

**Annual report**

**2022**



**Crnogorska panevropska unija**  
**Montenegrin Pan-European Union**  
*Paneuropaea Montis Nigri*

Moskovska 89/15  
81000 Podgorica  
[www.panevropa.me](http://www.panevropa.me)  
[cpaneu1@gmail.com](mailto:cpaneu1@gmail.com)

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## I Activities on the implementation of the Visegrad Fund project “V4 support to promote WB6 Common Regional Market: one market for post-COVID recovery (V4/WB6) “October 2021 – September 2022

Montenegrin Pan-European union received grant support for the project “**V4 support to promote WB6 Common Regional Market: one market for post-COVID recovery**”. The project was funded by the Governments of Czechia, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia through Visegrad Grants from International Visegrad Fund. The mission of the fund is to advance ideas for sustainable regional cooperation in Central Europe. The project implementation period was from **October 1<sup>st</sup> 2021 to September 30<sup>th</sup> 2022**.

The project focused on sharing experiences, transferring knowledge and recommending further regional economic integration through the development of the WB6 Common Regional Market using experiences from ex-CEFTA and V4 after integration into the EU single market. Project products (**e-book and storytelling video**) and events (**conference, roundtable, webinar, lectures**) addressed the difference in economic cooperation before and after entering the EU and how to speed up the process of European integration, with a focus on closer economic cooperation between V4 and WB6 in the post-COVID period.

This project was implemented with the support of partners from four VISEGRAD countries (Czechia, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) and partners from five Western Balkans countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo\*, North Macedonia and Serbia). The partners were:

- **Union of the Robert Schuman Institute for Developing Democracy in Central-Eastern Europe (RSI)** from Budapest, Hungary. The project partner website is – <http://schuman-institute.eu/>;
- **Center for Social and Economic Research (CASE)** from Warsaw, Poland. The project partner website is – <https://www.case-research.eu/en>;
- **Institute for Politics and Society (IPS)** from Prague, Czech Republic. The project partner website is – <https://www.politikaspolecnost.cz/en/front-page/>;
- **Macro-Economic and Social Analyses 10** from Bratislava, Slovakia. The project partner website is – <https://www.mesa10.org/>;
- **Albanian Center for Economic Research (ASER)** from Tirana, Albania. The project partner website is – <https://acer.org.al/>;
- **Foreign Policy Initiative BH (FPI BH)** from Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The project partner website is – <https://vpi.ba/en/fpi-bh/>;
- **Riinvest Institute for Development Research (Riinvest)** from Prishtina, Kosovo\*. The project partner website is – <https://www.riinvestinstitute.org/En>;
- **FINANCE THINK – Economic, Research and Policy Institute** from Skopje, North Macedonia. The project partner website is – <https://vvv.financethink.mk/en/>;

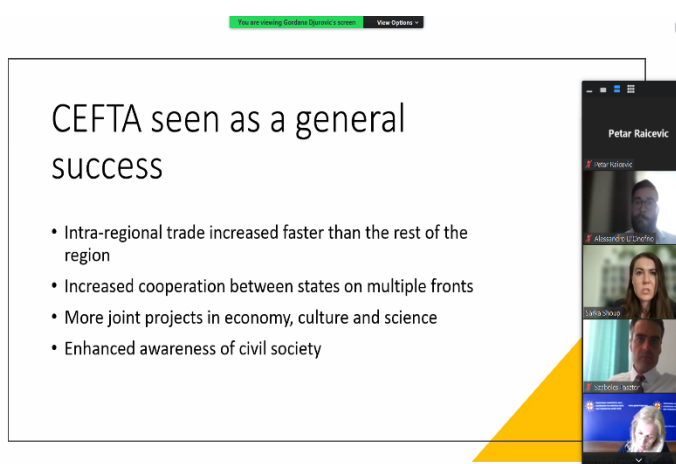
- **Center for Foreign Policy** from Belgrade, Serbia. The project partner website is – <https://cfp.org.rs/>.

**The project's overall goals were:**

- to improve the Ecosystem for business and social business development at the regional level;
- to promote and further explain the benefits and challenges of the CRM plan for the WB6;
- to include post-COVID recovery plan in research, education, debate and set of recommendations;
- to promote Key CRM benefits through the project;
- to support necessary changes achieved through close cooperation, knowledge transfer and experience sharing with V4.

### **1. Roundtable „From CEFTA to the EU Single Market: Lessons learned from V4 to WB6“**

Montenegrin Pan-European Union (**MPEU**) in cooperation with the Union of the Robert Schuman Institute for Developing Democracy in Central-Eastern Europe (**RSI**), Budapest, Hungary organized a roundtable titled „From CEFTA to the EU single market: lessons learned from V4 to WB6“ in an online format on **12<sup>th</sup> of May**. The roundtable is an activity of the project „**V4 support to promote WB6 Common Regional Market: one market for post-COVID recovery**“ co-financed by the Governments of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia through Visegrad Grants from the International Visegrad Fund.



