



SEE ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

Issue 2

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NEW PROGRAMME E-MAIL
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NEW PROGRAMME WEBSITE
www.see.pspa.uoa.gr

SEE STUDIES ENTERS SECOND DECADE!

2009-10 was the eleventh year of operation for the Postgraduate Programme in Southeast European Studies. As our Programme opened its second decade, our region entered a new era with the applications for European Union entry by Albania, Montenegro and Serbia. Our Programme is proud to have played its own small part in building the new Southeastern Europe.

From the start, an integral element of the SEE Studies experience has been to bring together students from the region and beyond to learn with and from each other during an intensive academic year in Athens. During the past 11 years, our Programme's specialist, interdisciplinary education in the history, politics, economy and society of Southeastern Europe has been enjoyed by over 300 students. (For details of our students, see p.2).

By bringing together members of the new generation of SEE citizens, the Postgraduate Programme in Southeast European Studies has made its own special contribution to mutual understanding and good neighbourly relations. International friendships begun on the Programme continue to flourish as our alumni move on to work in a broad range of fields, in government, business and academia (read more on p. 16).

This newsletter was launched last year as a way of helping you all to keep in touch with each other and with the Programme. We hope you enjoy it!

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Editorial

OUR ACCESS POLICY – THREAT AVERTED

Although Southeastern Europe and universities across Europe are suffering the effects of the economic crisis, we remain committed to ensuring the broadest possible access to Southeast European Studies. Despite considerable financial pressures, during the academic year 2009-10 our Programme maintained its policy of offering a free education to students from 11 Southeast European countries, while maintaining fees at the exceptionally low rate of 1,500 euros for other students.

This policy recently came under serious threat. Our Programme currently receives no external support from government or private sector sources and is entirely reliant on the income generated by students' tuition fees. New national legislation passed in 2008 provided for 25% of the income of postgraduate programmes to be diverted to central university funds, while allocating an additional 10% to the University's research fund for administrative purposes. This disastrous provision would have made our Programme in its present form financially non-viable.

We are pleased to report that earlier this year the Governing Council of the University of Athens decided that the 25% contribution to central university funds should be returned to the postgraduate programmes. We welcome this wise decision and look forward to its implementation. It will save our Programme from choosing between financial disaster or changes to our tuition fees policy, inevitably excluding the students we most want to attract.

The latter would inevitably change the nature of *SEE Studies* as a multinational programme committed to promoting mutual understanding in the new Southeastern Europe. We are proud of our access policy and are pleased that the University's decision means it will be able to continue unchanged in 2010-11. We hope we will also be able to maintain our access policy in future as we believe it is essential to ensure the participation of those students to whom the Programme is aimed – the new generation of SEE citizens from all over the region.

SUSANNAH VERNEY

Academic Coordinator 2006-10

WEBSITE

www.see.pspa.uoa.gr

Our colourful new website is now online. Besides information on our programme of studies, faculty, guest lectures, how to apply, and useful information on studying in Athens, it also includes a **special page for our alumni**, on which you will find back copies of the *SEE Alumni* newsletter.

The new website was created by Vassilis Lykoudis, Nikolaos Naoum, Anna Vallianatou and Susannah Verney. We would like to thank the whole team for their hard work – with special thanks to Vassilis for his major contribution.

We had a lot of fun creating the site and hope you will like it too. All comments and ideas on the development of the site and especially the Alumni page are welcome.

NEW PROGRAMME LOGO

The website team, with lots of input from last year's students, also created our new Programme Logo (as featured on the first page of this newsletter and on the Programme's website). At its centre is the rebuilt Mostar Bridge, symbolising the reconstruction and regeneration of Southeastern Europe after the conflict era. The Orthodox Church in Serbia (Novi Pazar City - Historic Raška-Oblast / Sandzak Region) and the Mosque in Greece (Ioannina, Lake Pamvotis), a reference to the historical role of religion in the region, flank the Bridge and are united by it. Completing the logo are a map showing the current shape of Southeastern Europe and a picture of the European Commission's headquarters in Brussels, pointing the way to the region's European future!

OUR STUDENTS 1999-2010

From 1999 to 2009 a total of *319 students* from *29 countries* participated in the Programme.

We had 281 students from Southeastern Europe. Namely from:

- Turkey: 29 students,
- Romania: 23 students
- Bulgaria: 22 students
- former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: 21 students
- Serbia and Montenegro: 20 students
- Albania: 19 students
- Slovenia: 8 students
- Bosnia and Herzegovina: 7 students
- Croatia: 4 students
- Cyprus: 2 students *AND*
- And last but not least.... Greece: 128 students

We had 7 students from Western Europe. Namely from:

- Germany: 1 student
- Norway: 3 students
- Finland: 1 student
- United Kingdom: 1 student
- Italy: 1 student

We had 8 students from Central and Eastern Europe. Namely from:

- Hungary: 4 students
- Slovakia: 1 student
- Lithuania: 2 students
- Czech Republic: 1 student
- Poland: 1 student

We had 7 students from the former Soviet Union. Namely from:

- Armenia: 1 student
- Ukraine: 3 students
- Moldavia: 1 student
- Lithuania: 2 students

We had 10 students from the United States.

