



## Commissioner Olli Rehn's Message on 9 May, Europe Day

Dear Friends,

This year we celebrate Europe Day against the backdrop of a historic double-anniversary. Twenty years ago we saw the Iron Curtain come down. Just a few days ago we celebrated the fifth anniversary of the EU enlargement that peacefully reunified Eastern and Western Europe.

The European perspective has proven to be a formidable transformation force in Central and Eastern Europe. The EU enlargement process has served as an anchor of stability and democracy and a driver of personal freedom and economic dynamism in Europe.



Today, the enlargement agenda focuses on South East Europe. The Western Balkans and Turkey have a European perspective and our commitment to EU accession once all the conditions have been met.

(From Commissioner Olli Rehn's Message on 9 May, Europe Day)

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**Second European "Street Football" festival in Foča**



# Initiative to Bring the Western Balkans Closer to Europe

The Strategy on Research and Development for the Western Balkans will improve national research policies and facilitate integration of the region into the European Research Area

The Ministers from the Western Balkan countries responsible for science and research, the EU Commissioner for Science and Research, the representative of the Czech Republic Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) Secretary General, as well as the representatives of other RCC members from South Eastern Europe (SEE) and regional and international organisations gathered in Sarajevo on 24 April, 2009 to take part in a conference featuring the launch of an initiative to develop a Regional Strategy on Research and Development for the Western Balkans.

The Strategy will improve national research policies through the exchange of experiences and good practices and facilitate integration of the region into the European Research Area.

The Ministers recalled that the EU perspective is essential for the stability, reconciliation and development of the Western Balkans and that the future of the region lies within the Union.

The progress already made has been recognised in the field of research cooperation under the Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkan Countries. Based on



Hido Bišćević, Vlastimil Růžička and Janez Potočnik

this experience, the Ministers from the Western Balkans have reiterated the need to focus on the added value of the regional dimension, reaffirmed their willingness to contribute to strong European cooperation within the RCC and pledged to support the work of its members in the Task Force Fostering and Building Human Capital.

Therefore, the Ministers and representatives of other RCC members from SEE have agreed to undertake the following steps:

- Consider education, research and innovation in a comprehensive manner, moving from a fragmented to an integrated approach in the region;
- Promote the establishment of competitive regional Centres of Excellence, closely connected with higher education and business sectors, in the fields of strategic interest for the region, thereby facilitating the integration of the Western Balkans into the European Research Area;
- Promote development of regional research infrastructures, open access to pan-European research facilities of common interest and consider the development of a Western Balkan research infrastructure roadmap;
- Encourage the transfer of knowledge by developing and supporting networks of scientists and engineers from the Western Balkans and the entire SEE region;
- Enhance the potential of young scientists by supporting their career development and opportunities, create favourable conditions

to sustain their research endeavours and facilitate their training, mobility and cooperation within the region;

- Encourage cooperation between the science and research community and the business sector, particularly small and medium sized enterprises;
- Support the development of cross-border regional clusters in sectors of competitive advantage based on knowledge and innovation;
- Encourage the establishment of and the continued implementation of bilateral agreements on science and technology within the SEE region;
- Ensure the sustainability of existing regional research funding instruments.

The Regional Cooperation Council will continue to facilitate the activities on the development and implementation of the Regional Strategy on Research and Development for the Western Balkans in close cooperation with the Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkan Countries and the EU.



## Regional Energy Forum in Sarajevo

The EBRD and the Energy Community were hosts of the Regional Energy Forum held in Sarajevo on 30 and 31 March, which focused on investment opportunities in electricity generation and renewable energy in Southeast Europe

Key topics of a two-day Regional Energy Forum were investing in renewable energy sources and energy efficiency. The event titled "Investing in Electricity Generation and Renewable Energy" was held in Sarajevo on 30 and 31 March and was organized by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the Energy Community. The EBRD has launched two new programs worth €110 million to finance projects dealing with energy efficiency and renewable sources of energy in the Western Balkans. A main challenge for the countries of the Western Balkans is to accomplish energy efficiency and introduce new renewable sources of energy, since the region spends, on average, 2.5 times more on energy than the member states of the Organ-



Regional Energy Forum

2020 in the energy sector in the Western Balkans, according to EBRD President Thomas Mirow. However, prior to this investment, countries must accomplish a higher level of energy efficiency and

EBRD President Mirow described the Forum, which gathered more than 150 participants, as an opportunity for politicians, bankers, investors and companies to exchange experiences and reach conclusions on developing the Southeast European energy sector, as this region has great potential for energy generation. The EBRD President pointed out that energy generated by hydro potential is more expensive in comparison to other sources of energy, particularly when prices of oil and gas decrease. However when prices of those energy sources increase, as happened last year, the price of energy generated through hydro potential is competitive. Mr. Mirow said it was worth investing in this sector, given that these are long-term projects.

Energy Commissioner Piebalgs and President Mirow urged government and business representatives to make every effort to utilize available domestic development resources. The EBRD has allocated €30 million for potential projects in BIH, if the state submits applications for funding projects in the energy sector.



Andris Piebalgs

isation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). "The promotion of renewable sources of energy is most important for the energy community and the EBRD. Ways of financing investment in renewable energy are also important," said EC Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs.

There are plans to invest approximately €20 billion by

promote renewable sources of so called "green energy".

The forum was opened by the Chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers, Nikola Špirić; Energy Commissioner Piebalgs and EBRD President Mirow. The event was attended by ministers and representatives of signatory countries of the Energy Community as well as company representatives.

