

## European Workshop “Challenges and Perspectives of Citizenship Education in Central and South Eastern Europe”

Zagreb, Croatia, 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> September 2009

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### Biographies



**Anita Baschant**, project consultant at the agency lab concepts in Bonn, studied pedagogics and cultural studies at the University of Karlsruhe. During her studies she worked as a graduate assistant at the Institute of Pedagogics, was a trainee at the “Filmfestival Mannheim-Heidelberg” and initiated and organised several projects for students of pedagogics and cultural studies. As project consultant Anita Baschant supports lab concepts in the areas of public relations and cultural management and is, amongst other things, responsible for the editorial work on the Networking European Citizenship Education (NECE) newsletter and for the conception of lab concepts’ reading series “Reading Europe”.



**Franziska Blomberg** has been working in the field of international cooperation since 1999. She has given seminars and workshops on civic education, diversity, communication, and project management. She holds an M.A. degree in cultural studies from the European University Viadrina, Frankfurt (Oder), as well as a degree in intercultural communication from the University of Tampere in Finland. Franziska Blomberg is currently writing her doctoral thesis on “External Democracy Promotion in Ethnically Fragmented States” in the Heinrich-Böll-Foundation’s PhD programme “Civil Society and External Democratisation”. The PhD programme is a co-operation between the European-University Viadrina, Frankfurt (Oder) and the ETH Zürich. The main focus of the programme lies in the analysis of phenomena related to the existence and activities of civil society. The PhD-dissertations examine questions related to the impact of civil society’s actions and the interactions between these and the efforts of external democracy promotion, especially by regional organizations such as the European Council, the European Union, NGOs and transnational Networks.



**Emina Bužinkić** is president of the Croatian Youth Network as well as an Executive Board member of the Center for Peace Studies in Zagreb. Her field of responsibility for the Croatian Youth Network encompasses programme coordination, project management, consultation and training for youth organisations, youth policy monitoring and non-formal education. At the Center for Peace Studies, Emina Bužinkić coordinates several projects and is a member of the Center’s Education Team on Civic and Peace-building Education for Youth. In addition to her work for these organisations, Emina Bužinkić is a student of political science.

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**Ivana Ćosić** is the founder of the NGO Pushlab. She studied anthropology at Zagreb University and holds an MPhil degree in leadership and education from Cambridge University, where she is currently a PhD in education and pursuing her field of interests comprising issues that arise from ethnic education and the creation of truth. In 2004, Ivana Ćosić initiated a training programme for American and Croatian students in Zagreb that is designed to empower students to become active in their communities and to enable them to learn about communication and cooperation on a cross-cultural level. Pushlab is based and active in the Croatian town of Vukovar, where it addresses inter-ethnic issues among the youth and seeks to empower young people to become more active in their community.

Pushlab's initiatives are supported by the mayor of Vukovar as well as the leading NGOs of the town.

**Sandra Cvikić** has been professional assistant in Science and Research Development at the Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar since November 2008. From 2008 to 2009 she also was professional trainer in the Project Cycle Management Education and Training at the Croatian Chamber of Forestry Engineers and Wood Technology. At the moment Sandra Cvikić is a PhD student in sociology at the University of Zagreb, Croatian Studies, Zagreb. She holds an M.A. in contemporary European studies from the University of Sussex, Brighton, UK, as well as a B.A., double major, in English literature and sociology from the University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada. She is an expert member of the National Sub-group for EU Negotiations – Rural Development Sector, an active member in the Regional NGO Forum of Slavonia (member of the managing board) as well as an independent expert for National Qualification Framework Development in Croatia. Sandra Cvikić is president of the NGO European House Vukovar; she was involved in the organisation and implementation of several projects in the Vukovar-Srijem County, Croatia – amongst others “Civil Society Building in VSC” (2003).



