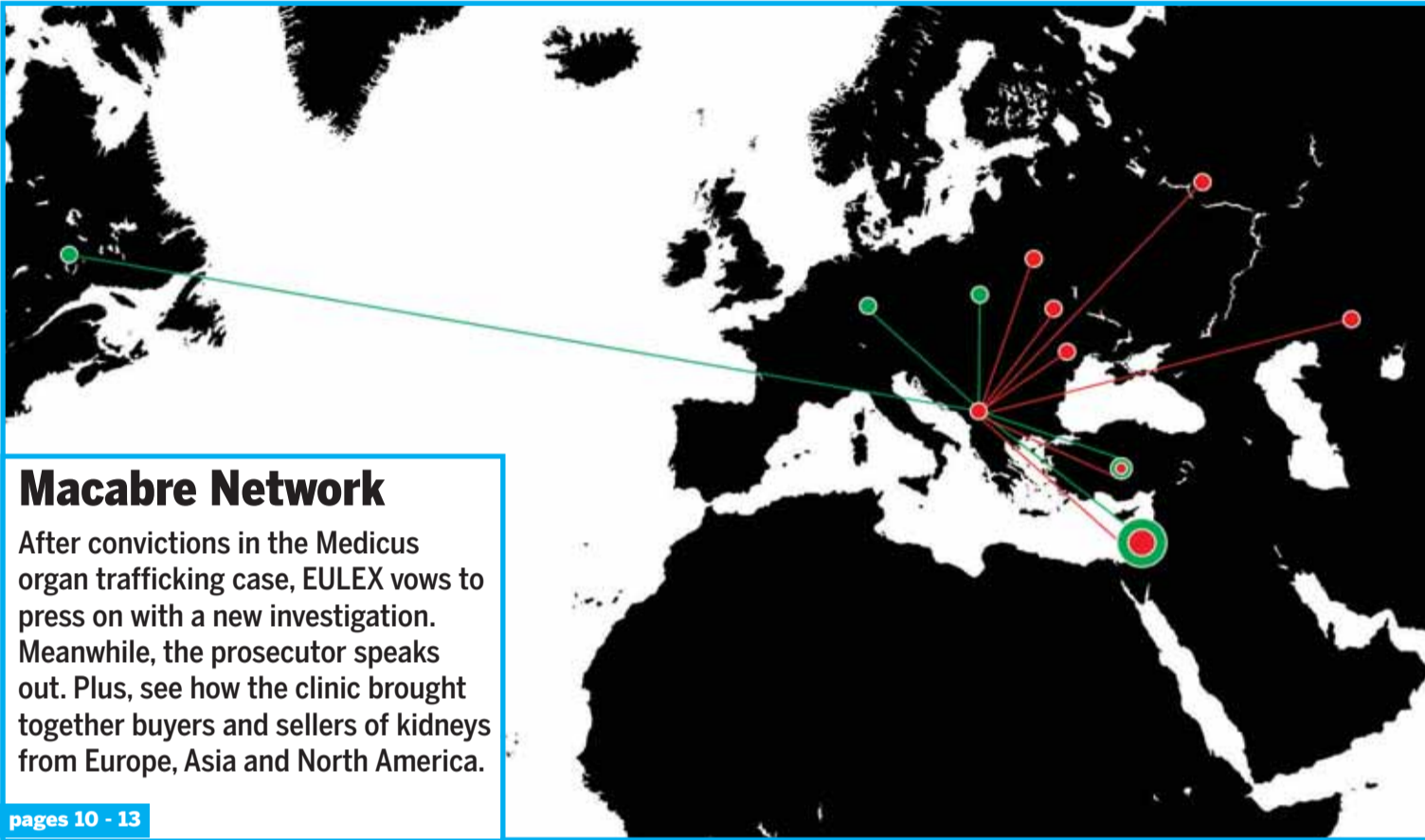


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Macabre Network

After convictions in the Medicus organ trafficking case, EULEX vows to press on with a new investigation. Meanwhile, the prosecutor speaks out. Plus, see how the clinic brought together buyers and sellers of kidneys from Europe, Asia and North America.

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Kosovo Prepares to Legalize Organ Transplants

Bill offers hope for patients who must go abroad for new organs – but concerns remain about granting licenses to private medical centres in the light of the Medicus case.

By Visar Duriqi

E.K. has failing kidneys and needs a transplant. The young man from Prishtina, who spoke on condition that his full name was not disclosed, gets dialysis each week to filter his blood.

"I'm 19 years old and it's hard to force myself to go to hospital every week and stay there for hours on

dialysis," he said.

E.K. even has a potential donor: his mother.

He sent a request to the Ministry of Health for an operation, one of 12 people to seek transplants this year. He never heard back.

The operation cannot take place in Kosovo in any case because no law is in place governing organ transplants.

He looked at having it done in Macedonia. But his family cannot

afford the 18,000-euro price.

"It's hard. The situation is serious for all the family. I'm practically non-functional, but family members take care of me," he said.

"It is very difficult especially when you know that all this suffering is because we do not have the funds for a transplant," E.K. said.

E.K.'s situation is ironical given the aftermath of the convictions in the so-called Medicus case.

Last week, courts found five peo-

ple guilty for their roles in carrying out dozens of illegal kidney transplants in the clinic on the outskirts of Prishtina.

The clinic lured poor people from Eastern Europe and Central Asia with the promise of big pay-offs for selling their kidneys. The recipients, mostly from Israel, paid much bigger sums for the new organs.

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Hive Giveaway a Honey-pot for Municipal Workers

Prishtina had quite the offer for the aspiring beekeeper: Two hives with bees and specialized equipment, including masks, gloves and a tool the collect the honey - all for free. The idea, officially, was to increase the number of beekeepers in Prishtina.

inside prishtina

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Turkish Soap Operas Bewitch The Balkans

Turn on the TV in any part of the Balkans today and you may well tune into a Turkish soap opera.

Booming in popularity across the region, according to media research agencies, dozens of these imports are being screened daily on televisions from ...

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The average age of cars in Kosovo is around 17 years old. (Photo/Nate Tabak)

Car Pollution Checks Fall by the Wayside

The government still hasn't followed through on the Prime Minister's order to carry out mandatory exhaust checks.



By Jeton Musliu

A year and a half after the Prime Minister signed a regulation, vehicles on Kosovo roads continue to generate growing amounts of pollutants that pose a danger to public health.

Hashim Thaci signed an administrative instruction on "Allowed Norms of Gas Emissions" on December 22, 2011.

Mandating emissions testing as part of regular vehicle registration, the directive called for the establishment of 86 centres to test vehicle exhaust. That has not happened.

"Why hasn't the instruction been implemented? I don't know," said Nebih Shatri, head of the

Department of Vehicles in the Ministry of Infrastructure, which is tasked with implementing the order.

Thaci's directive would in theory put Kosovo on a similar footing as the EU, where cars face regular tests to ensure that their emissions fall within designated limits.

Mirroring EU regulations, the directive categorizes cars into five groupings based on age. Each group has set limits for particular pollutants.

Such testing is especially relevant to older vehicles that predate contemporary emissions standards and are more likely to have mechanical issues that affect exhaust.

Cars in Kosovo are 17 years old on average, according to government figures. The Interior Ministry did not disclose figures on car registrations, but a 2009 University of Prishtina study put

the number at nearly 400,000.

Shatri said his department would begin testing in September, but it's unclear what, if any, steps have been taken.

He said checking and enforcing emissions was contingent on checks on fuel standards, which he claimed is not happening. "Without checking the oil, it's very dangerous to start checking the emissions," Shatri said.

Officials of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, which oversees oil standards, said there are strict controls on fuel in Kosovo. "Oil is imported to Kosovo entirely in conformity to European standards," Arta Istrefi, a ministry spokeswoman, said.

Oil products are checked at border points and subjected to further controls inside the country. "Internally the control is done by sampling oil in the sales point in accordance with the annual plan of monitoring under the supervision of the Market Inspectorate," Istrefi said.

There is also some confusion about the stamps foreseen to certify that cars have passed their emissions tests.

Shatri said he did not know whether this was the responsibility of the Ministry of Infrastructure or the Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning.

"The main responsibility for implementing this guideline falls on the Ministry of Infrastructure," Ilir Mirena, deputy environment minister, claimed.

The office of the Prime Minister did not respond to Prishtina Insight's questions about its emissions directive.



University of Prishtina professor Bashkim Baxhaku says car pollution in Kosovo is similar to what the EU had 15 years ago. (Photo/Jeton Musliu)

Meanwhile, public health authorities are alarmed by the recent increase in pollutants related to car exhaust.

The National Institute of Public Health reports that since 2009, daytime levels of nitrous oxide and sulfur dioxide - commonly produced through vehicle emissions - have doubled or tripled, especially in Prishtina.

"In Western states this would cause alarm," Naser Ramadani, director of the National Institute of Public Health, said.

During the same period, deaths caused by pollution-linked illnesses, such as certain respiratory and circulatory diseases, and various cancers, have increased, Ramadani noted.

"There's no question that gases are among the causes of these diseases, and decreasing emissions would undoubtedly

improve the environment," Ramadani added.

There is no hard data on pollution generated by vehicles. But a 2009 study by two professors at the University of Prishtina, Bashkim Baxhaku and Hajredin Tytyri, said Kosovo was significantly worse off than its neighbours and the EU.

"EU countries had the results we have today on car pollution back in 1995", Baxhaku told Prishtina Insight recently. "If we look at the region, they are around five years ahead of us."

Shatri, of the Ministry of Infrastructure, acknowledged that emissions controls would be a good thing for everyone.

"Of course, regulating the gas emissions would improve the environment because emissions would be in line with European standards," he said.



Nebih Shatri, head of the Department of Vehicles in the Ministry of Infrastructure, offered no concrete explanation for why Kosovo cars aren't getting mandatory emissions testing. (Photo/Jeton Musliu)



Automobiles are a growing contributor to Prishtina's abominable air quality. (Photo/Jeton Musliu)

PTK Buyer Spies Gold in Call Centres



Telecom could become lead player in small but burgeoning industry in Kosovo, which is tapping the low-wage, multi-lingual workforce.



By Liridona Hyseni

Opponents of the privatisation of the state telecom firm, PTK, have long said that the sale would lead to massive layoffs.

But after ACP Axos Capital made its winning bid for a 75 per cent stake in PTK in April, the German firm boldly stated that it would, in fact, create "employment opportunities for thousands of Kosovo's citizens".

Without providing specifics, ACP Axos Capital said it would create the new jobs by establishing "call centers for technical support to European companies."

Establishing PTK as an outsourcing centre would tap into a nascent industry in Kosovo.

The Investment Promotion Agency of Kosovo, in its 2011 to 2013 strategy, has made outsourcing one of its main priorities for attracting foreign investment.

Call centres, often used by phone companies for customer service and technical support, in particular, are experiencing growth in Europe, primarily in Eastern Europe.

The European call centre market is expected to reach a value of \$22.5 billion by 2017, up from \$18.3 billion in 2010, according to a 2011 study by the firm Frost & Sullivan.

Kosovo is trying to capture a piece of that growth.

"Kosovo offers a young and qualified workforce," said Valdrin Lluca, chief executive of the Investment Promotion Agency of Kosovo.

Kosovo's young workforce also earn a fraction of their counterparts in Western Europe; the average monthly wage is only around 300 euro. Many also speak foreign languages, including English and German.

Arian Zeka, executive director at the American Chamber of Commerce, said call centres offer a good opportunity for young people who have few other job options.

"I support the idea because it means using the youth, especially knowing the high level of unemployment in Kosovo," Zeka said.

According to him, this industry is a good opportunity to employ youngsters in Kosovo who are flu-



A call centre in Costa Rica could offer a preview of what's in store for Kosovo's PTK. (Photo/ESL Call Centre)

ent in foreign languages.

If PTK establishes call centres of its own, it is likely to become the largest player in the field in Kosovo.

Fifteen businesses are registered as "call centres" in Kosovo today, though officials say the real

number may be higher since some are registered simply as telecommunications firms.

A study in 2009 from Investment Promotion Agency of Kosovo found a total of 29 call centres employing 1,000 people.

While the current size of the

market isn't clear, a few start-up centres have emerged in Kosovo recently, albeit with mixed success.

Call Centre Rena recently opened in Viti with four employees, all of whom speak German, said owner Feim Xhaferi.

The company's main client is a Swiss firm that sells nutritional supplements. Staff earn a bonus of 50 euro cent on every sale on top of a wage of 3 euro an hour.

"Our clients are in Switzerland and work is going well, so we want to expand," Xhaferi said.

Xhaferi, who invested 5,000 euro in the Viti location, plans to open an office in Prishtina and hire 10 employees there.

But other new call centres haven't had the same success.

Shkurte Pali briefly opened Call Center SH in Prishtina in 2012.

"I closed the call centre last January, soon after I opened it, since there were no profits," Pali said.

Meanwhile, Valon Havolli has struggled to get his Call Center Leon up and running.

He registered it four months ago, but so far hasn't secured the funds he needs to make it operational.

"I haven't been able to start work because I haven't had the support. I tried to take out a bank loan, but haven't been able to do so," Havolli said.

Havolli hasn't given up, though. He is planning to travel to Switzerland to find a business partner in the health care industry.

"If I can't, then I will de-register the businesses," he said.



A woman works in a call centre in Romania. (Florence Preneuf /World Bank)

'No Abuse' at KLA Prison, Former Detainee Says

Ex-inmate at Llapashtica denies earlier statements to investigators concerning beatings and torture.



By Edona Peci

A witness in the high-profile trial of the 'Llapi Group' denied that there were beatings and torture at a wartime Kosovo Liberation Army detention centre in Llapashtica.

Prosecution witness Avdyli Avdyli told the court in Prishtina on Wednesday that "there were never beatings amongst prisoners" at the detention centre, denying statements he had previously given to investigators about abuses there.

He said he had no information that detainees might have been tortured or threatened at Llapashtica although he said he was interrogated twice by masked Kosovo Liberation Army, KLA soldiers.

The defendants Latif Gashi (known as Lata), currently a lawmaker from the Democratic Party of Kosovo, former MP Rrustem Mustafa (alias Remi) and Nazif Mehmeti (alias Nazi) - collectively known as the 'Llapi Group' - all held command positions within the KLA during the conflict in 1998-99.

Their indictment alleges that Gashi, Mehmeti and Mustafa "acting in concert with other unidentified individuals and pursuant to a joint criminal enterprise,

ordered and participated in the beating and torture of Kosovo Albanian civilians detained in the detention centre located at Llapashtica, in an attempt to force those detainees to confess to acts of disloyalty to the KLA from October of 1998 until late April 1999".

The prosecution confronted Avdyli with statements he had previously given to investigative judges in which he spoke about beatings, threats and torture at the KLA detention centre.

But the witness replied that "around 70 per cent of the things said in the transcripts are not in line with what I really said".

"There were several types of interpreters - Albanians, Serbs - and I don't know what they wrote [in the transcripts]," Avdyli said.

The witness also said he had never seen Gashi at the detention centre and had only heard Mehmeti's nickname from others.

Avdyli had been expected to testify as a protected witness but waived his anonymity.

The Llapi Group case was first investigated in 2001 and 2002 by the UN mission in Kosovo.

In 2005, after a two-year trial which concluded with guilty verdicts for the defendants, Kosovo's supreme court ordered a retrial because the allegations had not been proved "beyond all doubt".

In 2009, the three former



Latif Gashi, right, and Rrustem Mustafa, leave an earlier court session.