## Success of Assistance Project to Energy Regulatory Authorities in BiH

The European Commission Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina presided on 7 May over the closure event of the Enreg project, designed to provide technical assistance and support to BiH energy regulatory authorities.

ECD was represented by the First Secretary and Head of the Operations Section for Economic Development and Natural Resources, Mr Johann Hesse, and by the Energy Task Manager, Mr Rafael Bellon.

During his introductory speech, Mr Hesse recapped the history of Enreg and congratulated beneficiaries and consultants for their continued collaboration and joint efforts even in the face of an adverse political environment.

Emphasizing the role played by the ECD in adjusting to the given circumstances, he said the project had reached successful completion thanks to its ability "to identify the real needs of the beneficiaries" and "focus on technical issues" that could benefit all parts above any political boundary.

Mr Hesse handed over commemorative plaques to Presidents of the State Electricity Regulatory Commission Mr Nikola Pejić, Regulatory Commission for Electricity in FBiH Ms Djulizara Hadzimustafić and RS Regulatory Commission for Energy Mr. Milenko Cokorilo.

The Enreg project was funded with CARDS funds from 2006 for an amount of €1.5 million and had been running since 2007.

## News from EU

### The European Commission launched website with coverage of European news in 10 languages

The European Commission has launched multilingual Internet pages

[www.presseurop.eu](http://www.presseurop.eu) where press articles dealing with EU subjects in at least ten European languages will be published. In cooperation with the international consortium Courier International, the goal of the pages is to offer a choice of the best articles on EU issues published in the European and international press. Besides translations into ten languages (English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Dutch, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian and Czech), translations into 23 other official languages of the European Union will be ensured. The pages will include a selection from 250 newspapers, weeklies and Internet portals, including Le Monde, Figaro, Financial Times, The Economist, Washington Post, Corriere della Serra and FAZ.

### The European Commission launches the eYouGuide

The European Commission has published eYouGuide explaining the specific rights of European consumers using web or on-line shopping. The European Commission has published this Guide because, despite the growing popularity of buying via the Internet, many consumers still do not trust money transfers via the Internet. The Eurobarometer survey substantiates this argument: according to its results, of as many as 48.5 percent of households with broadband access to the Internet, only 12 percent feel safe when carrying out on-line transactions. In addition, 39 percent of European consumers have doubts about security; 42 percent do not use on-line banking at all.



Doris Pack

## Pack: Fulfilling its EU obligations is crucial for Bosnia and Herzegovina

Your politicians must reach consensus about key questions for this country. Compromise is a key word also in the EU and without that nothing can be done, Doris Pack stressed

**D**oris Pack, Member of the European Parliament (MEP) and Chair of the Delegation for relations with the countries South-East Europe recently made a two-day visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH).

After her meetings, Ms Pack told journalists that Bosnia and Herzegovina needs an independent, efficient, transparent and multi-ethnic judicial system.

She spoke to university students in Sarajevo about the European integration process and what it required of BiH.

In her introductory remarks, Ms. Pack discussed the Instruments for Pre-Accession (IPA) funding and other EU assistance mechanisms

for BiH and other Western Balkan countries, emphasizing that the EU has a strong interest in BiH's progress and ultimate membership. Yet she pointed out that only BiH can fulfil the necessary EU criteria, as is the case with all other EU aspirants; external actors cannot do this instead. Ms. Pack highlighted the need for political will: "Your politicians must reach consensus about key questions for this country. Compromise is a key word also in the EU and without that nothing can be done."

She was asked whether the fact that the Lisbon Treaty has not yet been ratified by all EU members poses an obstacle to BiH's potential to join. Pack

responded that, "The enlargement process goes step by step. This process requires time and for BiH the most important thing is to fulfil its obligations on the road to the EU." During her two-day visit, MEP Pack also met with Medždida Kreso, President of the BiH Court, Milorad Novković, President of the HJPC, and Kemal Kozarić, Governor of the Central Bank of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition, she met representatives of NGOs and the business community, as well as representatives of the international community. On the second and final day of her visit, Ms. Pack met Franjo Komarica, Roman Catholic Bishop of Banja Luka.

## Potočnik: “Towards integration in the European research zone”



Janez Potočnik and Sredoje Nović

The Seventh Framework Program for Research and Development (FP7) enables financing of joint research in strategic areas such as health, energy, climate change, information technologies, nano technologies and transport

Janez Potočnik, European Commissioner for Science and Research and Sredoje Nović, BiH Minister for Civil Affairs, expressed their support for BiH participation in the Information event on Seventh Framework Program for Research and Development (FP7) that was held under the title “Towards integration in the European research zone”.

The event provided information about opportunities that have been made available through the recent accession of BiH to FP7.

“I was extremely pleased last year in November when Minister Sredoje Nović and I signed a Memorandum of Understanding for BiH’s accession to FP7,” said Mr. Potočnik, “Now we need to work on your complete integration in the European research zone. The best way to integrate is to take part jointly

in science-research cooperation.”

BiH became the 12<sup>th</sup> FP7 accession country in November 2008. The FP7 countries are competing within the program on the same basis as EU member states. The program enables financing of joint research in strategic areas such as health, energy, climate change, information technologies, nano technologies and transport. FP7 supports science-research in the EU and the wider European research zone with a budget of almost 55 million euro over seven years (2007- 2013).