**Miljenko Dereta** is co-founder of the Belgrade-based civil society organisation Civic Initiatives. In the nineties he was active in the Centre for Antiwar Action and the Belgrade Circle. In 2000, Miljenko Dereta was appointed a member of the Serbian National Council for Education and is now actively involved in the introduction of civic education as a subject at public schools. He holds a degree from the Academy for Film, Theatre, Radio and Television and has produced numerous television programmes and films as a freelancer. He assists the Council of Europe as an expert for citizen participation and relations between civil society and governments. The Serbian President has appointed him as one of eight members of the Council for Relations with Civil Society and he is also a

member of the National Council for EU Integration and the Council of Ministers for Youth and Sports. The work of Civic Initiatives primarily focuses on local communities outside of the capital, where the organisation seeks to motivate people to take an active part in processes of change.

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**Srđan Dvornik** works as a freelance researcher, consultant and translator in Zagreb. Additionally, he has served as the chairman of the Council of the Green List party since 2006 (the party has the observer's status at the European Green Party). He holds an M.A. degree in political science and has taken active part in various civic organisations, including the Association for Yugoslav Democratic Initiative (UJDI), the Anti-War Campaign, the Civic Initiative for Freedom of Speech, ZaMir network, Transition to Democracy (ToD), and the Civic Committee for Human Rights. He has taught at high schools and at Zagreb University, worked as an editor for social sciences and humanities in the “Naprijed” publishing house, and has been a programme coordinator and managing director

in the Croatian branches of international foundations such as the Open Society Institute and the foundation Heinrich Böll Stiftung. His most recent position was executive director of the Croatian Helsinki Committee. He co-edited the book “Next Steps in Croatia’s Transition Process” (with Christophe Solioz) and has published numerous articles about social and political theory as well as political commentaries and analyses. At the moment, he is finishing his current book on civil actors as ‘agents of change’ in the post-communist transformation.



**Joerg Forbrig** is senior programme officer for Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) for the German Marshall Fund (GMF) in Berlin. In this capacity, he is engaged in analytical and policy work concerning the new EU Member States as well as the European Union’s eastern neighbourhood. He also contributes to the GMF’s support for civil society, elections, and political processes in transitioning democracies. Joerg Forbrig studied political science, sociology, and Eastern European affairs at universities in Germany, Poland, and Hungary. He holds an M.A. degree in political science from the Central European University in Budapest and completed his PhD in social and political sciences at the European University Institute in Florence. Prior to joining the GMF in 2002, Joerg Forbrig worked as a

Robert Bosch Foundation Fellow at the Center for International Relations in Warsaw, Poland. He has published widely on democracy, civil society, and CEE affairs; most recently the books *Reclaiming Democracy* (2007), *Prospects for Democracy in Belarus* (2006), and *Revisiting Youth Political Participation* (2005).



**Caroline Hornstein-Tomić** is currently a researcher at the Ivo Pilar Institute of Social Sciences in Zagreb, focussing on transformation societies, nation building processes and democratization, European integration, sociological and anthropological study of power, social stratification, elites, migration, ethnicity, and gender. She studied cultural anthropology, sociology and film studies at the Goethe University in Frankfurt (Main). In 1994 she received an M.A. degree with a thesis on migration and citizenship in Germany. Between 1995 and 2000, she was involved in academic research, teaching and publishing, as well as in the NGO sector and in cultural politics. After a research year at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge/MA, she gained her doctoral degree in

sociology with a theoretical work on anthropological discourses and actors in 2001. She joined the foreign service of the German Konrad Adenauer Foundation in 2000 and headed the foundation’s country office in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 2001 until 2005. After years of applied work in the policy field, she resumed her academic as well as consultancy work in 2006 in Zagreb, Croatia.

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**Maja Ignjačević** is a freelance youth trainer and member of Civic Initiatives Youth Programme Team of Trainers. She is a PhD student at the Faculty of Music Art in Belgrade, Serbia. Maja Ignjačević has previously worked in the fields of capacity building of youth offices and empowering youth groups in Serbia, support and networking of youth organisations and non-formal groups in Serbia, as well as youth mobility programmes. As a trainer, Maja Ignjačević has designed and delivered trainings related to youth participation and citizenship, youth mobility, intercultural dialogue, volunteering, and action planning.