We had 2 students from the Middle East. Namely from:

- Iraq: 1 student
- Jordan: 1 student *AND*

We had 2 students from Japan.

THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2009-2010

Our Students

This year's dynamic multinational group included students from six countries: Serbia, Turkey, Albania, Greece (of course!), Cyprus and the USA.

Our 2009-10 students were graduates of the *University of Belgrade* and the *University of Niš* in Serbia; *Ankara University*, *Istanbul Bilgi University*, *Koç University* and the *University of the Aegean* (Izmir) in Turkey; the *University of Tirana "Enver Hoxha"* in Albania; the *University of Athens*, *Panteion Univesity*, the *Hellenic Open University* and the *Hellenic Army Academy* in Greece; *Brown University*, the *University of California, Berkeley* (SA) and the *University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign* in the USA.



As usual, their backgrounds were very diverse, including first degrees in Political Science, Social Policy, International Relations, Italian and Spanish Language and Literature, Law, Classical Philology, Statistics, Linguistics, Economics and Administrative science, Business Administration, Communication and Mass Media Studies, Greek language and literature, European Culture Studies.

It seems fair to say that the *SEE Studies* student group reflects the goal of the European Union: "Unity with Diversity"!

SCHOLARSHIP HOLDERS

Seven students of our 2009-2010 were scholarship holders:

- **George Mesthos** (US) won a prestigious **Fulbright Scholarship**. His research project for Fulbright was on “prevailing faith”: the church of Greece and immigrants.
- **Belce Akdogan** and **Çansu Poyraz** (both from Turkey) won 12-month scholarships from the General Directorate for International Development Cooperation (**Hellenic Aid**) of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- **Esra Dogan** (Turkey) and **Nineta Zaimi** (Albania) won 12-month scholarships from the **E1 Directorate for Educational and Cultural Affairs** of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- **Dragan Nikolic** (Serbia) won a 12-month scholarship for postgraduate/postdoctoral studies in Greece from the **State Scholarships Foundation (IKY)** of Greece.
- **Una Todorovic** (Serbia) held a scholarship from the foundation **“Fund for Young Talents”** of the Ministry of Youth and Sport in Serbia.

Congratulations to all of you!

SOME HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2009-10

This year's Orientation week in September included a visit to the brand new **Acropolis Museum**, opened just three months earlier, in June 2009. Staff and students enjoyed the guided tour of the impressive new museum, including the beautiful sculpture collection and the breath-taking views of the Acropolis

at sunset as seen from the top gallery. All agreed the Acropolis Museum visit should become a regular feature of Orientation week from now on.



Dr Nassia Yakovaki organised an optional day trip to ***Hydra island***, 1 hour and 50 minutes by hydrofoil from Athens. The participating students discovered at first hand how Hydra offers a fascinating case study of the



inter -relationship between the international, the national and the local. The group visited the Historical Archive of Hydra and learned about the impact of the Balkan Question and national movements on the development of this island town. Dr Yakovaki plans to organise the trip again next year.

We all enjoyed the ***Farewell Party*** (for staff and students) at the University Museum in Plaka on 4 June 2009. Under the shadow of the Acropolis, students and academic staff had the chance to drink a glass of wine and have a chat after a hardworking academic year.



NEXT YEAR'S STUDENTS

The student selection for 2010-2011 was announced in May 2010. Our new student group includes 3 students from Albania, 1 from Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1 from Bulgaria, 3 from Serbia, 4 from Turkey, 1 from Montenegro, 2 from Romania, 8 from Greece, 1 from Australia, and 1 from Russia. ***We are looking forward to meeting all our new students in September!***

CURRICULUM NEWS

CURRICULUM 2009-2010

The programme of courses as taught in 2009-10 was as follows:

Winter Semester

➤ *Nationalism in Southeastern Europe*

Pantelis Lekkas, Associate Professor, University of Athens

➤ *European Integration and Southeastern Europe*

Susannah Verney, Assistant Professor, University of Athens

➤ *The Political Economy of Transition: The Case of Southeastern Europe*

Dr George Stubos, Research Department, Bank of Greece

Spring Semester

➤ *Southeast European Politics and Society in the New Democratic Setting*

Professor Christos Lyrintzis, University of Athens & Dr. Ioannis Armakolas, Lecturer, University of Macedonia

➤ *Politics and History of Southeastern Europe in the Twentieth Century*

Nassia Yakovaki, Assistant Professor-elect, University of Athens with guest lectures by Dr Dia Anagnostou, Lecturer, University of Macedonia

➤ *Conflict Resolution & Regional Cooperation in Southeastern Europe*

Ruby Gropas, Lecturer, Democritus University of Thrace

CURRICULUM NEWS, 2010-11: PLANNED CHANGES

In response to popular request during our bi-annual student evaluation sessions, the Coordinating Committee has made the following updates to the Programme for next year:

“Conflict Resolution and Regional Cooperation in Southeastern Europe” will expand beyond its traditional CR focus. The exciting new course, entitled **“Sources of Conflict in Southeastern Europe”**, will also cover issues such as transitional justice; memory, cultural heritage and war; political Islam and Islamic radicalism; and unconventional threats in Southeastern Europe.

