

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Adnan Terzic, Prime Minister of BiH, met Commissioner for Justice, Freedom and Security, Franco Fratinni, on October 18, in Brussels.

Commissioner Fratini congratulated Prime Minister Terzic on the agreement reached for police reform, enquired about the implementation of said reforms and offered comprehensive assistance from the European Commission and the Commissioner for Justice, Freedom and Security.

He confirmed that police reform is extremely important, not only for the citizens of BiH who will have a professional and independent police, but also for BiH and the EU, as it will improve joint co-ordination and co-operation in the field of security, allowing for a successful fight against all types of organised crime.

They also spoke about the visa regime for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Commissioner Fratini emphasized his personal satisfaction with the launch of this process, in light of the success of prior reforms in BiH. He promised that by the end of the year a team of specialists will come to analyse the current situation and search for the necessary solutions, so as to be able to simplify the visa regime for citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina soon.

Turkey, Croatia and Serbia & Montenegro - one step closer to Europe

The European Union enlargement process took another major step forward on October 4, when accession negotiations were opened with Turkey and Croatia, and on October 10 for Stabilisation and Association Agreement negotiations with Serbia and Montenegro.

Turkey has had a long path in the process of European integration. It made its first application to join what was then the European Economic Community (EEC) in July 1959. The response was to propose the creation of an association between the EEC and Turkey, until such a time as circumstances permitted Turkey's accession. This association came into being with the signing of the Ankara Agreement in September 1963. It envisaged the progressive establishment of a customs union which would bring the two sides closer together in economic and trade matters.

Turkey applied for full membership in the European Union in 1987 and was confirmed as a candidate in December 1999. When it extended a customs union with the EU to all new member states in July 2005, Turkey met the last condition for accession talks, which have now started.

Croatia applied for membership in February 2003 and was confirmed as a candidate country in June 2004. Accession talks had been due to start in March 2005 but were postponed because of Croatia's lack of full co-operation with the International War Crimes Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. Negotiations have now started and Croatia could be ready to join the EU by the end of the decade.

Serbia and Montenegro has now opened talks on a Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) with the EU - the first step on the path to membership.

In order to join the Union, the countries need to fulfil the economic and political conditions known as the 'Copenhagen criteria', according to which a prospective member must:

- be a stable democracy, respecting human rights, the rule of law, and the protection of minorities;
- have a functioning market economy;
- adopt the common rules, standards and policies that make up the body of EU law (the *Acquis Communautaire*).

SECTORAL OVERVIEW

Environment

Initial assistance to this sector dates back to the Phare programme, with technical assistance amounting to some €5 Million to support the creation of a Waste Management Strategy in BiH, the preparation of environmental legislation and the first phase of institutional reform of the water sector. This created the conditions for extensive support under the CARDS programme, which over the past three years has provided funding amounting to €20 Million.

The assistance is aimed at creating conditions for sustainable environmental management and bringing BiH closer to EU standards. With this in mind, CARDS assistance has been allocated through three main sub-sectors and their related environmental priorities:

Water

The EC has been the lead donor in reform of the water sector since 1998. The key features of ongoing technical assistance (TA) are support to an integrated water management based on the river basin model and assistance in the preparation of water legislation based on the EU Water Framework Directive. Assistance to improved water quality management is also ongoing and includes both TA and the provision of state-of-the-art equipment, including a computerised decision support system to monitor water quality.

Waste

A recently-ended TA project addressed the implementation of the Waste Management



Strategy adopted in both entities in 2003, through the preparation of waste management plans for three selected waste management regions: Livno, Trebinje and Dobojski-Tesanj. This project was a particular success story, having also assisted the development of secondary legislation and a number of policy documents on the closure and reclaiming of wild dumps, treatment of medical waste, introduction of recovery and recycling, etc. These will serve as the basis for further development of secondary legislation. Twenty-two municipalities from both entities were involved in the creation of Waste Management Boards, aimed at creating capacities at local level to attract funding for the construction and remediation of new and existing landfills, based on a regional principle.

Ongoing assistance includes both TA and the supply of equipment to introduce waste recycling through pilot projects for the treatment of medical waste, the creation of waste collection centres and waste recovery through source separation.

