



Balkan Public Agenda

IN – depth interviews

Montenegro

April 2001
KEY FINDINGS

Realized by
SMMRI Group

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Summary of the key findings:

- **Most important problems that the country is facing at the moment relate to the following areas: politics, economy, society and the federal state.**
- **The main political problem is the issue of sovereign status of Montenegro. This issue is perceived in respondents' answers as a prerequisite for all other problems-both political and economic to be sorted out.**
- **Economic problems will be the most difficult to solve, even when Montenegro manages to achieve its sovereignty.**
- **The main obstacles in dealing with economic problems are: backwardness of economy, inadequate economic structure, badly implemented privatization, monopolies of influential groups, disrespect of laws, tax evasion, lack of funds for economy restructure.**
- **Most often stated economic problems are: overall problems accompanying transition-unsophisticated economy, unemployment, social tensions, privatization, high share of black economy in overall economy of the country, corruption.**
- **The main reasons for economic problems were stated as: isolation of Montenegro due to sanctions, wars in former Yugoslavia, lack of democracy, political decision-making in economy, inability of Montenegro to cooperate with international financial institutions because it is not an international subject.**
- **Respondents have great trust in International institutions, particularly WMF and World Bank, and then EU and European Bank. They find these institutions crucial for democratic, economic and political growth of Montenegro.**
- **Respondents think that the most prosperous areas of economy are tourism, agriculture and naval economy, while they do not have a clear concept of the destiny of bigger industrial enterprises.**
- **Expectations in the field of economy are strongly related to hopes for independence, which is expected to be finalized in the referendum. Independence of Montenegro is perceived as a prerequisite for foreign credits and investments, which would be a stimulus for economic growth.**

- **None of the respondents stated that Montenegro has achieved a high level of democracy. On the contrary, they found that a system of party state is dominant, with enormous influence that the President of the Republic has, undeveloped institutions, strong group interests and disrespect of law.**
- **Respondents have the most confidence in the President of the Republic, Republic Parliament and Republic Government. Respondents do not have any trust in federal institutions. Within federal institutions, President of the Federal State, Vojislav Kostunica, received the most unfavorable assessment. Political parties in Montenegro are perceived as underdeveloped structures, with strongly expressed antagonism between opposing parties.**
- **Most respondents see their role in decision-making as significant and in some cases as crucial, depending on the hierarchy in political and public life.**
- **Independent media-the papers, TV, radio and Internet are stated as the most important sources of information. It is general assessment of the respondents that in order to get objective information one needs to consult different media sources.**
- **Respondents have a positive attitude towards NGOs and understand their importance in developing democracy and public institutions. However, they also pointed out that NGO sector in Montenegro is still at its beginning, not very prominent, it does not have a significant impact on public life and many NGOs were established for the sole reason of serving the needs of certain individuals.**
- **Professional organizations were evaluated as having negligent importance and influence on present social life.**
- **Serbian Orthodox Church is perceived as a political organization and as the main exponent of Greater Serbia nationalistic project. It is thought that its effect on political situation in Montenegro has been extremely negative.**
- **There is a clear dissatisfaction with public services which are seen as obsolete and disorganized. Health care and water supply received the best marks and the army met with most unfavorable opinions since it is thought to have been the cause of Montenegrin involvement in wars in former Yugoslavia and it represents a threat to Montenegrin independence. Other services which were rated as bad were electricity supply, social welfare and public transport.**