“Politics and History of Southeastern Europe in the 20th Century” will be replaced by **“Modern and Contemporary History of Southeastern Europe”**. With a starting point in 1776, the new course will provide more comprehensive coverage of the historical development of the region and a deeper understanding of the influences which have shaped the region of today.

“Southeast European Politics and Society in the New Democratic Setting” will be renamed **“Politics and Society in Contemporary Southeastern Europe”** to reflect the fact that, over 20 years after the fall of the Berlin wall and a decade after the fall of Milosevic, the democratic framework is no longer quite so new!

GUEST LECTURES, 2009-2010

*Guest lectures continue to be an important part of our Programme.
During the academic year 2009-2010 the following guest lectures
took place:*

Dr. Jens Bastian, Senior Research Fellow, ELIAMEP, formerly at the European Agency for Reconstruction and Development,

- ***“Reaching Out in a Time of Economic Crises. External Anchors and Internal Dynamics in South East Europe”***, 23 November 2009

Professor Panayiotis C. Ioakimidis, University of Athens, Greek Representative to the Intergovernmental Conference for the Nice Treaty (2000) and Alternate Government Representative to the European Convention (2002-03)

- **“The Nature of the European Union Political System”**, 22 October 2009
- **“The Lisbon Treaty and After”**, 29 October 2009

Dr. Axel Sotiris Walldén, Head of the Enlargement Strategy Unit, Directorate-General for Enlargement, European Commission

- **“The History of the EU-South East Europe Relationship and the Politics and Mechanics of EU Accession”**, 2 November 2009
- **“The EU and the Western Balkans”**, 4 November 2009
- **“The 2009 Enlargement Package. Key Challenges of the EU's Enlargement Policy”**, 5 November 2009

Dr. David Landsman, OBE, Ambassador of the United Kingdom to Greece

- **“Europe in the Balkans, or the Balkans in Europe? Some British Reflections”**, 19 February 2010

Associate Professor Nikos Fokas, Eotvos Lorand, University of Budapest

- ***“Politics in Post Communist Hungary and Romania: Recent Developments”***, 23 March 2010

ALUMNUS EVENT, 2009-10

In the academic year 2008-9 we launched an annual event which allows our Alumni to maintain contact with the Programme and to meet current students. The first alumnus event was a lecture given by the Ambassador of the United Kingdom, Dr David Landsman, OBE in April 2009.

Our second alumnus event, held in May 2010, was a lecture by His Excellency the Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Greece, **Professor Boron Bronza** on *“Bosnia and Herzegovina and Europe - Centuries of Belonging”*.

Professor Bronza offered us a stimulating historical overview of Bosnia-European relations from antiquity to the EU and cheerfully answered many penetrating questions from students, staff and alumni, before joining us to continue the discussion at an informal wine-and-cheese reception.

We hope to see you at our next Alumni event in Spring 2011!

NEWS OF OUR FACULTY

WELCOME to...

➤ **Dr Nassia Yakovaki**, Assistant Professor-elect who joins the Programme and the Department after eight years teaching in the History Department at the University of Thessaly. In 2009-10 Dr Yakovaki taught *“Politics and History of Southeastern Europe in the Twentieth Century”* and in 2010-11 will be teaching the new course on *“Modern and Contemporary History of Southeastern Europe”*.

➤ **Dr. Ioannis Armakolas**, Lecturer at the University of Macedonia who joined us to teach *“Politics and Society in the New Democratic Setting”* with Professor Christos Lyrantzis during Professor Sotiropoulos’ sabbatical. We are pleased to report that Dr Armakolas will be staying with us next year to teach the new course on *“Sources of Conflict in Southeastern Europe”*.

And Welcome Back to...

➤ **Dr. Ruby Gropas**, Lecturer at the Democritus University of Thrace, who is an old acquaintance of the Programme, having taught the course on *“European Integration and Southeastern Europe”* in 2006-7. This year Dr Gropas taught *“Conflict Resolution & Regional Cooperation in Southeastern Europe”*.

Some of our Faculty activities during 2009-10

As ever, our faculty has been very busy this year...

➤ **Dia Anagnostou** organized a workshop in October 2009 funded by the European Science Foundation on “Rights, legal mobilization and political participation in Europe”, which was attended by 20 participants from 11 countries. In May, the International Institute for the Sociology of Law (IISL) at Onati in the Basque Country approved her application to host a follow-up workshop in June 2011 on "Law, rights and social mobilization in a multi-level European system". She presented papers at the General Conference of the European Consortium of Political Research, University of Potsdam in September 2009 and at a workshop on “Evolution in Equality and Law Theory” at the European University Institute, Florence in January 2010. Dr Anagnostou also found time to give birth to her second daughter, Angelina. Congratulations!