The aim of this online event was, through the experiences and recommendations of the Visegrad Group countries (V4), as well as the challenges of regional integration of countries in the region – WB6 (foreign trade policies of the region, CEFTA 2006, Common Regional Market within the Berlin Process, Open Balkans Regional Initiative and other initiatives), to share experiences of previous and views on future regional economic initiatives, on a common path towards the EU.

Speakers at the webinar were Šarka Shoup, from the Institute for Politics and Society – Czech Republic, Agnieszka Pechcińska, from the Center for Social and Economic Research, CASE, Warsaw, Poland, professor László Árvai, from the Robert Schuman Institute, Budapest, Hungary, Martin Hudcovský, the University of Economics in Bratislava, Faculty of National Economy, Bratislava,

Slovakia, Faruk Hadzic, Foreign Policy Initiative, FPI BH, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Milica Muhadionovic, Montenegrin Pan-European Union and the University of Montenegro, and Bojan Sribnovski, Finance Think – Economic, Research and Policy Institute, Skopje, North Macedonia. Gordana Djurovic, head of the project team, gave opening and concluding remarks, whilst Alessandro D’Onofrio (RSI) and Petar Raicevic (MPEU) were facilitators.



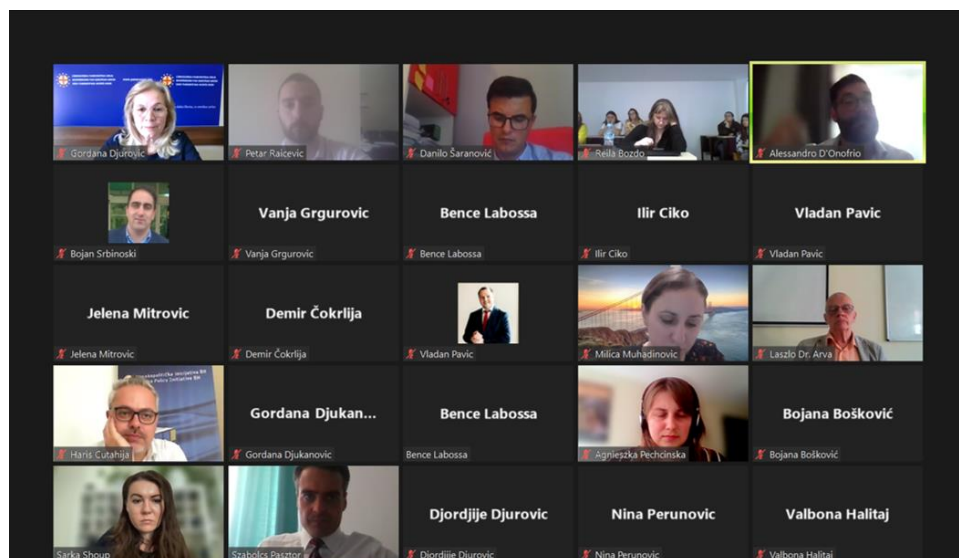
**MONTENEGRO AFTER YUGOSLAVIA**

MONTENEGRO ENTERED THE PROCESS OF GRADUAL BUILDING OF ITS OWN ECONOMIC SYSTEM:

- IN JULY 1999, MONTENEGRO STOPPED TO TRANSFER PART OF CUSTOMS REVENUES INTO THE FEDERAL BUDGET, AS WELL AS PART OF THE REVENUES FROM SALES TAX AND EXCISE DUTIES;
- MONTENEGRO TOOK CHARGE OVER CUSTOMS SERVICE FOR ITS TERRITORY;
- IN NOVEMBER 1999, MONTENEGRO INTRODUCED DUAL CURRENCY SYSTEM;
- MONTENEGRO ESTABLISHED ITS OWN CENTRAL BANK OF MONTENEGRO, ITS OWN FOREIGN TRADE AND CUSTOMS POLICY, AND ADOPTED THE EURO AS ITS OFFICIAL CURRENCY IN 2002;
- THE PERIOD 2000-2006 WAS A PERIOD OF GRADUAL ECONOMIC RECOVERY. IT WAS THE PERIOD OF GRADUAL STRENGTHENING OF THE ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE OF MONTENEGRO.

The CEFTA as the regional free trade area of the Central Eastern European countries was established in 1992 by V4, and it became a successful economic integration story, as all of the Eastern European countries that once were part of CEFTA are now members of the EU and its Single Market. Countries of the Visegrad group, especially used economic integration that came with CEFTA and EU membership to boost their trade and gradually strengthen

their economies. Many indicators support this trend. The roundtable provided an open and cooperative space for dialogue between the project team, researchers, academia representatives, and other attendees from V4 and WB6 countries. The Roundtable is an important source of data and analysis in favour of finalizing the e-book (main project result) and recommendations for improving and directing regional economic cooperation inside two regions and between them. The webinar was attended by **44 participants**. After the presentations of the speakers, a discussion with the participants followed. Round table is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gH-t5XFQOIY>.



