



## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Co-presidents of the Igman Initiative lobbied the governments of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Montenegro
- Delegation of the Igman Initiative convened meeting with the EU officials
- Igman Initiative produced 4 TV Debates on Citizens' Status and Property Issues
- Traditional School of Democracy on the Island of Brac
- Up and coming Igman Initiative Session

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# Igman Initiative newsletter

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## LOBBYING CAMPAIGN

### Status and Property Issues

#### IGMAN INITIATIVE CO-PRESIDENTS MET WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND EU OFFICIALS FROM THE SIGNATORY COUNTRIES OF THE DAYTON AGREEMENT.

In the second half of the month June, the Co-presidents of the Igman Initiative and the coordinators of the project: "Experts' Elaboration on Unresolved Issues Between the States Signatories to the Dayton Agreement - Citizens' Status and Property Issues" convened meetings with the highest ranking government as well as European Union officials in the countries signatories of

the Dayton Agreement.

The lobbying campaign was an opportunity for the Igman Initiative delegation to introduce the expert team recom-



mendations from the "White Paper" and lobby for their adoption and implementation. Namely, this expert study contains the analysis of the citizens' status and property issues as a result of the disin-

tegration of the former Yugoslavia, as well as concrete and feasible recommendations aimed at relevant ministries and parliamentary bodies in the four countries. On the occasion of the "White Paper" presentation in Sarajevo, Mr. Renzo Davidi, Head of EU Delegation to B&H stated that this was the first time that the EU Commission was introduced to such precise and practical recommendations on how to permanently resolve these particular issues.

### Bosnia and Herzegovina

#### Meetings with Bosnia and Herzegovina officials held on 13 June in Sarajevo.

Aleksandar Popov, co-president of the Igman Initiative for Serbia, Vehid Šehić co-president for BiH and Zoran Pusić, co-president for Croatia met with Zeljko Kuzmanović, Chief of Staff of Milorad Živković, President of the Lower House of the Parliament of B&H, and acquainted him with the

recommendations from the "White Paper". Mr. Kuzmanović said that the contents of the "White Paper" is very useful and constructive when it comes to solving the status and property issues of citizens and refugees. He also pointed out that the recommendations will soon be presented to the Parliamentary Assembly Deputies, given that the atmosphere within the high-

est representative body of Bosnia and Herzegovina to address them is rather favorable. Radmila Mitrović, Deputy Minister for Human Rights and Refugees, along with her colleagues, agreed with the high estimation of the views and recommendations in the White Paper, and promised that they would be incorporated into the strategy of the Ministry and the Government.



In view of the high quality of the expert work, Renzo Davidi, Deputy Head of the EU Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina, suggested that the EU Delegation organize a round table in Sarajevo which will be attended by Bosnia and Herzegovina's government officials, diplomatic representatives of other three countries of the Dayton Agreement as well as media. This event shall be an opportunity to additionally induce positive pressure

on the state officials to solve the issues addressed in the White Paper, as well as to promote the results of the project among the wider auditorium. Mr. Davidi suggested that similar round tables be organized in the other three signatory countries of the Dayton Agreement.



## Croatia

On 21 June 2012, Zoran Pusić, Vehid Šehić and Aleksandar Popov, co-presidents of the Igman Initiative, visited the representatives of the relevant ministries and the Parliament in order to lobby for the implementation of recommendations in the White Paper. Stanko Janjić, Assistant Minister for Regional Development and EU Funds, pointed out that "the new government shall pass a law by which property and the statutory rights of the citizens do not become obsolete as it was controversial in previous cases." Mr. Janjić also stated that the new government intends to make amendments to all the subsequent laws relating to tenancy rights and will do everything

it can to write off the debt in cases when a citizen loses dispute due to the obsolescence, generating high litigation costs. Furijo Radin, the President of the Committee for Human Rights and Minority Rights of the Croatian Parliament, in an interview with the co-presidents said he was familiar with the recommendations and that they had hit the target. He believes that in the Parliament there was a positive atmosphere to solve those issues. He pointed out that all the bills of law that originate from the Government, which are linked to the solution of these problems, would definitely get full support in the

Parliament.