➤ **Ioannis Armakolas** was ESRC Fellow in the Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Oxford, January 2009-June 2010 and Research Fellow at Nuffield College, January-December 2009. He also



took up a new position as Director of Research of the *US-Greece Task Force: Transforming the Balkans*, a joint project of EKEM (Hellenic Centre for European Studies) and Washington's Center for Strategic and International Studies, analysing the obstacles facing the Western Balkans in their efforts

to integrate into the European and Euro-Atlantic institutions and offering practical policy recommendations to American and European policy makers. He presented seven papers at international meetings in Athens, Oxford, Sarajevo and Washington.

➤ Former faculty member, **Konstantina Botsiou** (*“History and Politics of Southeastern Europe”*, 1999-2006), currently Associate Professor at the University of the Peloponnese, was appointed Director of the Karamanlis Institute for Democracy.

➤ **Ruby Gropas** organised the 2010 ELIAMEP European Seminar on “Economic Governance in the Eurozone and the EU: Drawing lessons from the crisis” (co-organised with Bruegel and funded by the European Commission’s Jean Monnet Action Plan). She also participated in the project *IME, Identities and Modernities in Europe: European and National Identity*

Construction Programmes and Politics, Culture, History and Religion, financed by the European Commission under the FP7 Programme and coordinated by Kingston University in London.

➤ **Dimitris Sotiropoulos** was Visiting Fellow in Southeast European Studies at the European Studies Centre, St. Anthony's College, University of Oxford. Among his activities at St Anthony's, he organised and co-chaired a one-day conference on "The Role of the State in South East Europe" (21 May 2010) and chaired a panel on "Greece, Southern Europe and the Eurozone" (10 May 2010). He presented papers at the 6th General Conference of the Political Studies Association, University of Edinburgh, April 2010 and at a workshop at the University of Paris-Sorbonne in November 2009.



➤ **Susannah Verney** was Convenor of a Section on "The Quality of Democracy in Southern Europe" (six panels, 24 papers) at the General Conference of the European Consortium of Political Research, University of Potsdam, September 2009. She presented papers at the 6th General Conference of the Political Studies Association, University of Edinburgh in April 2010 and at a conference on "Reconceptualising Turkey-EU Relations" organised by the Universities of Marmara and Bremen in Istanbul in October 2009.

Selected Publications of our Faculty, 2009-10

➤ **Dia Anagnostou** (2010): "Does European Human Rights Law Matter? State Implementation and Domestic Impact of Strasbourg Court Judgments", *International Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 14, No. 5, pp. 721-743.

➤ Richard Moreton, **Ioannis Armakolas** et. al. (2010) "Assessment and Analysis of EU Accession Risk Factors for Bosnia and Herzegovina", report published by the British Embassy in Sarajevo in English and Bosnian.

➤ **Ruby Gropas** (2010) "Integrating Peace, Security and Environmental Priorities in EU Development Cooperation Policy", TGAE, Notre Europe

➤ **Ruby Gropas & Dia Anagnostou** (2010), "Domesticating Islam and Muslim Immigrants: Political and Church Responses to Constructing a Central Mosque in Athens," in *The Orthodox Church of Greece in the 21st Century: The Role of Religion in Politics, Ethnicity and Culture*,

Prodromou E. (Ed.), Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Roudometof V., Makridis V. and

➤ **Dimitris A. Sotiropoulos**, Spyridoula Nezi & Panagiota Toka (2010), "Party Affiliation, Left-Right Self-Placement or Country Origin? Determinants of Attitudes of Parliamentarians towards European Integration in Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia", *Europe-Asia Studies*, 61 (6)

➤ **Dimitris A. Sotiropoulos**, Spyridoula Nezi & Panagiota Toka (2010), "Attitudes of Greek Parliamentarians Towards European and National Identity, Representation and Scope of Governance", *South European Society & Politics*, Vol 15, no 1

➤ **Dimitris A. Sotiropoulos** also published four articles in Greek edited volumes on higher education reform, political patronage in the 1980s, the Greek dictatorship of 1967-1974, and the EU's Open Method of Coordination in social and unemployment policy.

➤ **Susannah Verney**, Anna Bosco & Marina Costa Lobo (2009) (eds.), "Southern Europe and the Financial Earthquake: Coping with the First Phase of the International Crisis", special issue of *South European Society & Politics*, Vol 14, No. 1



➤ **Nassia Yakovaki's** book, *Europe Via Greece: A Turning Point in European Self Consciousness, 17th-18th centuries*, published in Greek (Hestia Publishers) in 2006, has been translated into Chinese and will shortly be published in Canton.

WE WILL MISS YOU!