**Evelina Kelbecheva** is associate professor of history at the American University in Bulgaria (AUBG) in Blagoevgrad. She holds a bachelor's degree in archaeology and an M.A. degree in history and French literature from Sofia University, as well as a PhD degree in history and the history of culture from the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. She has published in her fields of research interests, including myth-making and falsifications in history, the politics of cultural memory, as well as intelligentsia's activities and civil responsibilities. Evelina Kelbecheva served as chairwoman of the South East European Academic League from 2000 to 2002 and was the Jean Monnet Title Holder from 2002 to 2005. She is currently engaged in developing oral history projects with her students that focus on civil responsibility, such as an investigation of the impact of communist and post-communist narratives and memorials and monuments on young generations and their concepts of the past. The projects are directly involved in conveying the values of democracy and tolerance.



**Hrvoje Klasić** is an assistant lecturer at the Department of History of the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb, where he is currently earning his doctorate with a dissertation on “The year 1968 in Yugoslavia”. He is also a lecturer at Visoka Novinarska Škola (College of Journalism) in Zagreb, where his main teaching interest lies in the mass cultures of the 20th century. From 1995 to 2001, Hrvoje Klasić worked as a high school teacher of history, politics, economy and ethics. Following this, he served as a museum educator at the City Museum of Sisak and worked for the public relations agency “PREmisa” in Zagreb. He contributes to the project “History in Action. Planning for the Future”. Its aim is to enhance historical knowledge and citizenship education in Croatia, Serbia and

Montenegro by promoting collaborative values, critical awareness and mutual respect to guarantee peace, stability and democracy in the region.

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**Aleksandra Letić** has been head of the education department of the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Republika Srpska (RS), Bosnia and Herzegovina, since 2007. Since 2000 she was working as a freelancer on different activities for this NGO. In the beginning of 2009, Aleksandra Letic has taken over the coordination of the Regional Human Rights education programme in the Western Balkans, which gets realised in cooperation with the Norwegian Helsinki Committee and local partners in Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. These programmes include different but inter-linked human rights education activities, such as human rights schools, advanced schools for future decision makers, cooperation with universities, publications on civic education, etc. The Helsinki Committee is a non-governmental, non-partisan and non-profit association of citizens, primarily dedicated to promoting, monitoring and protecting human rights in RS, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in the region of Western Balkans. Within the education department, Aleksandra Letic works on different issues related to citizens' education on human rights, democracy, intercultural understanding, Transitional Justice, civil activism, etc. The institution also is involved in human rights education of professional groups such as media, judicial staff, and young politicians. Since many years, the NGO offers educational activities such as human rights schools for youth, trainings in intercultural understanding for young religious leaders, trainings on Transitional Justice for students of Law, journalism, and social science.



**Ondrej Matejka** is in charge of the formation of the Centre for Citizen Education by order of the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. Its aim is to enhance political education in the Czech Republic. Ondrej Matejka studied history and political science at Charles University in Prague, where he also commenced a PhD programme in 2005. Since 2006, he has been a lecturer at the Department for Civil Society Studies of the university's Faculty of Humanitarian Studies. In 1998 he joined “Antikomplex”, a civil society group that seeks to increase awareness of the Sudeten region. He became the organisation's executive director in 2000 and has since then been involved in the development, fundraising and realisation of all its projects. One of his current projects is called "Tragic memory-places", where students of secondary schools in Northern Bohemia are discovering the tragic stories of their towns between 1938 and 1947, which means a period from Nazi-occupation to brutal expulsion of Germans after the war. In the region involved in the project, e.g. mass murdering of German civilian inhabitants took place, which is until now a difficult issue for the local community.

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**Lisa McLean** has worked for the National Democratic Institute (NDI) in Washington, D.C., Bulgaria, Slovakia and Montenegro since 1990. She holds a B.A. in economics from Boston College and an M.A. in international affairs from the Johns Hopkins University. Lisa McLean has served as director of public affairs for the Council of the Americas and as executive director of the Mexico-US Business Committee (MEXUS). She has previously served as NDI's senior advisor for political and civic organising. Her most recent field work has focused on establishing programmes that assist the parliament to become more transparent, accountable, and effective in its legislative and representative functions. NDI is focused on educating adult citizens who seek or hold political power with the goal of strengthening democratic institutions worldwide through citizen participation, openness, and accountability in government. Working with political players inside and outside of governing institutions and using a wide network of experts from around the world, the Institute organises seminars, consultations, and written materials to share ideas, knowledge, experiences and expertise that can be adapted to the needs of individual countries.