Paul Vandoren, Head of the EU Delegation to the Republic of Croatia, said that the recommendations from the "White Paper" were very important and that in the process of lobbying the EU Delegation shall provide full support to the Igman Initiative for the implementation of these recommendations. He too agreed to organize a roundtable at the Delegation of the EU in September, to which the representatives of the Parliament, ministries and media will be invited, in order to influence the decision-makers more effectively.



## Montenegro

On June 27th 2012, Branko Lukovac, Vehid Šehić and Aleksandar Popov, co-presidents of the Igman Initiative and Branko Radulović, a member of a team of experts in Podgorica were received by all the highest state officials of Montenegro.

At the meeting with Igor Lukšić, Prime Minister of Montenegro, Branko Lukovac suggested that the government should form a team that will be responsible for monitoring the extent to which the recommendations would have been implemented. Mr. Lukšić praised the work of the Igman Initiative, particularly the collaborative attitude it shows

towards the relevant institutions because it appears as a successful integrating mechanism for both government and civil society, which will be moving towards the solution to the problem. He suggested that the views and recommendations from the "White Paper" were to be discussed at the next Government session, and that the relevant ministries



should consider which of these recommendations can be enforced and in what timeframe, about which co-presidents of the Igman Initiative are to be informed. Representatives of the Igman Initiative also met with the Minister of Internal Affairs of Montenegro, Ivan Brajević, who said that the "White Paper" tackles the issues that his Ministry encounters and that he would provide his assistance in their solving.

Ranko Krivokapić, the President of the Montenegro Assembly praised the Igman Initiative engagement that works to renew cooperation between the countries of the former Yugoslavia, and appealed for them

to persevere in their political continuity. He promised that the Montenegrin Parliament will do everything within its authority to implement the recommendations of the Igman Initiative experts. The representatives of the Igman Initiative had a meeting at the EU Delegation in Podgorica with the Deputy Head of the Delegation Alberto Cammarata, who expressed his satisfaction that the recommendations were well accepted by the Government of Montenegro. According to Cammarata, it is important for the recommendations to be adopted and implemented, and it is upon the Igman Initiative to monitor their enforcement and put positive pressure on decision makers. He point-

ed out that in evaluating the progress of Montenegro on its path towards the EU, which will be made in October, one part will surely regard the implementation of the recommendations of the Igman Initiative expert team. It was also agreed that the EU delegation in Montenegro is to host the round table in early autumn whereupon the implementation of the recommendations of the expert team will be discussed.



## TV DEBATES - Status and Property Issues

**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA** - TV debate in which the results and recommendations of the "Experts' Elaboration of Unresolved Issues Between the Signatory Countries of the Dayton Agreement – Citizens' Property and Status Issues" were presented to the wider auditorium in Bosnia and Herzegovina via BN TV Bijeljina. The results and recommendations of the project were presented by Vehid Šehić, Project Coordinator as well as Ratko Bubalo, the Expert Team Leader. After the presentation of the project and its results, many viewers were directly involved in the program, asking vari-

**SERBIA** - Recommendations from the White paper, regarding refugees and displaced persons in Serbia, were presented in a TV Debate aired on TV B92. Ratko Bubalo, head of the team of Igman Initiative experts, pointed out that the issues addressed within the project did not affect only the refugees, but also other citizens who had acquired their rights in the other states of the former Yugoslavia, and now, due to various obstacles, cannot fulfill them. Danijela Popović Roko, Assistant Commissioner for Refugees, said that it was good that the project had been implemented at regional level as the issues in question can be solved only through a re-

gional approach and regional cooperation. Radomir Kukobat, Director of the Provincial Fund for Support to Refugees and Displaced Persons stated that, unfortunately, the states had largely ignored the entire body of civil and human rights and that is why, after more than two decades since the breakup of the former Yugoslavia, a large number of status and property issues of citizens remained unresolved.

**CROATIA** - The White Paper was presented to the Croatian public via Capital Network TV by Zoran Pusić, the co-president of the Igman initiative and Boris Knežević, an expert team member from Croatia. Pusić stressed that the things with regards to creating political will to compensate people who had suffered damage during the war on various grounds things, unfortunately, went on for far too long. Boris Knežević briefly introduced the expert team recommen-

ous questions from the areas in which they were particularly interested.