KLA commanders were again found guilty of war crimes and jailed for the torture and inhumane treatment of detention camp pris-

oners. They appealed against the verdicts and in 2011, the supreme court ordered a partial retrial.

Reported Drop in Unemployment Dismissed

Official unemployment rate is over 35 per cent - a 10 per cent drop from 2009 - but experts believe that the real number of jobless people is much higher.



By Edona Peci

Kosovo's statistics agency announced last Tuesday that the unemployment rate was 35.1 per cent, a decrease of 10.3 per cent compared to 2009, when the last official analysis of the labour situation was conducted.

"Based on preliminary results, a high rate of unemployment is more pronounced in the municipality of Gjakova [Djakovica], in Prizren and in Mitrovica," said Bashkim Belaqa, director of the social statistics department at the agency.

But experts warned the number of unemployed people among around 1.8 million registered residents of Kosovo is much higher.

Former economy minister Haki Shatri told Prishtina Insight that "official data on unemployment in Kosovo is underestimated".

"It's worse. It's actually a miracle how people in Kosovo can survive bearing in mind the high rate of unemployment," he said.

Shatri said that the sta-

tistics agency only seems to take into account those people who make contact with to employment offices, while people who don't trust those institutions or don't know who to contact about their jobless situation are excluded.

Meanwhile those with jobs are determined to hold onto them even if it means missing out on the International Workers' Day holiday.

"We don't have the luxury not to work on May 1," Labinot Berisha, a food store owner in Prishtina, told Prishtina Insight.

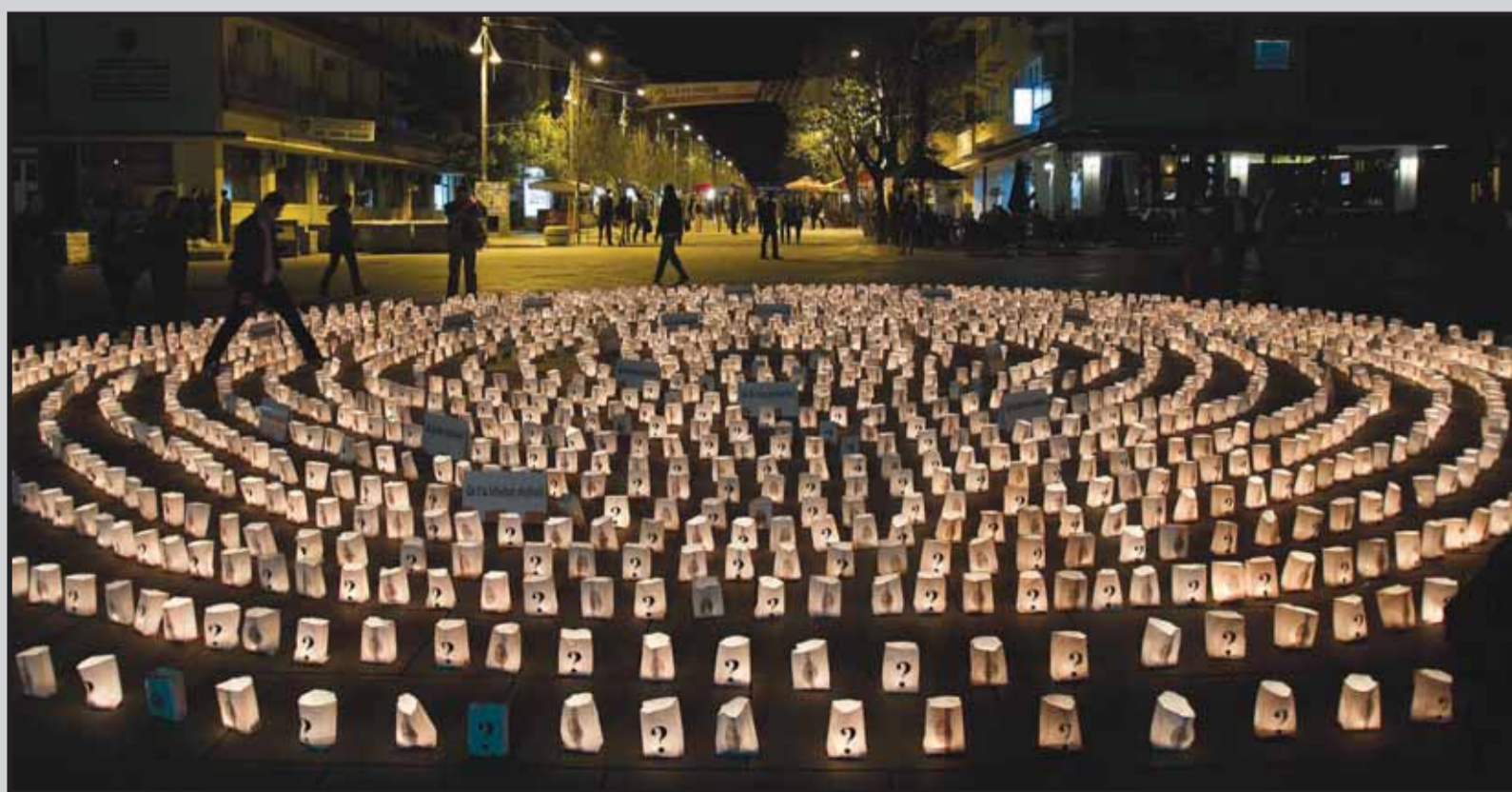
He suggested that unemployment had become the accepted norm in Kosovo.

"People are tired. They see nothing can be changed so they have kind of accepted the reality they live in," he said.

The economic crisis which hit some European Union states also had an impact in the Balkans, where many people have lost their jobs over the past two to three years.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, nearly half the population is unemployed; in Macedonia, the unemployment rate is over 31 per cent; while in Serbia the official rate is 22.4 per cent.

Photo News: Remembering the Missing



A circle of lit candles in central Prishtina commemorates those who went missing during 1998-99 war on April 27. More than 1,000 people are estimated to still be missing from the war. (AP Photo/ Visar Kryeziu)

Serbs Face Phased Transition to Kosovo Rule

Kosovo's authority will be introduced to Serb-run northern Kosovo in three stages, Prishtina Insight can reveal, as Kosovo Serb leaders warn the EU-backed plan may prompt them to emigrate.



By Gordana Andric

The EU's draft proposal for the implementation of the recently-reached Belgrade-Prishtina deal suggests that it should be implemented in three stages, Prishtina Insight has learned.

An EU diplomat who spoke to Prishtina Insight on condition of anonymity said the EU's director for Western Balkans, Fernando Gentilini, presented the Serbian and Kosovo negotiating teams with the implementation plan on April 25 in Brussels. The teams met again yesterday, and it's unclear if the proposal has since changed.

According to Gentilini's proposal, in the first stage Serbia and the Kosovo Serbs should abolish all Serb-run security structures in northern Kosovo.

In the second stage, Serbs in northern Kosovo will hold elections for the new Association of Serbian Municipalities.

In the third phase, after the elections, the Serbian security forces, judiciary and the educational system will be integrated into the Kosovo police, judiciary and educational systems.

The EU is forming a working group that will work on implementation of the plan. While the first stage is expected to be led by the Serbian Prime Minister, Ivica Dacic, and his deputy, Aleksandar Vucic, the third is to be led by the

ministers of police, justice and education from both sides.

Dismayed Kosovo Serb politicians say they are unsure about their prospects in a reintegrated Kosovo or how the deal will be implemented on the ground.

They say Serbs will not want to vote in elections organised under Kosovo laws, but say that because northern Kosovo is financially dependent on Belgrade, the Serbian government may impose implementation of the plan.

However, they warn that many Serbs could leave Kosovo in protest.

Kosovo and Serbia adopted a 15-point draft agreement on normalising relations on April 19, allowing both sides to advance their integration into the European Union.

The draft agreement mainly concerns the future of the Serbian community in Kosovo. However, Serbs from northern Kosovo rejected the agreement and are refusing to take any part in it.

The deal envisages that the local Serbian community will choose its own police commanders, while the composition of the police will generally reflect the ethnic structure on the ground. The draft also proposes that more judges come from the Serbian minority.

An Association of Serbian Municipalities with broad powers will include the four Serb-run northern municipalities of North Mitrovica, Leposavic, Zvecan and Zubin Potok.

Since the end of the Kosovo conflict in the late 1990s, northern

Kosovo has been beyond the Prishtina government's control, while Serbia has continued to finance local security, judicial, health and educational institutions.

The EU has a plan:

The EU diplomat told Prishtina Insight that the implementation of the deal, according to Gentilini's proposal, should start with the withdrawal of all Serbian security structures from northern Kosovo, including the civil protection force formed by local Serbs.

In the second stage, northern Kosovo should hold municipal elections helped by the OSCE, in accordance with Kosovo laws.

"The issue of elections will be a matter for further negotiations, as the Prishtina team wants the elections organised in 2014, along with local elections in the rest of Kosovo, while Belgrade wanted the election held before that," the EU source said.

In the third stage, the police, judiciary and education system will be financed by the government in Prishtina instead of Belgrade, although educational institutions in north Kosovo will be able to follow the same curriculum as Serbian schools.

According to the source, implementation of the third stage will have to undergo further discussion.

According to the source, there is no exact deadline for implementation of the agreement. However, some progress must be made before June, when EU heads of states are expected to decide on a date for opening accession talks with Serbia.

The EU Enlargement Commissioner, Stefan Füle, said on April 26 that the EU's decision will depend on the implementation of the agreement.

'Only Belgrade can order the Serbs'

Kosovo Serb politicians say the agreement reached in Brussels has created uncertainty in the north, and that the deal may only be implemented if Belgrade imposes it.

"Serbs have not lived with



Municipal leaders from four Serb-run municipalities in northern Kosovo meet in Zvecan in April to discuss the talks between Belgrade and Prishtina. (Betaphoto/Sasa Djordjevic)

Albanians for 14 years and people distrust Prishtina. Now we are expected to replace our country, Serbia, with Kosovo," said Marko Jaksic, a Democratic Party of Serbia, DSS, MP from Kosovo.

He believes that Kosovo Serbs are unlikely to take part in local elections intended to mark the first step in the implementation of the agreement.

"Only people who would gain materially from their votes in the elections would go to the polls and that is less than 5 per cent. Such elections would have no legitimacy," said Jaksic.

Krstimir Pantic, Mayor of Mitrovica and deputy head of the Serbian government's office for Kosovo, agreed that few Serbs would vote in elections held under Kosovo laws.

"We still don't know whether the elections will be held in accordance with Prishtina's laws. If so, people will not vote," said Pantic.

Both Jaksic and Pantic believe that if Belgrade imposes the agreement on the Kosovo Serbs, many will leave.

"Kosovo Serbs will struggle, but they will eventually have to accept what Belgrade wants. We have been fighting for 14 years, people are tired. Many will leave Kosovo. I believe that a third of them would leave," said Jaksic.

Because the deal envisages that cash-strapped Prishtina will be responsible for financing the newly-formed local government

institutions as well as the police, judiciary and education, Pantic says that economic motives will also prompt people to relocate to Serbia.

"Kosovo itself has high unemployment, so I'm not sure how they will be able to finance additional salaries and institutions. Serbs will not accept being financially dependent on Prishtina; they will decide to leave Kosovo," says Pantic.

Oliver Ivanovic, former state secretary at the Serbian government's ministry for Kosovo, says that Belgrade and Kosovo Serbs might, however, find a compromise solution and jointly implement the deal.

He explains that while the police, judiciary and local government must be included in Kosovo's legal framework, Prishtina will not insist that all other institutions are included as well.

"If the Serbian government guarantees that it will not exclude health, education and culture institutions in Kosovo from its system, the deal might be implemented, as these are very important issues to us," says Ivanovic, who is also a Kosovo Serb.

Ivanovic said the state should launch a campaign to explain the deal to Kosovo Serbs so that they don't fear the changes.

"Kosovo Serbs will boycott the elections for the first year, but later they will have to accept the new reality," said Ivanovic.



A man walks by a mural depicting the former Bosnian Serb wartime commander, Ratko Mladic, in Zvecan, in northern Kosovo. (Betaphoto/Sasa Djordjevic)

Serbia, Kosovo PMs To Push Through Deal

After the two delegations failed to agree an action plan, the Serbian Prime Minister said the EU-led deal will be finalised following direct meetings with his Kosovo counterpart.



By Prishtina Insight

Serbia's Prime Minister, Ivica Dacic, said an action plan to implement the Brussels-led agreement on Kosovo will be completed in seven to ten days through top-level dialogue.

Dacic and his Kosovo counterpart, Hashim Thaci, are to meet in

Brussels on May 21.

The summit comes after the Serbian and Kosovo delegations failed to agree on Wednesday on ways to implement the EU deal brokered in April.

The deal envisions that the local Serbian community in Kosovo will choose its own police commanders, while the composition of the police generally will reflect the ethnic structure on the ground. The draft also proposes more judges coming from the Serbian minority.

Marko Djuric, advisor to Serbian President Tomislav Nikolic, who led the Belgrade team in talks on implementing the deal, said that Serbia had presented a comprehensive plan.

This would ensure that the future community of Serbian municipalities in Kosovo "has precisely those rights envisaged by the agreement", he said.

Djuric also said that the EU officials "did not have any significant objections" to this plan.

According to Djuric, the Kosovo

delegation walked out of the meeting on Wednesday.

The Kosovo government said the Serbian delegation had raised new issues in the talks that were not part of the original document.

It said such issues could only be discussed between the two prime ministers and not during the talks on implementing the agreement.

Serbs in the north of Kosovo have meanwhile written to Russia, seeking Kremlin aid against the EU-brokered deal on Kosovo, which they see as a sell-

out.

Kosovo Serb leaders have condemned the agreement on normalising relations as a first step towards Serbian recognition of Kosovo's independence, proclaimed in 2008.

Since the end of the Kosovo conflict in the late 1990s, northern Kosovo has been beyond the Prishtina government's control, while Serbia has continued to finance local security, judicial, health and educational institutions.



The No. 1. and No. 3 most-watched shows in Kosovo are Turkish. (Photo/Korab Basha)

Turkish Soaps Bewitch

Soap operas from Turkey have replaced Latin American shows as must-sees for many TV viewers in the region - tapping into nostalgia for a system of family values that people in the region have lost, and lament.



By Donjeta Demolli in Prishtina, Amina Hamzic in Sarajevo, Maja Nedelkovska in Skopje and Nemanja Cabric in Belgrade

Turn on the TV in any part of the Balkans today and you may well tune into a Turkish soap opera.

Booming in popularity across the region, according to media research agencies, dozens of these imports are being screened daily on televisions from Albania to the Black Sea.

Sociologists explain the phenomenon, in part, as a sentimental reaction on the part of viewers in the Balkans to an old patriarchal family model that appears dead in the Balkans but which is still alive in Turkey - at least in TV shows.

"The first reason why we started to broadcast Turkish soap operas was that we con-

sidered that the topics in these series are more akin to the mentality in Kosovo, and this will attract more Kosovar viewers," says Dardan Selimaj, a producer at Koha Vision, which airs "Love and Punishment."

Viewers that Prishtina Insight talked to say they love the shows for their realistic characters, intriguing plot lines that include whole families and the lack of violence and obscenities.

Ottomans are back:

Data show that, in the region, Turkish shows are most watched in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia followed by Kosovo and Serbia, where the phenomenon is still developing.

Four Turkish shows are currently on air in Kosovo. The most popular in December 2012 were "What is Fatmagül's fault," which ranked top of all programmes and "Love and punishment," which came third.

