

# NEWSLETTER

Delegation of the European Union to BiH

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**INTERVIEW** Ambassador Peter Sørensen, Head of the EU Delegation to BiH/ EU Special Representative

## Letting progress towards the EU slow down is in no-one's interest

*I think that the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina want to see EU integration move faster, I believe that this is possible*

In the short term, we are focusing on facilitating the authorities' efforts in doing the necessary 'homework' to get Bosnia and Herzegovina's Stabilisation and Association Agreement to enter into force. Our main aim in the years ahead, is to continue and intensify our work in partnership with all. Overall, tangible progress on the long overdue EU-related reforms is urgently needed. There have to be credible efforts to follow up the European Court of Human Rights ruling on the Sejdic-Finci case, which deemed Bosnia and Herzegovina to be not compliant with the European Convention on Human Rights. There needs to be an EU-compatible State Aid Law. The country also needs the population census law at the state level. This task is crucial not only for the country's socio-economic development, but also for Bosnia and Herzegovina to be able to respond to any eventual questions on its road to EU accession, stated Ambassador Peter Sørensen, Head of the EU Delegation to BiH/ EU Special Representative.

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Sørensen: Overall, tangible progress on the long overdue EU- related reforms is urgently needed

## QUOTE

Catherine Ashton, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/ Vice-President of the European Commission

*Use of social media to promote human rights should not be restricted by governments. The EU has repeatedly and publicly condemned restrictions on freedom of expression and on access to the internet, as well as the arrest of bloggers, witnessed in many countries around the world.*



Catherine Ashton

High Representative, Catherine Ashton, on behalf of the European Union on the occasion of Human Rights Day, December 2011

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Sørensen: The EU accession process requires long term political will

# Letting progress towards the EU slow down is in no-one's interest

● At the beginning of your post in BiH you made clear that within the new mandate you will support Bosnia and Herzegovina's people to prepare to eventual membership to the European Union but that is not going to be easy and that the brunt of the work will have to be done by people and politicians. After the initial period in the office and bearing in mind a fact that BiH government has not been established yet, how do you see the impact of this situation on fulfillment of obligations that BiH taken over by signing the SAA and how and if the bringing

together of the EU Delegation and EU Special Representative offices may help in moving things forward?

#### Partnership with all

- In the short term, we are focusing on facilitating the authorities' efforts in doing the necessary 'homework' to get Bosnia and Herzegovina's Stabilisation and Association Agreement to enter into force. Our main aim in the years ahead, is to continue and intensify our work in partnership with all. Overall, tangible progress on the long overdue EU-related

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reforms is urgently needed. There have to be credible efforts to follow up the European Court of Human Rights ruling on the Sejdic-Finci case, which deemed Bosnia and Herzegovina to be not compliant with the European Convention on Human Rights. There needs to be an EU-compatible State Aid Law. The country also needs the population census law at the state level. This task is crucial not only for the country's socio-economic development, but also for Bosnia and Herzegovina to be able to respond to any eventual questions on its road to EU accession.

All political parties and leaders

have backed the EU accession process, all have said that they intend to fight corruption, strengthen the rule of law and get the economy back on its feet. I believe that the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina want to see EU integration move faster; I believe it can. However, the speed of Bosnia and Herzegovina's EU integration depends ultimately on the country's progress in EU related reforms, thus on the country's leaders and on the citizens who vote for them. The country's EU perspective is real, but clearly it needs to accelerate.

### There is no shared vision

● **Progress Report was launched and there are still ongoing discussions on assessments that were presented in it. In your opinion, what is the PR area that requires the most attention of BiH public?**

- A shared vision by the political representatives on the overall direction and future of the country and its institutional setup is lacking, as the recent Progress report of the EC has noted. The EU accession process requires long term political will, functional institutions and effective coordination mechanisms

on EU matters.

The conclusion of the Report was that the overall pace of reforms has been very limited. The political and institutional deadlock has continued. This has prevented work on the reform agenda including those needed to bring the country closer to the EU. But letting progress towards the EU slow down is in no-one's interest. The EU is ready to work together with BiH authorities to translate recommendations from this year's report into concrete actions. What is clear is that the political leaders must make Progress Report a living document and take the opportunity to rebound from this unfavourable position, find inspiration in compromise and work together. This is the only recipe for BiH to catch up with the rest of the region.