**MONTENEGRO** - On May 30 2012, TV "Vijesti" aired a TV Debate covering the project implemented by the Igman Initiative as well as findings from the White Paper. The guests were, Mr. Branislav

dations that are primarily related to the recovery or returning of property, restitution of tenancy rights, as well as to the right to a pension. Branko Đukić, the chairman of the Association of the Affected Pensioners 91 - 98 and Jovica Brkić, from the Association of Persons Affected by Terrorist Activities, "Pravda" from Bjelovar also participated in this show, and they spoke about the real problems of members of their associations whereupon the experts study can be of much help in the resolving with its recommendations.

Radulović, an expert team member, Tanja Bakalbašić, Project Coordinator for Montenegro, Zeljko Šofranac, Director of the Institute for Care of Refugees and Asylum Seekers and Vesna Simović, Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Welfare. The focus was on the recommendations regarding resolving status issues of people in Montenegro generally unable to obtain citizenship of the Republic of Montenegro and thus actualize other rights in the country of their residence. The participants have expressed satisfaction with the successful cooperation they had in the course of the expert team research, serving as a model for successful cooperation between the government and civic sector.



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The Igman Initiative is an umbrella association whose projects are implemented at both micro- and macro-levels. It comprises NGO representatives, political and economic analysts, media, and local government representatives, who present, assess and design projects at joint sessions. To ensure quality analysis and impact on the ground, multi-sector expert groups are occasionally established to deal with specific topics. The Igman Initiative efforts are aimed at establishing good neighbourly relations, building mutual trust and tolerance and overcoming all types of discrimination in the countries of the region.

Through its numerous activities aimed at establishing stable democratic institutions, the rule of law, advocating for the full respect for human and minority rights, and restoring regional cooperation, the Igman Initiative directly contributes to the advancement of the process of European and Euro-Atlantic integration of the entire region.

# Up and Coming Events

## **TRADITIONAL SCHOOL OF DEMOCRACY ON THE ISLAND OF BRAC**

As part of the yearly tradition the Igman Initiative is in the midst of preparations for the up-and-coming School of Democracy on the island Brac. Summer school of democracy is a traditional 3-day event that every year takes place in Supetar on the island Brac, at the end of September. It is an opportunity for participants (students, journalists, lawyers, teachers from B&H, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia) to hear and discuss theoretical background and practical aspects of very actual present problems and obstacles to the development of democracy in the states of the region and to the cooperation in the region as a whole. The only way to make the achieved reaches of democracy more resistant and robust and to aim society towards higher standards is to increase the number of people who understand the problem and who recognize and

appreciate moral principles which make core of an open democratic society. Lecturers are mostly renowned individuals from various areas of the society: media, politics, culture, civic sector, etc. Every year the school gathers over 60 people, mostly youth, from Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia. Stay tuned for this year's lecturers and participants!!

## **IGMAN INITIATIVE ANNUAL SESSION**

Igman Initiative traditionally organizes annual sessions that occasionally gathers Presidents of the four States – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia. This has been the practice for the past six years, which generally concludes with the signing of a Joint Presidential Statement. The sessions contribute to the increase of Igman Initiative's visibility in the public as well as its greater impact on stakeholders, i.e. the four countries' Governments, interna-

tional community, civic sector, media, etc. On the occasion of the lobbying campaign conducted in Montenegro the delegation of the Igman Initiative was received by Filip Vujanovic, President of Montenegro. In the course of the meeting they talked about the organization of the 23rd Session of the Igman Initiative, which is to be held in Montenegro in the presence of the four Presidents and the



EU Enlargement Commissioner Stefan Füle, at the end of the year. On that occasion, President Vujanović proposed that this session be also used for launching the White Paper recommendations and agreement on their implementation.



The project "Expert Elaboration on Unresolved Issues between the Countries Signatories of the Dayton Agreement – Citizens' Status and Property Issues" is being realized with the support of the European Union.