Research by Mareco Index Bosnia shows

that in the first quarter of 2013, for example, 13 Turkish shows were being screened on nine stations by two TV networks.

The most watched show in Bosnia and Herzegovina was "Magnificent Century", which is set in the golden age of the Ottoman Empire at the court of Suleiman the Magnificent.

In Macedonia, of nine Turkish shows on air, five were ranked in January 2013 among the top 15 in terms of viewers, according to AGB Nielsen.

"As Time Goes By" and "Asi" came first and second in terms of viewers. "Zavet ("Pledge"), "Mother" and "Memories Still Hurt" also ranked in the top 15. The trend continued in February with minor changes at the top of the list.

In Serbia, four Turkish soaps are currently on air on three television stations, although none made it onto the Top 15 list compiled by AGB Nielsen.

The most popular Turkish show that appeared in their measuring was "When Leaves Fall," which ranked 17th in the overall TV programme in February 2012.

Research from this year shows that in January 2013 the top two Turkish shows were "Magnificent Century," which ranked fourth, and "As Time Goes By," which came seventh.

Tapping into nostalgia:

Serbian sociologist Ratko Bozovic says people identify with the patriarchal values of the Turkish shows, and enjoy spotting the many cultural and linguistic similarities that they recognize while watching the shows.

"The mentality depicted in those shows has to do with a traditional understanding of morality that people in Serbia remember at some level," he says.

Bozovic said that all Balkan countries have seen dramatic changes in terms of

family life, and the Turkish shows help them recall value systems that now seem lost.

"The traditional family model has gone to ruins in the Balkans while the new model is not functioning yet," Bozovic explains.

Artan Muhaxhiri, a sociologist from Kosovo, attributes the success of these series more to the fact that they do not require much intellectual effort.

Scenarios are constructed in such a way that both dialogue and events are simple, sometimes verging on banality, he maintains.

"The stories are melodramatic, lengthy and emotionally charged, which promotes the establishment of relations of viewers to crowds of characters," he says.

Muhaxhiri believes that Turkish series have an additional advantage in penetrating the Albanian market, as "the cultural references are very similar to those of our viewers."

"Social norms and values, the general mentality, family relationships, lifestyle, clothing, food, furniture, character names - the Albanian viewer can easily identify with all these cultural elements in Turkish soaps," he adds.

Love actually:

Darko Brocic, director of AGB Nielsen, says that while Turkish shows are widely watched throughout the region, their popularity depends on the particular show.

"Generally, love stories do better among audiences because these shows are mostly

"I love them; they relax me after the stress of the day. It's an addictive habit."

Hajrie Reka, Prishtina





Turkish Series Lead Prime-time Ratings

"What's Fatmagul's fault" (RTV21)	34%
News (RTK)	32%
"Love and punishment" (KTV)	29%
Film (RTV21)	23%
"Our Cafe" (RTK)	16%
News (KTV)	15%
"Oxygen" (KTV)	15%
News (RTV21)	11%
Football (RTK)	10%
"Life in Kosovo" (RTK)	10%
Film (KTV)	9%

Source: Index Kosova, December 2012

All the way to Istanbul:

Snježana Radenkovi, from Serbia, says she was so thrilled with some of the shows that she watched that she went all the way to Istanbul to find out more.

"I saw the old city and the Topkapi Palace, which includes the harem, as well as the old houses that look like those in the shows that I enjoy," she enthuses.

She says her friends also watch these shows, and they are a frequent topic in their conversations.

"When I headed to Istanbul, I left a message on my Facebook profile that I was going to find Savash (a character from Love and Punishment played by Murat Yıldırım), and so many people liked my status and commented on it that I realized that everyone watched the same show," she says.

"Social norms and values, the general mentality, family relationships, lifestyle, clothing, food, furniture, character names - the Albanian viewer can easily identify with all these cultural elements in Turkish soaps."

Artan Muhaxhiri, sociologist

She feels many people do not want to admit that they watch these soaps because they feel ashamed to do so.

"It's not 'in', although it is perfectly all right to watch Hollywood productions," she continues. "But I do not feel ashamed at all. On the contrary I am delighted."

Amela Bicic, a student of journalism from Belgrade, says that almost the whole of her family in Belgrade, as well as those scattered across the world, in the US and Canada, enjoy watching Turkish shows.

Her two grandmothers both buy magazines in which they follow the latest gossip about their favourite actors together.

Although she doesn't watch much television herself, she sometimes sits with them in order to spend time together - and says the Turkish shows seem superior to their Spanish and Indian rivals.

"Indian shows are awful. The acting is terrible. Turkish shows you can watch and cry through all the time. They are much better than the others," she says.

Syzana Gashi, a fan from Peja, in Kosovo, has lots of time to spend on her favourite shows. "I have a plenty of time in the day since I quit my job, that's why I watch TV soaps," she says.

On the other hand, Lirim Bekteshi, from Gjilan, compares soaps to "reading a novel. They give you the same story, just visualized," he explains.

Hajrie Reka, from Prishtina, says watching TV soaps has become almost a way of life. From Latin American shows to Turkish ones, she has seen them all.

"I love them; they relax me after the stress of the day," Reka concludes. "It's an addictive habit."

The Balkans

watched by women," he says.

"Even the historical topics are imagined more as stories from everyday life, so the historical component is not the main one," Brocic adds.

Turkish producers didn't invest much in that area, and the accent, even in "Magnificent Century", is more on the intricacies that take place at court than on the historical events, he continues.

Commenting on the rise of dubbed Turkish soaps in Macedonia a few years ago, he observes that these shows also became more popular precisely because of the dubbing, as it helps viewers who have difficulties following subtitles.

"In Serbia there is no custom of dubbing programmes, except for children, but the Macedonians have done it well by casting good actors whose voices became recognizable to audiences," he notes.

On the other hand, Bozovic says people are also drawn by the original Turkish language, as they can pick up on words that their languages have borrowed from Turkish and the other way around.

'Adios' to Spanish:

Most people who follow Turkish soaps in Bosnia, Macedonia, Kosovo and Serbia say they admire the family relations depicted in them, as well as cultural similarities.

Nefisa Bubi, a pensioner from Sarajevo, says the stories remind her of fairy tales in which good and evil are strongly opposed to one another.

"I like the way they represent relationships between children and parents in shows like 'When Leaves Fall,' which is full of the deep respect that once existed here as well," she says, adding that she enjoys noting similarities between Turkish and Bosnian languages.

Irnesa Senderovic, also from Sarajevo, says these shows taught her what people can be like, what are they ready to do and thus

what to expect from the future.

"I got fed up with Spanish-language shows because they all follow the same pattern and involve plots that don't happen in everyday life to ordinary people," she says.

She says that she likes the Turkish language and their culture, as well as finding the acting in the shows lifelike.

Elvira Malic, a trader from Sarajevo, finds Turkish shows relaxing. The characters are more realistic than those in shows from Spain and Latin America; even the most evil characters have some redeeming human qualities.

"I like the element of oriental exoticism that I recognize in the costumes of actors like those in 'Magnificent century,'" she says.

"Their culture is also close to me, as there are a lot of things here left over from the Ottomans. We call our coffee 'Turkish', for example, even if we prepare it differently. I am interested in these things."

Zvezda Blazevska, from Skopje, compares her husband's passion for football with hers for Turkish shows.

"My family protest when I watch them and argue with me but I tell them that it presents real relaxation for me," she says. "Most of them are dubbed, so I can do my knitting at the same time, which is a double pleasure."

Almasa Alilovic, also from Skopje, says watching Turkish soaps has become a family ritual in their household.

"We watch Turkish shows together, which is nice," she says. "You can hear something happening in the show and afterwards recognize a similar situation in your own life," she adds. "It's not like I identify myself with the stories, but there are beautiful stories in there."

Alilovic likes love stories best, as well as the actors, who she says "are handpicked so they compel you to watch the shows and amaze you and make you interested in them".

Aco Ristovski, from Skopje, likes the fact that characters are not superheroes; there is no violence, just ordinary human tales.

"They are like a light novel. They are more interesting than American ones with all those lawyers and businessmen who don't have the same customs as us," he says. "Turkish shows are much closer to us."

"Many people make fun of those who watch Turkish shows," he adds. "I tell them that I need this relaxation, and the offer on Macedonian television provides no other choice."



Croatia's EU Benefits Tempt Bosnian Youth

Young Bosnians with Croatian passports will have new opportunities to work in Europe after Croatia joins the EU in July - but some regard this privilege with mixed feelings.



By Kenan Efendic

Tomislav Piplica, an 23, English Literature student from Sarajevo - one of half a million Bosnians with Croatian citizenship - is well aware of all the grim problems that young Bosnians face, starting with low employment and generally poor perspectives.

But he says he will do all in his power to obtain a decent life in his home country before deciding whether to make use of the privileges that his Croatian citizenship gives him.

Martina Bradara, a 25-year-old recent graduate in journalism, thinks differently. Now struggling to find a job, she is eager to use the opportunities that Croatia's EU membership will give her.

"The economic situation in Bosnia is so bad that I think that going abroad is a smart decision," she says.

"I am ready to move away for a good job opportunity. As a young and educated person, my chances are better in a developed country," she told Prishtina Insight.

While Croatia is due to join the EU on July 1, neighbouring Bosnia and Herzegovina is very far from that prospect.

An ongoing deep political crisis in the last couple of years has set back the country's halting progress on its EU path.

With its ethnic tensions and political feuds and a complicated administrative and political structure, the economic outlook worsens every year.

At the end of last year, the official number of unemployed per-

sons in Bosnia was more than 550,000, which is 44.4 per cent of the working-age population, the highest number recorded.

Many young people, particularly those affected by unemployment, see the only chance for work in moving to other European countries.

When Croatia becomes EU member in July, young Bosnians will have better opportunities to find jobs in the EU if they have Croatian passports. Those with this right will have the same working rights as any other EU citizen.

"When Croatia joins the European Union, citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina who have Croatian citizenship will have same rights as Croatian citizens from Croatia, including right to free movement, employment and education", the Croatian Foreign Ministry has confirmed.

But, living in Bosnia and being formally an EU citizen, thanks to dual citizenship, leaves some Bosnians with Croatian passports with mixed feelings.

"Living in Bosnia and being an EU citizen is like being a rich man who lives on the street," Piplica says. "I won't feel especially European just because I have Croatian citizenship."

Daniela Maric, 24, a law graduate from Mostar, the biggest city in Herzegovina, says she feels relieved by the idea of Croatia's EU accession.

"Now I know what exactly I have to do if I want to leave Bosnia and work somewhere else," she told Prishtina Insight.

Nevertheless, she cannot say that she feels proud of Croatia's EU accession, because Bosnia and Herzegovina remains her "primary homeland".



Croatia's forthcoming EU membership will mean that roughly a half-million Bosnian Croats will also have EU citizenship. (Photo/Martin Deutsch)

Dajana Cvjetković, 24, who lives in Breza, a small town near Sarajevo, where she works in a NGO, is more satisfied with her life in Bosnia. With a secure job, she doesn't need, or intend, to go anywhere.

"I am not going to leave this country except as a tourist. In future, I may go to do PhD studies abroad, but that has nothing to do with my Croatian passport," she says.

"Life in Bosnia for me is just fine and I don't think I will ever leave my country," she adds.

Mijo Džalto, 29, co-owner of small IT company in Prozor, a small town 110km west from Sarajevo, feels the same. He doesn't think about leaving.

"I don't think I am a special case because of my Croatian passport and EU citizenship," he says. "I am focused on life in Bosnia, with all the problems and joys that it brings," he told Prishtina

Insight.

He admits that he is not even that fully informed about all the rights and privileges that EU citizenship will give him.

"I don't intend to pack my stuff and run away from here," he says. "But, in any case, it is good to know that I have some opportunities in future."

However, others without secure jobs don't see Bosnia as place to build a good life and are glad they have new opportunities to emigrate.

Ivanka Kordic, a 25-year-old law graduate from Mostar, sees Croatia joining the EU as big advantage.

"I will definitely go to work or study in the EU," she says. "I think it is one of the best things that EU membership gives to ordinary citizens."

"I will try to go to Germany, where my father has lived for years. I don't know if I am going

to stay for couple years or for longer but in any case it will be huge experience," she adds.

Irena Mrnjavac, an activist from Mostar and president of the organization Croatian Students Political Science Forum, says she doesn't want to use her Croatian passport to leave - but understands young people who want to go abroad.

"I am not one of those who will just pack their baggage. But I understand them, because this state doesn't care at all about the 'brain drain,'" she told Prishtina Insight.

For her, the real advantage of Croatian EU accession shouldn't be seen only in better possibilities for travel, education and work abroad but in building better societies in both Bosnia and Croatia.

"I hope that Croatian EU membership will be something more than a simple passport towards moving away," she concludes.

Serbian Gays Get Own Space for First Time



By Prishtina Insight

Gays in Belgrade are to get their own "corner" in the heart of the capital in June for the first time.

"The space is designed as a place to rest, read, work, with lodging and a bar where LGBT people will be able to socialize," says Vesna Zoric, president of the NGO Egal which initiated the project, together with two NGOs "Bear zajednica" and "Loud & Queer".

According to Zoric, only LGBT people who in general know each other will be allowed to enter, while guests from abroad must

be announced and get a reservation to go in.

Besides accommodation, all guests will be able to get all the information they need on where they can move freely and the "safe" places in town.

The centre, which is currently under construction, will occupy 300 square metres of space in Kraljice Natalije street.

Zoric said that some people had complained about the centre being placed in the same street as a maternity hospital and two schools - an indication of what gay rights activists are up against in Serbia.

"None of the people coming to the centre will parade on the street, they will go into the room and stay there," she added.

According to surveys, Serbian society remains deeply homo-

phobic, as a result of which gay people tend to live in isolation and with a high degree of secrecy.

In 2009, 2011 and 2012, the authorities banned gay parades after police declared they could not safeguard marchers against threats of violence coming from right-wing groups.

The Gay Pride march went ahead in 2010, but several thousand youngsters, including football fans and members of rightist organisations, threw stones and missiles at the police, injuring police officers and setting buildings and vehicles on fire.

This year, organisers have announced that Belgrade Gay Pride Parade will be marked from September 20 to 29, while the central walk through the capital is set for September 28.



Graffiti in Belgrade in 2009, against the gay pride parade, reflects the widespread homophobia in Serbia. (Photo/Aris Gionis)

Macedonia Refuses to Face Its Troubled Past

Macedonia has yet to face up to what happened in its 2001 conflict with Albanian rebels, says Biljana Vankovska, an advocate for Balkan reconciliation initiative RECOM.



By Sinisa Jakov Marusic

Pristina Insight: Johan Tarculovski was the only ethnic Macedonian convicted by the Hague Tribunal of war crimes after his police unit killed Albanian civilians during the 2001 conflict, but he was greeted with a government-backed celebration in Skopje last month after being released early. What did that say about reconciliation efforts in Macedonia?

Biljana Vankovska: "The welcoming party for Tarculovski is in fact the best indicator that we have lost all these ten years since the conflict in vain, at least when it comes down to actually facing the past.

"Macedonia not only had an agreement with the Hague Tribunal and cooperated with it, which means it made an obligation, but also Johan Tarculovski was convicted and served two-thirds of his sentence. However, we saw that for the majority of Macedonian citizens, for the ethnic Macedonians, this was irrelevant and for them; by getting out, he became a hero, a martyr. Even the legitimacy of the victims was questioned.