Faculty Sabbaticals, 2010-11

- Professor Lyrantzis will spend the year as a Research Fellow at the Hellenic Observatory, London School of Economics.
- Professor Verney will be based in Greece, but will be a Visiting Fellow at the Hellenic Observatory, London School of Economics in November.
- Dr Anagnostou will be spending the year as a Marie Curie Fellow at the European University Institute in Florence.
- Dr Gropas will be spending the year in the United States.

STUDENTS' RESEARCH TRIP TO THE WESTERN BALKANS

(22/6-2/7/2009)

RAPPORTEUR: CHRISTOS AIVALIOTIS, CLASS OF 2008-2009

There is no better way to end an intensive one-year Master's degree in Southeast European Studies than by organizing a research trip to the region. That's how the class of 2008-2009 thought and we organised our trip a few weeks after the end of the second semester. Although the initial plan included more participants and more countries to visit, practical problems – such as professional obligations, bureaucratic procedures and the fact that it was the first time that such an initiative was taken by students on our Programme – made us amend our plans more than once.

SERBIA. With the participation of four SEE students (Christos Aivaliotis, Marina Gligorić, Alexia Karapatsia, Akis Sakellariou) and a 'Balkan-addicted' colleague (Giorgos Limantzakis) from the Postgraduate Programme in European and International Studies in our Department, we first visited Belgrade (22-25/6) enjoying the Serbian hospitality of our colleague, Marina. As a true Balkan metropolis, the city taught us about its past with every step in the streets of the picturesque city centre, on the boat restaurants along the Danube, in the



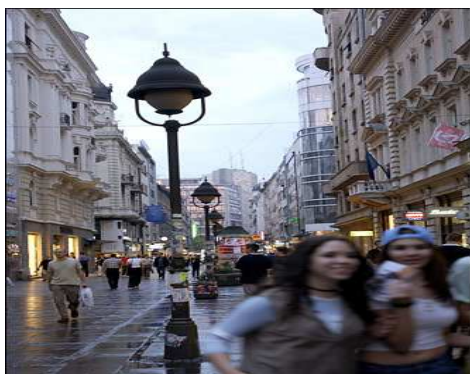
'communist' area of Novi Beograd, visiting the House of Flowers – where Tito is buried – or on top of the city's hill enjoying the view from the Kalemegdan Fortress. In Belgrade, we had the opportunity to meet interesting people who gave us an overview of what is going on in the country which remains the biggest and most

important actor in the region. Our first meeting in the UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) with Mr. D. Kladarin and Mr. D. Rako offered us an exciting discussion of the current situation of refugees in Serbia (mainly Serbs coming from other parts of former Yugoslavia), an important issue that dominates Belgrade's relations with its neighbors and with Brussels.

Our second meeting took place in the CCMR (Centre for Civil-Military Relations) with the Centre's Research Fellows, A. Abusara, M. Sarković, S. Đorđević and Iztok Bojović, who gave us a detailed presentation of the Centre's history and goals as well as of the army's role in Serbian politics before and after Milosević. A lively debate followed, showing that the hosts were as excited as the guests and the discussion soon included the December 2008 riots in Athens.

Our third meeting was in the EU Integration Office became possible thanks to Ms. Ljiljana Jevtović, an alumnus of our Programme (2006-07) who works in the Translation Coordination Department, in charge of translating the European Union *acquis communautaire* into Serbian. She informed us about the practical difficulties

that a candidate state encounters even in translating and at the same time implementing the EU's requests.



Our last meeting was with a representative of the Serbian press, Mr. M. Ivanović, Deputy Editor-in-Chief of *Blic*, one of the most independent newspapers in Serbia. In this last meeting we had the chance to learn at firsthand about the status that the press enjoys today in Serbia and to enjoy a general discussion on Balkan politics.

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA. A night bus took us from Belgrade to Sarajevo on 26th morning and we found our apartment in the heart of Sarajevo's old town, Baščaršija (= the main market). Our mental strength won over our physical weakness after sleeping just a few hours on the night bus, and we went directly to our first meeting with Mr. Luc Lietaer (although part of our team could not follow due to stomach sickness). Mr. Lietaer, policy and coordination adviser in OSCE's Education Department, explained to us the importance of multicultural education in overcoming the divisions of the past in BiH, the role of the ethnic leaders and the complexities of the Dayton administrative system.

Our second meeting was with Mrs. Jasna Jelisić, political advisor to the EU Special Representative. The headquarters of the EUSR were without doubt a symbol of power in BiH, a huge and modern building of European standards in the Habsburg area of Sarajevo by the river. Mrs. Jelisić gave an overview of the duties of the EUSR, stressed the importance of conducting an official population census and

explained how the closure of the Special Representative's office has not been possible so far, despite the declarations of all the persons that have accepted this post. After these discussions with representatives of the international community, our third meeting, with a Bosniak journalist from *Dani* magazine, Mr. Eldin Hadžović, gave us an



insight into how the locals think about their current state of affairs. This meeting was the least official one we attended, in a nice pizzeria-café in a quiet neighborhood of Sarajevo, with only the presence of some German soldiers from an EU mission reminding us of the country's unique situation. Mr. Hadžović spoke as a member of the Bosniak majority of the country but also as a young Bosnian and European who sees in a quite objective way the things are in his country and abroad. He emphasised the social problems in BiH (at the time the capital was facing huge protests against the government's anti-crisis measures) and the identity

issues that arise through associating ethnicity and religion in Bosnian (and especially Bosniak) society.

