

# SÜDOSTEUROPA

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## Sehr geehrte Leserin, sehr geehrter Leser,

am 22. Juli 2010 stellte der Internationale Gerichtshof in Den Haag in einem mit Spannung erwarteten Rechtsgutachten fest, die Unabhängigkeitserklärung des Kosovo vom 17. Februar 2008 habe nicht allgemeines internationales Recht verletzt. Mitte September 2010 schloss sich – auf massiven Druck der EU – die politische Führung in Belgrad einer Resolution der Vereinten Nationen an, die Serbien und Kosovo zum Dialog über „alle offenen Fragen“ auffordert. Wolfgang Ischinger, 2007 Vertreter der EU bei den so genannten „Troika-Verhandlungen“ über den Status des Kosovo, äußert in seinem gemeinsam mit Oliver Rolofs verfassten Beitrag die Hoffnung, „dass nun doch ein Schlusstrich unter den drei Jahrzehnte schwelenden Kosovo-Konflikt gezogen werden kann“. Die Autoren sehen in Kosovo nichts weniger als den „Testfall für die Führungskraft Europas“, denn der EU fehle weiterhin eine kohärente und glaubwürdige Strategie für Kosovo und den westlichen Balkan insgesamt. Zu der von den Autoren geforderten Strategie gehört auch, dass Kosovo schnellstmöglich in die Politik der Schengen-Visa-liberalisierung einbezogen wird – darin sind sich Ischinger und Rolofs einig mit der Autorin Gunda Schumann, bis vor kurzem Mitarbeiterin der EULEX.

Auch eine EU-Mitgliedschaft aber bedeutet keine Garantie für gute nachbarschaftliche Beziehungen – dies zeigt das Beispiel von Ungarn und der Slowakei, denen sich der Schwerpunkt in diesem Doppelheft der Südosteuropa Mitteilungen widmet. Unsere Autoren werfen Schlaglichter auf die historischen Hintergründe der schwierigen Nachbarschaft, auf die antagonistischen Auffassungen zur Rolle von Staat und Nation, auf die Ergebnisse der jeweiligen Parlamentswahlen 2010 und deren Hintergründe sowie auf die Auswirkungen der globalen Finanz- und Wirtschaftskrise in beiden Staaten. Der FAZ-Korrespondent Karl-Peter Schwarz sieht zumindest eine „beruhigende Wirkung“, die von der EU-Mitgliedschaft ausgehe: „So scharf die Töne auch waren, die aus Pressburg und Budapest zu vernehmen waren – beide Staaten haben die Grenzen nicht überschritten, die die europäische Integration nationalstaatlichen Konflikten gezogen hat.“

Nichts weniger als eine neue Geschichtsbetrachtung, einen „Schlusstrich unter die Vergangenheit“, fordert der Historiker Holm Sundhaussen in seinem Beitrag „Die Geschichte Südosteuropas neu denken!“. Sundhaussens grundlegender Beitrag sei nicht nur allen historisch Interessierten zur Lektüre empfohlen.

Ihr Redaktionsteam

*Hansjörg Brey*

*Claudia Hopf*

## SÜDOSTEUROPA

### Mitteilungen

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Wolfgang Ischinger / Oliver Rolofs

### Kosovo and Serbia: Options for a *Modus Vivendi*?

On 22 July 2010, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) reaffirmed the view that the Republic of Kosovo is, and will remain, an independent state. The advisory opinion and the last UN resolution of the General Assembly on Kosovo of September 2010 – eleven years after the intervention of NATO – is hopefully going to usher in a *modus vivendi* for both Belgrade and Pristina.

The key elements needed to settle the dispute had already been developed by the Kosovo troika in 2007 using Ahtisaari's proposals as a guideline. Now they have to be implemented. To get the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina going, several elements are important: The EU needs to live up to their responsibility of supporting peace and stability in the entire region. For Serbia it is time to look ahead. From a political and economic point of view it is overdue that relations between Kosovo and Serbia return to normal.

For a productive dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, the article discusses six approaches to resolve the bilateral dispute and the EU's current dilemma of not being able to take decisions or lead due to internal dissent. The EU should assume a clear leadership role and develop perspectives for the region, and Belgrade and Pristina must find a *modus vivendi* with each other as they aspire to join the EU.