- Respondents agree that international institutions have a strong impact on the programs of the country and this impact is almost exclusively seen as positive. It was pointed out that these institutions are very important for development of democracy and economy. Respondents agree that Montenegro should begin its progress with the help of international institutions as soon as possible and should cease to be just a recipient of foreign assistance.
- The key to stability in the region is seen as multifold: cooperation between the countries of the region, giving up on nationalist projects, respect of borders, democratization of the region and the presence of NATO in Montenegro.
- Respondents assessed ethnic relations as good or rather good. At the same time they expressed concern that the relations could worsen if Montenegro did not feel some economic growth. It is a general opinion that the status of ethnic minorities should be in complete accordance with European standards in this area.
- With very few exceptions, the respondents show trust and affection towards the countries in southeastern Europe. They would like to see economic cooperation in the region and are quite familiar with the results of transition in other countries in the region.
- Regarding the issue of what life in the region will be like in the following couple of years, respondents expressed different opinions. On one side, there is a fear of terrorism due to unsettled issue of Kosovo and Macedonia and the feeling that all countries in the region will develop slowly. On the other side, moderate optimism is expressed and it is based on the fact that all the countries have more or less begun the process of Europeanization and the processes of cooperation and integration will get momentum in close future.
- The biggest hopes relate to independence of Montenegro and its becoming a part of Europe in economic and cultural sense. Hopes are also connected to strengthening of democratic institutions and elimination of corruption.
- Most fears are connected with a possibility of renewed conflicts inspired by nationalism. Another fear is mentioned in connection to lack of tolerance in the society, respondents are concerned about the way in which Montenegro will make up for the time lost in the past ten years, due to isolation and war conflicts, taking into consideration that Montenegro enters 21st century as a backward country.

KEY FINDINGS-Montenegro

1. ASPIRATIONS, FEARS AND WORRIES RELATING TO PRESENT SITUATION IN MONTENEGRO

1.1 Most important issues that citizens of Montenegro are faced with at the moment

- **Most important issues that the citizens are faced with are : political situation, economy and the Federal State.**

Political situation:

-Respondents` replies refer almost with no exception to a single political problem-the issue of unsolved Montenegrin sovereignty. Only after this primary problem has been sorted out, other problems will get a chance of being dealt with-democratization and improvement of institutions, as well as cooperation with international financial and economic institutions.

-For politicians that belong to the ruling party, Montenegrin sovereignty is the issue of utmost importance, but the same opinion is shared by those who belong other, independent professions.

-Only one respondent, a foreigner, stated that poverty of Montenegrin citizens is the most serious problem that Montenegro has to deal with.

-Respondents highlighted two kinds of problems that relate to relationship between Serbia and Montenegro in the context of Montenegrin intention to become an independent state. In this sense, they stated problems connected to the recent past and the problems that are existent at present and which obstruct and impede the future. In this respect, the most important problems between the two republics are stated as the following: wars, sanctions, federal institutions` predominance, Serbian nationalist aspirations, inability of Montenegro to be defined as a state, Montenegro is perceived as a victim of wars and unstable surroundings, primarily Kosovo.

Typical statements:

-Unhealed wounds from wars on the ex-Yugoslav territory are a great problem that Montenegro is faced with.

-The economic issue is the most difficult to sort out because of ten-year-long war conditions and involvement in conflicts.

-Economy was destroyed due to the sanctions awhile at the same time corruption and crime flourished.

/an advisor/

- A great amount of energy is wasted in order to prove the equal position of Montenegro. Federal state monopoly is exerting pressure on our economy. Belgrade is the only external factor and the sole problem of Montenegro.

/member of Parliament/

-The conflict with Serbian leadership prevents Montenegro from being a normal state, with no tensions and no fear of what the future may bring. Montenegro is put at a disadvantage within FRY due to federal institutions`

attitude towards it and the inability of establishing cooperation with international institutions.

/high state official/

-Montenegro was the first victim of war in former Yugoslavia and it suffered because of the unstable region surrounding it. These factors will make Montenegrin consolidation a long and hard process.

/minister/

-There are very few statements which perceive Montenegro in the light of its need to face itself as it really is:

-Economic development will accelerate after the status of Montenegro is sorted out, although this is by no means a magic wand. After this problem has been solved, nobody will be in a position to find excuses in blaming federal institutions and Belgrade.

