

# NEWSLETTER

OF THE MINISTRY OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

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## Contents

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH	2
OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS	3
EVENTS THAT MARKED THE PREVIOUS PERIOD	4
CONFERENCES, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS	5
IPA	7
COOPERATION WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTS	9
OTHER	10

## Introductory speech

Dear readers,

Welcome to our third Newsletter of the Ministry of European Affairs published with the aim to present the most important events and activities of this Ministry in the process of EU accession in the first quarter of 2018.

Good result in negotiations is reflected in 30 opened negotiating chapters and 3 provisionally closed, and reforms which already gave visible results in many areas.

The Ministry of European Affairs, as the coordinator of the EU accession process, has been committed to the successful and responsible management of European affairs in partnership and cooperation with other authorities, and aimed at strengthening ties and relations with EU institutions and its members in order for Montenegro to take equal place among European partners.





The past three months have been marked by the dynamic activity of the Ministry, both in terms of coordination of accession process, implementation of IPA, cooperation with local self-governments and the civil sector, and organisation of numerous conferences, regional and international meetings.

We are convinced that this newsletter is a contribution to improving the understanding and knowledge of citizens about the accession process and future membership of Montenegro in the EU.

*Ministry of European Affairs*



25. Science and research	12. Food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy	29. Customs union
26. Education and culture	13. Fisheries	31. Foreign, security and defence policy
30. External relations	14. Transport policy	32. Financial control
1. Free movement of goods	15. Energy	33. Financial and budgetary provisions
2. Free movement of workers	16. Taxation	17. Economic and monetary policy
3. Right of establishment and freedom to provide services	18. Statistics	27. Environment and climate change
4. Free movement of capital	19. Social policy and employment	8. Competition policy
5. Public procurement	20. Enterprise and industrial policy	
6. Company law	21. Trans-European network	
7. Intellectual property law	22. Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments	
9. Financial services	23. Judiciary and fundamental rights	
10. Information society and media	24. Justice, freedom and security	
11. Agriculture and rural development	28. Consumer and health protection	

-  Provisionally closed chapter
-  Opened chapter
-  Position submitted
-  Drafting of the Negotiating Position

## EVENT THAT MARKED THE PREVIOUS PERIOD



6. II 2018.

### CREDIBLE ENLARGEMENT PERSPECTIVE AND CONTINUATION OF INTENSIVE REFORMS

EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini and EU Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes Hahn presented the Enlargement Strategy for the Western Balkans today to the European MPs in Strasbourg. This Strategy has special significance for Montenegro since, for the first time it offers a time horizon and confirms the consistency in the position of the EU that the process remains fully founded on individual merits, and the continuation of the expert, technical and financial support in meeting obligations on the European path. Mogherini stated that the Western Balkans are already a part of Europe since they share the same history as the members of the European Union, the same cultural heritage, the same challenges, the same interests, the same opportunities, and that it was clear that they would share a common future inside the European Union. Commissioner Hahn said that this was a historic opportunity for the region and a perspective for all Western Balkans countries. “We are not talking about a date, but a perspective. Some country could potentially join the EU by this date, which is an ambitious plan. There is still a lot of work ahead, but I expect that this is a positive momentum that creates motivation and optimism, so that everyone would do their homework, including the EU”, Hahn said.

9. II 2018.

### MONTENEGRO RETAINS ITS LEADING POSITION

EU Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes Hahn paid the visit to Montenegro in order to present a credible enlargement

perspective for the Western Balkans. He stated that Montenegro was the country that advanced the most and it was up to it to retain its leading position. “You are a leading country at the moment”, Commissioner Hahn stated. He indicated the importance of reforms in the entire region, particularly in the field of rule of law. “We expect your countries to observe our standards and values before joining our club, those are generational decisions and I want to tell you that the values we are talking about are not only written on paper, they also stand in everyday life. Democracy and rule of law are those key values”, Hahn stated.