Our last meeting in BiH was at the local office of UNHCR, where numerical data and the personal experiences of Mrs. Lejla Riđanovic as an Assistant Programme Officer helped us understand the problem that BiH faces and offered a comparison with the situation described to us by her counterparts in Belgrade.



Apart from the research, Sarajevo, just like Belgrade is a city of living history. The Ottoman city centre with the intriguing coexistence of mosques, Orthodox and Catholic cathedrals and synagogues, the Habsburg area with the dominant Library still under reconstruction, the green hills all around that do not allow you to think you

are in a modern European capital, our visit to Sarajevo's tunnel under the airport which was used during the siege of the city in the early 1990s, and our one-day trip to Mostar with its famous bridge are for sure part of our knowledge of Southeastern Europe that no book could offer. Last but not least, an important aspect of our trip to BiH was the opportunity to meet local youngsters, who showed us how similar we are in Southeastern Europe and at the same time how different collective memories influence our way of thinking today.

CROATIA. A night train took us from the oriental ambiance of Sarajevo to the 'Central European' part of former Yugoslavia, Croatia and its capital, Zagreb, on the 30th June. Although the initial plan included at least two days of relaxation at the astonishing Croatian coast, the self-funding character of our trip and our dedication to academic adventure (!) made us think (and later regret) of leaving this part of Croatia for next time. If Belgrade and Sarajevo seduce their visitors with their omnipresent Balkan and Oriental character respectively, Zagreb can easily point at its purely European architecture (although the mentality remains Balkan!).

Our first meeting there was with her Excellency the Ambassador of Greece to Croatia, Mrs. Ourania Arvaniti, who welcomed us to the beautiful building that

houses the Greek Embassy. Mrs. Arvaniti, with her deep knowledge of the region's history and her anecdotes (some times funny and sometimes sad) helped us understand bilateral relations in Western Balkans and the position of Greece to date. Later the same day, we had another interesting meeting at OSCE with Mr. A. Švarc and Mr. D. head of the local OSCE office. Despite a misunderstanding in our



electronic communication that made the OSCE officials expect a group of 30 students instead of 5, the discussion was quite fruitful and enlightened us regarding both the political balances within an important international organization and the Croatian reality regarding the return of the Serbian refugees and other important issues.

The next day, we met Mrs. Dunja Jevak in the Croatian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, Head of the Department for Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia and had the opportunity to listen to the Croatian side regarding regional cooperation, bilateral relations and the EU integration of the Western Balkans, comparing this with the Serbian and Bosnian comments on the same issues.

Last but not least, we were welcomed at IMO (Institute of International Relations) by Dr. Visnja Samardzija, Head of European Integration Department, former Deputy Minister of the Croatian Government and also a Visiting Lecturer to the Postgraduate Programme in Southeast European Studies during the academic year 2004-2005. She and her team informed us thoroughly about Croatia's integration efforts, about the bilateral issue with Slovenia and about the financial crisis. Unfortunately, the last meeting of our research trip ended earlier than planned,



as the Croatian PM Ivo Sanader resigned the same day and was replaced by the current PM Jadranka Kosor (we lived history indeed during the research trip!). However, our meetings continued even after our return as her Excellency the Ambassador of Croatia in Greece, Mrs. Vesna Cvjetković Kurelec, welcomed us to the Croatian Embassy for another interesting discussion.

Our trip came to an end on the 2nd July and we took the plane back to Athens full of memories, invaluable knowledge and a special bonding among the participants that is hard to describe. On behalf of all the participants, I would like to thank Dr. Susannah Verney, Dr. Ioannis Armakolas, Dr. Jens Bastian and Dr. Anna Vallianatou for their organizational contribution to making this students' initiative materialise and to all the persons who kindly agreed to meet with us and help us in the three countries we visited. I strongly encourage the next generations of SEE specialists to follow our example and I sincerely hope that the Department will build on this experience and be able to support such initiatives in future.

Thanks to Christos for this report. We hope to read more contributions from our Alumni in the next Newsletter.

WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

News of our ALUMNI

What have you been doing since graduation?

Please share your news with us at

postgrad_SEE@pspa.uoa.gr

Do send a small photo too!



Hakan ABACI (student in the academic year 2003-2004): After completing the Postgraduate Programme, I went back to Ankara, followed by a year in Afghanistan (2006-2007) and two years in Thessaloniki. I am currently in Rome as Turkish Senior Representative and Faculty Advisor at the NATO Defense College. I am also First Counsellor of the Turkish Embassy here.

