

## News by SELDI members

### RAI Secretariat Visits Slovenia



The RAI Secretariat met with the Slovenian Commission for the Prevention of Corruption and Centre for Excellence in Finance (CEF). RAI presented the International Instrument on data exchange on Asset Disclosure and Conflict of Interest promoted at Trieste Western Balkan Summit in July 2017 and reaffirmed its intentions to involve Slovenia as a partner in RAI's activities. **RAI, 7-8 September 2017**

Source: RAI

### Budget Transparency in Croatian Counties, Cities and Municipalities

The SELDI member Institute of Public Finance presented data from a survey on budget transparency in Croatian counties, cities and municipalities (November 2016 – March 2017). In the current research cycle, it averages 3.1 (the maximum rank is 5), with counties already being very transparent (4.6 on average), cities fairly good (3.7 on average), but municipalities still lagging behind (2.8 on average). **Institute of Public Finance, 9 September 2017**

### Transparency of the Judiciary in Kosovo Hindered by Lack of Resources in the Courts



Photo: Lëvizja FOL

On 7 September 2017 SELDI member FOL Movement and the "Search for Law" Program held a joint meeting to discuss transparency in the Kosovo judicial system. The President of the Basic Court in Pristina, Aferdita Bytyci stressed that although transparency remains a priority of the court, as seen from the number of published judgments, it is very important to understand that there is a huge lack of resources in the courts. But even though such increase in efficiency can be noticed, the distrust of citizens in the prosecutor's

office remains a huge problem, especially non-publication of their work and the failure to inform the public on time. "Increasing transparency in the work of the courts will have an impact on increasing the citizens' confidence in the courts," added Gersi Gashi from FOL Movement. **Lëvizja FOL , 7 September 2017**

## IDSCS to Observe EU Accession Reforms



Source: The Institute of Democracy  
"Societas Civilis" – Skopje

**Civilis" – Skopje, 6 September 2017**

The Institute for Democracy "Societas civilis", SELDI member, in cooperation with the office of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation announced the beginning of the project "Enhancing Progress in Macedonia's Accession Reforms to the European Union" (Perform on Reform - Monitoring Macedonia's EU accession package of reforms). The activities of the project will include observing the implementation of the reform process in the country. IDSCS will develop a methodology for monitoring the reforms and measuring their impact. **The Institute of Democracy "Societas**

## **Anti-Corruption News from the SEE Region**

### Working Group in Albania will Ensure the Police is Free of Links to Crime and Corruption

On 15 September 2017, a working group was formed at the Interior Minister in order to check whether all members of the police are free of links to crime and corruption while also assessing their professional abilities. The police in Albania comprises around 11,000 staff and it is still not clear if the whole force is going to undergo the process, or whether it will be reserved only to those in senior positions. The widespread nature of cannabis cultivation during 2016 took its toll on the police's image, with opposition politicians accusing senior members of the government of involvement in trafficking. **Balkan Insight, 19 September 2017**

### EC to Target Accession of Serbia and Montenegro with 2025 Perspective

The European Commission (EC) has said it plans to prepare a strategy for the accession of Serbia and Montenegro to the European Union (EU) with a 2025 perspective. The strategy will have a particular emphasis on the rule of law, fundamental rights, the fight against corruption and on the overall stability of the region, the Commission said in a letter of intent to the European Parliament president Antonio Tajani dated September 13. Earlier this month, Serbian prime minister Ana Brnabic said Serbia will be ready to join the EU in 2020. **SEENews, 15 September 2017**

### Numerous Highway Projects in Romania Stalled by Incompetence and Corruption

With numerous highway projects stalled by incompetence and corruption, the government is turning to the World Bank, hoping it can help it get back into gear. Of all 27 European Union states, Romania lost most EU funds from Brussels over the period 2007 to 2013 because it failed to start the planned construction of highways (estimated almost 2 billion euros). In spring 2016, the management of the Romanian National Company for Highways and National Roads fired 68 managers at the request of the shareholders over the slow execution of highway projects, overpayment of personnel and inefficiency. Several former members of the company's management have been investigated for corruption. **Balkan Insight, 11 September 2017**

### EU Warns Romania over Judicial Reforms

The reforms set out by Justice Minister Tudorel Toader would mean the president could no longer name senior prosecutors — including those attached to the anti-corruption directorate (DNA). They would also reduce the powers of the DNA itself, preventing it from investigating magistrates. "We are worried about the way in which this proposed

legislation could affect the independence of the judiciary,” said Angela Cristea, Head of European Commission Representation in Romania. **ACTmedia and euractiv.com, 31 August 2017**