## 2. E-book published *“Regional economic cooperation V4 and WB6: Exchange of experience and knowledge in the context of a Common Regional Market and post-COVID economic recovery”*

The Montenegrin Pan-European Union has published the book **“REGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION V4 AND VB6: EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCES AND KNOWLEDGE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COMMON REGIONAL MARKET AND MARKETS”** as part of the projects “V4 supports the promotion of the common regional market, one market for post-covid recovery”. In addition to 10 chapters from 10 countries and joint recommendations for improving regional cooperation, the book explores the current topic of the regional economic integration of the Western Balkans and critically analyzes proposed models such as the CEFTA 2006 agreement, the Action Plan for a common regional market, behind which six governments of the region and EU in November 2020, as well as a new proposal such as the Open Balkans initiative from 2021, which failed to bring together all the countries of the region.

Research team: **Gordana Djurovic** (Montenegrin Pan-European Union, Editor), **Šárka Shoup**, **Blanka Kovač** (Institute for politics and society – IPS, Prague, Czech Republic), **László Árva**, **Szabolcs Pasztor** (Union of the Robert Schuman Institute for Developing Democracy in Central-Eastern Europe, RSI, Budapest, Hungary), **Stanislav Bieliei**, **Agnieszka Pechcińska** (Center for Social and Economic Research, CASE, Warsaw, Poland), **Martin Hudcovský**, **Karol Morvay** (Faculty of National Economy, Bratislava), **Zef Preçi**, **Ilir Ciko** (Albanian Centre for Economic Research, ACER and Canadian Institute of Technology (CIT), Tirana, Albania), **Faruk Hadžić**, **Haris Ćutahija** (Foreign Policy Initiative, FPI, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina), **Bojan Srbinoski**, **Blagica Petreski**, (Finance Think – Economic, Research and Policy Institute, Skopje, North Macedonia), **Visar Vokri**, **Alban Hashani** (Institute for development research, RIINVEST, Pristine, Kosovo), **Milica Muhadinovic**, **Petar Raicevic** (University of Montenegro and Montenegrin Pan-European Union), **Dragan Djukanovic**, **Predrag Bjelic** (Centre for Foreign Policy, CFP, Serbia and University of Belgrade). You can download the e-book at: [https://panevropa.me/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/E-BOOK-PROPOSAL-19-9-2022-FINAL .pdf](https://panevropa.me/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/E-BOOK-PROPOSAL-19-9-2022-FINAL.pdf).





### 3. Book promotion event: “Perspectives of Regional Economic Cooperation: From the CEFTA agreement, through the action plan for the Common Regional Market to the EU single market”

On July 21, 2022, the Montenegrin Pan-European Union organized the presentation of the book entitled: ***“REGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION V4 AND WB6: SHARING EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE IN THE CONTEXT OF COMMON REGIONAL MARKET AND POST-COVID RECOVERY”*** in the European House in Podgorica within the project of the same name, which is supported by the International Visegrad Fund, whose founders are the governments of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Poland.



In addition to 10 chapters from 10 countries and recommendations for improving regional economic cooperation, the book explores the current topic of the regional economic integration of the Western Balkans and critically analyzes proposed models such as the **CEFTA 2006 agreement, the Action Plan for Common Regional Market (AP for CRM) within the Berlin process**, which was supported by WB6 – six governments and EU in November 2020, as well as new proposals such as **the Open Balkans** initiative from

2021, which failed to bring together all countries of the WB6 region.

The speakers at the presentation were Prof. Dr Gordana Đurović, president of the Montenegrin Pan-European Union, who presented the results of the project (<https://youtu.be/puIrYEN-rjo>), Slovakia's ambassador Boris Gandel (<https://youtu.be/IV8nRP6etNM>), who spoke about the International Visegrad fund, Hungarian Ambassador József Négyesi highlighted Hungary's experience in regional economic integration ([https://youtu.be/tAEd\\_ESTwFs](https://youtu.be/tAEd_ESTwFs)), and Czech Ambassador Janina Hrebickova (<https://youtu.be/F9Uh3rp8FOY>), who emphasized the use of regional economic integration through the experiences of the Czech Republic and the priorities of the presidency of the Council of the EU in this period.



Gordana Djurovic, the head of the research team, presented the e-book structure and its recommendations, with a special focus on differences between current proposals of the Action plan for the Common Regional Market within the Berlin process for WB6 and the Open Balkan initiative of WB3. You can download the project presentation at: <https://panevropa.me/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Gordana-Djurovic-ENG-I-MNE-FINAL-21-7-2022-.pdf>.