"There's a flipside of course, two sides to every story. On the other hand, [Macedonia's ethnic] Albanians, at least those who participated in the conflict, or those [now] in the government who are responsible in one way or another, were not held accountable for the crimes committed. There was even a political agreement in the parliament to interpret the law on amnesty, which confirmed an inappropriately broad amnesty for war crimes as established by the

international law. This means a political end was put to a story about perpetrators and victims, and without them there is no reconciliation."

PI: In Macedonia you are known as an advocate for the reconciliation initiative RECOM, whose aim is to promote the creation of a regional commission tasked with establishing facts about war crimes and human rights violations in the Balkan wars. So far you have met numerous politicians. What is your impression, is their support real or just rhetoric?

Vankovska: "Declarative political support for RECOM is usual everywhere in the region. All of us, public advocates for RECOM, are facing the same problem. We receive only declarative support, which is at this moment almost unanimous among heads of state.

"Now comes the real test, and that would be the formation of a regional experts' group made of representatives, personal envoys of the region's heads of states. For the first time they would sit together at the same table and discuss the document that the RECOM coalition prepared, the rulebook for the future regional commission. We want to make them take some action. That will be a long process. At this point, even a symbolical act such as this one is important. It does not mean the end, on the contrary, it's just the beginning of implementing RECOM.

"We faced a unique obstacle here, which existed until recently, and that was the silence in Serbia. The new development is that even the last president appointed a personal representative to the expert group for RECOM.

"Concretely in the case of Macedonia, I was pleasantly surprised that everyone I talked to,



Johan Tarculovski was convicted of war crimes in connection with the killing of Albanian civilians during the 2001 conflict in Macedonia.

both on the Macedonian and Albanian side, showed interest. No one refused to meet me, and all of them even demonstrated a high level of awareness what RECOM was all about and they all had a stance, a reason to back RECOM. All right, Macedonians had one position, Albanians another, but it seems to me that there was at least a wish list on both sides.

"The problem in Macedonia is that this issue is, in most cases, being suppressed, cast aside most of the time, except when someone needs to score political points by exploiting the war stories from 2001. The welcoming party for Tarculovski was one such case when I think we have had political misuse of a Hague convict."

PI: In 2011, the Macedonian parliament voted for an amnesty over

four cases of war crimes allegedly committed by Albanian rebels. One of them was the case tackling the fate of 12 Macedonians kidnapped during the conflict and presumed dead. In its last report on human rights in Macedonia published in April, the Council of Europe suggested that this investigation must not be stopped. Does this give new hope to families of those kidnapped?

Vankovska: "According to the signals we received from the outside, from the international community, both from government and non-government organisations such as Amnesty International, for example, we have had a unanimous agreement. And this definitely confirms that from international law's standpoint, the amnesty is inadmissible.

"It is true that the families of the kidnapped may be the most vulnerable group we have to discuss. The least that must be done is to find out the truth about the place they were buried so that their families can pay respects or at least have closure in that part of their life.

"For now I don't see any progress in the Macedonian judiciary. It seems we will have to work on several fronts in order to send this unambiguous message: the least that the state owes to the victims of the conflict are the facts that reveal what happened and how in cases of kidnapping, murder or torture.

PI: Because of your public stance, you are often the target for attacks coming from all sides. The last fierce criticism came after you said that the welcoming party organised for Tarculovski was not right. Are you discouraged by this?

Vankovska: "I have been in some kind of a sandwich [between different sides] for years or in a position which does not fit the mainstream opinion, so I got used to it. In fact, it is the duty of a public intellectual. They do not have the right to complain about their position, because they themselves open up unpleasant issues which the politicians and public do not want to see, and reconciliation is obviously one of the most painful issues.

"In that sense, I understand the attacks that ensued after I voiced my stance on Tarculovski's welcoming party, but I was unpleasantly surprised by the viciousness and sheer number of attacks coming from politicians, media and people that I don't even know. But it won't have any effect on my job."



Biljana Vankovska is an advocate for Balkan reconciliation initiative RECOM. (Photo/RECOM)

Prosecutors Renew Hunt for Kosovo Organ Traffickers

As the EU rule of law mission in Kosovo stages a new organ-trafficking investigation, prosecutor Jonathan Ratel discusses the recent Medicus clinic convictions and the suspects who remain at large.



By Kreshnik Gashi

Prishtina Insight: Was the investigation of the Medicus clinic near Prishtina, where the illegal kidney transplants took place, taken seriously from its outset in 2008?

Jonathan Ratel: "I think the initial investigation was very difficult because of the way it began. It began very quickly and with some urgency at Prishtina International Airport with the medical distress of a young Turkish boy, Yilmaz Altun, who expressed that he needed assistance. He was examined by a doctor at the airport and the police immediately realised that something was very wrong; they arrived at the Medicus clinic and seized the clinic. They found the recipient of that illegal transplant there."

PI: In 2008, it was implied that there was only one transplant operation at Medicus. How did you find out that there were more than 24 transplants?

Ratel: "When the search was conducted at the Medicus clinic and I have to say that that search was conducted because of urgency but it was not conducted with a valid search warrant by the court. That was a real problem. The urgency of the situation could have permitted the police to search without a warrant; however, that was not requested and a prosecutor's order was not requested and was not even given. So this search went ahead without any prior judicial authorisation whatsoever and that was a key issue in the case. Why was it important? It was extremely important because there were documents, medical records, anaesthesiology logs and surgical records that we desperately needed for the case in order to ground these convictions."

PI: In 2008, Kosovo police arrested Moshe Harel, one of the key suspects in this case. Why was he released before he could be tried?

Ratel: "I do not know but I could say that Moshe Harel, the Israeli national, wanted now by Interpol, was released by an UNMIK judge after 30 days' custody. He was told to return to Kosovo and face his charges, but he never has."

PI: Could you explain the role of Moshe Harel in this case?

Ratel: "Moshe Harel is a recruiter involved in the procurement, purchases, sale and transplantation of human organs involved in the illegal international trade in body parts. He is a key person in arranging logistics, money, wire transfers, travel and meetings between patients and donor victims. At that time, he was a resident in Israel and transited

to Kosovo through Istanbul.

Ratel: "Istanbul was a staging point for both the donor victims and the recipients. They would enter often on Turkish Airlines flights together and then immediately go to the Medicus clinic for surgery, along with Moshe Harel. He was a key participant and a key member of the organised criminal group."

PI: What was the role of Turkish doctor Yusuf Sonmez in the Medicus transplants?

Ratel: "At that time he was the key surgeon and instrumental in all organ transplants that took place. He is a fugitive from justice and wanted by Interpol along with Moshe Harel. He is a notorious organ trafficker from Turkey that we have been engaged in seeking for a long period of time. We do not know where he is at the present moment, but there is a theory that he might be in South Africa. We are making all efforts to locate him; he is wanted on a red notice by Interpol, and he is under indictment in Turkey for offences arising from the Medicus clinic here."

PI: In 2008, Sonmez managed to get a license from Kosovo's health ministry to work at the Medicus clinic. Was this acceptable?

Ratel: "Well, I do not think that the authorities here may have known his complete history, that he had run into difficulty with the criminal law in Turkey. Maybe they were aware, I do not know. But what I do know is that he was licensed as a general surgeon, not for organ transplants because this is prohibited under the Kosovo Health Act."

PI: It's believed that Sonmez was in Kosovo in 2008 but left just before Medicus was raided. Was he tipped off by someone?

Ratel: "What we do know is that from the time that Yilmaz Altun at the airport expressed his concern that he was in medical distress and was seen by a doctor at the airport and the time that it took to police to arrive to Medicus was approximately just short of one hour. We do not know what information in that hour may have been given to the clinic; however, we are concerned, as was the defence, that a number of documents were missing from the clinic: key surgical protocol books and records were missing. In addition, there were other documents that would have assisted the prosecution and perhaps the defence, but those documents have been removed from the clinic."

"We have no record of [Sonmez] exiting this country. There is a theory that he may have used a rented car and exited by land through a small

road in one of the neighbouring countries. We are just not sure."

PI: Have you asked Turkey for the extradition of Sonmez to Kosovo?

Ratel: "There was very limited opportunity for extradition both for Sonmez and Moshe Harel for obvious reasons that their law in Turkey and Israel prohibits extradition of their own citizens under the constitution. What was done was a full cooperation with Turkey and Israel based upon reciprocity requests for legal assistance. We met with the police and prosecutors of both Israel and Turkey and we had excellent cooperation with both countries. That has resulted in indictments going forth in both Turkey and Israel against several persons."

PI: You have said that there will be further prosecutions in the Medicus case.

Ratel: "I can confirm that the prosecutor has filed a further investigation in this matter against each suspect in Kosovo for the activities of the Medicus clinic. Those involve allegations of organised crime, trafficking in persons, abuse of office and other related offences. But that is a new investigation against further suspects."

PI: There have been rumours that some Kosovo politicians could be under suspicion. Can you confirm that?

Ratel: "I would not answer that, sorry. I may not identify any suspects."

PI: The initial arrests were criticised by Kosovo's former justice minister, Hajredin Kuqi. Was this a form of pressure aimed at stopping the investigations in 2008?

Ratel: "I am not aware of those statements because I was not here in Kosovo in 2008. I can advise that the past minister of justice was a witness in this matter and he gave evidence, so were other senior officials. That was part of the evidence. I can say that these matters and others will be looked at and there is a further investigation by the prosecutor with regard to activities of the Medicus clinic."

PI: Were there any political influences on this case or during the trial?

Ratel: "This prosecutor has not been influenced by politics at all; that has not happened. I cannot say about other investigators or other individuals, but I can say that I am not affected by any form of political pressure or concern."

PI: Will you appeal against the April 29 verdict that convicted five men including the owner of Medicus of organised crime and

people-trafficking?

Ratel: "Yes, I will. I think you should understand that we are satisfied with the majority of the verdict, we find that the sentences and convictions are entirely appropriate. We will file an appeal on technical issues regarding the limitations and on other technical matters. But I have to say that we welcome these verdicts, we think that this is justice for the victims, for the donor victims that were recruited and transported here to the Medicus clinic and exploited for the removal of their organs."

PI: The verdict ordered compensation to be paid to the victims, but the Medicus clinic has been shut since 2008. How will the money be found?

Ratel: "Let's be clear that the building exists, the equipment and the medical setting exists. We have filed an application for confiscation of that building, land, medical equipment and all its assets inside because the building was in total closure under the court through the entire investigation."

PI: Do you know anything about the health of those people whose kidneys were removed at the Medicus clinic?

Ratel: "The health and security of the victims is of a great interest to us. The victims suffered significant physical impairment. Many of them, their lives, have been altered forever both physically and psychologically. They have suffered immense pain, in some cases disfigurement, and their right to employment is severely limited. Some of them will live with this for the rest of their lives. Accordingly, the court took the view and they rightly saw that there should be compensation. But, so too, the desperate recipients of these organs, who were only concerned with their own condition and ignored where these organs were coming from, are also in a sense vic-

tims too. Several of those persons have died, including the witnesses that we heard from in the court."

PI: Have you worked with cases of human trafficking before?

Ratel: "Yes, I have worked with human trafficking in Sarajevo in the state court, in Bosnia."

PI: So you are familiar with this phenomenon?

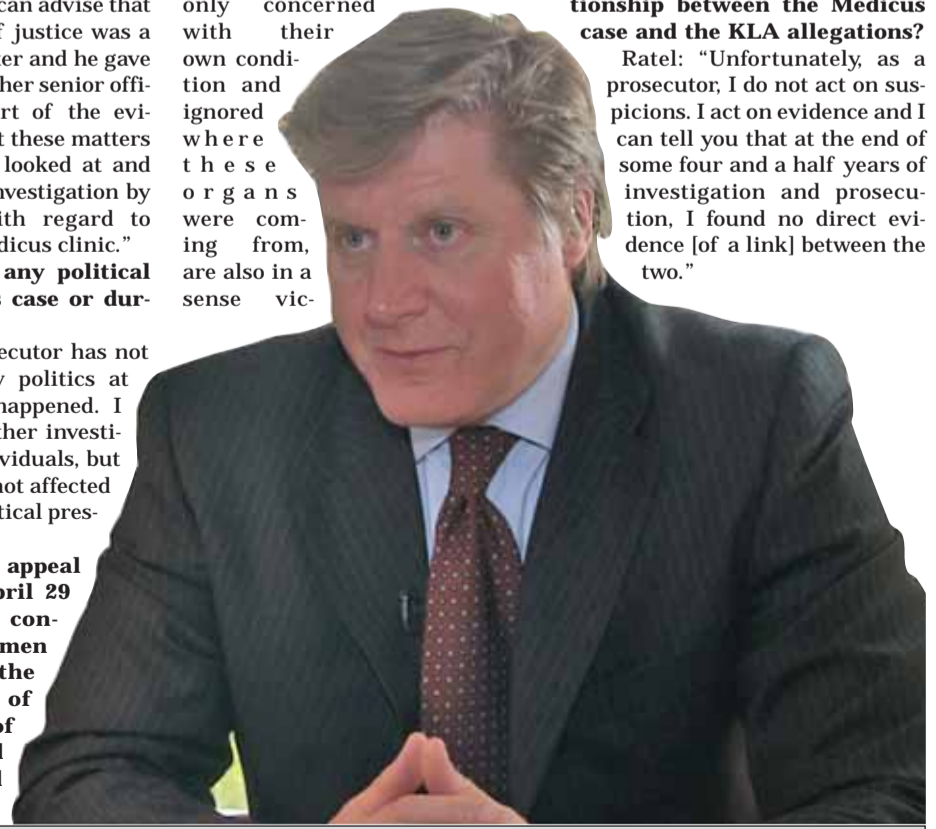
Ratel: "The techniques used by the recruiters, the persons whose enticed poor persons to agree to sell their organs and for removal of the organs at the Medicus clinic, were much the same. There were false promises of payment, coercion, fraud, and other devices used against them, including a tremendous pressure. These are seen in other trafficking instances, including trafficking in persons for the purpose of sexual slavery or prostitution - they use the exact same techniques."

PI: The Medicus clinic was also mentioned in a Council of Europe report, written by human rights rapporteur Dick Marty, which alleged that elements of the Kosovo Liberation Army traded the organs of prisoners during the 1999 conflict. However, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe did not permit Marty to testify at the Medicus trial.

Ratel: "The court and the prosecutor agree that this is unfortunate, because Dick Marty's report claims that he had direct causal evidence between the Medicus clinic and the allegations of the human organ trafficking during the [Kosovo] conflict, and we would be very interested to hear from him."

PI: As a prosecutor, do you think that there is any relationship between the Medicus case and the KLA allegations?

Ratel: "Unfortunately, as a prosecutor, I do not act on suspicions. I act on evidence and I can tell you that at the end of some four and a half years of investigation and prosecution, I found no direct evidence [of a link] between the two."



EULEX prosecutor Jonathan Ratel.

EULEX Launches New Probe After Medicus Convictions

After five men were convicted of involvement in the illegal trading of human organs from a Kosovo clinic, EU prosecutors said they were investigating eight new suspects.



By Marija Ristic and Edona Peci

The EU rule of law mission in Kosovo said last week that it was launching a new investigation into people suspected of involvement in the organ-trading ring that operated from the Medicus clinic outside Prishtina in 2008, a day after the high-profile convictions of five people involved with the clinic.

"The eight individuals are being investigated for the criminal offences of organised crime, trafficking in persons, grievous bodily harm, abusing official position of authority, fraud and trading in influence," the EU mission, EULEX, said in a statement.