/political analyst/

-Unsolved sovereign status of Montenegro is a source of problems, but it is also an excuse for not dealing with internal issues, first of all, we lack the transparency of actions. All spheres of economy are secretive and closed.

/journalist/

Economy

-Respondents are unanimous in their view that economic problems will be harder to solve than political ones.

-While the main political problem-independence of Montenegro will be sorted out, according to their estimates, in a few months time, the country will be dealing with economic problems over a period of several years.

-Respondents connect economic problems primarily to structural issues:

- obstacles in transition
- lack of capital
- absence of investments
- unfavorable environment for market economy

-Inappropriate privatization:

- bad tax system
- dysfunctional banking system
- goods which are not competitive on the European market
- corruption
- group monopolies
- crime

-The following problems are perceived as secondary ones:

- unemployment
- low salaries

- inappropriate investments
- apathy of adult population capable of work
- high share of black economy

Society:

-Respondents` remarks focus on deep-rooted traditional characteristics and consequences of recent armed conflicts:

- conservatism and intolerance
- inability to face and accept one`s own mistakes
- nationalism with elements of fascism
- absence of European attitudes towards work
- inadequate education system
- undeveloped civil society

Sources of information:

-Sources of information were assessed as relatively objective, independent media are perceived as more reliable.

1.2. Problems which are most likely to be solved in near future

Respondents were unanimous in their views that the issue of Montenegrin status is most likely to be solved in near future. They were of the opinion that the option for independent Montenegro will prevail and that this option will be verified in the referendum. Independence of Montenegro is seen as a condition for other issues relating to transition to be resolved. None of the problems can be sorted out before this political goal has been achieved.

1.3. Problems which will be hardest to sort out:

It is unanimous position of respondents that economic problems will be the most difficult to resolve. This process, according to their assessment, will take years.

Typical statements:

-Economic problems are the most difficult to resolve because of ten year long conflicts and involvement in war conflicts. The country was under sanctions, its economy has been destroyed and corruption and crime have flourished. It is necessary to decentralize the power and establish the rule of law.

/member of parliament/

-Political parties have become too bureaucratic, unless they change, it will be impossible to resolve economic problems.

2. ECONOMIC ISSUES

- **The most serious economic problems that the country is faced with are related to basic conditions necessary for functioning of a healthy economy: difficulties in transition, inadequate tax and banking system, obsolete technology and not competitive economy, corruption, crime and group monopoly.**

2.1. Sources of economic problems:

-The following factors were stated as the main sources of economic problems: slow transformation of economy, unsettled issue of ownership of many companies, black economy, isolation, corruption and crime, reluctance of authorities to deal with economic problems in an efficacious way and the war in the region/Kosovo/southern Serbia/.

-There are some interest groups which benefit from the present situation and which oppose the changes.

Typical statements:

- For the past ten years, during the sanctions, cooperation of Montenegro with Slobodan Milosevic's regime has given rise to illegal economy. This, along with lack of real economic system, as well as the war, has slowed down the integration of Montenegro. Instead, during the sanctions, economic monopoly of those close to the authorities were established.

/analyst/

-Highest state politicians are generally of the opinion that economic and other problems are caused by external factors, outside Montenegro, which suggests an attitude that Montenegrin politicians are not to be held accountable for economic problems. They seem to have the same opinion of the citizens. Politicians perceive them as nothing more than voting machine with just one aim-to vote for an independent status of Montenegro.

Typical statements:

-Independence issue can be resolved according to the wish of majority of citizens in election and referendum.

/high government official/

A statement which illustrates perception of economic problems:

-Objective situation itself, the legacy from the communist past, destroyed economy due to years of sanctions, blockade of all economic and political processes by the authorities in Belgrade, slow transition and particularly privatization. This is very often a painful process because many workers employed in public enterprises are made redundant and unemployment rate is increasing.

/government official/

2.2. Obstacles in solving economic problems:

-The main obstacle in solving economic problems is seen in unsolved political relations between Serbia and Montenegro. Only after independence option has been verified in the election can economy be rehabilitated, because only then will the country be in a position to open up to foreign capital and international economic cooperation.