#### **4. International conference: “ONE MARKET FOR POST-COVID RECOVERY: V4 SUPPORT TO PROMOTE COMMON REGIONAL MARKET OF WB6 ECONOMIES”**

The Montenegrin Pan-European Union organized on 15 September 2022 in Podgorica the international conference dedicated to strengthening regional economic cooperation “ONE MARKET FOR POST-COVID RECOVERY: V4 SUPPORT TO PROMOTE COMMON REGIONAL MARKET OF WB6 ECONOMIES”, supported by the International Visegrad Fund. The conference was opened by the Ambassador of the Slovak Republic in Montenegro, HE **Boris Gandel** (available online at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hLmiI4yCpVg>), Director General of the Directorate for the EU in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ms **Snežana Radović** (available video online at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VrcfD83IHNw>) and Prof. **Gordana Đurović** (available online at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wJufXqJ19eM>), President of the Montenegrin Pan-European Union. Research authors from 10 countries participated in two panels, and at the end of the conference, the final evaluations and recommendations of the meeting are determined. The conference is held in a hybrid format.



It is the final event of a one-year project and research of a consortium of 10 partner organizations from ten countries (the Visegrad Group and the Western Balkans), an exchange of experiences and the transfer of knowledge and recommendations for strengthening regional economic cooperation in the WB6 region through further strengthening of the inclusive form of economic cooperation through the Common Regional Market within of the Berlin process.





The results of the research were presented at the Conference with a special focus on the advantages and disadvantages of the Common Regional Market model within the framework of the Berlin Process, which brings together the six governments of the region and the EU, and the Open Balkans Initiative model, whose inclusivity was limited to three countries of the region.

Around 60 participants were present at the conference, and around 30 more joined online.

After the presentations of the speakers, a discussion with the participants followed.



## 5. Dissemination of project activities

At the beginning of the project, the Montenegrin Pan-European Union adopted a plan for the dissemination of project activities and regular informing of the public and all interested groups about project activities and results. All information related to the project was available on **social networks** and the MPEU **website (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn)**. Also, the press was informed about the project activities. For the e-book promotional event and the international conference, a professional media agency was contracted to cover the event.

Several posts were **promoted**, in order to provide **additional visibility to the project and its activities**.

## II. Debate with European ambassadors

### 1. Debate: *“France: Strategic compass for stronger EU security and defence in the next decade”*

**On June 21 2021**, the Montenegrin Pan-European Union in cooperation with the Embassy of France in Montenegro organized a debate on the premises of the EU Info Center. The debate is part of the MPEU activities dedicated to better communication about the EU in pan-European societies and is realized through a series of debates with European diplomats who live and work in Montenegro. The speaker was **H.E. Christian Thimonier**. Ambassador Thimonier spoke on the topic of the **Strategic**



**compass for stronger EU security and defence in the next decade.** Ambassador pointed out that The European Union (EU) has been accumulating instruments from the security domain, and the EU's Strategic Compass for Stronger Security and Defense unites these instruments. Thimonier said that the Strategic Compass document may not have had enough publicity because it is primarily a long document, adding that it was adopted by 27 member states of the Union.

The first version of the Strategic Compass was submitted by High Representative Josep Borrell in November last year, based on the first threat analysis contributed by the intelligence services of 27 EU member states and the phase of structured dialogue between EU member states, EU institutions and experts. Subsequent versions were discussed in February and March this year, to take into account the Member States' debate and the Commission's Defense and Space package of 15 February, as well as the latest international developments, in particular Russia's military aggression against Ukraine.

The facilitator of the debate was the President of the Montenegrin Pan-European Union, professor Gordana Djurovic, and students, MPEU Youth, partners, as well as representatives of several embassies of European countries who took part in the debate.



The event was covered by the media. The following media published key messages from the debate: Portal Analitika, Pobjeda and CDM. More information as well as press releases of the mentioned media can be found on the MPEU website - <https://panevropa.me/debata-sa-ambasadorom-francuske-strateski-kompas-za-jacu-sigurnost-i-odbranu-eu-u-sljedecoj-deceniji/>.

### III. Seminar of the MPEU and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation "Let's talk about Europe"

The Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the Montenegrin Pan-European Union organized a seminar "Let's talk about Europe: political, economic and security challenges", which was held from 15 to 17 April 2022, at the Hotel Palas, Petrovac.



The seminar was attended by members of the politically active youth and young members of the Montenegrin Pan-European Union. The seminar gathered a total of 22 young people (students, entrepreneurs, and political activists).

The seminar was designed to provide a platform for young people to discuss and analyze current issues facing Europe and to explore potential solutions to these challenges.

Lecturers at the seminar were: professor Gordana Djurovic, President of the Montenegrin Pan-European Union and Milan Jovanović from Digital Forensic Center.