**Vesna Mihoković-Puhovski** is executive director of the Forum for Freedom in Education in Zagreb as well as a member of the governing board of the European Forum for Freedom in Education. She is also a member of the Council for Civil Society of the Governmental Office for NGOs and holds a B.A. degree in history and philosophy from the University of Zagreb. From 1976 to 1992, she worked as an elementary and secondary school teacher and was appointed as a mentor for university students and future philosophy teachers and as a pioneering teacher in introducing new programmes and teaching methods by the Ministry of Education. During this time, she also co-authored a number of textbooks and published various articles. From 1992 to 1994, Vesna Mihoković Puhovski was a volunteer for Oxfam and War Child in the United Kingdom. Upon her return from there, she became first a co-ordinator and later the director of the educational programmes of the Open Society Institute (OSI). The Forum for Freedom in education conducts a training project for teachers which realises the organisation's concept of a so-called "Integral Civic Education". The project started as „Street Law“ inc. – sponsored by Open Society Foundation – but during the time two new segments, „The Rule of Law“ and „How to teach about Anticorruption in the schools“ were added.



**Christoph Müller-Hofstede** is a consultant at the German Federal Agency for Civic Education (FACE). He studied sinology and political science in Berlin, Shanghai, Beijing and Hong Kong, and has worked for the Berliner Festspiele cultural umbrella organisation as academic head of the exhibit "Europe and the Emperor of China". He has been a consultant at the German Federal Agency for Civic Education since 1988 in working groups focussing on the national and European aspects of migration, integration, and Islam. As head of the working group "Migration" at FACE from 2001 to 2005, Christoph Müller-Hofstede (M.A.) organised a number of conferences and expert discussion panels, including "Progressive Thinking in Contemporary Islam" (Berlin 2005). He has published numerous articles about development in China and the topic of migration, most recently one entitled "The Mega-topic Migration and the Work of the Federal Agency for Civic Education" (2006).

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**Corinna Noack-Aetopulos** is director of programmes at the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe (CDRSEE). She studied European business administration in Berlin and Cambridge and subsequently worked as a project manager and controller for an international retailer for six years. At CDRSEE, Corinna Noack-Aetopulos supervises all of the Center’s project work, but in addition to her managerial role, she also develops and directly coordinates several of the projects herself. Her current interests include employment and social inclusion policies, rural development and active citizenship. CDRSEE is an NGO that seeks to foster democratic, pluralist and peaceful societies in Southeast Europe by advocating principles of social responsibility, sustainable development and reconciliation among the peoples in the region. Its activities cover fields like the modernisation and democratisation of educational systems, sustaining peace by bridging the gap between the past and the future, and creating the conditions for tolerant and integrated societies to come to life.



**Anja Ostermann** is managing director and project manager at the agency lab concepts in Bonn-Berlin, Germany. After finishing her secondary school exams, she went on to pursue university studies in comparative literature, history, German language and literature, business administration and Italian at the University of Bonn and St. Andrew’s University in Scotland. After being awarded her Master of Arts, she worked as a freelance editor for the German Federal Agency for Civic Education. She was responsible amongst other things for the publication of the “Länderbericht USA” (Country Report USA, 1992, 1994, 1998, 2004, 2007). Since 1995 Anja Ostermann is actively involved in the design and the implementation of various education and cultural formats, especially for public sector clients. She has provided process guidance/academic support in the Europeanisation of citizenship education and the formation of political and cultural education networks.



**Martina Petrović** is vice president of the Club YTA (Youth Takes Action), an organisation that conducts projects to stimulate youth activism in local environments. The Club YTA is one of the first NGOs in Serbia to establish permanent cooperation with youth offices in developing their programmes. She is a student at the department of journalism at the faculty of political science at the University of Belgrade and has been engaged in non-governmental youth organisations since 2002, starting as a member of the Child Right Centre in Belgrade. She also works as a freelance trainer and has been engaged by Civic Initiatives to assist in the formation of youth offices in Southern Serbia, where she coordinated surveys about the state and requirements of the youth.