“Research cooperation is a good path for pre-accession. You are expected to get involved in research in order to fulfil European standards and technical requirements, as part of your EU integration process, which actually represents a good invest-

ment. For these reasons, one should see increased efforts in research areas at the state level, as a first and necessary step towards EU membership,” Mr. Potočnik said.

FP7 also stimulates the mobility of science-research workers through funds from the Marie-Curie program and it has programs that support capacity building, such as research infrastructure, research for small and medium enterprises and science in society. “It is in our interest to get involved in the European research area and build institutional capacities that will enable greater participation in EU programs, by research institutions, small and medium sized enterprises and state companies, as well as providing for greater mobility of our researchers,” said Civil Affairs Minister Nović.

### News from EU

#### Cannes Palme d’Or and four more prizes for films co-financed by EU funds

Michael Haneke’s film “White Band” (Das weisse Band) won the Golden Palm at the 62nd Cannes Film Festival, and three more films also received awards: “A Prophet” by Jacques Audiard, “Fish Tank” by Andrea Arnold and “Father Of My Children” by Mia Hansen-Løve, were co-financed with funds from the Media Mundus program. Media Mundus provides financial assistance to film makers and helps distribute European audio-visual works globally. Media Mundus is designed to increase the presence of European films in cinemas throughout the world. It is a 15-million euro program whose goal is to increase the competitiveness of the European film industry and strengthen cooperation with third countries.

#### EU adopts Blue Card scheme

At the end of May the EU adopted plans for a European Union work permit aimed at attracting highly skilled foreigners to the bloc. It will allow foreign workers to be employed in any EU member state except Great Britain, Ireland and Denmark and enjoy limited social and welfare rights for themselves and their family members for a renewable period from one to four years.

The 24 member states who have signed up for the scheme will have two years to transpose it into national law. They will grant Blue Card holders equal treatment with nationals when it comes to “working conditions, including pay and dismissal”, recognition of qualifications, the right to participate in trade unions and limited social security and pension rights, as well as access to housing and counselling. The EU ministers also approved a set of common standards and sanctions against employers – both individuals and companies – who illegally hire foreign immigrants.

# Commissioner Olli Rehn's Europe Day Message

The EU enlargement process has served as an anchor of stability and democracy and a driver of personal freedom and economic dynamism in Europe

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**Dear Friends,**

**T**his year we celebrate Europe Day against the backdrop of a historic double-anniversary. Twenty years ago, we saw the Iron Curtain come down. Just a few days ago we celebrated the fifth anniversary of the EU enlargement that peacefully reunified Eastern and Western Europe.

The European perspective has proven to be a formidable transformation force in Central and Eastern Europe. The EU enlargement process has served as an anchor of stability and democracy and a driver of personal freedom and economic dynamism in Europe.

Today, the enlargement agenda focuses on South East Europe. The Western Balkans and Turkey have a European perspective and our commitment to EU accession once all the conditions have been met.

The countries are making steady, if sometimes slow, progress. Croatia's negotiations are on the right track. With the elections over in Turkey, we now expect the country to deliver on its promise of new vigour in introducing necessary reforms for progress on EU accession.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is a candidate looking forward to opening its negotiations. We have a network of Stabilisation and Association Agreements with other countries of the Western Balkans in place.

Last year, Bosnia and Herzegovina made progress on the path of European integration, especially through the signature of the SAA and the entry into force of the interim agreement. The implementation of the SAA interim



**Olli Rehn**

agreement is broadly on track.

The Serbian Government remains committed to advancing on its European agenda, and there have been a number of positive developments recently. Both Montenegro and Albania have reached a significant milestone by applying for EU membership.

Stability in Kosovo was maintained throughout last year's important developments. Compared to many other regions in the world,

South East Europe benefits from relative political stability at the moment – not least thanks to its European perspective.

But if the 20th century taught us anything, it is the folly of complacency when it comes to the Western Balkans. There is no end of history in sight, nor irreversible stability, at least not quite yet.

All these arguments – the gains from enlargement and the risks of wavering – underline why we cannot take a sab-

atical from our invaluable work for peace and progress in South East Europe.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Today, Europe is reunited and free. Let's keep it that way. And let us complete our work also in South East Europe, on the basis of the Union's founding principles of liberty and democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. – In that spirit, let me express my best wishes to all of you on Europe Day!



Mezzo-soprano Bernarda Fink and the South Eastern Europe Symphony Orchestra

## Europe Day Celebration

As part of the 9 May Europe Day celebration, the South Eastern Europe Symphony Orchestra held a gala classical music concert at Bosnia and Herzegovina's Institutions Building in Sarajevo on the evening of 11 May. Representatives of the BiH authorities, the international community, NGOs, religious and cultural associations, and the media attended.

Ambassador Dimitris Kourkoulas, Head of Delegation of the European

Commission to BiH, addressed the guests before the concert. He reminded them that this year the European Union celebrated a double-anniversary: the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Iron Curtain and the fifth anniversary of the latest enlargement bringing in 12 new Member States all together.

"2009 is a critical year in determining the pace at which Bosnia and Herzegovina will proceed towards European integration. This should be a



year of renewed responsibility in Bosnia and Herzegovina, not a year of continued discord," said Kourkoulas.

The Chair of BiH's Council of Ministers, Nikola Špirić, reminded the audience that last year BiH opened a new chapter with the signing of a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU.

"BiH is a part of the European cultural and historic heritage. I would like to congratulate Europe Day and the day of victory over

fascism," said Špirić.