28. II 2018.

### JUNCKER: MONTENEGRO'S FUTURE LIES IN THE EU

President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker paid the official visit to Montenegro. During his speech in the Montenegrin Parliament, he stated that Montenegro demonstrated a strong will to join the EU. He also stated that Montenegro would be among the first countries of the Western Balkans to enter the EU. Juncker commended Montenegro's progress on the path towards the EU. “All that shows a strong will which is more than regular technical approach. It is a thorough engagement which is confirmed by the support of the opposition when it comes to the path towards the EU. This engagement should not be weakened, but one should not mix the speed and quality of reforms, particularly crucial ones – reform of the judiciary, fight against corruption and organised crime and respecting independence of the media. Independent media are a pillar of our values and we really appreciate it”, Juncker stated.



## CONFERENCES, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS

12. III 2018.

### PROFESSIONAL STATE ADMINISTRATION REQUIRES RESPONSIBLE CIVIL SERVANTS

The Initial meeting of the EU Scheme for Young Professionals in the Western Balkans took place in Podgorica. Participants of the mentioned programme, which is supported by the European and regional authorities at the highest level, undergo theoretical and practical training, and five of them will perform their tasks in the Ministry of European Affairs, where they will get the appropriate mentoring. Director General for European Funds at the Ministry of European Affairs, Ivana Glišević Đurović, stated that efficient, modern and professional public administration required qualified and responsible civil servants who think strategically and work in the interest of their country's progress. According to words of the Head of the EU Delegation to Montenegro Aivo Orav, societies of the Western Balkans shared common heritage and challenges, and conflicts from the past influenced creation of different prejudices. "Initiatives such as the EU Scheme for Young Professionals in the Western Balkans not only strengthen the process of reconciliation in the region, they also show that the public administration reform and good governance are at the very top of the EU enlargement agenda.", Orav stated.



22. II 2018.

### SARAJEVO: WITH THE EXCHANGE OF KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE WE MOVE FASTER TOWARDS THE EU



The first meeting of the Joint Committee between Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina took place in Sarajevo. Director-General for Accession in the Ministry of European Affairs, Jelena Burzan, said that Montenegro is ready to make its knowledge and experience from the accession process available to colleagues from Bosnia and Herzegovina with the aim of faster and more efficient progress towards EU membership. Both sides pointed to the need to efficiently use the available funds from the bilateral program Bosnia and Herzegovina - Montenegro in the current financial perspective 2014-2020, within which 8.4 million EU grants are available to beneficiaries, as well as the opportunities offered by the three transnational programs and a trilateral cross-border cooperation program.

5. II 2018.

### MONTENEGRIN WORKERS TO BE READY FOR THE BENEFITS PROVIDED BY THE EU

"Montenegro completed a large number of tasks in the field of freedom of movement for workers, while the accession to the European Union will have favourable impact on employment in our country and provide the opportunity to improve the quality of life and business environment for its citizens.", participants of the public debate "Montenegro and EU: Freedom of movement for workers" stated. Minister of European Affairs, Aleksandar Andrija Pejovic, explained that this was a complex area that would enable citizens of Montenegro, after the country enters the EU, to exercise without limitation the rights related to working in any EU Member State and enjoy the same privileges as the citizens of these countries. Head of the EU Delegation to Montenegro, Aivo Orav, indicated that ensuring the free movement of workers was a shared responsibility – of both those who send and those who receive workers. "We are counting on the Montenegrin institutions to ensure they make the best of this EU-funded intervention by coordinating their activities expediently and gradually implementing the corresponding acquis," said Orav.



31. I 2018.

### STRONG SUPPORT OF THE BULGARIAN PRESIDENCY TO MONTENEGRO AS THE LEADER OF THE INTEGRATION PROCESS

Minister of European Affairs Aleksandar Andrija Pejović paid a visit to Sofia. During the talks with Bulgarian officials, it was stated that the enlargement of the European Union to

the Western Balkans and the integration of the countries of the region was a priority of the Bulgarian presidency of the EU, and that Montenegro, as the leader of the integration process, was an excellent example in achieving standards on the road towards the EU. Minister Pejović presented to his counterparts the intention of Montenegro to continue with the good dynamics of negotiations also during the Bulgarian presidency, and to open during this year the remaining three chapters of the negotiation process. He pointed out that the return of the enlargement policy among the priorities of the Presidency of the Union represents a significant contribution to the intensification of the reform processes in the countries of the Western Balkans. Bulgaria's EU Presidency Minister Ljiljana Pavlova pointed out that during the process of the EU accession the focus shouldn't be only on the negotiation process and opening of the chapters, but also on concrete infrastructure and energy projects from which citizens will benefit and which will bring the Western Balkans closer to the Union and European standards in all areas.