The statement said that the new inquiry was based on revelations arising from investigations and from information that came out at the trial which suggested that the men who were convicted had help from others in order to traffic victims and sell their organs.

The trafficking ring lured poor donors to the Medicus clinic with false promises of lucrative payments, removed their kidneys and sold them to rich patients. Around 30 illegal kidney transplants are alleged to have taken place at the clinic

in 2008.

The conviction of the five Kosovo citizens on Monday drew no official reaction from Prishtina, but Belgrade's deputy war crimes prosecutor welcomed the verdict.

"It is very important as this is the first time that a verdict for organ trafficking in Kosovo has been reached, and it also accepted the prosecution's arguments that it is organised crime and not medical malpractice," deputy prosecutor Bruno Vekaric told Serbian media.

The court in Prishtina found the former owner of the Medicus clinic, Lutfi Dervishi, guilty of organised crime and people-trafficking, sentenced him to eight years in prison and imposed a fine of 10,000 euro.

His son Arban Dervishi was found guilty of the same charges and sentenced to seven years and three months in prison, and fined 2,500 euro.

Both of them were ordered to pay compensation of 15,000 euro to each of around seven victims of the organ-trafficking ring.

The clinic's head anaesthetist Sokol Hajdini was found guilty of grievous bodily harm and sentenced to three years in prison, while assistant anaesthetists Islam Bytyqi and Sylejman Dula were convicted of grievous bodily harm and sentenced to a year's imprison-



EULEX is investigating eight more people in the Medicus case.

ment, suspended for two years.

Belgrade believes that the Medicus case is a part of broader criminal operation that included Kosovo Liberation Army members who are claimed to have harvested the organs of prisoners during and after the conflict with Serbian forces in 1999.

The allegations are based on a 2010 report by Dick Marty, the Council of Europe's human rights rapporteur, in which he alleged that some elements of the KLA, including Kosovo Prime Minister Hasim Tachi, had been involved in organ trafficking.

Marty was invited to testify at the Medicus trial, but the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe declined to discuss the lifting of his immunity, thereby preventing him from appearing.

The EULEX prosecutor in the Medicus case said that transplant recipients, mainly Israelis, paid more than 70,000 euro for the kidneys.

Police initially raided the clinic in 2008 after a Turkish man whose kidney had been removed was found seriously ill at Prishtina airport.

Two foreign suspects in the case - Turkish doctor Yusuf Sonmez and Moshe Harel, an Israeli citizen - are still listed as wanted by Interpol but remain at large.

According to the indictment, Sonmez was a transplant surgeon "involved in the international trade in human organs, the procurement and purchase and sale of body parts and the recruitment of persons for the removal and harvest of organs".

Harel was "the key recruiter and fixer" for the trafficking ring, the indictment said.

The indictment alleged that preparations for the organ-trafficking operation began in 2006 when Dervishi made direct contact with Sonmez and soon after "began to plan and deliberate, in concert together, to perform organ transplants in Kosovo."

Kosovo Prepares to Legalize Organ Transplants

from page 1

Meanwhile people like E.K. can't get a new kidney in Kosovo legally.

But that may change this year as the Kosovo Assembly considers a bill proposed by the Ministry of Health.

The bill, which the Ministry expects to become law during the second half of this year, would make organ transplants legal.

Transplants matching EU standards:

Dr Ibrahim Rudhani, director of Nephrology at the University Clinical Centre, Kosovo's main public hospital, said the bill would improve the quality of lives of people who need transplants because it will shorten the waiting times.

"Organ transplants in Kosovo could be done according to European Union standards,"

Rudhani said, cautioning that implementation of the transplant law will take time.

More than 680 people receive dialysis at Rudhani's clinic regularly, and according to the physician, most are potential candidates for kidney transplants - the most commonly performed organ transplant worldwide.

He said about 80 of his patients have gone abroad for kidney transplants.

Currently, an administrative guideline under the Ministry of Health provides for arranging organ transplants outside Kosovo.

But the Office of the Auditor General in 2010 and 2011 found numerous problems in the transplant scheme.

The auditors cited procedural violations in how people were selected for the programme - namely that transplants were not always arranged based on need. In some cases, they were done without documentation showing that a person needed an organ.

Transplant centre envisaged:

The bill governing organ transplants, if adopted, envisages a robust national organ transplant programme with detailed guidelines laid out in 10 chapters and 76 articles.

A State Transplant Center would be established to organise and coordinates transplants under the auspices of the Ministry of Health.

Selling organs is forbidden in Kosovo. Donations from the deceased are only permitted where there was prior written consent or credible statements from family members that confirm that a person wanted to donate their organs.

The bill calls for stringent oversight, including random inspections by the Ministry of Health. Violations of the law would result in fines of up to

30,000 euro and the suspension and possible removal of medical licenses.

Private clinic and hospitals could also receive licenses to perform transplants, according to the bill.

The prospect of private clinics performing organ transplants has drawn concern from the EU rule-of-law mission, EULEX.

EULEX declined to discuss its concerns about the bill with Prishtina Insight.

The mission, however, took the lead role in prosecuting the case of the illegal kidney transplants at the private Medicus clinic.

The deputy head of the health commission, Time Kadrijaj, said EULEX's apparent concerns would not lead to any immediate changes in the bill.

"The law is being drafted in commissions and is not for a public hearing. EULEX should bring detailed proposals, in articles and points, which we can incorporate in the bill," Kadrijaj said.

Editor's Word The New Yorker Treatment

Kosovo's organs scandals reached a milestone as they got The New Yorker treatment.

Nicholas Schmidle's piece, "Bringing up the Bodies," came out just before the Medicus verdicts.

The 8,400-word story is a compelling read and a great piece of journalism. It explores the depths of the accusations that Kosovo Liberation Army members, in 1999, killed prisoners in Albania to harvest and sell their organs as well as the more recent case of illicit kidney transplants at the Medicus clinic.

The Medicus case - while certainly complicated - was always more clear cut, as evidenced by the recent guilty verdicts. Investigators and prosecutors had the donors, the recipients and the clearly identifiable perpetrators, as well as physical evidence at the clinic itself. The KLA organ allegations, however, have always been piecemeal - with no smoking gun.

Schmidle essentially debunked the most compelling evidence thus far: an account from a purported former KLA fighter who claimed to have removed a still-beating heart from a Serb prisoner.

Readers, however, likely will finish Schmidle's story feeling that there may be at least some credibility to the KLA organ-trafficking allegations.

Many of the key facts in the story, such as the so-called Yellow House in Albania where the organ harvesting is alleged to have taken place, have been previously reported elsewhere - this newspaper included. But their appearance in The New Yorker gives them added weight.

As Schmidle noted in a blog post, in the wake of the Medicus verdicts, the convictions for the illegal kidney transplants at the Prishtina clinic have also lent weight to the KLA accusations by confirming that there was an established illicit organ-trafficking operation in Kosovo.

Indeed, recent reports in the The Independent and several Kosovo newspapers have alleged that Shaip Muja, a PDK MP and former health adviser to Prime Minister Hashim Thaci, is one of the targets of a second wave of investigations into the Medicus case. Muja testified in the recent trial, admitting to meeting the Medicus doctors but denying any knowledge about the organ trafficking.

Muja is himself no stranger to dodgy dealings. He's been accused of illegally usurping public land and evading taxes, among other allegations.

Muja's name has also surfaced in the much-politicized 2010 Council of Europe report by the Swiss politician Dick Marty concerning allegations of organ harvesting by the KLA, suggesting a possible connection between the two cases. Muja has vehemently denied the allegations concerning the KLA organ trafficking.

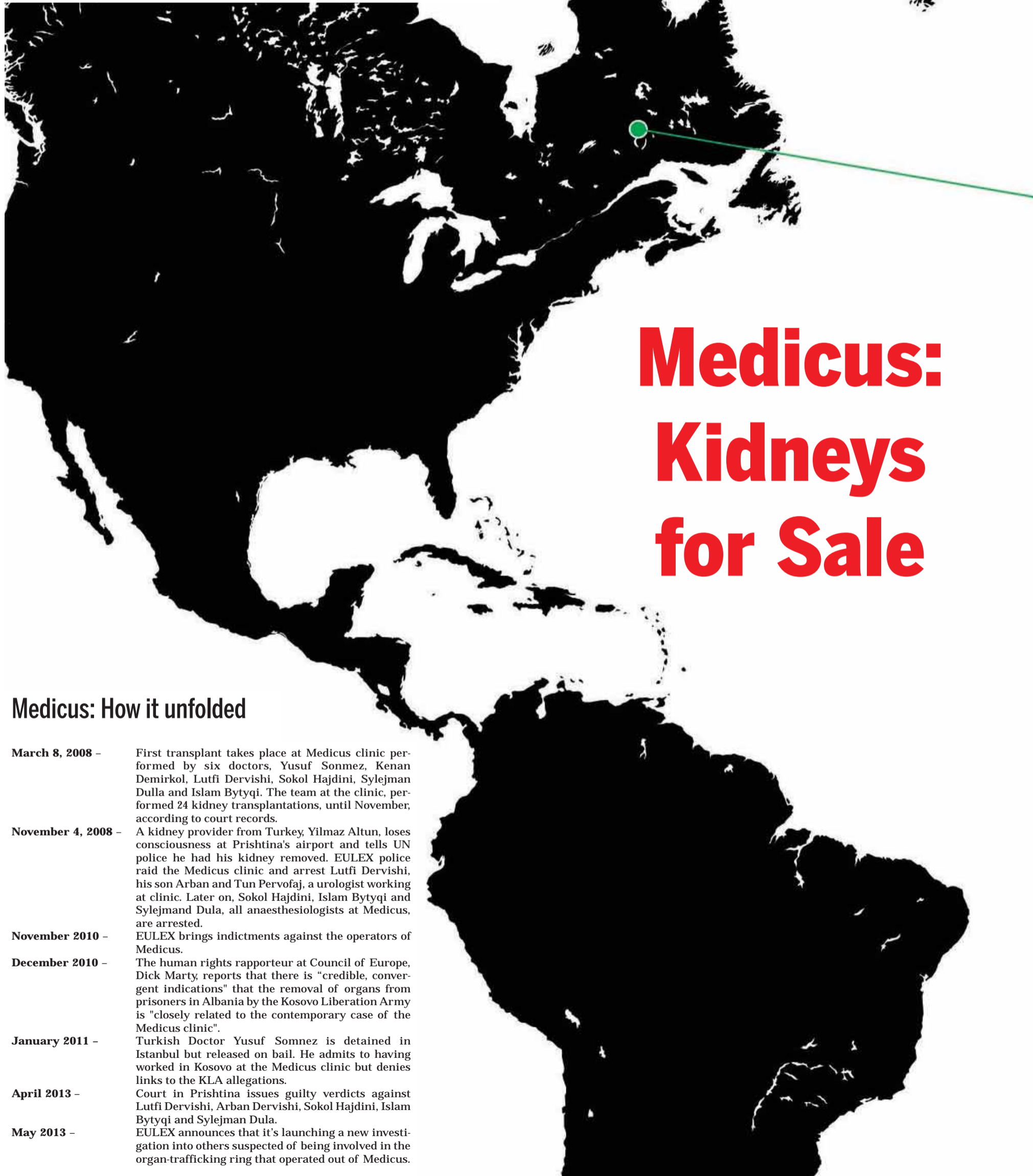
While there remain many unanswered questions and allegations that are as yet unsubstantiated, it is clear that the concerns about organ trafficking are unlikely to go away.

● Origins of Donors:

Israel (4), Turkey (3), Moldova (1), Belarus (1), Russia (3), Ukraine (2), Kazakhstan (1), Unknown (9)

● Origins of Recipients :

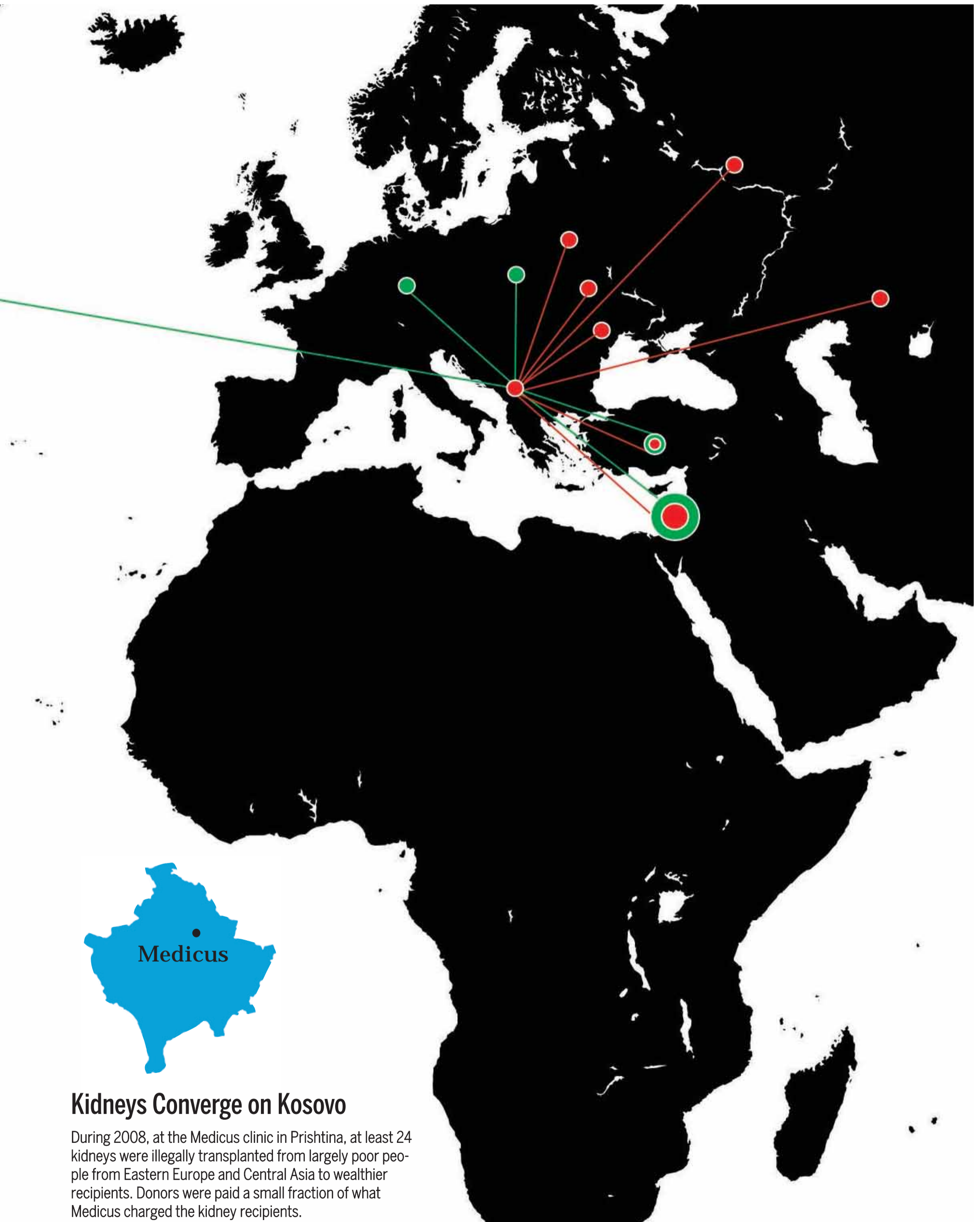
Israel (14), Turkey (1), Ukraine (1), Poland (1), Canada (1), Germany (1), Unknown (5)



Medicus: Kidneys for Sale

Medicus: How it unfolded

- March 8, 2008** – First transplant takes place at Medicus clinic performed by six doctors, Yusuf Sonmez, Kenan Demirkol, Lutfi Dervishi, Sokol Hajdini, Sylejman Dulla and Islam Bytyqi. The team at the clinic, performed 24 kidney transplantations, until November, according to court records.
- November 4, 2008** – A kidney provider from Turkey, Yilmaz Altun, loses consciousness at Prishtina's airport and tells UN police he had his kidney removed. EULEX police raid the Medicus clinic and arrest Lutfi Dervishi, his son Arban and Tun Pervofaj, a urologist working at clinic. Later on, Sokol Hajdini, Islam Bytyqi and Sylejmand Dula, all anaesthesiologists at Medicus, are arrested.
- November 2010** – EULEX brings indictments against the operators of Medicus.
- December 2010** – The human rights rapporteur at Council of Europe, Dick Marty, reports that there is "credible, convergent indications" that the removal of organs from prisoners in Albania by the Kosovo Liberation Army is "closely related to the contemporary case of the Medicus clinic".
- January 2011** – Turkish Doctor Yusuf Somnez is detained in Istanbul but released on bail. He admits to having worked in Kosovo at the Medicus clinic but denies links to the KLA allegations.
- April 2013** – Court in Prishtina issues guilty verdicts against Lutfi Dervishi, Arban Dervishi, Sokol Hajdini, Islam Bytyqi and Sylejman Dula.
- May 2013** – EULEX announces that it's launching a new investigation into others suspected of being involved in the organ-trafficking ring that operated out of Medicus.