The concert gathered young musicians from the region and beyond, including those from London, Paris and Vienna. The Conductor was Maestro Siniša Marković, and the Orchestra performed the works of Franz Joseph Haydn and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. The evening reached its peak with the performance of mezzo-soprano Bernarda Fink, who is also the winner of the Austrian medal for science and art.





## Banja Luka

### EU information park

On 9 May, Europe Day, the Delegation of the European Commission to Bosnia and Herzegovina organised an EU information park in Petar Kočić Square in Banja Luka.

Boris Iarochevitch, the Del-

egation's Head of Operations, stated on this occasion that Europe Day provides an opportunity to celebrate the EU's achievements and to remind ourselves of its goals, including preservation of peace, freedom, progress and cooperation:



“Europe Day, 9 May, is the anniversary of the Schumann Declaration. Almost 60 years ago and only five years after the end of the most brutal war ever

in Europe, he proposed a new form of political organisation in Europe, which was the very foundation of today's EU. This day has become a European symbol which, combined with the flag, the hymn, the motto and the currency, represents the

unity of Europe”, he said. Entertainment included a game called “Put Europe Together”, for younger visitors. In addition, visitors were able to taste the EU's birthday cake. The Europe Day event also included performances by the bands Visoki Napon (“High Voltage”) and Važno Obavjestenje (“Important Announcement”).





## Sarajevo



Start of the Marathon

The Delegation of the European Commission to BiH and the Directorate for European Integrations (DEI), in cooperation with the Association “Marathon Sarajevo” marked Europe Day, 9 May, with a symbolic race called “Trkom u Evropu” (Run to Europe).



More than 400 runners of all ages and categories entered the race. The route of the 4 km-long race was along Vilsonovo Setaliste. The top three finishers in the men's and women's categories won cash prizes of 300, 200 and 100 KM, along with commemorative T-shirts.

## Trebinje

As part of the Europe Day celebration, a two-day event started in Trebinje on 13 May organized by the NGO Ženski centar (“Women’s Centre”) and with the support of the European Commission Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This was the sixth year in a row that this Herzegovinian city on the River Trebišnjica has held a Europe Day celebration. This year's event featured an exhibition about life, traditions, music and chivalry in the countries in the region during medieval times.

The program began at Crkvina with official addresses by Ljiljana Čičković, Director of Ženski centar, Boris Iarochevitch, Head of Operations in the EC Delegation to BiH and Dobroslav Čuk, Mayor of Trebinje.

“I am very pleased to be here with you to mark one of the greatest success stories in peace building in history,” said Iarochevitch.



Performance of medieval culture and tradition

The organiser of the celebration, Ms Čičković, explained that the program was put together in such a way as to present both similarities and differences characteristic of Europe.

“We organised all of these activities in order to be able to show how people used to live in Europe in medieval times. For example, we organized a workshop for children so they can see how wallets used to be made in those times,” she explained.

Trebinje Mayor Čuk reminded the audience that this municipality was among the signatories of the Declaration on the European Future.

Following the close of the official part of the program, a presentation of the book

Orthodox Monasteries in BiH, published by the Association for the Preservation of Heritage in Gacko, was organized in Crkvine. This was followed by a diverse cultural and entertainment program.

The Europe Day event continued with a visit to a medieval market, purpose-built in Trebinje's Old Town. Artists from BiH, Hungary, Slovenia, and Serbia portrayed the culture and traditions of their countries during medieval times with various activities and performances.

During the second day of Trebinje's Europe Day event, workshops were organized for young people aged 18 to 23 on the topic “Creativity and Innovation – Development and Importance” in the light of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation.



Boris Iarochevitch

# Five years since the biggest EU Enlargement

Czech Prime Minister Mirek Topolanek has described the EU's expansion by ten new states in 2004 as a major success. European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso has stressed that the expansion has improved competitiveness within the Union and additionally increased the influence of the EU when conducting international trade negotiations and diplomacy

On 1 May 2004, the European Union welcomed 10 more member states: Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia. This was the fifth time that the EU had accepted new members, taking the total from 15 to 25 member states. On 1 January 2007, this latest round of enlargement came to its conclusion with the accession of two more countries, Bulgaria and Romania.

Enlargement has greatly stimulated growth and modernisation in the new members' economies. Integration in the EU's internal market has brought benefits such as increased trade and foreign investment and further integration in financial markets. New member states' economies have continued to grow fast – generally faster than the economies of the old members (5.6% against 2.2% in 2004 - 08, with countries such as Slovakia and the Baltic states reaching growth rates as high as 7 - 10% in the best years). It is estimated that joining the EU gave the new members an extra growth boost of around 1.75 percentage points per year over the period 2000 - 08.

In the context of the current international financial crisis, EU membership has given the new members invaluable protection.

Four countries have already joined the Euro (Cyprus, Malta, Slovenia, and Slovakia), which has helped to stabilise their economies and protect them from the worst effects of the crisis.

However, EU support is not limited to these countries. For example, at the end of 2008, when the Hungarian financial markets came under severe pressure, the EU decided to provide balance of payments



assistance of up to 6.5 billion Euro to Hungary. In return, Hungary had to commit to measures that support sustainable economic policies – such as fiscal consolidation, and improved fiscal governance and financial sector regulation.

Fast growth has stimulated employment in the new members, although increased emigration has caused some concern about a brain drain and labour shortages in specific sectors.