Environment

At institutional level, TA was provided to strengthen the capacity of entity Ministries of Environment, so as to create an environmental policy as a basis for the preparation of secondary legislation and the introduction of economic analysis in environmental management. This recently-ended project achieved progress on the development of environment institutions and definitions of responsibility at the state level, an important step towards the establishment of a BiH Environmental Agency. The "Association for Environmental Management Development" was also established, as an independent association of stakeholders aiming to become a partner in the process of defining and creating environmental policies. TA to entity authorities continues, currently through the Environment Impact Assessment, to develop working procedures for an Environment Impact Assessment.

Another recently-ended TA project supported the establishment of the

Environmental issues in the EU

The EC groups policy areas into environmental themes: Air; Biotechnology; Chemicals; Civil Protection and Environmental Accidents; Climate Change; Environmental Economics; Environment and Enlargement; Health; Industry; International Issues; Land Use; Nature and Biodiversity; Noise; Soil; Sustainable Development; Waste; and Water.

"Environment 2010: Our Future, Our Choice"

The Sixth Environmental Action Programme of the European Community takes a wide-ranging approach and gives strategic direction to the Commission's environmental policy over a decade, with four priority areas for urgent action to achieve improvements:

- Climate Change
- Nature and Biodiversity
- Environment and Health and quality of life
- Natural Resources and Waste

Environmental Integration

Environmental integration means making sure that environmental concerns are fully considered in the decisions and activities of other sectors. It became a priority in the EU's 5th Environmental Action Programme in response to issues raised at the Earth summit in Rio. Since 1997, it is a requirement under the EC Treaty, which states that environmental protection requirements must be integrated into the definition and implementation of the Community

policies, in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.



The European Eco-label - a flower - is a guide to greener products and services.

This is a voluntary scheme, designed to encourage businesses to market products and services that are kinder to the environment and for European consumers to easily identify them. It can be found throughout the European Union as well as in Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland. The European Eco-label is part of a broader strategy aimed at promoting sustainable consumption and production.

National Monitoring System through the creation of a monitoring structure in line with the European Environment Agency's reporting requirements.

Support to air monitoring in BiH combines TA and the provision of equipment, to develop a national air monitoring strategy. In this context, a new shelter and equipment for existing and new monitoring stations in Banja Luka were recently handed over to the RS Hydro-meteorological institute, along with a computer system for dispersion modelling. This will improve continuous monitoring of toxic substances in the air (e.g. sulphur dioxide and carbon monoxide) and the electronic transmission of data to the national reference centres in Banja Luka and Sarajevo. This information is important both to inform the public on air quality and potential health risks and for authorities to decide on priority measures to prevent harmful effects.

In order to assist BiH in the implementation of the Aarhus Convention on public access to information, TA is currently provided to support Inspections, particularly with regard to the preparation of a Pollutant Release and Transfer Register; the integration of

environmental concerns in other sectors through the training of inspectors on future integrated environment permits; and to support an increased participation of non-state actors through the preparation of Local Environment Action Plans for Tuzla, Gradiska, Ugljevik and Konjic municipalities.

The ongoing Environment Fund combines technical assistance and grant funds for the NGO sector, to support financing of the environment sector through the establishment of Environment funds. The completion of procurement for these grant funds is foreseen by the end of this year.

Sectoral Priorities

The Environment was one of the sectors included in the recent Functional Review of Public Administration. It identified the strengthening of State-level capacities as essential to creating the conditions for the development and implementation of a country-wide policy, to enhance implementation of international obligations and to create the basic conditions for future alignment with the *Acquis Communautaire*.

The *Acquis* includes a vast selection of environmental legislation and standards

as well as compliance with investment-heavy environmental directives (e.g. "Urban Waste-Water Treatment", "Nitrate Directive" or "Integrated Pollution Prevention Control Directive"). Recent experience in the ten new Member States indicates that an average of 2-3% of GDP must be allocated to environment infrastructure. Furthermore, environmental financing in the pre-accession period has proven to be particularly problematic, especially in the water and urban waste management sectors, notably due to administrative shortcomings. Hence, to achieve effective implementation of EU-harmonized legislation, adequate financing is needed. In parallel, institutional capacities need to be strengthened, to assure that financial resources are efficiently used.