● **There were many misinterpretations in the general public or rather to say lack of understanding on what does the structured dialogue on justice mean? Can we use this opportunity to ask you to provide us with perspectives of this issue?**

The EU-BiH Structured Dialogue on Justice assists Bosnia and Herzegovina to consolidate



Sørensen: Political leaders must make Progress Report a living document

### Corridor Vc does not mean investment only but also direct employment of people

● **EU funds support BiH to build its economy infrastructure. One of the most important part is construction of roads, especially corridor Vc. Important role also has EBRD with the loan line that supports ongoing EU initiatives in infrastructure building. How do you see the future role of the EU support in building these foundations of BiH economy?**

- As you may know, we recently had high-level talks chaired by the Director-General for Enlargement from the European Commission on the important transport link Corridor Vc. We are thinking of using the IPA 2012 funds for corridor Vc design, as building of this corridor will mean not only an investment, but also direct employment

Corridor Vc will provide for the interconnection of large parts of the country with the Trans-European Network and thus give the country access to important transport axes in South-East Europe and beyond. I call upon all political stakeholders in the country to join in a common effort together to make it possible for the infrastructure measures for the



BiH highway- connection of the country with the Trans-European Network

motorways and the railways to be completed by 2017, which is our common goal.

The European Commission will continue to financially support this important project, if there is a clear political agreement and commitment from your authorities.

an independent, effective, efficient and professional judicial system. It's a comprehensive exercise.

At the same time, the Dialogue helps the country move further along its path towards the EU. It is carried out in the framework of the Stabilisation and Association Process. It is one of the mechanisms for the revision of legislation and functioning of the institutions in the Enlargement countries.

The authorities have taken a pro-active approach to making progress on several of the recommendations made in June. We have had a good follow up now in Sarajevo. We had good suggestions especially from the HJPC. This time, the focus was on backlogged cases and the execution of criminal sanctions, the strategy for prosecution of war crimes and the legal framework for coordination of the powers of the various judicial institutions. We look forward to further discussions in the months to come.





Conducting a census is a technical exercise that delivers practical advantages

## A Census Can Open the Door to Prosperity

*The census is just one aspect of the overall statistical system that efficient democracies rely on to deliver maximum benefits in terms of planning and the allocation of resources*

One of the key elements in Bosnia and Herzegovina's European accession effort and one of the key elements in the corresponding effort to revive the BiH economy is to conduct a household and population census.

A population census makes

it possible to develop effective socioeconomic policies, by providing policymakers with essential statistics.

### Real picture of the country

Progress in raising living standards in Bosnia and

Herzegovina has been modest partly because policymakers are driving in the dark. They do not have an accurate picture of the country – where the people are, where the jobs are needed, where the houses and schools are needed, where the roads are

Last census was conducted 20 years ago

Most countries organise a census every decade – so that changes can be compared over each ten-year period. The last census in Bosnia and Herzegovina was conducted twenty years ago in March.

needed.

A census provides this information. That's why 21 European countries conducted household and population census this year. Bosnia Herzegovina was supposed to conduct a census too – but agreement could not be reached on precisely what information should be gathered.

In March 2008 the European Partnership (an agreement between the EU and the BiH authorities that is part of the Stabilisation and Association Process) set as one of its short-term priorities that the BiH authorities would agree on a target date for the census and start preparations for implementing it. Conducting the census was set as a medium-term priority.

Almost four years later, however, the census law has not been enacted.

#### Valuable information

There are at least three things about the census that every BiH citizen should know.

- all the political parties agree that a census is necessary and useful;
- holding a census will remove one of the obstacles to Bosnia and Herzegovina securing candidate EU membership status; and
- a census will make it possible to improve socio-economic policymaking and start to tackle the hardship that has been created by poor economic management till now.

The European Union's 2011 Progress Report stresses that adopting a BiH Law on Household and Population Census is essential for socio-economic development and future integration.