24. I 2018.

## MONTENEGRO'S PPCG KEY GUIDELINE FOR TERMINATION OF ACCESSION NEGOTIATIONS

Montenegro's Programme of Accession to the EU (PPCG) 2018-2020 was presented during the round table that took place in Podgorica. Participants of the round table meeting stated that the mentioned programme was one of the most important strategic documents that contain all the key activities whose fulfilment in the forthcoming period is required for successful termination of accession negotiations. State Secretary in the Ministry of European Affairs, Marina Vujačić, stated that the Programme 2018-2020 enabled clearer, faster and more operational monitoring, coordination and consideration of activities performed by all key process holders.



23. I 2018.

## MAPPING SYNERGIES BETWEEN MONTENEGRO'S ACCESSION PROCESS TO THE EU AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

Identifying synergies between two major development processes of Montenegro – EU accession and Agenda for Sustainable Development by 2030 was the central theme of a two-day meeting organized by the Ministry of European Affairs and the United Nations System in the country. "Montenegro is among the first countries to fully define national response to all 17 Sustainable Development Goals," said Minister for European Affairs Aleksandar Andrija Pejović. He pointed to clear link between the negotiating process and Agenda 2030, which is reflected through the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Montenegro, but also through a number of negotiating documents.



22. I 2018.

## NEGOTIATIONS MORE COMPLEX WITH EVERY ENLARGEMENT OF THE EU

Publication titled "Comparative analysis of benchmarks for Montenegro through comparison of benchmarks for Croatia and Serbia" was presented in Podgorica. Minister of European Affairs Aleksandar Andrija Pejović stated that the negotiating process was more complex and was based on a new approach which is more focused on specific results, while specificities of negotiating with candidate countries point to the need for individual progress evaluation. Head of the negotiating team of Serbia, Tanja Mišević, pointed out that Serbia did not support the principle that implies EU accession in a group, but the principle of regatta, and indicated that it was important to monitor the activities carried out by the neighbours during the accession process. Member of Croatian negotiating group for chapters 23 and 24, Kristian Turkalj, stated that, finally, it was on the candidate country to determine the speed of negotiating with the EU, but broader context, i.e. situation in the EU Member States, should also be taken into account.



15. II 2018.

## CIVIL SERVANTS NETWORK FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING ESTABLISHED

Setting up of the efficient coordination system and development of strategies that are in line with priorities of Montenegrin government contribute to the overall progress and faster integration of Montenegro into the EU, participants of constitutive meeting of the Civil Servants Network for Strategic Planning stated. Minister of European Affairs Aleksandar Andrija Pejović stated that establishment of that authority was one more step towards the realisation of the idea that comprehensive cooperation platform in the field of development of capacities for setting up the mid-term policy planning system should be established at the level of the Government. He pointed to the importance of alignment of national legislation with EU strategic framework, and reminded that a good coordination and planning at the Union level was recognised as a priority a long time ago.



1. III 2018.

## INFORMAL MEETING OF THE ENLARGEMENT COUNCIL WORKING GROUP HELD IN SOFIA

Director General for EU accession in the Ministry of European Affairs Jelena Burzan visited Sofia and participated in the informal meeting between representatives of the EU Member States in the Council. She stated that Montenegro was dedicated to the European integration process and that she expected opening of the remaining three chapters during the current year, as well as continuation of the new, more dynamic stage of negotiations that implies gradual closure of chapters with predefined closing benchmarks. Burzan presented the progress achieved in all fields of negotiations and recalled that Montenegro opened 30 negotiating chapters, three of which were provisionally closed. Furthermore, opening benchmarks were fulfilled for the opening of the remaining three chapters 17 – Economic and monetary union and 27 – Environment, while the negotiating position for chapter 8 – Competition is underway.



18. I 2018.

## POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE EUROPEAN UNION GROWS

Montenegro's EU integration process continues to be supported among the population. A recent public opinion poll shows that more than three-quarters of Montenegro's citizens (76.5%) would turn out to vote in a referendum on joining the European Union. Of the total number of decided citizens who would vote – those who at the time of the poll had a clear position on this issue – 80.9% would vote YES, while only a quarter of that number (19.1%) would opt for NO. The survey also showed that for the fourth year in a row since the polls were first conducted, citizens' support for Montenegro's accession to the European Union has been at consistently high levels, so at the end of 2017, 62% of respondents supported the country's bid to join the EU.