However, emigrant remittances have greatly helped the balance of payments in some countries (in 2006, remittances accounted for some 5.5% of GDP in Bulgaria and Romania, over 2% in the Baltic States and 1.5% in Poland).

Similarly, improved living conditions have reduced incentives to work abroad, and a trend of return has been observed. Returning workers bring back new skills, which

are invaluable to the home economies.

Enlargement has contributed to economic growth in the old EU members through further investment opportunities and increased demand for their products (7.5% of their exports went to the new members in 2007, compared with 4.7% in 1999).

The larger internal market has boosted competitiveness in the EU as a whole.

In the long run, the economic potential of adding countries with around 100 million additional producers and consumers is considerable.

In most EU countries, the number of people arriving from outside the EU exceeds the number of newcomers from other EU members. The only exceptions to this are Ireland and Luxembourg.

Workers from new member states have helped to meet extra demand for labour in the

host countries, especially in sectors where there is a shortage of local labour supply.

Financial support to new member states from the EU budget has brought a significant boost to their economies. The Czech EU Presidency has organised a conference in Prague to inaugurate the fifth anniversary of the EU's largest expansion to date. Czech Prime Minister Mirek Topolanek has described the EU's expansion by ten new states in 2004 as a major success. European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso has stressed that the expansion has improved competitiveness within the Union and additionally increased the influence of the EU when conducting international trade negotiations and diplomacy. In addition, Mr. Barroso has stated that the expansion has to be continued and that a strong single market is invaluable in the current global economic crisis.



Conference held under auspices of BiH Presidency

## Regional Conference “2009: European Year of the Balkans”

The experience of the Central European countries, which became the member states in 2004 and 2007, could be of invaluable benefit to BiH

The European Union is committed to the future of BiH and wants to see BiH in the EU, but accession requires the engagement of society as a whole and of all BiH citizens,” stressed Dimitris Kourkoulas, Head of the Delegation of the European Commission to BiH, while addressing participants at the regional con-

ference “2009 – the European Year of the Balkans”.

Mr. Kourkoulas said the road to the European Union was clear, as each country in the region either has EU candidate status or potential candidate status.

He said Bosnia and Herzegovina can accomplish everything that has been accomplished by other countries, but that

progress will only be made if reforms are implemented. He stressed that these reforms are not designed to please Brussels, but that they would be necessary for BiH even if the country were not trying to move along the road to Europe. The experience of the Central European countries that became member states in

2004 and 2007, he said, could be invaluable for BiH.

The same message was conveyed by the ambassadors of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. In addition, representatives of Croatia, Montenegro and the Regional Cooperation Council also spoke about the current situation.

Czech Ambassador to BiH Jiří Kuděla, whose country currently occupies the EU Presidency, stressed that every year from now on will be a European year for the countries in the region. However, 2009 represents a particular opportunity to come closer to the Union, he said.

The regional conference “2009 – European year of the Balkans” was held under the auspices of the Office of the Chairman of the BiH Presidency, Nebojša Radmanović. Implementation partners were the BiH Parliamentary Assembly, the Embassy of the Czech Republic in BiH, in the capacity of EU chair, and the Visegrad Group (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia). The event was financially supported by the EC Delegation and was organized by the European Movement in BiH.

## Substantial progress in combating human trafficking

On 15 May Dimitris Kourkoulas, Head of the European Commission Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina, together with RS Minister of Internal Affairs (MoI) Stanislav Čađo, opened a two-day seminar on the issue of “Human Trafficking, from the Perspective of Criminal Law”, at the RS National Assembly in Banja Luka.

Emphasizing that the EU has observed substantial progress in fighting human trafficking in BiH, Mr. Kourkoulas welcomed efforts by the RS MoI to combat this kind of crime:

“Trafficking is an extremely serious problem, because it jeopardizes the physical and psychological integrity of human beings,” he said.

„But it is also connected to other kinds of crime, such as money laundering, issuing false

IDs and many others. This is the sixth seminar of the RS MoI and TAIEX and for us this is proof of how serious the local institutions are about EU integration.”

Mr Čađo said the RS MoI is undertaking major efforts to make the environment as safe as possible. The results are apparent from two actions last year, in which 11 persons were arrested for trafficking in human beings and sexual abuse.

“This is not a problem that occurred yesterday,” he said. “The RS MoI is doing all we can to fight this kind of crime, and this seminar hosted by RS MoI will help.” He added that such events promote the harmonization of local regulation and legislation with European legislation, so as to fight these problems more effectively.

The Seminar was designed to



Dimitris Kourkoulas and Stanislav Čađo

familiarise participants with EU legislation in this field and its implementation in member states. It gathered representatives of security agencies and prosecutors offices from the State, entities and Brčko District as well as representatives of NGOs. Topics included protection of victims, and regional cooperation in the fight against trafficking, as well as steps to enhance cooperation

between victims and the judicial authorities and cooperation between police and NGOs.

The seminar was organised with the support of TAIEX – Technical Assistance and Information Exchange, an instrument of the Directorate-General Enlargement of the European Commission. TAIEX helps countries harmonize, apply and enforce EU legislation.

## Tempus program seeks greater support from BiH authorities and institutions responsible for higher education

Currently, the program encompasses in total 27 partner countries, including countries of the Western Balkans, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, North Africa and Middle East

On 12 March, the National Tempus Office in BiH and the Delegation of the European Commission in BiH, in cooperation with the most important national contractors, organized a day of awareness regarding the Tempus/Erasmus Mundus program, in order to promote international cooperation and improve higher education in BiH. On this occasion, new options in the Tempus/Erasmus Mundus program were presented, with particular attention given to the Tempus IV and Erasmus Mundus 2009-2013 programs.