“Policy planning in Bosnia and Herzegovina as a whole remains impeded by the lack of up-to-date census data,” the Report notes and it calls for the adoption of a census law as a matter of urgency.

Conducting a census is a technical exercise that delivers practical advantages. It is not a political exercise. The questions can be designed to



### Enormous benefits for citizens

The challenge of conducting a census and maintaining up-to-date, accurate and actionable statistics is not beyond the BiH authorities. It can be done.

When it is done, there will be enormous benefits for citizens.

- It will be possible to improve macroeconomic policymaking and boost investment and job creation.
- One of the obstacles to securing candidate EU membership status will have been removed.
- The European Union will be able to channel substantial aid into Bosnia and Herzegovina in the most effective way.

These benefits certainly justify the additional effort that is required to end the disagreement over the Population and Household Census and make the necessary preparations for a census in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2012.

deliver maximum advantage to all citizens without advancing or impeding the perceived political interests of any particular group.

Other European countries that face serious political issues regarding the make-up of the population in different parts of the country have been able to organise successful census that do not complicate political issues but offer valuable insight on economic ones.

Bosnia and Herzegovina can do the same.

#### Quarterly overview of the economy

The census is just one aspect of the overall statistical system that efficient democracies rely on to deliver maximum benefits in terms of planning and the

allocation of resources.

The 2011 Progress Report noted that there is still no Agricultural Information Strategy and no Law on Agricultural Census. In other words, there is no clear statistical picture of the farm sector – on which half of the population depends directly or indirectly for its livelihood.

The Report also found that cooperation between the BiH and Entity statistics agencies remains unsatisfactory, as does the level of cooperation between the BiH agency and other state-level institutions.

Because of this, Bosnia and Herzegovina is unable to offer international investors a quarterly snapshot of its economy – and that deters the investment that is desperately needed to create jobs.

FROM  
WWW.EUROPA.BA

### BiH Agricultural Cooperatives Receive GLOBALGAP Certificate



GLOBALGAP certificates were handed over to seven BiH agricultural cooperatives in Brčko on 4 November, at a ceremony which coincided with the presentation of the EU funded “Development of Agricultural Cooperatives” project under which that certification was provided.

### Diploma for 32 Masters in Democracy and Human Rights



Thirty-two students in the European Regional Master's Degree Program in Democracy and Human Rights in South East Europe (ERMA) graduated on 28 October 2011.

The ERMA program was established as a joint undertaking by several universities in Southeast Europe and the European Union.

Since 2001, a total of 5.5 million Euros has been allocated to the program. The EU has contributed 80 percent of financing, or five million Euros, the funds being allocated from the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights.

more on  
[www.europa.ba](http://www.europa.ba)



## Changing Bosnia and Herzegovina's Constitution: Why it Matters for Citizens and Why it Matters for Europe?

*In the European Union, every citizen enjoys the same fundamental rights. This must also apply in Bosnia and Herzegovina if it wants to join the EU*

In December 2009 the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) ruled that the BiH Constitution violates the rights of citizens who do not belong to one of the three constituent peoples – since they are not permitted to stand

case brought by Jakob Finci and Dervo Sejdić is important for three reasons.

It goes to the very heart of the concept of citizenship in a 21st century democracy;

it must be implemented before Bosnia and Herzegovina

can achieve EU candidate membership status (and start enjoying the benefits that come from that); and

building consensus on how to implement the ruling will serve as a model for progress across a broad spectrum of

urgently-needed but long-delayed reforms.

### A new working group

The 2011 EU Progress Report, issued in October and covering the period October



The building of the European Court of Human Rights

as candidates for the BiH Presidency or the BiH House of Peoples.

### Three reasons

The BiH authorities undertook to change the constitution.

Two years on, they have not yet done so.

The ECHR ruling in the

### Example of discrimination

Civil rights are not negotiable: they are inviolable.

The Progress Report found instances of citizens' rights being violated right across BiH society. There have been orchestrated attacks on journalists and NGOs that have investigated corruption or campaigned for minorities; workers are being exploited as a result of the failure to implement labour reforms; women continue to suffer discrimination in the job market. These are just a handful of examples.