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**Radmila Radić Dudić** has been a member of the Belgrade-based civil society organisation Civic Initiatives, where she is engaged in different aspects of civic education. After coordinating Civic Initiatives' democracy development programme until 2007, she is now responsible for the organisation's civic education programme. She has qualified as a certified trainer with distinction with the Team TRI (Training, Development and Information) of the Charity Evaluation Service in the United Kingdom. In this capacity, she has planned and realised more than 500 training days to date, as well as numerous evaluations, consultations and supervisions for international and local organisations and Serbian ministries. Radmila Radić Dudić is an advisor to the Ecumenical

Women's Solidarity Fund (EWSF) in Croatia, and serves as an evaluator for the assessment of the impact of eight years of civic education as a school subject in Serbia. Specific projects of Civic Initiatives include the School of Democracy, which is a training component of the Serbian Ministry of Education's project of Decentralisation and Democratisation of the Educational System and has been implemented in over 30 Serbian cities, Uniting Citizens for a United Europe, and Unemployed Youth Capacity Building through Development of Skills and Motivation for Job Seeking.



**Filip Radunović** is currently working as a project manager for the Europe programme at ERSTE Foundation in Vienna, where he oversees initiatives focussing on gender issues, architecture and community affairs of the foundation. He studied political science and communication studies at the University of Vienna. His master's and doctoral theses concentrated on semiotics and media psychology. Filip Radunović worked as a researcher at the Institute for Communication and Media Science in Vienna, where he contributed to projects on journalism in crises and conflict situations and surveyed the effects of print and television advertisements. Beside his academic interests, Filip Radunović has also investigated the reform of the Montenegrin vocational education system

for KulturKontakt Austria in Podgorica. He continues to pursue his research interests as a lecturer of media theories and psychology at the University of Montenegro in Podgorica.



**Ivana Randjelović** works as a trainer for youth projects in Serbia, primarily ones that are organised by the Belgrade-based organisation Civic Initiatives. She holds a B.A. degree in political science and has designed and conducted trainings on various subjects, such as youth activism and youth mobility, youth projects and initiatives (formal and informal), advocacy, and strategic planning. Ivana Randjelović has also coordinated activities of the Serbian Youth Leadership Programme, a high school students exchange programme between Serbia and the USA. She currently works as a programme coordinator at the Training Centre of the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities in Belgrade, Serbia.

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**Thomas Strobel** is a research fellow at the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research. He studied history and political science at the universities of Heidelberg, Cracow and Leipzig and holds a master's degree in these subjects. After his graduation, Thomas Strobel gained practical school experience in Germany and Georgia during his teacher training years. He has worked with different institutions committed to civic education activities in Eastern and East Central Europe; among other things, he has held several conferences at the German Federal Agency for Civic Education. He is currently working on his PhD dissertation, which deals with the history of the German-Polish Textbook Commission. At the Georg Eckert Institute, Thomas Strobel conducts the project “German-Polish Textbook”, the objective of which is to develop a common history textbook for German and Polish students. This way, the multiperspectivity of history is accentuated and becomes tangible. Common history books provide stimulations for national as well as cross-border public discourses and constitute a valuable instrument for European citizenship education.



**Vessela Tcherneva** is head of the Sofia office and Senior Policy Fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations ([www.ecfr.eu](http://www.ecfr.eu)), which is hosted by the Centre for Liberal Strategies (CLS). She has been programme director for Foreign Policy Studies at the Centre for Liberal Strategies since 2003. Between 2004 and 2006, she has been coordinating the activities of the International Commission on the Balkans chaired by Mr. Giuliano Amato ([www.balkan-commission.org](http://www.balkan-commission.org)). Vessela Tcherneva is Supervising Editor of the Foreign Policy-Bulgaria magazine since its establishment in April 2005. Her previous career includes service as Political Officer at the Bulgarian Embassy in Washington, D.C. (2000 - 2003) and Desk Officer for Germany at the Bulgarian MFA. She holds a Master's degree in political sciences from the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität in Bonn.