### **Special Prosecution in FYROM: 120 people have been indicted**

The Special Prosecution in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has published its fourth six monthly report about its activity. According to the report, 18 charges have been pressed against 120 people. Meanwhile, procedures have been launched against 24 individuals and four companies. Around 80 thousand files, 15 thousand audio files, as well as 22 thousand transactions are subject to investigation. **IBNA, 18 September 2017**

### **Kosovo\*: New Justice Minister to Amend Law on Confiscating Illicit Assets**

Newly appointed minister of Justice, Abelard Tahiri, has initiated amendment/supplement of the legislation related to confiscation of illegally obtained assets. Tahiri stated that fighting organised crime and corruption remains priority for the Government of Kosovo\*, noting that regional cooperation is crucial when it comes to fighting organised crime. **RAI, 19 September 2017**

*\* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.*

### **Moldova Big Fish Avoid Corruption Trials**

Across much of the Balkans, newspapers are frequently full of stories regarding corruption affairs. However, while arrests and investigations may be relatively numerous, actual successful prosecutions are few and far between. Much the same holds true in Moldova, ranked as one of Europe’s most corrupt countries. Moldova only prosecuted two high-profile corruption cases in the past two years, despite scores of investigations and arrests. NGO coalition Moldova Curata (Clean Moldova) published a report stating that of 12 senior public servants investigated in recent months for corruption, not one has been prosecuted. **Balkan Insight, 04 September 2017**

### **70% of Bulgarians Admit The President Should Have a Leading Role in Anti-Corruption Debate**

At the beginning of the autumn political season, corruption is at the heart of the political debate, and of lawmaking. The debate over the planned new anti-corruption institution is a key question. More than two-thirds of Bulgarian voters (70%) admit that the president should have a leading role in this respect. 21% support the proposal that control should be in the hands of the government, according to a Gallup International survey. **Novinite.com and BGNES, 5 September 2017**

### **Montenegrin Court Seizes Marovic’s Properties**

The high court in the Montenegrin capital, Podgorica, has accepted the request of the special prosecutor and blocked the property of the family of former Yugoslav President Svetozar Marovic until an investigation into the origin of the property of the former senior politician, who has been convicted of fraud, has finished. The total value of Marovic's property, acquired over the last few years while he was employed by the state, has reportedly been estimated at several million euros. **Balkan Insight, 18 August 2017**

## **Upcoming events**

### **Regional Forum on Preventing Corruption Through Efficient Identification of Risks**

The Regional Anti-corruption Initiative and the Regional Cooperation Council, in cooperation with Slovenian Commission for Prevention of Corruption, and supported by the Austrian Development Agency are organizing the Regional Forum on Preventing Corruption Through Efficient Identification of Risks in Ljubljana, Slovenia, on 25-26 October, 2017. The Forum will discuss the progress achieved and the challenges faced with introduction and implementation of corruption risk assessment and anti-corruption assessment of laws.

Particularly, the participants will present practical cases which brought an impact and innovative ideas in conducting the two preventive measures. **RAI, 25 – 26 October 2017, Ljubljana, Slovenia**

**UNODC Multi-stakeholder Workshop on Strengthening Civil Society Capacity on the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and its Review Mechanism**

Southeast Europe Regional Programme on Strengthening the Capacity of Anti-corruption Authorities and Civil Society to Combat Corruption and Contribute to the UNCAC Review Process (Programme) aims at building and strengthening the capacity of governments and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) from SEE to prevent and fight corruption. **UNODC, 25-29 September 2017, Sarajevo**

## Reports and Analyses

### **Corruption in the European Union**



#### Corruption in the European Union

Prevalence of corruption, and anti-corruption efforts in selected EU Member States



STUDY

EPRS | European Parliamentary Research Service  
Authors: Piotr Babrowski and Sofia Voronova  
Members Research Service  
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EN

The study deals with the prevalence of corruption in the EU and describes the action taken to address the problem. It focuses on initiatives and policies implemented by governments at the national, regional and local levels in eight selected Member States ranging from north to south and from west to east: Finland, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Croatia, Romania and Bulgaria. The perception of corruption among citizens, the legal, institutional and policy framework, as well as some best practices at different levels of government have been presented, to improve understanding of the context and the nature of anti-corruption policies and to give some positive examples of what can be done. **European Parliamentary Research Service, September 2017**

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