2010 to September 2011, noted that because the largest political parties had been unable to form a BiH Council of Ministers they had "hampered Bosnia and Herzegovina's progress on much needed reforms, in particular as regards harmonisation of the Constitution with the European Convention on Human Rights."

The first working group



**Dervo Sejdić**

established to implement the ECHR ruling could not agree, and in July the sitting Council of Ministers established a new working group, which has still to make recommendations.

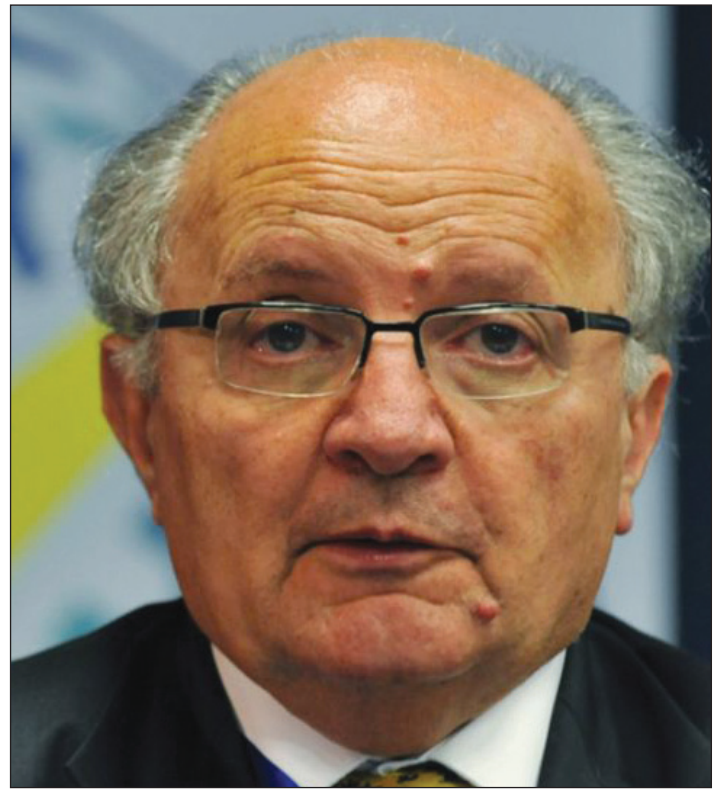
The Report argued that failure on this and other issues was caused by “the lack of a shared vision” among political leaders.

Implementing the ECHR ruling is not optional but mandatory. The authorities must bring the BiH Constitution into line with the European Convention on Human Rights.

This is consistent with Bosnia and Herzegovina’s commitment under the Interim Agreement signed with the European Union in July 2008 (and since ratified by all 27 EU member states) to meet the Copenhagen Criteria, which explicitly require a candidate country to guarantee human rights and respect for and protection of minorities.

#### **A new applications**

The Progress Report found that while Bosnia and Herzegovina has ratified all the major international human rights conventions, decisions handed down by the BiH Constitutional



**Jakob Finci**

Court in a number of human-rights cases have not been enforced, which has resulted in cases being taken to the ECHR. A total of 507 new applications were filed with the ECHR in the year from October 2010, bringing the number of

cases before the Court regarding Bosnia and Herzegovina to 1350. Between October last year and September this year the ECHR delivered another two judgements finding that Bosnia and Herzegovina has violated

the rights of its own citizens.

#### **EU suport**

In addition to the lack of a “shared vision” among political leaders, Bosnia and Herzegovina’s poor human-rights record may be the result of fundamental misunderstanding about the nature of the rights enjoyed by citizens.

Among the population as a whole there is overwhelming support for measures that will give BiH citizens the same protection that citizens in the European Union enjoy.

The task now is to translate that support into political action.

The European Union will offer constructive and consistent support to the BiH authorities to help them reach agreement on implementing the Sejdić- Finci ruling and other key human-rights reforms. The goal is to protect the rights of all BiH citizens, get Bosnia and Herzegovina back on the road to EU candidate status, and establish a model for the kind of constructive consensus that will deliver the whole range of reforms that are required for the accession process.