The results of the survey were presented by the Minister of the European Affairs, Aleksandar Andrija Pejovic, the Head of the Political, European Integration and Trade Section, Plamena Halacheva, and the author of the survey, Olivera Komar. Minister Pejovic said that this survey confirmed a stable trend of support for Montenegro's EU membership.



## IPA

5. III 2018. - 20. III 2018.

## INFORMATIVE MEETINGS ON INTERREG-IPA CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMME FOR CROATIA, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AND MONTENEGRO 2014-2020

During March, the Ministry of European Affairs, in cooperation with the branch office of the Joint Secretariat in Podgorica for INTERREG-IPA CBC Programme for Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro 2014-2020 organised the Informative meetings where the Programme was presented,



along with results of the First Call and contracted projects. In this manner, representatives of MEA and the Joint Secretariat visited Herceg Novi, Cetinje, Podgorica, Ulcinj, Bar, Tivat, Kotor, Danilovgrad, Nikšić and Budva, with a view to promoting the Programme and strengthening capacities of possible beneficiaries for the preparation of project proposals. Meetings were the opportunity to inform participants in details on the opportunities for project financing, thematic priorities supported by the mentioned Programme, as well as other rules and procedures relevant for INTERREG-IPA CBC Programme for Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro 2014-2020.

**19. II 2018. - 1. III 2018.**

### **INFORMATION MEETINGS WITHIN THE CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAM MONTENEGRO - ALBANIA AND MONTENEGRO - KOSOVO 2014-2020**

In order to promote the Cross-Border Cooperation Program Montenegro - Albania and Montenegro - Kosovo 2014-2020, representatives of the Ministry of European Affairs, the Delegation of the European Union to Montenegro and the Joint Technical Secretariat for the Cross-Border Cooperation Program Montenegro - Albania and Montenegro - Kosovo during February had discussions with representatives of a number of Montenegrin municipalities on the possibilities available to municipalities within existing programs. Information meetings were organized in Podgorica, Danilovgrad, Cetinje, Budva, Bar, Ulcinj, Kolašin, Mojkovac, Bijelo Polje, Rožaje, Petnjica, Berane, Andrijevica, Plav and Gusinje, with a special review of the calls for proposals, priorities and financial framework.



**13. II 2018.**

### **HELD MEETING OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE FOR MONITORING OF THE IPA PROGRAM SERBIA-MONTENEGRO 2014-2020**

The third meeting of the Joint Monitoring Committee was held in Podgorica within the framework of the IPA Cross-Border Cooperation Program Serbia-Montenegro 2014-2020. The meeting was attended by representatives of the Operating Structures and relevant institutions of both countries. At the meeting, the Annual Report on the Implementation of the Program for 2017 was adopted, after which the process of the forthcoming preparation of the second Call for Proposals, which is planned for the second half of 2018, was discussed. The Director for European Funds at the Ministry of European

Affairs of Montenegro Ivana Glišević Đurović informed the present people on the first call, which was published on 15 November 2017, and for which funds were allocated in the amount of EUR 2.04 million. She emphasized that the evaluation of the submitted proposals is currently underway, and that the results are expected in the second half of 2018.



**8. II 2018.**

### **MINISTER PEJOVIC PRESENTED PROGRESS ON THE USE OF EUROPEAN FUNDS AT THE COMMITTEE ON EUROPEAN INTEGRATION**

Minister of European Affairs Aleksandar Andrija Pejović took part in the work of the meeting of the Committee for European Integration at which the Information on EU support programs for Montenegro for 2017 was considered and accepted. The Minister pointed out that in 2017 the final activities on projects implemented within IPA I (2007-2013) were continued and as well as the work on the preparation and implementation of part of the projects covered by the IPA II programs (2014-2020). He emphasized that in 2017 financial agreements were signed for annual action programs for 2016 and 2017, and for support to agriculture and rural development (Iparad II). He reminded that during the previous year, all seven financial agreements for cross-border and transnational cooperation programs were signed and stressed that various calls for cross-border programs that offer great opportunities for institutions at the local and border levels are under way.