To facilitate this process, the EC has proposed to allocate €2 Million (from CARDS 2006 funds) for the establishment of the State Environment and Water Agency and for strengthening of state structures. The conditions would be a strong commitment from the BiH authorities on this process and that the political decision to establish the Agency be reached by the end of this year.

Local NGOs receive funding for new environmental projects



Ten new environmental projects - and the local non-governmental organisations which will implement them - were presented at a conference on October 11. The total value of the ten grants is €800,000, with co-funding raised or provided directly by the NGOS.

Ambassador Humphreys stated that he particularly values working with local NGOs as they not only offer the best value for money, but also demonstrate a serious engagement on the part of civil society. There are over 300 environmental NGOs registered throughout the country; a significant movement.

Ms. Azra Jaganjac, team leader of the EU's Environmental Public Awareness project - which aims to create the conditions for BiH to sign the Aarhus convention by providing TA and grants to strengthen public awareness in the civil sector - lamented the weak culture of dialogue between authorities and civil society, and the urgent need for local government to prioritise environmental protection. She also highlighted the crucial role the media should play in investigating and disseminating environmental issues, a public information service which is still lacking in BiH.

Project	Implementer	Duration / Location	Grant (in €)
MEDWASTE - Solving the Problem of medical waste in the city of Banja Luka	LIR Local Development Initiative	12 months Banja Luka	99,945
BiH Eco-diary (A 24-episode TV series on environmental subjects and EU standards)	Internews BiH	11 months Country-wide	74,948
Collection and re-cycling of used motor oil	Ecological association "Zeljeznica"	12 months / Eastern Sarajevo	89,000
Sustainable management and protection of the Vrelo Bosne area	COOR - Centre for sustainable environmental development	12 months Sarajevo Canton	79,532
Co-ordinated action by NGOs in following and influencing environmental protection policies	ICVA (Initiative and civil action)	12 months Country-wide	66,819
Support to Environmental Policy Development through Public Advocacy and Active Citizens Participation	Association VESTA	12 months Tuzla Canton	68,293
Organised communities for a better environment	Foundation Mozaik	15 months / Country-wide	86,094
We will improve (environmental awareness for school-aged children and teachers)	FONDEKO	12 months / Sarajevo, Tuzla-Kalesija, Travnik-Vitez, Zvornik-Bratunac	86,495
Annual Action Plan for BiH	Young researchers of Banja Luka	12 months / 5 municipalities	90,000
Solving the problem of municipal solid waste in the municipalities of North Eastern BiH	Faculty of Technology Zvornik	14 months / Zvornik, Srebrenica, Kalesija, Zivinice, Milici, Gracanica	61,710



Photos: Sead Memić



Donation of New De-mining Equipment

On September 5, Ambassador Michael B. Humphreys, Head of the European Commission Delegation to BiH, handed over specialised de-mining equipment to the Directors of the entity Civil Protection Administrations, Mr. Alija Tihic and Mr. Dragan Tupajic. The equipment is worth 220,000 Euro and includes mine detectors along with spare parts, electric detonators and protective equipment.

The Civil Protection Administration is responsible for protecting civilians from potential natural and/or man-made disasters. The European Commission has been working with both entity administrations since 1998 in the field of de-mining, a major long-term man-made disaster.

Up to now, the European Union donated 21 Million Euro to BiH for de-mining, most of which was used for training and equipping of

Civil Protection de-miners. These teams risk their lives every day to provide a safer environment for the rest of the population of BiH, an estimated one third of which lives in 1,366 identified communities impacted with landmines.

The donation ceremony was followed by demonstrations in the field. Ambassador Humphreys praised the efforts of the de-mining teams who have, so far, cleared over two and a half million square metres of land, and stated that it is vital that all of us together continue working on eradicating these appalling weapons.

The European Union is the largest donor in this field, having provided over 600 Million Euro to support de-mining programmes throughout the world and provide assistance to mine victims and research and development technology.

The EU's worldwide effort to eradicate landmines



In July 2005 Dr. Benita Ferrero-Waldner, European Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood policy, addressed the European Parliament in Strasbourg on the subject **“A world without landmines”**, saying:

“Five years after the Mine Ban Treaty entered into force and after the successful outcome of the Nairobi Review Conference last year, the international community, with the EU

as a leading force, has achieved significant progress towards a world without landmines.