Kidneys Converge on Kosovo

During 2008, at the Medicus clinic in Prishtina, at least 24 kidneys were illegally transplanted from largely poor people from Eastern Europe and Central Asia to wealthier recipients. Donors were paid a small fraction of what Medicus charged the kidney recipients.

Foltin and the Art of Private Folklore

The band from Macedonia describe their approach to music as an irrational process of creating a 'private folklore' out of their impressions and dreams, and their latest album as a tonic for apathy and depression.



By Nemanja Cabric

In their new album *Antitelo* (*Antibody*), Foltin continues to combine elements of mainstream and alternative Macedonian and World music, experimenting both with acoustic and electric instruments.

In a career that began in 1995 in Bitola, in southwest Macedonia, they have recorded seven studio albums, performed in more than 50 plays and recorded soundtracks for several movies and videos.

The most recent plays they performed in are *Misterij Buffo*, produced by SNG Drama from Ljubljana, and *Odysseus* by the Ulisses Theatre of Brijuni, Croatia.

With their jazzy Balkan music, full of improvisation and electro-like sound and rhythms, they have performed across the region and Europe.

Foltin sometimes describe their style as "pseudo-emigrant cabaret", not wanting to identify with most of the existing genres in music. Their concerts often turn into real performances, characterized by an almost frantic dance atmosphere.

Antitelo, (*Antibody*), their seventh album, released last year,



Foltin hail from Bitola, Macedonia.

speaks about the life, energy and passion that people need to survive.

The 20-minute album, according to Branislav Nikolov, sends a message that a person needs to be strong, "to think with his own head and act according to it as well as sustain wounds that will help one to better feel the passion of life.

"*Antitelo* (*Antibody*) means that if we are weak and succumb to apathy, then we encourage the forces that will destroy us. Just like in the blood," he explains.

The album was recorded by a crew of six professional musi-

cians: Pece Nikolovski (clarinet, chaos pad); Branislav Nikolov (vocals, guitar); Pece Trajkovski (accordion, keys, percussion, guitar); Goce Jovanoski (bass); Slavco Jovev (drums); Marjan Stanic (percussion).

According to them, the album continues a quest to be fresh and original and combine Macedonian traditional themes with world music, acoustic and electro sounds, using readymade instruments and lyrics inspired by local and international poets.

Mainstream alternative:

The band explain that their

musical blend reflects their different personalities and common approach to music, which is based on creating an original sound, instead of borrowing existing genres.

"It is more of a combination of characters than musical genres," Trajkovski says.

"We never thought of following existing musical patterns. Too me it would be absurd, as the band's identity has been built over years, accumulating experiences from concerts and theatre plays," he says.

Each of the seven albums is an artistic whole that combines rhythms traditional to Macedonia

and those from different European countries with modern ones, various languages - some of which do not even exist - and stories that mostly speak of love between imagined characters. Some are inspired by artworks such as poems or books, or by social ideas.

Nikolov, the lead singer, saying that it is an oxymoron to be "mainstream alternative", explains that the band were always drawn both by influences from both East and West.

"To begin with, we wanted in our small Macedonia to live the life of world adventurers and Mediterranean sailors," he says. "Afterwards, we tried to play electronic music strictly with acoustic instruments."

Jovanoski describes this as "the need to escape from the common genre divisions and place ourselves in a more artistic medium.

"We are transferring our impressions, feelings and dreams into music and that includes the instruments and vocals, as well as various other objects that serve as the source of sound."

"We never wanted an album that would be a bunch of random songs put together by chance," Nikolov says.

"Everything we do is a completely polished work of art. In a way they are 'movies' with content built up with care," Nikolov adds.

"Those are mostly love stories, with made-up characters. Any similarity with reality is coincidental," Trajkovski notes.

Experimental sounds:

Besides including interesting and fresh ideas in their songs, drawing from such sources as the French Poet Pierre de Ronsard, Russian-American writer Vladimir Nabokov or the Macedonian poet Blaze Koneski,



The band utilizes experimental sounds.

the band is recognizable for their musical experiments.

They are famous for using readymade "instruments", or creating ambient sounds from objects with unmusical primal functions, constructing musical sculptures and installations.

One of the most famous is the typewriter used as a percussion in the song "Milice", from the fourth album, Lo-Lee-Ta-Too (2005). It brought them immense popularity at home, as it is a remake of a traditional Macedonian song with the same name but done in a new manner.

Nikolov explains that their musical career began with improvisation, which remains an important pillar of their work.

"In the beginning we had a great desire, but no means, or instruments, so we made a noise with anything we would find," he

recalls.

"Guys from the theatre heard the noise, and here we are," he adds. "We are happy to use some natural sounds when we can."

Nikolov explains the band's urge to play with words, rhythms and sounds as a "way towards some kind of a private folklore".

Jovanoski adds that "musical research and experiment are a common interest for people that work in theatre, in musicals, movies and other performing arts.

"We are especially present in theatre as we record music for many plays as well as performing live, which is a combination of musical, visual, acting element and scenography."

Every album is a different adventure, Trajkovski concludes, and is "navigated solely by the heart, and that is never something rational".



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Hotel Gračanica ★★★

Swiss hospitality, comfort and design

A place to relax in the calm and clean air of the countryside, just 15 minutes from Prishtina city center, 500 m from the center of Gračanica and its UNESCO World Heritage monastery and a short walk to the archeological site of Ulpiana. Offering 5 single, 7 double rooms and 3 studios as well as two meeting rooms (16 / 6 p.), the boutique hotel designed by architect Bujar Nrecaj combines contemporary architecture with traditional elements to create a unique atmosphere that will make you feel at home. Enjoy the garden with its swimming pool filled with mineral water and the view over fields and hills, explore the surroundings on foot or mountain bike or visit other places of interest in Kosovo with one of our organized thematic tours.

Other amenities include:

- bar/restaurant with open fire place
- half board with local and vegetarian dishes available
- free Wi-Fi throughout the hotel
- free mobile phones
- small gym
- mineral water fountain
- art exhibitions and other cultural events
- two meeting rooms (16 / 6 people)

+381 (0)38 729 888 (landline)
+386 (0)49 764 000 (mobile)
Skype: hotel.gracanica

info@hotelgracanica.com
www.hotelgracanica.com
www.facebook.com/HotelGračanica

Here is Prishtina Insight's guide to the best places in town to eat, drink, shop and be merry. We'll keep this section updated with the newest and coolest places opening in Kosovo.

Restaurants:

Liburnia 1 and 2

Rr Meto Bajraktar, tel. +381 (0)38 222 719. There are actually two Liburnias opposite each other, both very similar in style and food. Housed in a fine Ottoman abode and surrounded by pleasant walled gardens, Liburnia oozes atmosphere, whether in winter or summer. The food is a roll call of decent traditional Albanian food, including the usual stews (tave) and grilled meat. It's not the best place in town to sample local delicacies, but a good choice given the setting. Open 8 am - 11 pm

Country House

Off road to Podujevo from Pristina, right after the Muciqi Mercedes-Benz garage, tel. +377 (0)44 656 054. This rustic restaurant is a 15-minute drive outside Pristina (on a good day) and provides glorious views across rolling, verdant hills and is especially pleasant place in the summer to watch the sunset. The overall food quality is decent, with special marks for the fresh bread, straight from the wood stove, and specia me maze (peppers in cream). 10 am - 11 pm.

Princesha Gresa

23 Rr. Fehmi Agani, tel. +381 (0) 38 24 58 41. If you have a horse-size hole in your stomach to fill, this is the place to come. The meal starts with some free bread and dips and is followed by gargantuan portions of salad, meat, fish, or anything else on this varied menu. The food is sometimes great, sometimes average but always served in massive portions. Open 10 am - 11 pm.

Hemingway

Rr Ilaz Kodra, tel. +386 (0)49 145 637. Yes, you can get fresh sea fish in landlocked Kosovo. Hemingway is tucked away in an unappealing end of the city but worth a trip if you are craving food of the piscine variety. It's a pretty basic sort of set-up and relatively expensive for the setting, but undoubtedly one of the best places in town for fish. Open 9 am - 11 pm

Le Siam Thai

Rr Fehmi Agani, tel. +377 (0)45 243 588. Stylishly designed and smoke-free, Le Siam has become a real hit for the international

community of Kosovo. If you are acquainted with Thai food, you're not in for any surprises here, with the typical assortment of curries, salads and deep fried treats, delivered to decent standards. At 7 or 8 euro for a main course, it's relatively pricey compared to its neighbours. Open Monday-Thursday 11:00-14:00 and 17:45-22:30; Friday-Sunday 11:00-23:00.

Renaissance II

Rr George Bush (behind the Pro Credit Bank HQ), tel. +377 (0)44 118 796. Renaissance offers arguably the best overall dining experience in Prishtina. It's quite an experience just to find the place. Tucked away along a tiny alleyway, you enter the homely, stone building through heavy wooden doors. It's 15 euro per head, and for that you will be kept fed, watered and supplied with booze for at least a three course meal, including a wonderful meze starter and a delicious main course cooked on embers. Open 11 am - 11 pm.

Bars:

Tapë

Hajdar Dushi Street Nr. 2 (next to Zani Bar, Kada Books, in front of the Radio Dukagjini). Tapë — which means "cork" in Albanian but is often used to denote extreme drunkenness — is a bar with a warm atmosphere in Prishtina's centre. It serves homemade rakia, as well as a variety of beers and other liquors, and, of course, Stone Castle wine - all at reasonable prices.

Crème de la Crème

Rr Robert Doll, tel. +377(0)44259912. Crème is probably the best all-round bar in the city. It's run for the amusement of the young, arty owners and not for profit, which explains the more-than-generous pricing arrangements, especially for the perfectly executed cocktails. Its five tiny floors heave on Fridays and Sundays with Pristina's cool to the variety of beats. Every Wednesday, Friday and Saturday from 8pm to 3am.

Filikaqa

Rr Mujo Ulqinaku BL 4/1, Pejton, website www.filikaqa.com; 038 244 288. Whistle, as it translates from Albanian, offers a dizzying array of televisions on which to watch your sport of choice and eat the best burgers in

town. Select a booth, ask the amiable staff to tune into your match and grab a 'double decker' or 'triple burger', which look like American fast-food classics but taste better. Friday night Karaoke is a must-see, must-sing event.

Hard Rockers Club

Road Ilaz Kodra, contact: vraja_fatos@ hot-mail.com. It's one of the few places in Prishtina where you can catch regular live acts and the only place which caters for those who like their rock served up heavy, or hard. On a quiet night, it's quite a comfortable venue to grab a beer, even if you are not being entertained by hirsute musicians.

The Cuban

Road Luan Haradinaj Tel: +377(0) 45 620 620. This is a decent addition to the city's drinking scene, even if the place can be full of spivs and tarts who aren't going to a fancy-dress party. The Cuban-themed décor is decadent Havana, the food is average, and not very Caribbean, but the cocktails are good. 8 am - 1 am.

Xhoni's Bar

Rexhep Mala, Pristina, tel. +377 (0)44 750 720. Xhoni's is, without doubt, a Prishtina institution. It's small, friendly and smoky, plays excellent soul, disco and classic rock music from vinyl and is open until the last man or woman staggers out. Arrive by 11pm at the weekend to secure a corner, or even better a

seat, if you intend to make a night of it. Next to A&A restaurant and has round windows. Opens: 8pm-to late. Shut on Sundays.

Fastfood:

Bel Ami

Rr Luan Haradinaj, Tel: +377 (0)44 133 848, +386 49 133 848. The ideal town-centre stop for a quick lunch or takeaway snack, Bel Ami unceremoniously serves some of the best chicken doner in Prishtina in a surprisingly un-greasy, smoke-free environment. Ask for a "komplet" to get the classic doner packed with salad and sauces and wrapped in tin foil. Monday-Friday 9 am - 7.30 pm; Saturday 9 am - 8 pm.

Clubs:

P1

Fehmi Agani, +377 (0)44 608 669. If you're looking for cool, then P1 is probably not the spot for you. The decor is pretty uninspiring, the music is bog standard and the atmosphere reminiscent of a cattle market. But if your thing is scantily clad young women or packs of amorous boys, than it's an excellent choice. And, in the venue's defence, it does have a pleasant outdoor area for summer dancing. Working hours Wednesday, Friday, Saturday from 9 pm to 3 am.



Hot Food:

VEGETARIAN RESTAURANT (ABOVE), Rruga Garibaldi, Behind Metro Caffè. Tingell-Tengell's short-lived but much loved vegetarian menu gets a restaurant of its own. It doesn't have a name, and it's delicious. There's falafel, hummus, baba ghanouj and more. The stew is also luxurious. All the food is under 5 euro. The bar also features a few whiskies you'll be hard-pressed to find anywhere in Prishtina, as well as an allegedly 36-year-old rakia. The space also feels like home, in that down-to-earth hipster sort of way. The only quibble is the bread, which is a rather basic white bread that's toasted and garnished with herbs. It doesn't do justice to the otherwise spectacular fare. Don't miss the poppyseed cake, either. - Gravlix

FRESCO (LEFT), Rr. Fehmi Agani. The newest eatery to hit Prishtina's fine-dining scene, Fresco has designs on being one of its best. Forgive the excessive interior design - the food is elegant and simple, with a gastronomic sense that in-step with the times. The salmon filet (11.50 euro) is a standout: succulent and flavorful, appearing alongside a sweet potato puree and tempura-fried zucchini. The steaks are perfect, too. +377 (0) 44 333 772.

PAPIRUN Tel. 045 26 23 23. Papiro has seating at two perpendicular counters in what's basically a hole-in-the-wall just off Mother Teresa Boulevard, near the Grand Hotel. The menu has 13 options: 6 pizzas and seven sandwiches. The sandwiches are the stars, though. Every component is handled with care. The bread alone is good enough to make just about any sandwich into a glorious feast. It's freshly baked and seasoned with rosemary.



Where to pick up Prishtina Insight?