2.3. Role of international institutions in solving economic problems:

-Respondents evaluate the role of international institutions as most important and very positive. Without these institutions no changes will be possible.

Typical statements:

-We expect significant help from IMF and foreign investors in infrastructure projects.
/high government official/

-The role of international institutions is to stabilize the region, to invest fresh capital and to contribute to democratization and creation of civil society.
/ Yugoslav Army major/

2.4. Factors which will accelerate the solution of economic problems:

-Respondents have great expectations from foreign financial institutions, World Bank, IMF and EU. The prerequisite in this respect is also Montenegrin independence. Development of tourism and the production of healthy food would contribute to quicker solution of economic problems.

Typical statements:

Montenegro should become an observer member of IMF as soon as possible, and establish ties with EU and other political and military organizations.
/government official/

-Montenegro should open up to foreign capital. This will reduce unemployment, make it possible for the state to collect taxes and all this will lead to elimination of xenophobia.
/advisor/

2.5. Expectations in the field of economy in 2001:

-Overall, expectations in the field of economic development are connected with the political outcome of relations between Serbia and Montenegro. Moderate optimism is shown towards economic growth after sovereign status of Montenegro is achieved.

-Some respondents claim that "the situation cannot get any worse" and their hopes are focused on economic reforms which will encourage foreign

institutions as well as the authorities, which are expected to show their readiness to conduct reforms.

-In some not so optimistic statements there is no hope of any changes. An opinion was voiced that “everything will boil down to patching up the social wholes”.

-There is a certain feeling of resignation in remarks that 2001 will bring no significant changes, as it is a short period of time for any changes to take place.

3. POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

3.1. Perception of democracy

- **Democracy is perceived differently, depending on the position in the hierarchy of Montenegrin elite. Those closer to the circle of power are less critical, while those who are not tend to be more critical and straightforward.**

-The former have infinite trust in the President, the latter criticize centralized party control, bureaucracy of political parties, concentration of power in the hands of one man, existence of informal groups that make crucial decisions.

Typical statements:

-The President is the most capable but he is not given full trust. He is the one who has the most significant impact on everyday life of citizens, although this is not in accordance with the Constitution.

/analyst/

- Legal institutions are under great influence of political elite, and political institutions are burdened by strong authoritarian legacy.

/journalist/

-Montenegro is divided into private interests which are manifested in the interests of new political elite. If you don't think in their categories, you cannot have any impact on the problems that the country suffers from.

/teacher/

- I see Montenegrin institutions as absolutely dependant, biased and politically influenced, and state and local authorities as corrupted because you cannot hope to solve any of your personal problems unless you bribe somebody.

/journalist/

- Unfortunately, the power in Montenegro is still very centralized, although it has to be pointed out that party monopoly is not as strong as it used to be.

/member of parliament/

3.2. Trust in political institutions and political leaders

-Respondents have confidence exclusively in some Montenegrin institutions as opposed to federal institutions. However, a general remark refers to the fact that the institutions are weak, except those which are personified by the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister.

-Federal institutions are generally received with aversion and they are held accountable for continuation of dictatorship.

-Federal institutions are not recognized because Montenegro has opted for independence.

-Federal institutions, such as federal government, the army, military institutions and the army headquarters are perceived as means of threat and pressure.

Typical statements:

-FRY does not exist for me. It is a structure of 10.000 parasites obstructing Montenegro and Serbia from establishing normal relationship.

/high state official/

-President of FRY makes some contradictory moves and is not a very good strategist. Federal Prime Minister is not really up to his position, he was not elected legitimately and does not represent the will of citizens of Montenegro, he represents his party. federal institutions have brought the federation to a collapse.

/judge/

-The president of FRY Vojislav Kostunica is perceived in completely negative light.