**Karolina Ujaković** has been working as a high school teacher in Zagreb since 1991. She is a founding member of the Croatian History Teachers' Association, the presidency of which she held twice until 2007. The association conducted a four-year project in collaboration with the European Association of History Educators (EUROCLIO), as a result of which a book entitled “Ordinary People in an Extraordinary Country. Every Day Life in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia between East and West 1945-1990” was published. In the course of this project, Karolina Ujaković participated in numerous training seminars for teachers in various European countries and also organised ten seminars for history teachers in Croatia herself. Furthermore, she has co-authored a number of history textbooks for elementary as well as secondary school teachers.

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**Daliborka Ujarević** is executive director of the Centre for Civic Education (CCE, [www.cgo-cce.org](http://www.cgo-cce.org)) in Podgorica. She has studied political science, European and East European studies and is currently pursuing a master of law. She was from 2001 until 2005 political and media adviser within the Council of Europe Office in Montenegro, and has extensive experience working previously for international organisations and media such as OSCE Mission in Montenegro, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), BBC World. Her civil society engagement in Montenegro manifests itself, among other things, in her memberships of the executive board of the Association of Political Scientists in Montenegro, the Centre for Development of NGOs, the Young European Federalists (JEF) Montenegro, the Institute Alternative as well as the NGO coalition “Through Cooperation to the Aim”. She has co-authored and edited several publications in the fields of democracy, civic activism, human rights and European integration. CCE’s work focuses on education for democracy, human rights and European integration, aiming to strengthen civil society based on multiethnic and multicultural values, with a high level of participation of citizens in decision-making processes. The Centre has conducted comprehensive trainings for civic education teachers and contributes to drafting the Strategy for Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in Montenegro (2007-2010).



**Maja Uzelac** has been director of the non-profit organisation Centre for Culture of Peace and Nonviolence “Mali Korak” since 1994, which is a member of the Hague Appeal for Peace Global Campaign for Peace Education (GCPE) network and DARE (Democracy and Human Rights Education in Europe) network. She holds a degree in philosophy from the University of Zagreb and currently working on her doctoral thesis at the Faculty for Political Sciences (Zagreb University). Upon her graduation, she worked as a high school teacher for nine years, after which she commenced to work for the Croatian Ministry of Education on curricula development and teacher training in philosophy and sociology. She has lectured at the Department of Educational Sciences of the University of Zagreb and has edited, authored and co-authored numerous social science textbooks as well as other publications in the field of education. She co-founded the Center for Women’s Studies in Zagreb, where she has been teaching courses on “Gender Perspectives in Theories of Moral Development” since 1995. With Mali Korak, Maja Uzelac has developed a Peace Education Teaching Programme for primary school teachers and conducted a series of seminars and interactive learning workshops directed mostly at teachers and students in war-affected zones; this project was supported by UNICEF. She has organised hundreds of workshops for teachers and NGO members (peace-building activists and women groups) in Croatia, Macedonia and Bosnia, as well as some international workshops for trainers on conflict-resolving skills (Budapest, Antwerpen, Utrecht, Vienna, New York, Dubrovnik). In the last three years (2006-2009) she has been project leader of “Peer Mediation Programme in School”.

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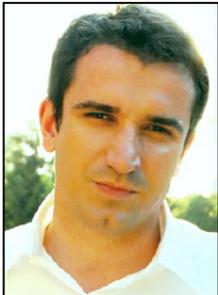
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**Aida Vehabović** is the manager of the Bosnia and Herzegovina office of the NGO and foundation “Schüler Helfen Leben” (SHL) in Sarajevo. She is responsible for the strategic planning and monitoring as well as the administrative and financial management of SHL activities and projects. She holds a B.A. degree in comparative literature and librarianship from the University of Sarajevo. From 1999 to 2003, she served as director of the youth centre “Stella”, where she organised international youth camps in cooperation with partners from Germany, the Netherlands, as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina. Following this, she worked as a library assistant at the Human Rights Centre of the University of Sarajevo for one year. From 2004 until 2009 she has been a project coordinator for school student councils for BiH. Since 2009 she has been project manager of SHL in Sarajevo. “Schüler Helfen Leben” (“Students Helping to Live”) is a youth organisation that was founded by German students in 1993 in order to help their peers in the at that time war-shaken countries of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. SHL is currently conducting projects in the three core fields of youth media, student councils and the Fund for Youth Projects (FOP), where individuals, informal youth groups as well as youth NGOs can apply for financial support in order to implement projects through which they can actively shape their environments.