Prishtina Insight has teamed up with these excellent venues to offer a limited number of complimentary copies of Kosovo's only English-language newspaper. Grab a copy of the publication and settle down with a drink or a meal to read it.



Papillon Bistro Bar

This newly reopened bar in Prishtina, Papillon, offers more than 60 types of wines from France, Italy, Spain, and Kosovo with great prices and delicious dishes.

They serve pasta, sandwiches, salads and different appetizers.

You can also try different types of local or international beers.

The bar, with its stunning new design, is located in the centre of Prishtina, near ProCredit Bank headquarter, RTK radio centre, and the Mother Teresa cathedral.

Papillon
Mother Teresa Str. Nr. 51 A
info@caffepapillon.com
044 103 310

Hotel Prishtina

Hotel Prishtina's 43 charming guest rooms and suites are reminiscent of a small hotel in the European tradition. You'll immediately feel at home in our living room, sipping a glass of wine in our fine restaurant surrounded by a gallery of paintings by local artists.

The hotel offers free, fast wifi internet, complimentary breakfast, conference room, swimming pool, sauna and laundry service.

Hotel Prishtina,
St. Vaso Pasha nr. 20
+381 38 / 22 32 84



Hotel AFA

Located in a quiet neighbourhood just outside the city centre, Hotel Afa can guarantee guests a peaceful night while being within walking distance of all the action. The venue has won a host of awards for its excellent service to customers and offers a good range of facilities, from an exclusive restaurant and VIP bar to pretty, tranquil gardens. Rooms start at 45 euro for a single, and luxury rooms and apartments are available. The hotel's rooms are well appointed and comfortable.

15, Rr Ali Kelmendi,
Sunny Hill, Prishtina
+381 38/225 226
www.hotelafa.com



Hotel Gracanica

A place to relax in the calm and clean air of the country side, just 15 minutes from Prishtina city center, 500 m from the center of Gracanica and its UNESCO World Heritage monastery and a short walk to the archeological site of Ulpiana. Offering 5 single, 7 double rooms, 3 studios as well as two meeting rooms (16 / 6 p.), the boutique hotel combines contemporary architecture with traditional elements to create a unique atmosphere that will make you feel at home.

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Paddy O'Brien's

The staff at Paddy O'Brien's have a saying: "It's easy to walk in, but very hard to leave."

And with its warm atmosphere, fantastic range of drinks and excellent food, it is easy to see why.

There have been many attempts to establish a proper Irish pub in Prishtina, but this is the only one to hit the spot.

From classic coffees to cocktails, via, of course, Guinness, you really won't find it difficult to select the perfect drink.

A mouth-watering menu of Irish specialties is also on offer, spanning from all-day breakfasts to Irish stews at night.

Options include shepherd's pie, bangers and mash, fish 'n chips, and whopping great burgers.

Thursday is pub quiz night, but there is always something going on at the pub, whether it is sport screenings or just a good shindig.



Paddy O'Brien's
Tringe Smajli Street, by the Illyria Hotel
Prishtina: 045-420900

A taste of Napoli in Prishtina.

After ten years of making pizza in Napoli, and with only love to blame, Fatmir, the head chef, returned to Prishtina. His pizzas, made in a wood-burn stove, are definitely genuine napolitanas. Fatmir also has several delicious pastas on offer, a true joy for the taste buds. Napoli has an excellent selection of red and white wines or, for the more ambitious, one of the region's best quince raki. Napoli makes for delicious lunch, dinner or even after-theatre time out in the centre of Prishtina.

Pizzeria Napoli
off Luan Haradinaj, opposite Newborn
044/409-402402



The Ninety One

The Ninety One (91-shi) is back with its new location and old tradition. The owners and the staff are the same. Daily specials are changed on a daily basis. The breakfast is still served as usual while the coffee is served with delicious homemade almond biscotti. Breakfast menu includes; English breakfast, French toast croissants, puff pastries and omelettes with your choice of toppings. The new menu dishes include: roast fillet of beef served with spinach potatoes & wine, Chicken and confit garlic in bed of mash & thyme juice. Dessert are served and garnished with fresh herbs and are all home made. Lemon tart and Chocolate mouse is a must try. The kitchen is open every day until 11:00 pm.

Fehmi Agani str., 29/2 (Te kafet e vogla)
- 044 91 91 91 -



+



"The Croods" 3D

Every day at 4pm

The Croods is a pre-historic comedy adventure that follows the world's first family as they embark on a journey of a lifetime when the cave that has always shielded them from danger is destroyed. Traveling across a spectacular landscape, the Croods discover an incredible new world filled with fantastic creatures -- and their outlook is changed forever.

Director: Kirk De Micco, Chris Sanders

Writers: Chris Sanders, Kirk De Micco etc.

Starring: Nicolas Cage, Emma Stone, Ryan Reynolds.



"Broken City"

Every day at 8pm

In a city rife with injustice, ex-cop Billy Taggart seeks redemption and revenge after being double-crossed and then framed by its most powerful figure: Mayor Nicholas Hostetler.

Director: Allen Hughes

Writers: Brian Tucker

Starring: Mark Wahlberg, Russell Crowe, Catherine Zeta-Jones



"Love in Cursed Mountains II" (Albanian)

Every day at 8pm and 10pm

The fable of this movie enterprise lies from the post-war period in Kosovo, Cursed Mountains, and New York and beautiful parts of Albania.

Director: Ekrem Kryeziu

Starring: Diellza Kolgeci, Florian Agaliu, Jahja Shehu, Nimon Mucaj, Klodian Hoxha,



Soon: "Star Trek into Darkness" 3D, Epic" 3D and "After Earth"

For any further questions or reservations call at 038 243 238 or visit them at www.kinoabc.com

Theatre



"The last station"

Every Thursday at 8pm

The story is situated in the year 2015. Nowadays and past problems are carried in the year of 2015. Burim is the main character who is looking for the truth, for his family and his fiancé, which are still missing since the war of KLA ended. After many attempts he finds out that his neighbour is still alive and that he knows more about his family. Burim

can't live in the present; he is always going back to the past, in the memories of his family and Behare, his fiancé. Halfway he meets a young girl called Shpresa who reminds him of Behare and finally gets part of Burim's life.

Based on the novel "Birds fly on their own" by Ibrahim Kadriu.

Directed by Lirak Celaj and Florent Mehmeti

Cast: Besnik Krapci, Liridona Shehu, Ilire Celaj, Adrian Morina, Eshref Durmishi and Kushtrim Sheremeti.

"As if this was a show"

Every Wednesday at 8pm

"In the bus no. 4...during the war in Prishtina ...a 26 years old - young man...is wearing jeans and a black T-shirt... At "Union" hotel...sniper breaks a window... and the youngster is shot in the neck... A lady dressed in white, who was standing near him starts to scream. When she sees the blood in her shirt she faints... two hours later...she is seen at the Big Mosque...near café "Romantika", but this time accompanied by a friend younger than her..

Based on the drama by: Almir Imshireviq

Directed by Agon Myftari

Cast: Rebeka Qena, Ardian Morina, Armend Ismajli, Besnik Krapci



8pm Friday, 10 May (Small stage)

"The killing of the mosquito"

By Xhevdet Bajraj

Director: Donard Hasani

8pm Saturday, 11 May (Small stage)

"The killing of the mosquito"

By Xhevdet Bajraj

Director: Donard Hasani

8pm Monday, 13 May (Small stage)

"The listener"

Stand-up comedy with Adem Mikullovc

8pm Tuesday, 14 May (Small stage)

"The listener"

Stand-up comedy with Adem Mikullovc

8pm Wednesday, 15 May

Premiere "Narnia"

"The lion, the witch and the wardrobe" by C.S. Lewis

Director: Arjeta Ajeti @ Antti Sevanto

8pm Thursday, 16 May

"Narnia"

Screenplay by "The lion, the witch and the wardrobe" - C.S. Lewis

Director: Arjeta Ajeti @ Antti Sevanto

8pm Friday, 17 May

"Don Quixote"

Choreograph: Israel Rodriguez

8pm Saturday, 18 May

"Rabbit hole"

By David Lindsay - Abaire

Director: Zana Hoxha Krasniqi

8pm Monday, 20 May

"The clashes"

By Ekrem Kryeziu

8pm Tuesday, 21 May

"A tomb for the King's Mayor"

By Haqif Mulliqi

8pm Wednesday, 22 May

Concert by "Shota" - National Ensemble of Songs and Dances

8pm Thursday, 23 May

"Where the light falls" ballet

Choreograph Antonio Pio Fini

Prishtina Diary

Punkt

9 pm Friday, 10 May

"European Souvenirs"

European Souvenirs is a major live-cinema performance by Karol Rakowski (PL), Barış Gürsel (TR), Farah Rahman (NL), Malaventura (ES) and Noriko Okaku (JP/UK)

Curated by Spanish artists and remix experts of ZEMOS98, European Souvenirs will be created by an artistic ensemble of five European media-makers that were born during the decades of the 1980's and later in Spain, Poland, UK, Turkey and the Netherlands. They have different profiles complementing each other as media artists, perform-

ers, 3D animators, documentarians, musicians, DJs and VJs.

Shallter

Saturday, 18 May

Quf Quf Party

Shallter, will organize a special event, on a train, next Saturday.

There'll be a tour, great music.

At 12:30 we will depart from Shallter for Peja. 14:40 we arrive in Peja - a pause held, followed by an appetizer and music. At 16:00 we go back to Prishtina.

DJ: Jimmy Hagan [US]

DJ: Nino Flooder [Macedonia]

DJ: Alien no.155 [Albania]

Party will continue on Shallter's terrace.

Ticket: 6 Euros.

The Gallery of the Ministry of Culture

7pm Thursday, 16 May

Petrit Ukëhajdaraj - "Fragments"

Personal exhibition

You are invited to the opening ceremony of the photographer Petrit Ukëhajdaraj. The opening ceremony will be held on

16.05.2013 at 19.00, at the Gallery of the Ministry of Culture, "Qafa" complex, Prishtina.

Pay to Prescribe? Two Dozen Doctors Named in Novartis Kickback Case



by Theodor Meyer,
ProPublica

On Jan. 23, 2008, the pharmaceutical company Novartis threw a party at a restaurant on Long Island. The party, which cost \$1,250, was ostensibly for doctors to learn about cardiovascular drugs made by the company, with Novartis sales representatives present as well.

But no doctors ever came, according to a whistleblower lawsuit against Novartis that was unsealed last week. Instead, nine sales reps ran up the tab, and the company wrote an honorarium check to Dr. Robert Nissan, a Long Island family practitioner who wasn't present, the lawsuit alleges.

The party, the lawsuit maintains, was one of "countless" events held by Novartis over a decade that were designed to direct kick-

backs — cash, meals and favors to relatives — to doctors who prescribed the company's drugs.

Last week, the Department of Justice joined the whistleblower lawsuit, which was originally filed in 2011 by Oswald Bilotta, a former Novartis sales representative on Long Island. "Novartis corrupted the prescription drug dispensing process with multi-million dollar 'incentive programs' that targeted doctors who, in exchange for illegal kickbacks, steered patients toward its drugs," Preet Bharara, the U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York, said in a statement.

Novartis has disputed the government's allegations of wrongdoing; Nissan did not return several requests for comment.

Whether such payments by drug companies to physicians are kickbacks or a legitimate marketing and educational practice is a recurring contro-

versy — as ProPublica has extensively reported. Our Dollars for Docs database tracks \$2 billion in payments to doctors from 15 drug companies, including Novartis. All but one have settled government lawsuits alleging improper marketing practices.

A number of the doctors named in the Novartis case have received substantial sums since 2009, Dollars for Docs shows, including one physician who was paid more than \$150,000 combined from six different drug companies.

Historically, the doctors cited in cases alleging improper marketing have not faced consequences. A ProPublica investigation in 2011 found that none of more than 75 doctors named in lawsuits since 2008 had been sanctioned, despite charges of fraud or conduct that put patients at risk.

Generally, payments like those in Dollars for Docs made for speaking, consulting, travel, meals and other promotional purposes are legal.

Novartis has only publicly reported payments since 2010, when the company pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor and paid \$422.5 million to settle charges it had illegally promoted Trileptal, an anti-seizure drug, and had paid kickbacks for prescribing its drugs. Aside from the misdemeanor plea, Novartis denied wrongdoing.

The latest lawsuit is one of two filed last week by the Justice Department against Novartis in U.S. District Court in Manhattan. The company is also accused of paying kickbacks to pharmacies to promote Myfortic, a drug that suppresses the immune system. Novartis — which is bound by a corporate integrity agreement from its 2010 settlement — has disputed the allegations in both cases.

"We disagree with the way the government is characterizing our conduct in both of these matters and we stand behind our Compliance program," Andre Wyss, the head of Novartis's U.S. operations, said in a statement.

The whistleblower lawsuit alleges that Lotrel, a blood-pressure medication with sales of nearly \$1.3 billion in 2006, "became a big seller for NOVARTIS because it paid physicians to write Lotrel prescriptions." Novartis sales reps allegedly rewarded doctors with cash or gift checks and recruited them to attend "Clinical Learning Days" with honoraria of \$250 to \$500 a pop.

The meetings could be as short as half an hour, the whistleblower suit alleges,



Zometa is one of Novartis' biggest sellers. (Neofedex/Flickr)

and doctors would be paid even if they didn't show up. "So long as a physician was writing Lotrel prescriptions," it says, "he or she could expect to be paid."

Thousands of doctors took part in the alleged kickback scheme, according to the whistleblower lawsuit. But the case singles out 24 Long Island doctors and nurses, including Nissan. Nissan and two other physicians — Edward Condon, who specializes in internal medicine, and Mark Jagust, a family practitioner — "each received tens of thousands of dollars" from Novartis, according to the lawsuit.

Novartis also hired Ross Fishberger — the son of Kenneth Fishberger, another one of the doctors named — as a sales representative "in order to assure that Dr. Fishberger continued to prescribe" Lotrel and other Novartis drugs, according to the lawsuit. Novartis also allegedly employed Condon's wife and daughter-in-law as sales reps.

Reached by ProPublica, Condon said he had no knowledge of the lawsuit, and hung up when asked more detailed questions. Jagust and the elder Fishberger did not respond to repeated requests for comment.

Ross Fishberger declined to comment when reached by ProPublica.

Dollars for Docs shows that drug companies have made payments to many of the 24 doctors named in the whistleblower lawsuit since 2009.

Condon received at least \$156,094 in meals, travel, speaking fees and other expenses from six companies, including Novartis. Another doctor, Michael Shanik of Smithtown, N.Y., was paid at least \$97,754 from six companies, including more than \$30,000 from Novartis.

Robert Mormando, an inter-

nal medicine specialist in Port Jefferson Station, N.Y., who was also named in the case, told ProPublica he hadn't taken any kickbacks and didn't know of Long Island doctors who had.

"I would say it's up for interpretation whether paying someone to be part of a speaking program" constitutes a kickback, he said. "I'm not aware of any doctors who have taken it to that level."

Mormando said he had been a paid speaker for Novartis on three occasions a number of years ago and estimated he had earned between \$1,200 and \$1,500. According to Dollars for Docs, he was paid at least \$9,958 from nine pharmaceutical companies since 2009, only \$19 of which came from Novartis.

Another of the named doctors, Howard Hertz of Babylon, N.Y., also denied taking kickbacks in a brief interview. Hertz was paid at least \$9,888 since 2010 from five drug companies, including \$4,110 from Novartis, according to Dollars for Docs.