Gunda Schumann

### Visa Liberalisation for Citizens of Kosovo – A Critical Analysis of the Current State of Play and Future Perspectives

The Thessaloniki Agenda, offering Western Balkan countries a future perspective in the European Union, has become tangible at last: Citizens of FYR Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia may travel to the Schengen zone without visa, while Albania and Bosnia & Herzegovina will follow suit soon.

However, one territory in the Western Balkans has been left out in the cold: Kosovo. It has neither become a partner of any "visa dialogue", nor are its citizens entitled to receive Serbian biometric passports. The former Yugoslav province, facing incomplete recognition as an independent state due to its *sui generis status*, is caught between a rock and a hard place: Currently, it will have to rely on its own momentum for tackling reforms required to obtain visa liberalisation, however, without tangible incentives.

As to the author, what Kosovo needs instead is a "structured approach" that would enable the public to compare progress between countries and civil society to put

pressure on the government in order to avert the risk of becoming a failing state eventually. To keep visa liberalisation from backfiring on EU member states, an integrated approach combining both visa liberalisation and socio-economic development is urgently needed.

**Norbert Spannenberger**

### **Hungary after Parliamentary Elections in April 2010: More than a Shift to the Right**

The article inquires in how far the elections in Hungary in spring 2010 actually should be evaluated as decisive turning point since the political changes in 1989/1990. Contrary to earlier parliamentary elections, basic changes concerning the parties' political spectrum happened. These changes are by no way of meteoric nature, since the sole leadership of the ruling party FIDESZ represents a real option that goes beyond this election period. FIDESZ's victory, which secures a comfortable 2/3 majority, is not the result of an overwhelming election campaign, but is due to the self-destructive behavior of the Socialists and the left-wing Liberals, whose scandals and corruption incidents were a rewarding subject for the press.

The opposition parties in Hungary have been dramatically weakened, not so much by the election results, but by other immanent reasons. Thus the government's main focus lies in the fight against the right-wing extremist party Jobbik, which recently appeared on the political scenery. It is obvious that the second Orbán government seizes its chance to make those plans a success that didn't show any results so far – such as the granting of a dual citizenship for Hungarian minorities abroad.

**Wolfgang Aschauer**

### **Current Problems as for Hungarian-Slovak Relations from a Discourse Theoretical View**

The paper deals with current controversies between Slovakia and Hungary from a discourse-theoretical point of view. It argues that controversies like those about the Hungarian law on dual citizenship, and many more, result from antagonistic discourses about the role of state and (ethnic) nation.

While the Hungarian discourse stresses the ethnic nation's priority over state interests and therefore claims the Hungarian state's responsibility for the ethnic Hungarians abroad, the Slovak discourse stresses the state's priority over ethno-national interests and therefore tries to reduce any influence of Hungarian nationals and their kin state in Slovakia.

The article concludes that without overcoming these discourses, real solutions to the political controversies are quite improbable.

**Karl-Peter Schwarz**

### **Anti-Revisionism and Anti-Magyarism on the Danube About the Difficult Relations of Hungarians and Slovaks**

The bilateral relations between Hungary and Slovakia had registered a sudden deterioration just a year before new parliaments were elected in both countries in

April and June 2010. A restrictive legislation regulating the use of the state language in Slovakia and a new Hungarian law offering citizenship to Magyar minorities in the neighbouring countries led to a hitherto unseen escalation in a controversy between the two member states of the European Union. Nationalists on both sides succeeded in reducing the complexity of a neighbourhood in the very heart of Europe to simple ethno-political patterns. The new government in Slovakia which got parliamentary support in August 2010 tries to mitigate the conflict. – The article resumes the development of the recent crisis and describes its historical background.

**Barbora Moormann-Kimáková**  
**Parliamentary Election 2010 – A Shift to the Right in Slovakia?**

The results of the recent parliamentary elections in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia are often referred to as a “right shift” – meaning the success of far right parties on the one hand or the success of center-right parties on the other. A differentiated analysis of “left” and “right” in Slovakia, distinguishing between an economic, value and nation-orientation level as well as cleavages not overlapping with the “left-right” continuum, shows a complicated pattern which does not allow for a one-dimensional evaluation of the results.