### **The rights of all citizens are undermined**

In the European Union, every citizen enjoys the same fundamental rights. This must also apply in Bosnia and Herzegovina if it wants to join the EU.

This isn’t important only for minorities. It is important for everyone – because when a citizen faces discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity or gender or any other factor, the rights of all citizens are undermined. If discrimination is allowed in one instance it becomes hard to stop in another instance. Once the principle is breached, its capacity to protect is diminished.



## Provide permanent accommodation for refugees and displaced persons

*Sixteen years after the end of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina some 8600 people - mainly Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) - still live in collective centres scattered throughout the country, where basic living conditions remain extremely difficult.*

*“This is a situation that must be resolved” Director for the Western Balkans at the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Enlargement, Pierre Mirel, and UNHCR BiH Representative, Andrew Mayne, stressed when they visited collective centres in East Sarajevo and Gladno Polje near Rakovica on November this year.*

*The collective centre visit comes within the context of a continuing joint effort with the BiH authorities to find durable solutions for refugees and IDPs and other vulnerable citizens living in these centres.*



Residents of the collective centres live in poverty and face many problems







„It is unacceptable that people are still living in these conditions,” Mirel said



Support provided by the local authorities is, in most cases, insufficient



# Competition and Transparency Are Good for Consumers

*The object is to make sure that subsidies are public not secret, that they are regulated by clear criteria and do not represent a wasteful drain on public funds, and that they do not give unfair advantages on the one hand or reduce the value and quality of goods and services available to the consumer on the other*



**Ensure that consumers can choose from a variety of affordable and high quality goods and services**

The European Union's internal market has delivered unparalleled quality and cost savings to 500 million consumers. It has done this through a regulatory system that ensures that companies compete transparently.

There are rules, for example, that strictly prohibit governments from using public funds to prop up uncompetitive companies. These rules have a double impact.

They make sure that consumers don't have to put up with shoddy goods or services at inflated prices provided by companies that are only there because they are on government life-support; and

They prevent governments

from spending public money wastefully to support companies that will never be competitive.

### Unfair subsidies

The rules against unfair subsidies are applied throughout the Single Market – since it would clearly be wrong for companies that benefit from state subsidies to compete against companies that do not.

And the rules have been effective: the EU's internal market is free and competitive, which means that consumers can choose from a variety of affordable and high quality goods and services.

As part of the integration process Bosnia and Herzegovina

## What should citizens know about State Aid



There are several things that citizens should know about State Aid.

- The different levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina disburse public funds in subsidies to companies and industrial sectors – without transparency and without coordination.

- These subsidies are substantial in terms of this country's modest resources, but they are generally below the 200,000-Euro level that is the threshold for State Aid regulation under EU rules – so establishing an EU-standard State Aid system in Bosnia and Herzegovina would make subsidies transparent, accountable, quantifiable and more effective, but would not in present circumstances mean a mass withdrawal of subsidies.

- Effective regulation ensures proper accountability of public finances and protects consumers – a system to regulate State Aid is protective, not restrictive.

- The European Union has taken into account the serious challenges faced by BiH companies and has agreed that regulation will be introduced in stages, and subsidies will continue to be allowed where Bosnia and Herzegovina's economic condition justifies such subsidies.

- In addition to agreements with the European Union, this country has undertaken to regulate State Aid as a member of CEFTA, which it joined in 2006, and under the Southeast European Energy Community Treaty, which it ratified the same year. This will also be a requirement when Bosnia and Herzegovina negotiates membership of the World Trade Organisation.





**Ensure a transparent competition**

has undertaken to establish a system that regulates State Aid – the allocation of public funds or other forms of government support to companies and industrial or economic sectors.

**A snail's pace**

The Stabilisation and Association Agreement and the European Partnership list in detail what the BiH authorities must do in order to bring State Aid regulations up to European standard.

But the authorities have not done what they promised to do.

In fact, as of 1 July 2010, Bosnia and Herzegovina has formally been in violation of its EU commitments because by that date it was supposed to have established at the state level an independent operational agency for State Aid.