Helene Skikos of the EU Education and Culture Directorate, which is in charge of implementing the program, said that Tempus' aims have remained constant: to establish cooperation and modernize higher education institutions, with the final aim of creating links in European higher education and cooperation among member and partner countries.

TEMPUS (Trans-European Mobility Scheme for University) Studies is an EU program established in 1990 after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Currently, it encompasses 27 partner countries, including countries of the Western Balkans, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, North Africa and the Middle East.

A fundamental goal of the Tempus program is to provide support to partner countries, including Bosnia and Herzegovina in the process of upgrading higher education in accordance with Bologna Process and Lisbon Strategy principles.

Ms. Skikos called on the domestic institutions to support projects and to avoid linking projects with just one person (representing the institution). Therefore, letters of support for projects have to be signed by the directors of institutions, and not by coordinators who will be



Bosnia and Herzegovina has submitted 42 project applications

project leaders, with the support of their institutions. "Your country is more complex than the other countries, and your local authorities are represented at several levels, not at one level. However we can still cooperate. As you can see, BiH has worked on its presentation and achieved very good results in the Tempus project; those results reflect not simply the number of projects but their quality too," Ms. Skikos said.

She pointed out that in addition to the need for larger involvement of local institutions and authorities responsible for higher education, there is a need for a larger engagement of the European Commission Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Implementation of the last phase (Tempus IV) began on 28 January 2008 with the publication of the first call for proposals to participate in Tempus projects. A total budget of 51 million Euro for all countries has been allocated for this phase. From this amount, the budget for BiH within the first call was 2.8 million Euro. To

date, participating countries have submitted 530 project applications; Bosnia and Herzegovina has submitted 42.

Constatino Longares of the EC Delegation to BiH explained that in total 76 projects were selected from the other participating countries, representing a 15% rate of success, while 9 projects were selected from BiH, representing a 21% rate of success, which is above average. "This has shown us that the BiH institutions are capable of making and submitting projects, further demonstrating their know-how. Nevertheless, I would like to see a larger number of applications, which would result in a higher probability for projects to be chosen," said Mr. Longares. He noted that a BiH project implemented in 2006 was chosen as the best practice project in the area of creativity and innovation. The project – Procedure of Quality Management to Promote Cooperation between University and Companies – was named the best in a competition of 300 projects.

Tempus projects are carried

out in partnership with various higher-education stakeholders, including educational institutions, ministries, companies, non-governmental institutions, associations, and other organizations from the EU and partner countries. They cooperate through the exchange of experience, know-how and best practice and through joint project implementation. Joint programs are based on partnership between institutions dealing with higher education in the EU and partner countries.

The Tempus program has been implemented in three phases by the EC Directorate for Education and Culture, Extension and Assistance, and has been funded through three EC instruments: the Instruments for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) for the Western Balkan countries, the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument for the Eastern European countries, North Africa and the Middle East, and the Cooperation Instrument for the Central Asian countries.



Tourism promotion

## Final conference of Posavina Hunting and Fishing Paradise project

The total value of the project is €332 000, out of which the European Union contributed €295 480 while the remaining €36 560 was provided by other participants in the project

The final conference of the Posavina Hunting and Fishing Paradise project took place on Monday 20 May 2009, in Odžak. Participants presented an overview of project activities, experiences gained and results achieved from the assistance provided to 18 hunting and fishing associations from Posavina, with a total of 4.853 members. New perspectives for the development of tourism and the economy of this region were also emphasized.

Representatives of the European Commission Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Government of the Posavina

Canton, relevant BiH Ministries, municipalities participating in the project, tourist communities and project partners attended the conference.

“We supplied pheasants, fish were restocked in a number of locations and three fishing lodges were built,” said Johann Hesse, Head of the Operations Section for Economic Development and Natural Resources in the Delegation of the European Commission to BiH. “We are withdrawing now and we leave everything to you. How successful it will be, depends on your efforts.”

The project supports regional and local economic

development, helps strengthen regional and local tourism capacities and is an element in the broad agenda of preparation for European integration.

The main activities carried out in order to achieve the goals envisaged by the project were the creation of a tourist package, “Posavina Hunting and Fishing Paradise”, the promotion of this package and the promotion of investment in future development of tourist potential in the region.

The project was based on the needs and potential of tourism development in Bosanska Posavina and is the result of joint

efforts by several municipalities. The Tourist community of Posavina Canton implemented the project, the Government of Brčko District is a partner, and the Independent Office for Development provided technical support.

The total value of the project is €332 000, of which the European Union contributed €295 480, while the remaining €36 560 was provided by other project participants. During the 20 months of the project's duration, tourist infrastructure and hunting and fishing capacities in the Bosanska Posavina Region were significantly strengthened.

## Independent Office for Development opens new facility

In Tarevci, near Modriča, the Independent Office for Development has formally opened its new “Object 2”, for small and medium companies of the Entrepreneurship & Development Centre.

The Office also held a conference to conclude the project “Strategic strengthening of existing and establishment of new Entrepreneurship & Development Centres in North-East BiH”.