Christos AIVALIOTIS (academic year 2008-2009): The first thing I did after the end of the classes on the Postgraduate Programme was to organize a study trip to Western Balkans (BiH, Croatia, Serbia) with some of my colleagues. (You can read about our trip elsewhere in the newsletter). This was a fantastic experience and is highly recommended to the next generations - but start planning early! After that, fate took me to Bruges, Belgium for a Master's Degree in EU International Relations and Diplomacy at the College of Europe. Like the SEE Studies Programme, it has involved studying hard and making international friends! In October 2010 I am starting a Stage in the Croatia Unit of DG Enlargement at the European Commission, so Belgium is going to be my home for some time.

Angel ANGELOV (academic year 2000-2001): In the years after my graduation I defended a PhD in Political Science and taught a number of university courses (most of them focused on the SEE region). I also contributed analyses of the political developments in the Balkans to a number of newspapers and magazines. In 2006 I joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria and I am currently posted to the Permanent Mission of Bulgaria to the United Nations in New York.

Eirini ATHANASIOU (academic year 2008-2009): I spent the academic year 2009-10 at Bilgi University, doing my second master's degree in International relations and Greek-Turkish relations. It's a really interesting programme for those who want to learn more about Greek-Turkish relations. Istanbul is one the most charming cities that I have ever seen and I've been having a really nice life here!

Boyka BONEVA (academic year 2007-8): is working as a researcher at the Institute of International Economic Relations (IDOS) in Athens.

Magdalena BORON (academic year 2006-7) is studying for a PhD in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration at the University of Athens. Her PhD topic is "Europeanisation as a factor of conflict resolution in the Western Balkans"

Thelxi CHATZIANTONIOU (academic year 2008-2009): I have continued to work at the Agricultural University of Athens. The English language skills gained during my postgraduate studies in London and on the SEE Programme played a role in my new position (from September 2009) in the University's Office for European Programmes, where I deal with student mobility programmes such as LLP / Erasmus, the IAESTE, and Leonardo da Vinci. My job includes concluding and monitoring international agreements for academic and research collaboration with Universities abroad (China, USA etc). In my spare time, I continue studying the Turkish language.

Tasos CHATZIVASILEIOU (academic year 2003-2004): I live in Athens. After finishing the M.A. Programme in 2004, I did my military service for a year (2005-2006). From 2007 to 2009, I worked as a Special Counsellor to the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the General Secretariat for

European Affairs. I really enjoyed working in an international environment, facing challenges and new experiences. I am now (since February 2010) a Research Fellow at the Hellenic Centre for European Studies (EKEM), working for the Southeast Europe Programme. I also work as a consultant to an HR company, named “Human Resources Planning” (HRP), responsible for the development of its subsidiary company in Turkey. I am currently finishing my PhD dissertation in Political Science and History at the Panteion University of Athens.

Damla CIHANGIR (academic year 2008-2009): I am based in Istanbul, working as a researcher at the Economic Development Foundation, where I deal with Turkey's EU membership and negotiation process. Specifically, I focus on the Right of Establishment and Freedom to Provide Services, Free Movement of Capital, Consumer and Health Protection, Regional Policy of the EU, and Turkey's EU Communication Strategy.

Genny DIMITRAKOPOULOU (academic year 2006-2007): I am now a scientific advisor in the Greek Ministry of Culture and Tourism, working as a consultant to the Deputy Minister.

Milan DJOKIC (academic year 2007-2008): As of February 2010, I have been working for the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), the largest EU civilian mission in the world launched under CSDP. I have also recently been offered a place on the MA programme in Politics, Security and Integration at University College London (UCL), but for financial reasons haven't yet decided whether to go.

Dimitris FRANGAKIS (academic year 2000 -2001): From 2000 to 2004, I was the Deputy General Manager at the Constantine K. Mitsotakis Foundation, a non-governmental foundation devoted to studying the life of the former Greek prime minister (1990-3). I was coordinator of the publishing programme and of the European programmes conducted at the Foundation and was also in charge of the archives and the library. Since 2004 I have been working as an advisor to a Greek Member of Parliament (Kyriakos Mitsotakis), responsible for policy research, political analysis, speech writing etc.

Marina GLICORIC (academic year 2008-2009): After I finished the MA in SEE Studies, I decided to return to Serbia. This was a tough decision to

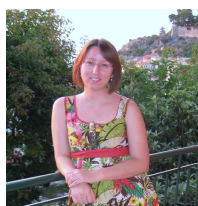
make, but I haven't regretted it. A few months later, I started working as the UNDP Consultant for the Implementation of the Law on State Aid Control at the Ministry of Finance in Belgrade. The knowledge I gained from my SEE Programme courses helped me to stand out among other candidates and has also been helpful to me in performing my everyday work. I would strongly recommend the Postgraduate Programme in Southeast European Studies to future students because of the great teaching staff, good organization and career opportunities. Last but not least, I would recommend this postgraduate programme because Athens is a lovely city with so much to offer.

