

## News by SELDI members



### **SELDI Conference: Enhancing CSOs Advocacy Efforts for Countering Corruption in Critical Sectors in SEE: Leveraging the EU Accession Process and State of the Art Research**

On 29-30 October 2015 the SELDI and ANTICORRP initiatives organized one and half day conference in Podgorica to discuss with local and regional stakeholders the best methods for transforming the existing cutting-edge anti-corruption and good governance research into efficient policy and advocacy tools. The participants focused on the role of the civil society in evaluating the impact of current anti-corruption measures and stressed on the need of stronger collaboration with the public institutions, the media, and the general public. The participants noted the importance of free access to data, such as public procurement databases, asset declarations, financial audits of state-owned enterprises, the reports and recommendations by the European Commission. **SELDI, 29 October 2015.**



Photo: Institut Alternativa

### **Panel Discussion: How to Fight Against Corruption in Public Procurement**

SELDI's member organization Institut Alternativa presented the irregularities they have identified in a report on public procurement. These irregularities show that often the data on public procurement are neither available or credible nor presented properly, which affects the transparency in this area. Moreover, the poor implementation of the legal solutions increases the risk for corruption, while contracting authorities often remain unsanctioned thus not being held responsible for their actions. The system as such allows that this actions remain hidden and presented within the legal framework. Public Procurement Administration (PPA) in its annual report corrects the information of the contracting authorities, but it does not specify the errors, thus they are re-appearing year in year out. The PPA itself offers the wrong figures on the total budgets for public procurement, which we have confirmed by comparing this data with the individual reports of the subject obliged to act accordingly to the Law on Public Procurement. **Institut Alternativa, 16 September 2015.**



Photo: Riinvest Institute

### **Two Day Training on the Principles of Open Governance Held with Representatives of Business Sector**

Representatives from different business sectors attended for two days the training on the principles of corporate governance, organized by Riinvest Institute. On the first day of the training, the participants were introduced with the concepts and the importance that corporate governance plays in the development and sustainability of the businesses. On the second day of the training, they were divided into working groups, where they solved different business cases. Trainings and lectures held by Riinvest Institute with business representatives are part of Riinvest's ongoing advocacy efforts on the topic of corporate governance in Kosovo. The project is supported by the Center for International Private Enterprise – CIPE. **Riinvest Institute, 22 October 2015.**

## **A Protection Of Whistleblowers Law Is Needed, In Order To Effectively Handle Corruption**

The Institute for Democracy "Societas Civilis" - Skopje (IDSCS), member of the SELDI initiative, held an Agora session regarding the topic "Advocacy goals 2016: focus on rule of law policies". Several experts and CSO representatives with experience and knowledge on policy creating process in the rule of law sphere took part at the session. The discussion was aimed at the public institutions' fight against corruption, the depoliticisation, or more specifically departization of the public administration, as well as the elections and the election campaign. **IDSCS, 27 October 2015.**



Photo: RAI, Mr. Giovanni Kessler

## **High-Profile Court Hearings in Bulgaria Against Backdrop of OLAF**

### **Visit**

Several high-profile hearings coincided with a visit to Bulgaria by the Director General of the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), Giovanni Kessler, who criticized the country yet again for not taking enough concrete actions to tackle corruption. Mr. Giovanni Kessler was a

guest speaker at a public debate last week about corruption at European Union (EU) and national level, organized by Bulgarian deputy prime minister Meglena Kuneva. "Judges must have the ability to punish. In Bulgaria, this is a big problem," Kessler told the participants. He stressed that anti-corruption measures include first and foremost good management of the administration, saying that curbing corruption was a decisive factor in whether a government succeeds. **RAI, 26 October 2015.**



Photo: MANS

## **The Government Continues to Hide Information on the Sale of 13 Companies**

On 22 October 2015 at the Administrative Court a hearing was held on the lawsuit of MANS against the Council for Privatization and Capital Projects for the annulment of the decision of the Council in January this year, which the privatization of 13 companies declared

secret, with inarticulate explanation that the documentation for privatization contains information whose disclosure would cause detrimental consequences for the security and interests of Montenegro. Interestingly enough, official data indicate that in these 13 companies nearly five and a half thousand people are employed, while the total value of the property, plants and equipment, as seen in their financial statements at the end of 2014, amounts to 1.3 billion euros. The actual value of the property, plants and equipment in real GDP however could be much higher. **MANS, 21 October 2015.**

## **Anti-Corruption and Good Governance News from the SEE Region**

### **Bulgaria Fails To Adopt Key Anti-corruption Law**

Bulgarian parliament did not succeed in approving a key part of legislation to tackle high-level corruption in a setback for the government. Two small parties in the four-way coalition spoke out against the draft law, which would let anonymous tip-offs trigger corruption investigations. The present legislation forbids any such probes. **EUobserver, 8 September 2015.**

### **Serbia and Croatia Score Well in Transparency Survey**

Serbia and Croatia received a high score among 54 countries in a survey of the transparency of finances in politics conducted by the NGO Global Integrity. Serbia and Croatia demonstrated good governance in Global Integrity's new survey, "*Money, Politics and Transparency*," indicating the degree of transparency of financing in politics. Out of 54 countries listed in the survey, Serbia received 62 of a maximum 100 points and finished in 10th place, while Croatia got 62 points. **Balkan Insight, 27 October 2015.**

### **Southeast Europe Coalition on Whistleblower Protection 1st Meeting – November 9-10, 2015 – Belgrade, Serbia**

A report by the Regional Anti-corruption Initiative and Blueprint for Free Speech shows that Southeast Europe is among most active regions in the world in developing, passing and implementing whistleblower protection laws. Leadership by governments and NGOs has been the key to these advancements, together with growing public support and guidance from regional and international stakeholders. **RAI, 9 November 2015.**

## Reports and Analyses

### **Public Opinion Survey: Knowledge, Opinions and Experiences of Citizens on Corruption in Kosovo**

The survey analyses the level of trust that the citizens have towards the public institutions of the Republic of Kosovo. Specifically, the survey analyses the perception of citizens with respect to the high level of corruption in the country. In the first part of the survey, the citizens were asked to identify the main issues which Kosovo is facing at the moment. Initially, the citizens were asked regarding the presence of corruption in the most important public institutions/sectors. At that point, the citizens were also asked to rank the most corrupt institutions, depending on their knowledge and personal experiences. **Levizja FOL.**

### **The 2015 SAR Annual Policy Analysis and Forecast Report**

This year's SAR Annual Policy Analysis and Forecast Report addresses two major issues. Firstly, it discusses how close Romania is to real convergence with the European Union and how much the recent growth has helped towards that goal and what how good governance contributes to closer union with the the Euro zone. Secondly, it addresses the public policies that need to be put in place so that performance can increase more smoothly and more efficiently and how the decreased corruption also leads to a higher economic growth. The Forecast highlights the above-average GDP growth, that surpassed expectations for the second year in a row: 2014 brought another 2,9% to Romania's GDP – according to provisional data available from the statistics office – and could be called the first year of post-crisis growth, after 2013 had barely equaled the GDP of 2008. **Romanian Academic Society.**

## Contacts

[Click here to Unsubscribe](#)

SELDI Secretariat  
Center for the Study of  
Democracy  
5 Alexander Zhendov str.  
1113 Sofia, Bulgaria  
Tel: (+359 2) 971 3000  
Fax: (+359 2) 971 2233  
Email: [seldi@online.bg](mailto:seldi@online.bg)



This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of the SELDI initiative and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.