In August this year the Council of Ministers adopted a draft Law on State Aid, but the Parliamentary Assembly hasn't debated the law yet, since parliamentary business has proceeded at a snail's pace in the absence of agreement on forming a new Council of Ministers.

The European Union helped Bosnia and Herzegovina develop a Preliminary State Aid Inventory, listing all the instances of State Aid across all levels of government in

BiH. It helped to draft the State Aid Law. It helped draft a report on which parts of the country and which industrial sectors are most in need of State Aid, and it produced a draft annual report on State Aid, which will serve as a model for future reports.

These measures add up to a system that ensures – above everything else – transparency in the disbursement of government subsidies.

**A single BiH interlocutor**

The object is not to prevent subsidies, or take resources away from companies or sectors that need them. The object is to make sure that subsidies are public not secret, that they are regulated by clear criteria and do not represent a wasteful drain on public funds, and that they do not give unfair advantages on the one hand or reduce the value and quality of goods and services available to the consumer on the other.

Entity legislation, even if it were consistent with EU norms, would not protect consumers right across the BiH market. The European Union wants to deal with a single BiH interlocutor on this key initiative that affects the interests of all BiH consumers. That is why it is imperative that a BiH State Aid Law is enacted without further delay.

**REGION**

# Region on the path towards the EU

*The recent signing of the accession agreement between Croatia and the EU was important for all the countries in the region. Croatia's progress is proof that the EU has a clear policy towards Southeast Europe and that it is determined to honour its commitment to the region's European perspective*



**Western Balkans: Promotion of regional cooperation and opening EU accession possibilities**

Countries in the Western Balkans that are on the path towards integration in the European Union go through the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP). This is designed to stabilise each country, stimulate rapid transition to a market economy, promote regional cooperation and prepare states for EU accession.

The SAP for the Western Balkans was launched at the EU's Zagreb Summit in 2000,

and the region's European perspective was reaffirmed at the Thessaloniki Summit of 2003.

In this context, the recent signing of the accession agreement between Croatia and the EU was important for all the countries in the region. Croatia's progress is proof that the EU has a clear policy towards Southeast Europe and that it is determined to honour its commitment to the region's European perspective.

● Continued on page 12 and 13



# Bosnia and Herzegovina: Still without request for a membership status

*The recent Conclusions of the Council of the EU expressed serious concern over the continued political deadlock in BiH, which is hampering the proper functioning of the state and the implementation of EU-related reforms*

Bosnia and Herzegovina signed a Stabilisation and Association Agreement in 2008, but has not yet fulfilled the requirements for applying for EU membership.

BiH is the only country in the Western Balkans that has not yet submitted a formal request for candidate status. Reforms that are part of the EU integration process have been held up because of the failure to form a new BiH Council of Ministers following the October 2010 elections.

Forming a Council of Ministers is among the principal steps that BiH must take before it can apply for candidate status. Other priorities are to implement the European Court of Human Rights's ruling in the Sejdić-Finci case and to adopt European-standard laws on State Aid and on Census.

The recent Conclusions of the Council of the EU expressed serious concern over the continued political deadlock in BiH, which is hampering the proper functioning of the state and the implementation of EU-related reforms. The Council urged all BiH political leaders to live up to their responsibilities in this regard and to develop a shared vision of the future of the country.

The Council stressed the importance of improving and strengthening the efficient functioning of the state and institutions, including necessary constitutional changes. In particular, it noted, the country will need to be in a position to adopt, implement and enforce EU laws and regulations.

Recalling its Conclusions of 21 March and 10 October 2011, the EU Council reaffirmed its



commitment to strengthening its support for Bosnia and Herzegovina. It also reaffirmed its full support for the EUSR/ Head of EU Delegation taking the lead in supporting Bosnia and Herzegovina in EU-related matters.

The Council reaffirmed its support for the establishment of the Structured Dialogue on justice within the framework of the SAP and called on the BiH authorities to continue

to engage constructively in this dialogue. The Council emphasised that establishing an effective coordination mechanism for dealing with EU matters, including IPA-related issues, is key.