To date 144 countries have ratified the Mine Ban Treaty; the number of victims has dropped from about 26,000 per year to between 15,000 and 20,000; no state transfers landmines anymore; more than 31 million stockpiled mines have been destroyed; and mine action programmes are being successfully implemented in many affected countries, together with civil society players and international organisations.

While these are great achievements, there remains a lot to do.

There can be no long term security without human security.

Support for international mine action therefore continues to be among the most important political priorities of the EU. This is an issue that has been and will always be close to my heart as the Union's External Relations Commissioner.

Our efforts to combat landmines are an integral part of our foreign, humanitarian and development policy. In response to the Nairobi Action Plan, the European Commission adopted the second Mine Action Strategy for 2005-2007 at the end of last year.

Its overarching objective is the “Zero Victim Target”. What we want is a world where no one will be injured or killed by landmines. This is not a remote political dream. It is an achievable goal.

To make it reality, the Commission is further strengthening international assistance in mine action, by strongly encouraging States to ratify the Mine Ban Treaty and by supporting them to implement it.

Our Strategy is supported by a budget of 140 million Euros, representing an increase of 10% compared to the 2002-2004 Strategy. This money is well spent, not to just for marking, clearing and destroying mines, but also, to alleviate the suffering of the victims, aid their socio-economic reintegration, and to enhance local and regional capacity. This shows that Europe's foreign policy is at its best when it uses all its broad instruments to promote human security.”



BiH Ministry Benefits From New Twinning Project

A press conference on September 28th saw the launching of a new twinning project between the BiH Ministry of Transport and Communication and the French Ministry of Infrastructure, Transport, Spatial Planning, Tourism and the Sea. This project is worth 250,000 Euro and is part of a wider package of EU assistance to BiH institutions in the process of EU integration, comprising a total of two million Euro for twinning projects.

Ambassador Humphreys explained that twinning projects differ from other technical assistance projects in that they make available the knowledge of civil servants from EU Member States who have first-hand experience with European legislation. Such expertise is highly beneficial for their counterparts in candidate or pre-accession countries during the process of adopting and implementing EU standards. Twinning projects are, therefore, not implemented in other continents.

His Excellency Henry Zipper de Fabiani, Ambassador of France to Bosnia and Herzegovina, highlighted his country's strong tradition and commercial experience in the transport and communication infrastructure sectors, which make it particularly qualified to carry out such a transfer of knowledge. He noted that the Ministry twinning team, led by Mr. Guy Bennatar, has prior experience in Lithuania and Estonia during their Candidate status years. In BiH, the eight team members will work two hundred days on three axes: roads, railways and rivers. They will produce an assessment of the Ministry's strengths and weaknesses along with a related training plan and action plan targeting EU integration.

Mr. Branko Dokic, BiH Minister of Transport and Communication, welcomed the project and stated that the Ministry needs such hands-on assistance, to enable it to grow and improve.

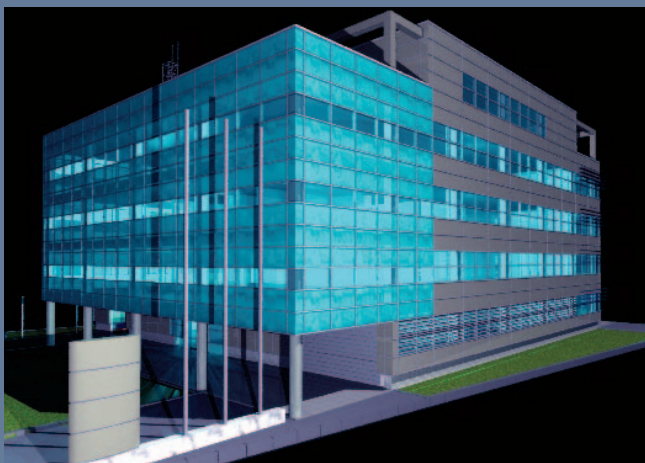
Training of Civil Servants

A memorandum of understanding signed on September 23rd links the EC Delegation to BiH, the BiH Civil Service Agency and UNDP in a training programme for civil servants in the state and entity administrations. It is based on priorities identified by the Civil Service Agency and the EU-funded Functional Reviews of the Public Administration. The EU provided over one million Euro while UNDP will contribute 50,000 Euro and a project manager. Civil servants will receive over 2,000 courses on topics including:

- Human Resource Management
- Legislative drafting
- Regulatory impact assessment
- Administrative procedures
- Strategic planning and preparation of annual work plans
- Specialised IT

In addition, a contract with the Centre for Computer Education from Sarajevo worth 200,000 Euro will provide IT courses for 700 civil servants, who will receive the European Computer Driving License (ECDL), an internationally recognised certificate.