**19. I 2018.**

### **MONTENEGRO AND KOSOVO ARE EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION**

Concrete and visible results of previous projects between Montenegro and Kosovo, which have contributed to the comprehensive development of the border area, confirm the



success of the cross-border cooperation concept, it was announced at the closing conference for the IPA Cross-border Cooperation Program Montenegro - Kosovo 2011-2013. Minister of European Affairs Aleksandar Andrija Pejović reminded that 9 projects, totaling 3.7 million euros, were implemented within the Cross-border Cooperation Program Montenegro-Kosovo 2011-2013, which significantly contributed to the realization of concrete program goals, including the economic development of the program area, protection of its biodiversity and the promotion of sustainable use of natural resources, with particular emphasis on agriculture, forestry and tourism development. Though financially smallest, as it started the last, this program laid the foundation for future cooperation and linked users and potential users in the border area.



17. I 2018.

## TERRITORIAL COOPERATION DRIVER OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION OF THE REGION

The Head of the Cabinet of the Minister of European Affairs, Milena Filipović, took part in the regional workshop “Territorial Cooperation and New Prospects for Improving Integration” which was organized by the Albanian Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs and held in Tirana. Speaking about the importance of territorial cooperation in the context of better EU integration, Filipović said that the Union recognized the benefits of previous cooperation through the Interreg IPA cross-border program between Italy, Albania and Montenegro, which resulted in the allocation of 93 million euros for the new perspective 2014-2020. “I am convinced that European territorial cooperation must be seen as the driving force of integration, which it indeed is, with the strong political commitment of all actors in this process,” Filipović assessed.



12. I 2018.

## THE EU WILL SUPPORT PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM WITH 15 MILLION EUROS

The Government adopted the Information and accepted the Financing Agreement of Montenegro and the European Commission on the annual Action Document for Montenegro, which implies direct budget support of the EU in the field of public administration reform. Secretary of the Ministry of European Affairs Miodrag Radović pointed out that this is a financial support in the amount of 15 million euros. “This support is of great importance given the role of public administration reform in the process of EU accession and all other reform processes that we currently have in Montenegro,” Radović said.



## COOPERATION WITH LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENTS

19. II 2018.

## DEVELOPMENT OF MUNICIPALITIES IN THE FOCUS OF EU INTEGRATION

Accession negotiations are a chance for local self-governments to use the opportunities offered by EU funds and contribute to the development and strengthening of their own capacities, it was said during the visit of Minister of European Affairs Aleksandar Andrija Pejović to the municipality of Mojkovac. During the visit of Minister Pejović to Mojkovac, organized within the project European Day in Your Town, it was pointed out to the possibilities for all Montenegrin municipalities that are available from the EU funds. The Minister assessed that the Municipality of Mojkovac has shown that it has the capacity to cope with complex procedures.



## OTHER

27. III 2018.

**AWARDS FOR BEST JOURNALIST STORIES GRANTED**

Journalist of the Portal RTCG, Borislav Višnjić, Bojana Komnenić from Radio Antena M and Darvin Murić, journalist of the Independent Daily Vijesti, were granted awards for the best journalist stories under the competition “Europe for me”, which was announced in line with the Strategy for informing the public on Montenegro’s accession to the EU 2014-2018, as a part of the project called “EU4ME”. The mentioned awards included laptop computers, phone and tablet. During the award granting ceremony, Deputy Prime Minister Zoran Pažin stated that free and professional media and journalists were a real pillar of democracy and integral part of a democratic society, and human rights and freedoms themselves would be incomplete. Journalist Borislav Višnjić, who won the first prize, indicated that the role of journalists was important in every society, and that they bear greater responsibility in the European integration process.



26. II 2018.

**BETTER COORDINATION OF POLICIES FOR MORE EFFICIENT INTEGRATION OF MONTENEGRO INTO THE EU**

The Director General for Coordination of Strategies Determining Public Policies Zorka Kordić and her associates welcomed today the representatives of the EC Directorate-General for Neighborhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations. It is jointly assessed that the improvement of the strategic planning framework represents a prerequisite for faster integration into the European Union and more efficient use of structural funds, as well as that this is one of the key tasks of Montenegro in the context of the implementation of public administration reform.