The Council reiterated its unequivocal commitment to the European perspective of BiH and reaffirmed its unequivocal commitment to the territorial integrity of BiH as a sovereign and united country.

# Croatia: Member State as of 1. July 2013

*From the very beginning of the negotiations, Croatia has had to meet strict benchmarks, so it may be assumed that the same consistent criteria will be applied to other countries in the region*

At a ceremony in the European Commission headquarters in Brussels on 9 December 2011 Croatia signed an accession treaty with the European Union. After ratification by the parliaments of the EU Member States, Croatia will become a full member of the EU, on 1 July 2013.

Croatia gained candidate status in June 2004 and was the only country in the region to gain candidate status and a secure date for the launch of membership negotiations on the same day. The negotiations, which began in 2005 and ended

in the summer of 2011, were blocked for a certain period because of Croatia's border dispute with Slovenia.

From the very beginning of the process Croatia has had to meet strict benchmarks. The same consistent criteria will be applied to other countries in the region, an approach which has emerged in part from the EU's experience in regard to the accession of Romania and Bulgaria. Neither country fully met conditions before joining, especially in terms of judicial reform and the fight against organised crime and corruption. A



monitoring mechanism had to be applied after accession and because of this the EU now insists that candidates fulfill all criteria before they secure membership.

Although negotiations have been successfully concluded, Croatia will be monitored between now and the middle of 2013 to ensure that all criteria have been met.



# Serbia: A progress in dialogue with Kosovo is expected

*The President of the Council of the EU, Herman van Rompuy, has indicated that an assessment of Serbia's progress will be made in February*

On 12 October 2011 the European Commission recommended that Serbia be given candidate status, but the country will have to wait several months for further steps on the road to European integration.

The President of the Council of the EU, Herman van Rompuy, has indicated that an assessment of Serbia's progress will be made in February and that an EU summit in early March will decide on Serbia's

EU membership candidacy.

Belgrade needs to show further progress in implementing the agreements reached in the dialogue with Pristina, including the agreement on Integrated Border Management (IBM), and it must reach agreement on the participation of all parties in regional cooperation and active cooperation which should ensure that EULEX and KFOR carry out their mandates.



## Montenegro: Additional checking



Montenegro gained candidate status in December 2010 and the European Commission has recommended that accession negotiations begin in June 2012. On 9 December 2011 the Council of the EU tasked the EU Council of Ministers to "explore Montenegro's progress in implementing reforms, especially in terms of crime, the rule of law and fundamental rights, particularly in the fight against

corruption and organized crime on the basis of reports to the European Commission." This should be presented in the first half of 2012.

Montenegro will be the subject of additional verification if EU ministers give the green light for negotiations to begin in June, and in the meantime the European Commission will create a framework for negotiations.

## Macedonia: A dispute with Greece over the name

Macedonia gained candidate status in 2005, but a date for opening formal negotiations has not yet been determined. The main difficulty is the "name" dispute with Athens, which

The European Commission has three times recommended starting negotiations with Macedonia, but negotiations cannot proceed as long as a Member State objects. At their meeting on 5 December 2011 EU



objects to the use of the name "Macedonia" as this also refers to a part of Greece

ministers postponed a decision on Macedonia, indicating that they are ready to review this issue next year.

## Albania: Additional progress is needed

The European Commission has concluded that further progress will be needed before Albania can be granted candidate status. As long as requested steps have not been taken, the country will not be able to achieve candidate status or move forward towards the



opening of accession negotiations with the European Union.

## Kosovo: Immediate tasks

Kosovo immediate task is to prepare for the launch of a visa-liberalisation dialogue with the EU and to strengthen trade relations with the EU.



# My neighbourhood photo competition: winners announced

*The winners of the photo competition My Neighbourhood were announced on 29th of November. The competition was launched by the European Union Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina/EU Special Representative. It ran from 18 October to 18 November 2011 and 168 photos were submitted. The first prize, a NIKON Coolpix L120 camera, has been kindly donated by BLICKDRUCK Company of Sarajevo*

Entrants were asked to submit photographs in response to the questions: What does your neighbourhood mean to you today? What might change and what might stay the same in your neighbourhood when Bosnia and Herzegovina becomes a member of the European Union? Maybe there is something in your neighbourhood that would be a positive contribution to the EU?