Johann Hesse, Head of the Operations Section for Economic Reform and Natural Resources of the European Commission Delegation to BiH, Drago Vuleta, Assistant Minister for Refugees and Displaced Persons of Republika Srpska, Modriča Mayor Mladen Krekić and other local leaders, as well as representatives of neighbouring municipalities attended the Object 2 opening ceremony.

The project to promote Entrepreneurship & Development Centres in North-East BiH was implemented by the Independent

Office for Development in partnership with Tuzla Municipality. The total value of the project is 588 548 KM, of which 89 percent was financed by the EU.

Implementation began in October 2007. A 408 m<sup>2</sup> building was constructed to accommodate new export-oriented small and medium enterprises.

Johann Hesse underlined the major importance of the project, in which the EU has invested €260 000. He said the view of the European Commission is that it is crucial to reinforce the competition of small and medium enterprises in Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly now in a time of global economic crisis.

Drago Vuleta, Assistant RS Minister for Refugees and DPs, underlined that the Tarevci event is a good example of how to assist returnees through opening small and medium enterprises.

“It would be unforgivable



Building for new export-oriented SMEs

and inadmissible if returnees were in a situation where they had to think twice about return because they did not have the means to make a living. This is a good example that we can work together with joint efforts,” Vuleta said, noting that the RS Government has invested 110 000 KM in this project.

Mayor Krekić congratulated the Independent Office for Development and pointed out that the project has had a

positive impact on employment and reconstruction. “We can now say that this has become a small industrial incubator,” he said. “A new facility was constructed for three export-oriented enterprises. It is important that 10 to 15 jobs will be created, and that products from Modriča will be placed on the European market. This is beneficial both, for Tarevci and for Modriča”, said Krekić.



Football team "Doboj" - winner of the Festival



Medals for winners

## Second European Street Football Festival Held

The Festival was organised by the European Commission Directorate General for Enlargement, the Streetfootballworld Association from Berlin and the Football Friends foundation from Serbia

The "Doboj" football team from Bosnia and Herzegovina won the Second European Street Football Festival, held in Foča from 20 to 24 May 2009.

The Festival was organised by the European Commission Directorate General for Enlargement, the Streetfootballworld Association from Berlin and the Football Friends Foundation from Serbia.

Boris Iarochevitch, First Counsellor and Head of Operations of the EC Delegation to BiH, opened the Festival

pean Commission I wish to express our satisfaction that we have supported the European Street Football Festival this year as well. It is not only important for the European Commission to facilitate local cooperation in a country, but also to establish regional cooperation between the states, and such an event is a true example of it. Today in the streets I came across a banner that read 'Europe in Foča', and I hope that soon I will see a sign that reads 'Foča in Europe,'" Iarochevitch said.



Football makes friends



24 teams took part in the Tournament

and commended the exceptional organisation this year, adding that the excellent organisation and success of the Streetfootball Festival Foča 2008 was the inspiration supporting this sports festival for the second time.

"On behalf of the Euro-

He conveyed greetings from Olli Rehn, the EU Commissioner for Enlargement and Dimitris Kourkoulas, Head of the European Commission Delegation to BiH, and wished good luck to participants and a successful festival in Foča.

During the meeting between the organisers and media representatives from the whole of Europe, Zdravko Krsmanović, the mayor of Foča Municipality, expressed his satisfaction that Foča again hosted the European Street Football Festival.

"With these football events, over a short period of time, we have succeeded in achieving major changes in our municipality: all indicted war criminals are now before the Hague Tribunal, relations between Serbs and Bosniaks in Foča are exemplary for the whole of BiH, and Foča is once again on the map of Europe. Football is much more than a competition, more than a game. Football is about socialising, friendship and trust," Krsmanović said.

Vladimir Borković, Director of the Streetfootballworld Association, said that the Foča event was an excellent opportunity for young people to meet, show their skills and promote football as an instrument for social development.

The meeting was also attended by Zoran Avramović, president of the Football Friends foundation, who replied to Boris Iarochevitch that this Festival was proof that Foča is already in Europe. Representative of the English Premiership Academy Richard Money, and Jimmy Nelson of Newcastle United underlined that the Festival was not only about football, but about friendship as well.

Corina Eqqenberger, FIFA representative and Jimmy Nelson presented a symbolic



Guests from 16 countries arrived in Foča

## in Foča

gift to Mayor Krsmanović. Mr Nelson said he hoped the gift would be a daily reminder of Newcastle United.

The finals of the Second European Street Football Festival caught the interest of Stevan Stojanović, the former goalkeeper of the Serbian team, "Crvena zvezda" ("Red Star"), which won the European Cup in 1991. He offered useful advice about the game to the young football players.

Twenty-four teams from 16 countries, each with eight youngsters, all amateur street football players, participated



Teams comprising four boys and four girls played 5-on-5 10-minute games, following the rules of fair play. There were no referees in the games played, and breaks were called by players themselves by a simple raising of the hand. At the start of each game, the players set the rules of the game and at the end



in the tournament. Participants were boys and girls aged 14 to 18 from Serbia, Croatia, Portugal, Poland, England, Ukraine, the Czech Republic, Germany, Montenegro, Hungary, Macedonia, Turkey, France, Ireland and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

discussed whether the rules had been followed.

Participants also attended workshops on fair play in football, and thus learned about intercultural understanding and social development. All participants received medals and gifts.