-Some respondents are of the opinion that he came to power in an unlawful way, although he claims that he supports the rule of law. Others see him as a “pre-modern” rather than “postmodern” politician or a person “who gathered Serbian and Montenegrin nationalists.”

-He is also “a nationalist and an authoritarian ruler and it is because of his nationalistic views that he cannot build his democratic conscious and political culture”, “he didn’t move forward from his predecessor Milosevic”.

/professor, analyst, government official/

-President of Montenegro enjoys widest confidence, followed by the Parliament and government.

-Respondents think that the government has the strongest impact on the lives of citizens.

-Political parties are mainly evaluated as very influential, so much so that respondents find that they live a party state.

-Parties do not have long-term strategy, they deal with what is perceived as important political issues, exhausting their strength in political rivalry and not paying enough attention to the needs of citizens. An exception in this respect is SDP.

-Respondents are of the opinion that there are more civil political parties in Montenegro than in Serbia, as a result there is not such a strong nationalistic

feeling in Montenegro and the parliament of Montenegro functions in a more civilized manner.

3.3. Personal influence on changes in the society

-Most respondents stated that their position gives them an opportunity to have an influence on the way citizens form their views and make decisions. Some of them, particularly military officials, stated that their influence is not any different than that of every other voter.

-All respondents show a strong support for the idea of Montenegrin independence, great trust in the president Djukanovic and representatives of independent professions (a journalist, a NGO analyst, etc) have a critical attitude towards partyocracy.

4. CIVIL SOCIETY

4.1. Sources of information and their credibility

- Majority of respondents get informed through the papers and television, Internet and business information also have a more prominent role. Some respondents state that they find the most reliable information on the Internet.
- As for credibility of papers and TV, assessments vary. Some respondents think that independent media offer the most objective picture of the situation in Montenegro, while others point out that objective information can be obtained only through comparing the information from different sources.
- Respondents state that they rely both on domestic and foreign sources of information, and they mention foreign sources such as Free Europe, CNN, different web sites of various institutions.

4.2. The role of NGOs

- The role of NGOs is assessed by most respondents as positive and this holds true more as a principle than experience. NGOs are perceived as an important element of influence on stabilization of democracy, but also as a sector which is only at the beginning of dissolving the old authoritarian structure of the society.
- Respondents state that they believe in NGO findings and suggest that they should have a more aggressive approach.
- The following are perceived as negative aspects of NGO activities-a huge number of NGOs that are cropping up, their inactivity and a hidden agenda of attracting foreign financial assistance for personal benefit.

4.3. The role of professional organisations

- Respondents state that the influence of professional organizations is negligible. They hardly exist in the society as organized associations. The most frequent association when professional organizations are mentioned was “trade unions” or the “syndicate”. Respondents think that better professional activity of those organizations is necessary so that certain professions can improve their activities.

4.4. The role of religious organisations

- A general feeling is that the church is highly politicized and that the status of religious organization has a strong impact on the society which is perceived as negative.
- The attitude of Orthodox Church was assessed as particularly negative, while other religious organizations, in respondents` opinion, are correct in their behavior.

Typical statements:

- Serbian Orthodox Church supported the war projects of Slobodan Milosevic.

/journalist/

- Serbian Orthodox Church doesn't acknowledge the existence of Montenegrin nation.

/analyst/

-Serbian Orthodox Church acts as a paramilitary and political organization.

/professor/

5. PUBLIC SERVICES

- Public services were evaluated as generally unsatisfactory, even the services evaluated as slightly better satisfy only the average needs.
- The service which was evaluated as the best is Health Care. The respondents point out professionally trained medical staff (which is to be ascribed to proper education of the staff in the past ten years) and their dedication to their work.

An average mark was given to Water Supply System, while other services were evaluated as below the satisfactory level.

Education was evaluated as old-fashioned and based on ideology, and other services are seen as organizationally chaotic, without any basic abilities to offer better services.

- Positive attitude towards privatization is predominant in some sectors of public services, with a remark that privatization could make the social differences even deeper.