In addition to the lectures, the seminar included interactive discussions and breakout sessions, allowing participants to engage with each other and share their insights and perspectives on the issues at hand.

Overall, the seminar was a valuable opportunity for participants to learn from experts and to exchange ideas with their peers, and it is hoped that the knowledge and insights gained will help to inform their future endeavours as leaders in their respective fields.





#### IV. Seminar of the MPEU and the Hanns Seidel Foundation "Empowering Montenegrin youth to counter disinformation in today's digital world in the context of European Integration process"

The Hanns Seidel Foundation and the Montenegrin Pan-European Union organized the seminar "Empowering Montenegrin youth to counter disinformation in today's digital world in the context of European Integration process " which was held from June 9 to 11, 2022 at the Palas Hotel in Petrovac.



The lecturers at the seminar were: prof. Gordana Đurović, president of the Montenegrin Pan-European Union, Assoc. PhD. Branko Bošković, President of the Council of the Agency for Electronic Media, Milica Kovačević, Center for Democratic Transition, Milan Jovanović from Digitalog Forensic Center, Darko Ivanovic, NGO "35 mm", and Prof. Dr Dragan Đukanović, University of Belgrade, Faculty of Political Sciences.

The seminar was designed to provide young people with the knowledge and skills needed to identify and counter disinformation in the digital world and to promote critical thinking and media literacy. In addition to lectures from experts, the seminar included interactive discussions, breakout sessions, and practical exercises, allowing participants to engage with the material and put their learning into practice.

The seminar covered a range of topics related to disinformation, including the sources and motivations behind it, the impact it can have on society and politics, and strategies for combating it through media literacy and fact-checking. Overall, the seminar was a valuable opportunity for participants to learn from experts and to exchange ideas with their peers, and it is hoped that the knowledge and insights gained will help them to become more informed and active citizens in the digital age.



## V. Other activities

### 1. MPEU Youth presidency members on multiculturalism in Montenegro through the prism of European Integration

The International University of Sarajevo and Balkan Studies Center have published proceedings from the Western Balkans Youth Conference: We Share the European Goals and Values (WBYS'21) held in May 2021. Youth Secretary and Presidency Member, Ms Teodora Ladjic and Youth Presidency Member, Mr Radovan Ognjenovic released an article titled "Politics of Multiculturalism in Montenegro through the Prism of European Integration".



The objective of this paper is to present the comprehensive framework of the policy of multiculturalism in Montenegro and its implementation in a complex socio-cultural situation. The paper tends to analyze the cultural model of the EU, through its "United in Diversity" motto, as well as the development of the European policy of multiculturalism. It demonstrates the implications that the European integration process has on multiculturalism-related issues in Montenegro, i.e. promoting inter-ethnic cooperation and maintaining multicultural harmony. The authors define key problems and recommendations for strengthening cohesion in society.

The WBYS'21 attempted to seek authors and papers primarily contributing towards the promotion of peace, individual well-being, freedom, justice, social inclusion, sustainable development, scientific and technological progress, economic cooperation and trade, and respect for the EU common values and principles.

Link to the Article: <https://bsc.ius.edu.ba/.../conference-proceedings-western...>



## 2. Member of the MPEU presidency, Martin Bojaj is the winner of the annual award of the Central Bank for the best doctoral thesis

The annual awards of the Central Bank of Montenegro for 2022 in the field of banking and monetary policy and theory, which this institution traditionally awards for the best master's and doctoral thesis, this year went to students of the Faculty of Economics, University of Montenegro.

In the category of doctoral theses, the award was given to Martin Bojaj, a member of the CPEU presidency, for the doctoral thesis "Maintaining price stability in Montenegro through the governance of external and internal factors of inflation".

The awards were decided by a commission made up of prominent university professors from Montenegro and the region, as well as Central Bank experts.



### 3. President of MPEU, prof. Gordana Đurovic attended the 15th meeting of the EU-Montenegro Joint Consultative Committee

For the 15th time, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and Montenegro held the Civil Society Joint Consultative Committee (JCC). The JCC is a civil society platform established between the EESC and Montenegrin civil society. It complements with a civil society point of view the EU institutional framework related to the Stabilization and Association Agreement between the EU and Montenegro. This joint institution allows civil society organizations on both sides to monitor the country's accession negotiations. It is also a platform to discuss issues of common interest and to inform the public at large of the challenges ahead during the accession period.

This 15th JCC took place in Brussels and tackled issues such as:

- Current state of play in EU-Montenegro relations including the 2021 Montenegro Report
- Revised enlargement methodology – Cluster 1: The Fundamentals of the Accession Process, with a special focus on Economic Criteria, Public procurement, Statistics and Financial Control and the response to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Overview of the civil society situation in Montenegro

A joint declaration was adopted at the meeting and distributed to all relevant EU institutions, as well as to the Montenegrin authorities.