## Dimitris Kourkoulas: Organisation of World Rafting Championships is proof that BiH has enormous potential for tourism development

The European Delegation Commission in BiH organized a conference in support to launch the World Rafting Championship that took place in BiH during May 2009 on the Vrbas and Tara rivers. The conference was connected to the "Vrbas Adventure Resort" project, which is co-financed by the European Union and Banja Luka City.

The Conference marked the formal launch of a campaign to publicise the world rafting championship, which took place in BiH during May

develop tourism," Kourkoulas said. "In addition, sport is certainly the best possible way of bringing people together, which is one reason for our support. I look forward to Sarajevo preparing its candidature to host the Winter Olympics and for the inauguration of that candidature to be held in Banja Luka."

Kourkoulas noted that the European Commission has been supporting tourism development in BiH for ten years.

Prime Minister Špirić thanked the EC Delegation for



### Sport is about friendship

on the Vrbas and Tara rivers.

The successful organisation of five ecological events of the Balkan League, then the 2005 European Competition, and the World Cup series in the last twelve months all served as an excellent introduction for BiH to become the host of the World Rafting Championships.

The organisation of the competition was supported by the Head of the European Commission Delegation to BiH, Dimitris Kourkoulas, and the Chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers, Nikola Špirić.

"Hosting the world rafting competition has shown that BiH has enormous potential to

providing support for the Vrbas Adventure Resort project, which was funded by the European Commission through its EURED Program, aiming to develop sustainable and competitive adventure tourism.

Aleksandar Pastir, Director of the World Rafting Competition, confirmed that official applications were submitted by 40 states, including 13 EU member states, for approximately 600 competitors. More than 40 teams participated, including 25 female teams. The competition took place from 17 May through 24 May, 2009 on the Vrbas and Tara rivers, in several courses including sprint, head to head, down river and slalom.

## Sweden joins EU in support for Population Census preparations through IPA 2008

The EC and Sweden have common priorities such as support for public administration reform and the judicial sector and for economic development, the Director General of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency-Sida, Anders Nordström, said after his meeting with the Charge d'Affaires of the EC Delegation to BiH, Boris Iarochevitch.



Anders Nordström

Specifically, cooperation between Sweden and the EC regarding support for the 2011 BiH Population and Housing Census has been agreed. Conducting the Census is a high priority because it will improve the statistical capacity in all three statistics institutions in BiH, strengthen the statistical system of BiH, and improve the quality and comprehensiveness of statistics. Poor statistics is widely seen as a major barrier to sound policy making without which BiH cannot achieve the level of economic development necessary to join the EU.

Preparation for the Census is a strategic choice for EU IPA assistance. The Project has been developed by the BiH Agency for Statistics in cooperation with the two entity statistical institutes. Sweden has decided to make a contribution amounting to approximately €1 600 000, which together with the EU contributions will result in a total contribution of up to €3 000 000. The Swedish contribution will be part of IPA 2008 and is planned to be effective by the end of this year.

## New EU Newsroom for the Balkan TV stations

SEETV (South East Europe TV) has launched its new web-based video newsroom providing EU affairs coverage for broadcasters in the Balkans. Now EU news with a Balkan angle can be downloaded and used in broadcast quality, following a simple registration procedure.



This tailor-made internet platform developed by SEETV offers a wide range of topical interviews with EU experts and politicians on hot issues related to EU integration: from visa policy to the financial crisis aftermath, and international justice.

This service is primarily targeted at Western Balkan journalists following EU affairs, but will be useful to anyone with an interest in a Balkan angle on EU public affairs. We invite you to visit this website and find out more on SEETV's coverage of the most up-to-date topics at <http://www.seetv-exchanges.com>

## New website about cultural diversity in Southeast Europe

The European Commission's DG Enlargement has launched a new website "Southeast Europe: People and Culture".

On this web page ([www.southeast-europe.eu](http://www.southeast-europe.eu)) journalists from the Western Balkans and Turkey present the local music scene, film production, books, food specialties and much more through articles and audio-visual material. An events calendar gives visitors the opportunity to find out about cultural and sports events in the region. The website aims to raise awareness of the cultural richness of the region currently on the EU enlargement agenda.

## Competition for 2009 Lorenzo Natali Prize

On World Press Freedom Day, 3 May, the Commission is officially launching the Lorenzo Natali Prize for 2009. The prize is awarded in partnership with Reporters Without Borders and the World Association of Newspapers to journalists who have demonstrated a commitment to human rights, democracy and development.

The European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, Louis Michel, said: "Democracy cannot exist without freedom of information. Lack of information makes for an unhealthy society. The ideals of development, human rights and democracy cannot be achieved without free and independent media to raise questions and stimulate debate. The European Commission's aim in organising the Lorenzo Natali Prize is to support committed journalists who contribute to the cause of development, democracy and human rights through the quality of their work."



The Natali Prize is an international press award dating back to 1992. In 2008 over 1500 journalists from 151 countries took part. It is open to journalists working in TV, radio, the press and online.

Interested journalists have until 30 June 2009, to apply ([www.nataliprize2009.eu](http://www.nataliprize2009.eu)). The winners will receive their prizes at a special award ceremony in Stockholm in October, in the presence of the European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid.

Prizes worth a total of €60 000 will be awarded to the winners in the different sections: Africa, Europe, Maghreb/Middle East, Asia and Latin America/Caribbean.

For the organisation of the Lorenzo Natali Prize, the European Commission is once again working with two of the most prestigious world press associations: -Reporters Without Borders, winner of the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought in 2005; and the World Association of Newspapers, which represents over 18,000 publications in all five continents.