New Headquarters for the State Border Service



A memorandum of understanding regarding co-funding for the construction of a new headquarters for the State Border Service was signed on 27 September by Ambassador Michael B. Humphreys, Head of the European Commission Delegation to BiH and Mr. Barisa Colak, Minister of Security of BiH.

The building will be located in the vicinity of Sarajevo airport and will cost 2.9 Million Euro, of which the European Union is providing 2.4 Million Euro and the Ministry of Security the balance of half a million. The building will consist of an underground parking, ground level and four floors of offices.

To date, the European Union has provided 5.5 Million Euro to support the State Border Service and enable it to combat organised crime such as trafficking, drug and weapons smuggling or terrorism.

REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Regional Conference on Social Dialogue Hosted in Skopje

A Regional Conference on Social Dialogue, organised by the EC Technical Assistance Information Exchange Instrument of the Directorate General for Enlargement, in co-operation with the Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, was held in Skopje on October 6-7. The aim of the meeting was to promote social dialogue throughout the Western Balkans and to raise awareness of the importance of social dialogue structures to improving the functioning of democratic mechanisms, to achieving successful economic reform and to promoting social cohesion.

Social dialogue is defined by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to include all types of negotiation, consultation or simply exchange of information between, or among, representatives of governments, employers and workers, on issues of common interest relating to economic and social policy. It can exist as a tripartite process, with the government as an official party to the dialogue, or it may consist of bipartite relations only between labour and management or trade unions and employers' organisations. The main goal is to promote consensus building and democratic involvement among the stakeholders. Successful social dialogue structures and processes have the potential to resolve important economic and social issues, encourage good governance, advance social and industrial peace and stability and boost economic progress.

Around ninety participants from trade unions, employers' organisations, think tanks and public administration hailing from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro and Kosovo attended the conference, along with social partners from the EU, members of international organisations and numerous EC representatives, headed by Vladimir Spindla, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. The considerable BiH contingent consisted of representatives of state and entity level public administration, employers' associations and trade unions.

The conference was a platform to share experiences in social dialogue, in order to:

- address the importance of social dialogue structures for the improvement of democratic mechanisms;
- spread good practice in social dialogue;
- encourage the creation of social dialogue networks at national level;
- increase co-operation between national social partners and European social partner organisations;
- help national administrations and national social partners to identify possible aid from the European level.

Informal Meeting of Heads of State and Government

On October 27, the UK European Union Presidency hosted a meeting of EU Heads of State and Government. This was an informal meeting, set in the renaissance royal palace of Hampton Court, rather than in the Council headquarters in Brussels.

The purpose was to discuss how to maintain and strengthen social justice and competitiveness in the context of globalisation; Europe's place in the world; and the security of its citizens.

The meeting was also attended by the leaders of Romania and Bulgaria, who are scheduled to join the EU in 2007; by Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso; Secretary-General of the Council of the EU and EU High Representative Javier Solana; and by



Josep Borrell, President of the European Parliament. The leaders of the two candidate countries, Turkey and Croatia, attended the working lunch.

The leaders discussed the direction of the Union's economic policy on the basis of a paper by the European Commission and reached a broad agreement that it represents the right direction for Europe's economic and social policy for the future. Other issues included university reform and the need to develop strong and competitive centres of excellence across the European Union.

On the issue of migration, there was a strong desire to take better and more co-ordinated action against illegal migration, at the same time as recognising the benefits of lawful migration to the European economy.

There was an agreement to take forward work in the energy sector, including how to try to establish a common European grid. There are already bilateral interconnections but a lot more can be done and it is important that energy policy is something worked on together as the European Union.

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European Union home page: www.europa.eu.int

The EU's actions in BiH web page: www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/bosnie_herze/index.htm

European Commission Delegation to BiH: www.delbih.cec.eu.int

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