- Attitude to the Yugoslav Army is conditioned by political relation between Montenegro and FRY.
- The Army is perceived as hostile and it represents a threat to Montenegro. Respondents find the Army responsible for involving Montenegro in wars in former Yugoslavia regions and it is regarded as a foreign tissue in the present situation in Montenegro.

Typical statements:

-The role of the army is extremely problematic. It represents an armed threat to Montenegro.

/journalist/

-The army has been abused for wrong purposes. We don't want to have an army like that on our territory. Its behavior is unacceptable.

/high government official/

-The army was inherited from the communist period and has not been reformed. It took part in wars and ethnic cleansing, it was a tool in disseminating religious and national hatred, it is an authoritarian structure with obsolete technology.

/journalist/

- I have most confidence in the army because it proved to be stable and its reputation is unblemished. It is the only organization which has acted in accordance with the Constitution.

/member of parliament/

Grades percentages

Grades	Health care	Education	Social assistance	Public transport	Electricity supply	Water supply	Military
1	5.3%		17.6%	27.8%	15.8%	11.1%	42.1%
2	10.5%	16.7%	17.6%	11.1%	10.5%	16.7%	21.1%
3	15.8%	27.8%		11.1%	10.5%	5.6%	10.5%
4		11.1%	11.8%	16.7%	10.5%	5.6%	5.3%
5	15.8%	11.1%	23.5%	22.2%	21.1%	11.1%	10.5%
6	15.8%	11.1%	5.9%	5.6%	10.5%	16.7%	
7	21.1%	16.7%	5.9%		5.3%	5.6%	5.3%
8	10.5%		5.9%	5.6%	10.5%	16.7%	
9					5.3%	11.1%	
10	5.3%	5.6%	11.8%				5.3%

6. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

6.1. The influence of international institutions

- Respondents agree that international institutions have a significant influence on development of Montenegro and their attitude towards them is completely positive.
- Respondents are of the opinion that international community has both political and financial influence on Montenegro.
- Respondents have high expectations of the international community, related to Montenegro achieving its independent status when it will be accepted into international political and financial institutions and become an attractive destination for foreign capital investments.
- It is predicted that the time will come for Montenegro to be more than just a passive recipient of foreign assistance but an active partner in international relations.
- The most important remarks directed at international community is that it does not fully understand this region and the second remark refers to the fact that it supports the idea of Montenegro remaining a part of FRY.

Typical statements:

-International community harmonizes the relations between states. It unifies basic principles, sets standards that every country has to respect. International community is involved in the Balkan region in a very positive way.

/high government official/

6.2. The role of international institutions: EU, Pact for stability and NATO

- Pact for Stability received positive evaluations and the expectations from this institution are very concrete.
- Pact for Stability is expected to connect the whole region, to offer projects of regional cooperation in corruption and organized crime prevention, to aid transition with its funds and help the improvements in the field of human rights.
- EU is a role model that Montenegro is trying to achieve. Montenegro is ready to accept European standards and it is believed that EU can help a lot in this respect.
- Some skepticism regarding EU efficiency is present, especially regarding its bureaucracy, slow decision-making and politically motivated decisions.
- EU is criticized for its unsupportive attitude towards the issue of Montenegrin sovereignty.
- NATO is regarded with positive attitude.
- It is thought that NATO can contribute to the solution of problems, prevent conflicts and have a deterring role.
- The idea of NATO using Montenegrin territory and Montenegrin soldiers being a part of NATO sources is acceptable, this in turn will make Montenegro part of international security system.

- It is thought that NATO will not require from Montenegro to fulfil any conditions different from other NATO members.
- Negative evaluation of NATO and EU was present in just one case. The respondent was of the opinion that these institutions operate in terms of blackmail and that they do not contribute to any progress.

Typical statements:

-The Pact for Stability is the way for the west to wash their hands after they had destroyed this region and it is based on the concept of economical and political control of the region.