**Erion Veliaj** is the head of G99, an organisation that seeks to “democratise democracy” by bringing citizens closer to governance in every aspect. He graduated from Grand Valley State University, USA, received his M.A. degree in European politics from the University of Sussex, UK, and has worked in the Balkans, Caucasus, Central and South America and East Africa. From 2003 to 2007, Erion Veliaj headed the Mjaft! Movement, Albania’s leading watchdog and civil society pressure group that received the 2004 UN Civil Society Award. G99 is a socio-political offshoot of the Mjaft! Movement that pushes for change in the Albanian political establishment. Erion Veliaj has worked for different international organisations and UN agencies, the OSCE, the Council of Europe and the Open Society Institute. He is a member of the board of directors of the Balkan Children and Youth Foundation as well as several regional philanthropies and think tanks. Additionally, he is a frequent speaker on Albania and the Balkans in the European Parliament, the US Congress, as well as at regional conferences and university campuses.

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### Biographies



**Vernes Voloder** is project coordinator and PR officer with the Nansen Dialogue Centre in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina. He is currently studying economics at the University of Mostar and has participated in a number of non-university trainings and seminars such as a “Young Political Leaders” course and the BBC World Service Training School. Vernes Voloder has gained experience as a journalist, presenter and correspondent for Radio X and RTV BiH, as administrator of the youth organisation DIA, and as editor of the news desk and assistant to the editor-in-chief at Radio X. The Nansen Dialogue Centre is a non-profit, non-political and non-governmental association of citizens that encourages democratic practice and promotes dialogue between different ethnic, religious, political and interest groups, as a tool for prevention and resolution of conflicts in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Vernes Voloder’s responsibilities at the Centre encompass the organisation of dialogue seminars, round tables, interactive lectures, workshops and other activities that are to help increase democratic standards in Bosnia and Herzegovina and help promote peace-conflict resolution.



**Sanja Vuković-Čović** has been director of the PRONI Centre for Social Education in Croatia, which is active in youth work and community development education, since 2003. She holds a degree in youth and community development from the School of Education and Communication at Jönköping University, Sweden, as well as a degree in marketing from the JJ Strossmayer University of Osijek, Croatia. She has been active for civil society organisations since 1993 and co-founded the Volunteer Centre Osijek, of which she was initially the president and is now a member of the governing board. Additionally, she is a member of the advisory board for civil initiatives of the Osijek-Baranja County. The PRONI Centre for Social Education conducts projects and programmes focussing on youth work and community development in cooperation with a number of Croatian as well as international organisations and institutions and thereby promotes cross-sectoral cooperation and an integral approach. In 2009, the Centre received the Partners in Advancing Education (PIE) for International Social Work Award on behalf of the Global Commission of the Council on Social Work Education.



**Peter Wittschorek** is head of the programme “Theodor-Heuss-Kolleg of Robert Bosch Stiftung and MitOst Association” and, additionally, has been an expert to the division “Citizenship Education and Participation” at MitOst Association since 2007. He holds an M.A. degree in political science. Peter Wittschorek has previously concentrated on strengthening civil societies in Eastern Europe through his work with the Center for European Integration Studies in Bonn, the Heinrich Böll Foundation in Berlin, as well as a private project aiding street children in Kyiv. Furthermore, he has contributed to a number of projects for non-formal citizenship education with the Heinrich Böll Foundation and MitOst Association. Theodor-Heuss-Kolleg constitutes a programme that provides education and support to young people who want to contribute to shaping their environment.