A joint declaration is available at:

[https://panevropa.me/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/joint\\_declaration\\_15th\\_eu-montenegro\\_civil\\_society\\_jcc\\_final.pdf](https://panevropa.me/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/joint_declaration_15th_eu-montenegro_civil_society_jcc_final.pdf).



#### 4. Conference on integration after the pandemic and the war in Ukraine

Representatives of the Montenegrin Pan-European Union, Đorđije Đurović and Petar Raičević, participated in the international seminar on integration after the pandemic and the war in Ukraine held in Bucharest from May 17 to 18. The conference was organized by Movimento Cristiano Lavoratori (MCL), Ente Formazione e Addestramento Lavoratori (EFAL) in cooperation with Europäische Zentrum für Arbeitnehmerfragen (EZA).



The seminar brought together experts and stakeholders from across Europe to discuss the impact of the pandemic and the war in Ukraine on the integration process, and to identify opportunities and challenges for the future. The discussions focused on a range of topics, including the impact of the pandemic on the economy and society, the role of the European Union in addressing the crisis, and the implications of the war in Ukraine for regional stability and security.

The conference featured a range of presentations, panel discussions, and interactive sessions, allowing participants to delve deep into the topics at hand and exchange ideas and best practices.



## 5. International Seminar: Sustainable and resilient agriculture to strengthen worker safety and safeguard the environment

Representatives of the Montenegrin Pan-European Union, Đordije Đurović and Petar Raičević, participated in the international seminar titled “Sustainable and resilient agriculture to strengthen worker safety and safeguard the environment” organized by Federagri in Ischia from 7 to 9 October 2022. The seminar was supported by European Commission and was attended by representatives of EU institutions, trade union organizations of workers, university professors and experts from 14 European countries (Italy, France, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Austria, Malta, Cyprus, Croatia, Albania, Bosnia, Serbia and Montenegro).

The seminar brought together experts and stakeholders from across Europe to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing the agricultural sector, with a focus on the role of the European Union and other international organizations in supporting the development of sustainable and competitive farming practices.

The discussions focused on a range of topics, including the impact of new technologies and innovations on farming practices, the role of international trade and cooperation in supporting the industry, and the importance of sustainability and environmental stewardship in the agricultural sector. Furthermore, the seminar included discussions on the impact of war and conflict on the agricultural sector and the challenges and opportunities that arise in terms of food security and supply.

Petar Raičević spoke on the topic "Overview of the agricultural sector in Montenegro: Main challenges and opportunities". All expenses were covered by the organizers.





## 6. The 100th anniversary of the Pan-European Union was marked by the great congress in Vienna

More than 300 Pan-Europeans and friends of the Pan-European Union from all over Europe gathered at a large congress that was held in Vienna from November 17 to 20, 2022, on the occasion of the jubilee, 100 years since the foundation of the Pan-European Union.



Speakers at the congress, which was organized by the Pan-European Union of Austria in cooperation with the International Pan-European Union, were amongst the others: Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu, President of the Republic of Kosovo, Johannes Hahn, European Commissioner for Budget and Administration; Alain Terrenoire, President of the International Pan-European Union; Karl von Habsburg, President of the Pan-European Movement of Austria; Pavo Barišić, Secretary of the International Pan-European Union and President of the Croatian Pan-European Union; Lukas Mandl, Member of the European Parliament; Gudrun Kugler, member of the Austrian Parliament; Oleg Dunda, member of the Ukrainian Rada; Walburga Habsburg Douglas, vice-president of the International Pan-European Union and many others. Congress participants were greeted by video messages from the President of Austria Alexander van der Bellen and the Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs Dmytro Kuleba.

Congress participants were greeted by video messages from the President of Austria Alexander van der Bellen and the Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs Dmytro Kuleba.

On the panel dedicated to Southeast Europe within the conference, the message was sent that the remaining countries on the Balkan Peninsula should be part of the EU, now more than ever. Speakers were Marianne Beretetz, Deputy High Representative in BH, Lukas Mandl, Member of the European Parliament, Milica Muhadinović, Assistant at the Faculty of Economics of the University of Montenegro and President of the MPEU Youth, Genc Polo, President of Pan-Europe Albania and Andrej Lepavcov, Advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of North Macedonia, they reviewed the challenges and opportunities for progress in the European integration process. The panel was moderated by Teodora Ladić, a member of the Presidency and general secretary of the MPEU Youth.





## 7. The European Union in the world — past, present and future

The Croatian Pan-European Union, in cooperation with the International Pan-European Union and MEP of the Republic of Croatia, held the annual international conference of the Croatian Pan-European Union entitled "The European Union in the World: Past, Present and Future" on Friday and Saturday, October 22 and 23 in Zagreb at the hotel Westin (Panorama Hall).