Özgür GÜRBÜZ (academic year 2006-2007): After the programme ended, I stayed another year in Greece to learn the Greek language and then returned to Turkey to carry out my military service. I was based at Mardin in South East Anatolia, near to the border with Syria. After returning to Istanbul in October 2009, I held some temporary jobs (including as a supervisor at the Annual Meetings of World Bank Groups and the IMF), and from March 2010, I have been working at Mikro Software House Company based in Istanbul, where I am responsible for Enterprise Resource Planning (an integrated operation system that provides resources including labour, machinery and material in the most productive way for enterprises). I am responsible for the Balkan region and the Persian Gulf. I miss my Athens days and am planning to visit in November, so see you then!

Athanasia KARACHRISTOU (academic year 2008-2009): I work for the International Group of a consulting company in the field of projects funded by the EU and World Bank, mainly in the Western Balkans and Turkey. I deal with different thematic areas including social development (employment, Human Resources Development etc), engineering (transport) and economic development (Small and Medium Enterprises, financial markets). The EU-funded projects are mainly an initiative to reinforce these countries' integration into the EU and sometimes to ensure harmonization with the *acquis communautaire*.

Miryana MILANOVA (academic year 2006-2007): When I returned to Bulgaria after graduation, I started working for the Settlement Department of the Bulgarian Stock Exchange. My field is European Integration and Standardization, and I became head expert of the European Integration, Standardization and Methodology department. This has given me a good

opportunity to apply my knowledge of the South East European capital markets and to have access to various EU institutions involved in that field. Currently, I am working in the private sector, for a global company with offices all over the world as a Management Trainee in the Finance Department. My head office is in Athens but I get to travel to various locations of our business, mainly in Cyprus and Switzerland. I am happy to tell you that my education played a vital role in selecting me for that position, so I would like to extend my gratitude to all the great people involved in the MA programme.



Alexandra NIKOLAKOPOULOU (academic year 2007-2008): I am working at ELIAMEP (Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy). I started in Administration but last October moved to the Development Department, where I am now working on developing new project ideas and offering administrative support to ongoing research programmes. This photo is from a recent visit to Kyparissia!



Kristian NORHEIM (academic year 2000-2001): After graduating from the SEE programme, I returned home to Oslo and completed a 2-year Master's programme in Political Science. Since 2004 I've been working in the Storting (the Norwegian Parliament) for the Progress Party, currently the leading opposition party. Since 2006 I have been International Secretary, leading the party's work in the field of international relations and networking. In 2007 I was also elected to the City Council of Oslo, and to the Standing Committee on Finance in Oslo. I'm still very much interested in the SEE region and I try to keep updated in the field. In 2008 I attended the Balkan Seminar – visiting Serbia and Montenegro - jointly organized by NUPI (Norwegian Institute of International Affairs) and the Norwegian telecom provider Telenor, featuring young leaders from Norway. I'll also attend the Balkan Seminar 2010, visiting Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The SEE Programme was truly a great experience, and Athens a great place. As we say in Norwegian, *Med vennlig hilsen / Best regards*

Ilias PAPADIMAS (academic year 2008-2009): I am still working in the Army General Staff as an analyst for the SEE region.

Ralitza YOTOVA (academic year 2002 – 2003): After graduating from the Postgraduate Programme in Southeast European Studies, I studied for an MA in European Politics and Policy at the University of Manchester, UK (with an Open Society Institute scholarship). In 2005 I joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Sofia. I was part of the team engaged with the preparations for Bulgaria's accession during the ratification stage of our country's Accession Treaty. Since July 2008, I have been working in the Permanent Representation of Bulgaria to the EU in Brussels, where I deal with EU Enlargement policy, and more specifically with the countries negotiating for accession (currently Croatia and Turkey).



Milan Djokic with Apostolos Karabairis (Alumni 2007-2008) from K. Mitrovica (May 2010).

Programme Administration

Coordinating Committee 2009-10:

Professor Christos Lyrintzis, Chairman of the Faculty of Political Science and Public Administration (Programme Director)

Assistant Professor Susannah Verney (Programme Coordinator)

Associate Professor Pantelis Lekkas

At the end of 2009-10, after running the Postgraduate Programme in Southeast European Studies for the past four years, Programme Director Christos Lyrintzis and Programme Coordinator Susannah Verney, will both be going on academic leave. We wish them a happy and productive year and look forward to welcoming them back to teach on the Programme in September 2011.

The **new Coordinating Committee, 2010-11** takes office on 1 September 2010:

Associate Professor Dimitris Sotiropoulos (Programme Director)

Associate Professor Pantelis Lekkas

Assistant Professor Emmanuella Doussis

CONTACT

Who to contact : Dr. Anna Vallianatou, the **SEE Programme Administrator** who will be happy to help you.

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Telephone: +30 210 3688965-6, *Fax:* +30 210 3688966
E-mail: postgrad_SEE@pspa.uoa.gr
Website: www.see.pspa.uoa.gr.

When to find us: 10.00 a.m.-2.00 p.m. Monday to Friday