-NATO would be the inside controller and protector and it will get its benefit from introducing its dirty industry.

/Member of Parliament/

6.3. The key to stability

- The key to stability of Montenegro is seen in political and military measures.
- As far as military measures are concerned, the respondents point out the need for the presence of international military forces which would be guarantors of peace and invulnerability of borders.
- On terms of political measures, some kind of help is expected so that the process of disintegration of former Yugoslavia will end peacefully, and the same goes for the formation of new independent states which will establish mutual ties in accordance to international standards.
- Respondents think that another factor in stability of the region is the solution of Serbian-Albanian conflict.

7. INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS AND FEELINGS

7.1. Perception of life in southeastern Europe in the following couple of years

- A feeling of very moderate optimism prevails and it refers partly to state matters and partly to the system of values in the region.

Typical statements:

- I expect maximal improvement in life of people in this region and I expect that Montenegro will have sorted out its state sovereignty issue.

-The borders between the countries in the region will open up, neighboring countries will cooperate more.

-All countries in the region will focus on development and the Balkans will not be synonymous with the evil.

-The culture of life will become a value.

- Pessimistic opinions about the future of the southeastern Europe are not so numerous:

Typical statements:

-I don't expect such a great progress, ethnic tensions will still be present, the economic growth will be slow, the region will remain unstable for quite some time.

7.2. The feeling of belonging to the community and the prospects of leaving the region.

- The highest number of respondents did not want to leave the country, regardless of political or economic difficulties they had to cope with.
- A number of respondents did leave Montenegro because of the war and the inability to deal with the isolation, but eventually they returned.
- A small number of respondents would like to leave Montenegro because of the low standard of living. They would go abroad to earn enough to live on when they retire.

Typical statements:

- I have thought about leaving the country many times. However, since 1990 I changed my mind. Those of us who believe they can contribute to the changes in the region should stay here.

/high government official/

- I want to live in Montenegro and to put all my potentials at my country's disposal.

/journalist/

-I thought about leaving when the war started, but I decided to stay after all and try to defy evil.

/NGO activist/

- I lived in a foreign country for some time. The reason I left was the war and religious and a national hatred.

/journalist/

- I don't have the courage to start from square one in a completely new community.

/politician/

7.3. Attitude towards other countries in Southeastern Europe

- Respondents showed respect for efforts that countries in the region are making to implement transition. Respondents can clearly tell the difference in this respect between the countries in the region.
- Rational, not emotional, attitude towards countries in southeastern Europe is more dominant.
- Respondents primarily notice how successful or unsuccessful the countries in the region are in terms of economic growth.
- The fear of possible ethnic conflicts breaking in old hot spots is still very strong.

Croatia

- Croatia received more favorable than unfavorable opinions: it is at the beginning of developing a democratic system; it is possible that it will grow into a European country; it has begun its democratic, political and economic progress; it has a problem of defining transition more precisely; it has lovely Dalmatian songs; the war; nationalism, the sea.

Slovenia

- Positive attitude because of success it has made; medium developed country; democracy; good attitude towards Montenegro; a disciplined country; clean; German diligence softened by the Balkan experience; one of the most successful post-communist countries.

Macedonia

- Feelings of concern; a country faced with different aspirations from neighboring countries; although it has successfully built democratic institutions, it is forced to use the arms in order to defend itself; an ill-fated country which has done everything in its power to make things work and it got nothing in return; a synonym for an unstable country; a nation which has done no evil to anyone.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- Positive feelings and doubts regarding its future: it doesn't function as an integral country; very slow changes, particularly in the field of ethnic relations; it will continue to face problems; corruption and abuse of international financial assistance; music; friendly people; a protectorate; a country which does not exist as yet; the most beautiful part of former Yugoslavia.

Bulgaria

- Appreciation of results achieved in transition: the country which steadily builds its position in the region; it has favorable future prospects; it has come a great way from the most dogmatic communist country to successful transitional country; positive experiences; it has good potentials.