Europe in a multipolar world should have its own clear position, should be independent and able to defend its interests, should have its own common foreign policy, security strategy, common defense, should continue the enlargement process, should give greater importance to the European Parliament - these are just some of the conclusions annual international conference of the Croatian Pan-European Union entitled "The European Union in the world: past, present and future".

As every year, the conference brought together a large number of members of the Pan-European Union from all over Europe, as well as distinguished guests and representatives of Croatian and European institutions. European Commission Vice-President **Dubravka Šuica**, Croatian Minister of Foreign and European Affairs **Gordan Grlić Radman**, representatives of the European Parliament

**Željana Zovko**, **Karlo Ressler** and **Tomislav Sokol**, member of the Croatian Parliament **Davor Ivo Stier**, president of the International Pan-European Union **Alain Terrenoire**, vice-president of the International of the Pan-European Union and the President of the Croatian Pan-European Union, Academician **Mislav Ježić**, the Secretary-General of the International Pan-European Union, Academician **Pavo Barišić**. The President of the MPEU prof. dr Gordana Djurovic and the member of the youth presidency of the MPEU, Petar Raičević, spoke at the congerence.



## 8. Member of the MPEU Youth presidency, Radovan Ognjenović, participated in the international seminar on ecological transition

Member of the CPEU youth presidency, Radovan Ognjenović, participated in the international seminar “Ecological transition: New professions in a sustainable economy”, held in Milan from 25-26. November 2022 organized by the Christian Worker Movement from Italy – Movimento Cristiano Lavoratori.

With this conference, also marked 50 years of existence and activity of this organization, which has more than 300,000 members and advocates for man and his dignity not only in the sphere of work, but also for man in need, for man in trouble, but also for European unity based on common European values.

The seminar brought together experts and stakeholders from across Europe to discuss the ecological transition and the role of new professions in building a sustainable economy. At the seminar, among other things, it was pointed out that the ecological transition is only one of several transitions that



the modern world is facing at the same time (energy, economic transition, etc.). It was also emphasized that the COVID-19 pandemic, despite the numerous negative consequences it left around the planet, nevertheless encouraged and accelerated the development of modern innovations, especially in the field of digitization, but also in other fields. Also, people have become more aware of the fact that the planet we live on is only one and therefore we must all focus on sustainable development. It is impossible, however, to expect that the entire costs of the ecological transition will fall on the backs of taxpayers, but to achieve that goal, the cooperation of all significant actors, based on the principle of solidarity, is necessary. Ecological transition is among the most urgent processes that we must complete, and because we are all aware of the visible negative effects of climate change.

Radovan Ognjenovic, a member of the CPEU youth presidency, participated in the seminar and contributed valuable insights and perspectives to the discussions.

## 9. The embassy of France presented insignia of the National Order of Merit to Rajko Uskokovic, vice president of the MPEU

Within the conference dedicated to the fight against cybercrime, potential dangers and experiences of France, which was organized today by the Association of Franco-Montenegrin companies in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce of Montenegro, the ambassador of France, Mr Christian Timonie, in the presence of the representative of the Government of Montenegro, the rector of the University, Mr Vladimir Božović, representative of the Chamber of Commerce and representatives of Montenegrin and French companies, presented the order of Knight of the National Order of Merit to Rajko Uskoković, member of the presidency and vice-president of the Montenegrin Pan-European Union.

“The ambassador added that the mentioned results would not have been possible without the personal qualities of Mr Uskoković, his openness, commitment, persistence and generosity, which is recognized by everyone who has the opportunity to work with him.”

Rajko Uskoković’s speech:

*“I am extremely grateful to the Republic of France and its institutions for being awarded the Order of Knight of the National Order of Merit, and I am especially honoured to have received the order from his Excellency, Mr. Ambassador Christian Timonier, because for me it is an additional honor and at the same time a significant obligation to in the coming period, I will work with even more enthusiasm to improve economic relations between France and Montenegro.*

*I have only fond memories of the friendly country of France. 20 years ago, from the then, but also from today’s perspective, the great business adventure of establishing air flights between Paris and Podgorica and connecting the two countries by the fastest route started. It was not at all easy to position oneself in such a demanding market because that engagement required great effort, sacrifice and patience. Since 2003, some 50 tourists from France to Montenegro – after 10 years, the national airline Montenegro Airlines transported 50,000 French tourists annually, and in those years France was the country with by far the largest number of tourists from the European Union in our country! The mission was fulfilled because we managed to bring the two countries closer together and strengthen touristic, diplomatic and cultural ties.*

*That decade spent in Europe’s most beautiful avenue, the Champs-Élysées, passed incredibly quickly, like in a dream. In addition to my involvement in aviation, I also performed the role of a business representative and tried to establish cooperation with other business activities, all with the aim of strengthening economic relations. Because today, only the economy is able to overcome all misunderstandings, bring people closer together, strengthen cultural exchanges, strengthen diplomatic forces and lead to prosperity and improvement. That is why France is necessary for Montenegro and that is why Montenegro can learn from France.*