The two top placed winners are:

1. Emir Vražalica, Sarajevo, for Family values with a modern twist
2. Nikolina Tuka, Sarajevo, for Girl overlooking the town

And for the most “likes” on the Delegation Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/europa.ba](http://www.facebook.com/europa.ba)) the winner is:

Jovana Vujasinović, Banja Luka, for Children cannot wait  
Ambassador Peter Sorensen said:

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a diverse and beautiful country and this was well reflected in the entries to the competition. There are so many good things, from all the communities, to bring to the attention of a wider audience. Our winners have in addition shown impressive artistic flair and I congratulate

them. I look forward to presenting them with their prizes and to their pictures being part of our official calendar for 2012.

A panel of judges, composed of three professional photographers, a representative of the EU Awareness II project and a representative of European Union Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina/EUSR, had the difficult task of selecting the two best works out of the 168 entries received. The selection was made based on the following criteria:

1. Relevance to the theme My Neighbourhood
2. Composition of the frame
3. Light used for photography
4. Idea and message sent

The winners will be presented with their awards – including digital cameras for the two top placed winners - at a dinner with EU Ambassador Peter Sorensen in January 2012.

A further 9 photographs will be selected for the EU in BiH 2012 calendar.



1. Emir Vražalica, Sarajevo  
“Family values with a modern twist”



2. Nikolina Tuka, Sarajevo  
“Girl overlooking the town”



Jovana Vujasinović, Banja Luka  
“Children cannot wait” the most “likes” on the Delegation Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/europa.ba](http://www.facebook.com/europa.ba))

## Europe in 12 Lessons

What is the purpose of the European Union? Why and how did it come into being? How does it work? What has it achieved for its citizens and what are the challenges that it faces today? What role will Europe play on the world stage in the years to come? Where will the EU's borders be? And what is the future of the Euro?

tackle terrorism and organized crime by consolidating the EU "Area of Freedom, Security and Justice". This is a new challenge that requires close cooperation among governments – the same kind of cooperation that is needed in order to resolve the global economic crisis, Fontaine argues.

Europe in 12 Lessons shows that in a world where China, India,



These are some of the questions explored by EU expert Pascal Fontaine, Professor at the Institute of Political Studies in Paris, in his popular book Europe in 12 Lessons, published in 2010. Fontaine analyses key issues affecting the European Union since 9 May 1950 when Robert Schuman first proposed the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community.

A particular focus is the Enlargement Process in Southeast Europe and Turkey and the effort to

Brazil and other major economies are growing rapidly, the European Union can join the United States as a global superpower – but for this to happen the Member States must work together to achieve "critical mass" and to maintain EU influence on the world stage.

For today's Europeans, Fontaine writes, the old adage "strength in unity" still holds.

*The brochure „EU in 12 lessons“ is printed and delivered by BORAM. The brochure is available at the EU Delegation to BiH and Eu Info Centres.*

## Booklet EU assistance to BiH

Since the end of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the European Union has provided the country with more than three billion Euros in assistance. Between 1995 and 2000, the focus was on humanitarian aid, refugee return and rebuilding physical infrastructure.

After this, EU funds were directed towards establishing institutions and political and economic systems that would help BiH become a fully functional

impact on the country. If it had been possible to sustain broad consensus among the main political parties then this impact might have been even greater and even more positive – and BiH might be very much further along the road to prosperity and security as an EU member state. Disagreement among the parties has until now prevented this outcome, but the EU remains determined to support BiH citizens and help them achieve



state. Since the signing of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement in June 2008 the focus of EU funding, principally through the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), has been on helping BiH adjust its economic, political, security and social system to meet the requirements of EU membership.

EU aid has had an enormous – and enormously positive –

their EU-membership aspirations.

Following are notable success stories involving projects that are an integral part of the effort to help BiH meet the political and economic criteria for EU membership.

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