Romania

- Comments similar to those made about Bulgaria but with more mixed feelings: first steps in transition and reforms of society; transition has started well; it has good potentials; it is making an effort to join developed countries but this process will take time; a poor and most

backward country in the Balkans; friendly people; unsuccessful transition; former semi-authoritarian regime has gained power again.

Greece

- Feelings of affection but also criticism towards political role in the region: tourism; religious country; trade; prosperous; does not have much in common with neighboring EU member countries; artificial member of EU and NATO; regional force; an excellent example how a country from this region can develop more harmoniously and more quickly if it is a member of EU; a concept of foreign affairs not very clearly envisaged; the Greeks have failed to Europeanize in spite of huge amounts of money they received from Europe; although a member of EU-it does not have very developed democracy and its influence in the region is very negative; in some segments it can set an example for the region.

Turkey

- Mainly positive perception; a country of sudden economic growth; it accepts reforms; it has good prospects and huge potentials; it has succeeded in implementing modern political options; has powerful military force; an important member of NATO; a country with crises; culture; modernization; managed to keep civil regime; a potential problem because of ethnic relations with the Kurds; oriental culture; untidy cities.

Albania

- The country which got the most unfavorable comments: disorder; the most backward country in the region; far from democratic society; it shows some progress thanks to foreign aid; in some areas it is ahead of Montenegro; unstable and a potential problem; disorganized and criminalized country; it is good that it distanced itself from the Albanian minority in the neighboring countries; its people are showing some initiative.

7.4. Perception of relations between different ethnic groups

- Respondents assess ethnic relations in Montenegro as very stable and satisfactory and the atmosphere among different ethnic groups as harmonious.
- It is also pointed out that, unfortunately, in the past ten years, due to the politics conducted by the Belgrade regime, there has been a certain crises in this area.
- Montenegrins have a bigger problem in relations with the Serbs than Moslems or Albanians.

Typical statements:

- *Ethnic relations in Montenegro are perhaps better than in other countries in the region, with the exception of Slovenia.*
- *Ethnic relations in Montenegro are tense, but tolerant.*
/government official/

8. FINAL COMMENTS

- Main hopes are related to the independence of Montenegro. After this aim has been achieved, the country will see some prosperity.
- Respondents' hopes are more related to issues of social and political changes.
- Respondents have hopes in younger generation that will run the country one day and make it closer to western culture; through establishing communication with the world Montenegro will adopt new rules and ways of behavior which will be generally accepted and respected by all.
- Hopes also relate to stable political situation, end of national and religious tensions and beginning of normalization in all spheres of life.
- Higher living standard is connected with the hope that economic situation will improve.
- Democratization of institutions, eradication of corruption and a chance for Montenegrins to become a pro-European nation and Montenegro a multi-ethnic society.

The greatest fears are connected with a danger of not sorting out the relations in Federation and the impossibility of Montenegro to become independent.

- On the other hand, there is a fear of power being concentrated in the hands of individuals when Montenegro has become independent. This refers to powerful individuals who have gained huge wealth illegally in the past ten years.
- There is a fear of terrorism and organized gangs.
- The fear relates to internal differences in Montenegro and the intolerance of political leaders.
- A fear that the old way of thinking will prevail, ideas which disapprove of modernization which will require some sacrifices to be made.

Typical statements:

-I am concerned that Montenegro, after it has become independent, will be run by powerful people and the five most powerful families.

/journalist/

-I keep hoping that we will live better, but I am afraid that my whole life will pass in just dreaming about it.

-I am afraid of living in a non-existent federal state and I worry about the fact that international community does not understand Montenegrin ambitions.

/deputy minister/

- I am afraid that we will enter 21st century without having our own state identity.

/high government official/

- I fear that we will continue to be restrained in a state without our own sovereignty, in constant conflict between Serbia and Montenegro.

/Member of Parliament/