*Returning to Montenegro brought a new challenge in the form of protecting our nature and environment. Certain natural assets, proclaimed by the Constitution as the only ecological states in*



*Europe, were in danger. I started to deal with green economy and ecology, hoping that the effort will yield results. And it arrived in 2018, when the project of the French company VALGO, whose representative for the region I am still today, won at a large international tender, which provided for the permanent export of tens of thousands of hazardous materials from Montenegro.*

*Along with that came the position of president of the Association of French-Montenegrin companies and the creation of a network of businessmen and friends of our two countries. Because friendship and trust are a condition for all success in life, they are hard to gain and easy to lose.*

*Dear Excellency,*

*Dear friends,*

*I thank you for the great honor and, at the same time, the great challenge to strengthen the solidarity between our countries and reach the level of prosperity in the coming period. I will be extremely happy if in the coming period we from Montenegro will be economic partners of a great country, in every sense great France.*

*Long live the eternal friendship of France and Montenegro!"*



## 10. Publications

### Scientific journals

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2. Jovetic G., Djurovic G., Kalezic Z. (2022). **Impact of the public administration reform on the economic development of the Western Balkans**, *Lex-localis – Journal of Local Self-Government*, Vol 20 No 4 (2022), 785-807; DOI: [https://doi.org/10.4335/20.4.785-807\(2022\)](https://doi.org/10.4335/20.4.785-807(2022)), SSCI indexed;
3. Zarkovic M., Cetkovic J., Redzepagic S., Djurovic G., Vujadinovic R., Zivkovic A. (2022). **Economic Growth Determinants in New and Old EU Countries with Focus on Construction**, in *Technological and Economic Development of Economy*, ISSN: 2029-4913 / eISSN: 2029-4921, paper in press, <https://doi.org/10.3846/tede.2022.17598>, SSCI indexed;
4. Zarkovic M., Cetkovic J., Redzepagic S., Djurovic G., Zivkovic A., (2022), **Economic growth determinants in new and old EU countries with focus on impact of construction – A DD Approach**, *Technological and Economic Development of Economy*, accepted, in publishing procedure, ISSN: 2029-4913 / eISSN: 2029-492, SSCI indexed;
5. Ognjenovic, R., Ladić, T., (2022), **Politics of Multiculturalism in Montenegro through the Prism of European Integration**, International University of Sarajevo, ISSN 2744-2713/ ISSN 2744-2705

### Analytical papers

1. Djurovic G., Ivanov M., Raicevic P., Gliboric B., (2022), **Climate Risk Assessment of Kotor Bay, Montenegro**, Plan M Podgorica, Plan Blue for Environment and Development of the Mediterranean, Marseille, France;

### Other papers

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2. Djurovic Gordana (2022). **Regional economic integration of the Western Balkans: from the CEFTA 2006 towards the EU single market**, *Diplomacy Journal*, [Issue 28](#), Bulgarian Diplomatic Institute, Sophia, Bulgaria, July 2022;



## 11. Media

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04/05/2022, **TV AL Jazeera Balkans**, Gordana Djurovic, Emisija KONTEKST, debata o podrsci EU za borbu protiv pandemije (vaccine) i podrška za integracije, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WNvGfRRnOvs>

17/05/2022, TRT, **Turkish TV, Across the Balkans, Gordana Djurovic**, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H6ZxXOeSIAM&t=993s>

01/06/2022, **TV AL JAZEERA BALKANS**; Gordana Djurovic, TV debate, Ko je za, a ko protiv Otvorenog Balkana, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Md60TV-djzM>

23/06/2022, **TV AL Jazeera Balkans**, Gordana Djurovic, Emisija KONTEKST, kineske investicije u region, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rkIe\\_pfHAWE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rkIe_pfHAWE)

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## V. Final remarks

The Montenegrin Pan-European Union continues to work on its key purpose, which is **to implement European standards and promote European democratic values in Montenegro**. The Montenegrin Pan-European Union is one of the youngest member organizations of the International Pan-European Union that works to promote and achieve objectives outlined in the Strasbourg Declaration of the International Pan-European Union of 1974 and 1995. MPEU aims to preserve and improve good neighbourly relations with the countries in the region, as well as to develop friendship and cooperation with the EU Member States and other countries. Also, MPEU works towards enhancing the cultural, scientific, technical and economic cooperation and exchanges between Montenegro and other countries.

The organizational structure of the MPEU consists of the Presidency and the Youth Presidency which meet on a quarterly basis to discuss past activities and make plans for the coming period. At the same time, the MPEU holds the door open for all people willing to help work and achieve the goals of the MPEU through their **volunteer engagement**.