The election in Slovakia in June 2010 marked a historical victory of a social democratic party, which however is relativized by its nationalist rhetoric in the past years as well as cooperation with nationalists and Vladimir Meciar in the past government. The losses of Meciar, nationalists, as well as the more radical of Hungarian parties seem to mark the end of “Meciarism” in Slovakia and a shift away from far right.

A shift to the right on the economic level seems obvious, but the old Christian democrat parties in fact experienced losses or only minor gains. Two new parties on the other hand, a liberal one and a party seeking to overcome the ethnic cleavage in Slovakia, surprised with high gains. The future of the new government remains unclear, as it has to face the financial crisis as well as the rising poll numbers of social democrats.

**Zdenek Lukas**  
**The Slovak Economy in the Light of Global Financial and Economic Crisis**  
**A Comparison with Other New EU Countries in Central Europe**

Slovakia’s banking sector was not directly affected by the global financial and economic crisis as banks’ exposure to highly toxic assets was marginal. In addition, at the beginning of the turbulent year 2009, Slovakia adopted the euro: This definitely eased the impact of the financial crisis on Slovak banking.

However, the strongly export-oriented Slovak economy was hit hard by the sharp contraction of foreign demand in 2009. The GDP was down, the labour market deteriorated and the general government deficit was rising. But, with surprising strength and earlier than expected, the Slovak economy has been recovering with the highest growth in the EU. The GDP was up by 4.8 % in the first quarter of 2010. The economic expansion has been largely the result of the revival in external demand, supported by improved competitiveness. As for sustainable economic



growth in the future, the crucial point is to avoid any measures that would threaten Slovakia's regained competitiveness and might thus undermine its competitive position particularly within the EU. If the euro remains weak, unit labour costs continue to be low and if the economies of Slovakia's main trading partners are strongly recovering, GDP growth may remain high. However, economic growth driven by a massive appetite for consumption will not return to the high rates seen a few years ago. The main challenges for the new Slovak centre-right government relate to rising unemployment and an escalating budget deficit.

**Ognian Hishov**

### **Explicit and Implicit Public Debt in the Southeast European EU Member States**

Excessive borrowing during the global economic crisis caused public debt to soar in many Southeast European member states of the EU. The result is that not only Greece is facing a fiscal squeeze but also do Hungary, Cyprus and others. Moreover, on top of this – explicit – public debt there are so-called implicit liabilities. They are related to the promise of the government to pay pensions, offer medical treatment to the insured, and to provide long-term care to the elderly. The implicit liabilities that governments bear are in the vicinity of 500 per cent of the GDP in Greece, Slovenia, or Cyprus. Given the demographic trend they may – without immediate countermeasures – rise further. In the article, a standard model is employed to evaluate the effects of selected policies aimed at dealing with the burgeoning explicit and implicit debt in the countries considered.

**Holm Sundhaussen**

### **A New Approach to the Historiography of Southeast Europe**

Following a short outline of the main approaches, semantics and limits of national historiography in Southeast Europe / the Balkans, the article focuses on some phenomena which do not fit in with the history of a state or the history and "prehistory" of a nation.

This is especially true for many of the migrations in pre-modern times. Crossing the borders of states and cultures (often accompanied by an identity switch) was an important aspect of everyday life. Besides the history of states and (modern) nations, the history of migrations (beyond states and nations) should therefore figure as a third pillar of Southeast European historiography.

One of the main challenges of such an approach concerns the identification of ethnic groups. Many of the recorded ethnonyms do not necessarily correspond to an ethnic group (in the sense of a group with common descent). In many cases it remains unclear what is behind a name. The same ethnonym was often applied to people of different origin who were only united by their profession, language or religion. In most cases the ethnic origins of modern nations and the ethnic continuity of pre-modern ethnic groups is a matter of pure speculation.

The article stresses the contingent and performative character of ethnic and national identity and argues in favour of a historiography which questions the popular perceptions of autochtonity and continuity of groups.