The main plank of the Justice Department's lawsuit is the federal anti-kickback statute, which makes it illegal for drug companies to pay doctors with the intent of getting them to prescribe a particular drug or to reward them for doing so.

Kevin Outterson, a professor at Boston University Law School who has studied health care fraud, said it can be difficult to prove intent in pursuing kickback cases.

"What it boils down to is they need smoking gun evidence," he said.

But Outterson said he thought the Justice Department had a strong case. "It goes directly to the culture of wining and dining and having lavish entertainment and educational events in order to induce prescription writing," he said.



A Novartis research and development lab. (Photo/Novartis)

Ecosovo

Lessons in Picnicking



By Elizabeth Gowing

May 1 is a day when Kosovo suddenly feels very socialist again. Even the habitual macchiato drinkers in the capital give the impression of being part of the righteous working class finally enjoying the holiday they deserve, as they bundle picnics into cars, and unfold blankets in Germia. Everyone wants to spend the day outside near greenery.

However, there are of course plenty of Kosovars who don't have access to picnic boxes or cars, or to Germia or other greenery. Our NGO's work in the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Neighbourhood 29 of Fushe Kosove has brought us into contact with many families we knew would be very happy to spend the day in a lush landscape of flowers, but whose immediate surroundings seem to have only two seasons: mud and dust. And, whether spring, summer or winter, amid the mud and the dust blooms only garbage.

For years, the municipality's garbage collection has been sporadic or non-existent. Just think about that dustbin bag you put out earlier this week, and imagine that there was no municipal service coming to collect it. Imagine the bin being knocked over by a stray dog, and the contents spilling over the front yard. Imagine the same thing happening the next week, and outside your neighbour's home – and you'll have a picture of how quickly and effectively a community space can be transformed into a rubbish heap.

Recently, the municipality has started to re-engage with the issue of this community's rubbish. One hundred lorry-loads of garbage were removed from the largest site, and a short while ago a weekly collection was instituted, with neighbourhood reps nominated to check that collection occurs as promised. So for May 1, this year, it felt like the perfect place to celebrate was in the dust of Fushe Kosove, working with the community to create a green space that could be a future picnic site.

We were offered support by UNVolunteers, who paid for more than 1000 seeds, and transport for a group of Kosovar and international volunteers to travel from Prishtina, to join a team of more than 100 volunteers from Neighbourhood 29. The local volunteers were mainly children, but also included curious, skeptical, or excited parents, some of The Ideas Partnership's own volunteers from the community, and volunteers from the local NGO, Gëzimi.

Everyone had been told to bring a spoon, and within minutes, the former rubbish site was budding with holes dug in the dirt. We distributed seeds (and gloves), and some flowers, and the volunteer force had soon bedded in a potential meadow.

As we stood back and watched, we all felt gritty, but also somehow proud. There had been a communal effort bringing together children and old people, foreigners with Kosovar Albanians, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians. People had talked to strangers, had helped neighbours. Everyone had been inspired by the future for this neighbourhood, how rubbish dumps can be transformed. One thing I learned this 1 May was the exhilaration that comes from joint effort.

And then something else happened: planted flowers started to disappear. We were all really sad that things we had invested in as a group were being taken jealously to be enjoyed each by just one family rather than all. But it made me realize something – that it was much better that these flowers were stolen than that they were stepped on; I would rather know that a flower was so valued that someone wanted to take it than that it was so little valued that no-one noticed if they trampled it. And we had brought these flowers to make the neighbourhood beautiful; they were still doing that, but just on other pieces of land.

What we also realized was that whatever happened to the flowers, no one can steal the seeds. Both literally and metaphorically, what we planted that day can't be touched or taken away. And hopefully over the next few months we will be presented with a daily reminder of that fact as we watch next year's picnic site and the belief in it take root. And on May 1, 2014, hopefully we'll all turn up again, but this time with blankets and coolers, and relax together in an ever more beautiful neighbourhood, feeling like virtuous workers who have earned this holiday.

Elizabeth Gowing is a founder of The Ideas Partnership, a Kosovan NGO using volunteer power to tackle educational, cultural heritage and environmental challenges. She is also the author of *Travels in Blood and Honey*; becoming a beekeeper in Kosovo (2011) and *Edith and I*; on the trail of an Edwardian traveler in Kosovo – www.edith-and-i.com – published this month.



The President of Kosovo, Atifete Jahjaga, has dramatically reduced the number of presidential pardons.

Good news for Kosovo and the Rule of Law



By Andrea Lorenzo Capussela

A month before the fourth anniversary of the declaration of independence I wrote two articles for Zeri and The European Voice, on the mass pardons that in the previous three years Kosovo's presidents had issued on that day.

They had pardoned 72 criminals in 2009 (Fatmir Sejdiu), 62 in 2010 (Sejdiu), and 103 in 2011 (Jakup Krasniqi, as acting president). The average was 79 pardons per year, which was equivalent to 5.4 per cent of the prison population, or one pardon every 18 criminals. For a comparison, I noted that in Italy and the United States the per-year average is about 0.005 per cent and 0.001 per cent of the prison population, respectively. Also, Italian and especially US presidents tend to pardon only people who have served their full sentences, whereas Kosovo's president had pardoned only people who were still in jail, including murderers and drug traffickers. And while US presidents issue pardons only once every few years, Kosovo's presidents had issued them every year.

I argued that such mass pardons flagrantly breached the law and the constitution, for two reasons. Firstly, presidential pardons are meant to be an exceptional act of clemency, which is discretionary precisely because it should be rarely used; broad amnesties, generally granted by parliaments, are not permitted by Kosovo's constitution. Secondly, many pardons issued by Sejdiu and Krasniqi breached the principle of the separation of powers too, because they had been granted to persons who had asked for early release from prison (for good conduct or health reasons,

for instance) and were refused it by the competent judicial authorities: the president effectively overturned their decisions.

Aside from generating more crime, I noted, such amnesties were an open challenge to very notion of the rule of law: what could be worse than seeing the head of state illegally and arbitrarily freeing tens of criminals every year, to 'mark' Kosovo's most important anniversary?

In 2012, the new president pardoned 15 criminals. In a subsequent article I wrote that this was still too much, and more or less confirmed my earlier criticism: I wrote that stealing one apple is better than stealing ten, but is still theft.

In 2013 the president pardoned 4 criminals, and these are the only pardons issued between 17 February 2012 and today. This proves that the new president has abandoned the previous policy, and that the 2012 decision was a first important step in that direction, not a momentary concession to public criticism, as I had judged it.

The assessment I gave in 2012 was wrong, therefore, and I am delighted to note that Kosovo has put an end to that practice. This goes to the credit of the current president and to those, within or outside of the institutions, who have asked for a change in that policy: I recall, for instance, a declaration issued by the Kosovo Legal Institute a few days before the 2012 anniversary, and critical comments in the 2012 progress report by the European Commission and in the EU audit report on EULEX. This is excellent news for Kosovo.

A second observation I would make is that in 2009, 2010 and 2011 Kosovo was subject to the supervision of International Civilian Office, ICO, and benefited from EULEX's assistance. These institutions knew of the pardons but did not say a word

about them: I had asked ICO to act, and I still remember the elaborate, lawyerly excuses that a colleague used to defend Krasniqi's 103 pardons in 2011. We know that their approach puts a premium on short-term political stability, but the fact that the practice of granting mass pardons has now been discontinued proves that it would have been possible for them to stop it already in 2009 without harming stability. Why did they not even try? Perhaps they thought that Kosovo is irredeemable: but, if so, why did they stay there? Or perhaps they thought that the public would have sided with the criminals rather than with principle of the rule of law: if so, Kosovo emphatically proved them wrong, and increased their moral and political responsibility for having remained silent.

Some noise in the press and the pressure of public opinion or single persons did better than the two international missions endowed with sweeping powers (theoretically), a total staff of 2,500, and the ability to speak on behalf of the EU and the West. That's a fine lesson. Which will hopefully encourage Kosovo's citizens to raise their peaceful voice also on other matters. For instance, a few weeks ago there was a historic civic demonstration against corruption; but a little later the parliament and president appointed a former minister and PDK party member as governor of the central bank, which is a scandalous and dangerous choice why not protest forcefully? Equally, last year public pressure forced parliament to change the criminal rules limiting media freedom; but in December the parliament wrote rules in the code of criminal procedure that discourage witnesses from testifying, and represent an implicit invitation to intimidating them: why not protest, with the same determination?



A happy pair.

Nothing Fishy About Detari's Fish



By Gravlax

For the discerning fish eater, finding a great catch often resembles a fool's errand in Prishtina.

Far too often fish - be it sea bass, sea bream, trout or salmon - smell and taste uncomfortably fishy. It's the sort of fishiness that suggests freshness has started giving way to rot.

I've encountered fish in this condition even from established go-to destinations for sea-dwelling delights.

But not at Detari.

The small shop quietly opened up on the main road in Dragodan late last year. While it's obstinately a fishmonger, Detari also has a few small tables where the affable staff will serve up their catch for a cheap, quick meal.



The shop owners hail from Ulqin (Ulcinj), Montenegro. The small seaside town is sometimes called the Kosovo riviera because throngs of Kosovars flock to its beaches every summer. But its crisp waters are also home to delicious fish.

All of Detari's fish is laid out in ice-filled display cases. The assortment varies day-to-day, but there's usually an ample supply of levrek (sea bass) and orata (sea bream), both of which are reliably delicious. Just stay away from the salmon. There aren't any in the Adriatic, so it wouldn't be coming from anywhere near Ulqin.

The fish is largely mild, with tender flesh, and absent of that unsettling rotting smell. Pick out the fish, and the staff will happily gut and clean it.

They're also happy to grill it up for you to either eat there or to take away. But anyone serious about fish will take it home raw. The fish also blows Taunita's out of the water.

I've even turned their sea bass into crudo - the Italian raw-fish delicacy - with great results.

Prices also are quite reasonable, with most fish coming well under 15 euro per kilogram.

Detari also sells fresh olives, a spectacular olive oil from Ulqin, as well as wines and vinegars. But all are a sideshow to the fish.

Detari fish shop

Ahmet Krasniqi Street, Dragodan, Prishtina
(below the Amalfi restaurant), Prishtina

Monday-Saturday
9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

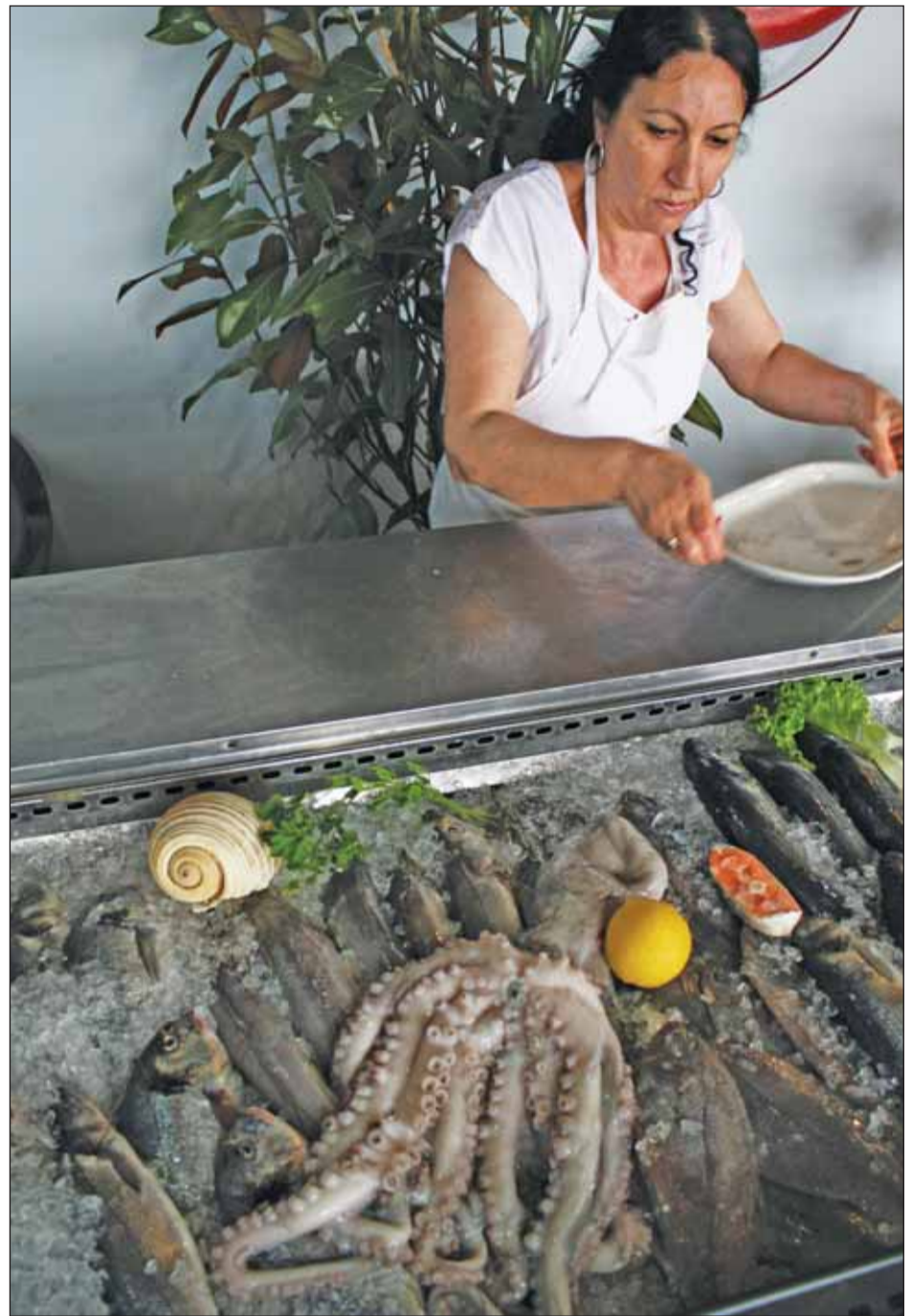


Photo News: The Royal Treatment



A mural painted in downtown Prishtina to depict various icons of EU countries in honour of Europe Day got a cheeky addition of graffiti.

Honeypot for Prishtina Employees

Prishtina started a free hives programme to encourage beekeeping. But without training, some beginners ended up feeling stung.



By Petrit Collaku

Prishtina had quite the offer for the aspiring beekeeper: Two hives with bees and specialized equipment, including masks, gloves and a tool to collect the honey - all for free.

The idea, officially, was to increase the number of beekeepers in Prishtina. The project cost just shy of 80,000 euro.

When the municipality offered the kits on a first-come, first-serve basis during two 10-day periods in 2011 and 2012, municipal employees were the first to hear.

Nineteen Prishtina municipality employees took advantage of the offer, in addition to 121 lay residents.

They included inspectors, municipal clerks, forest guards and drivers, as well as officials in the inspection department and

“There are recipients who did not take our advice and lost their bees.”

*Sylejman Zogiani,
Bee supplier*

the main municipal office.

One recipient, Fadil Gashi, who works as an emergency-services operator, didn't fare so well. “A bee family died. Winter went well but I lost them in spring. I don't know why,” Gashi said.

Fexhri Hyseni, who heads the municipal agriculture department and spearheaded the project, said there were problems with the selection process.

“This is the only project I am not satisfied with,” Hyseni said. “There are many reasons for this. The main one is the selection of beneficiaries.”

He said there were only two criteria to apply - the applicant had to be a resident of the municipality of Prishtina and have five acres of land. To do this, applicants filled out a form and supplied a copy of their ID.

The municipality did not offer any training until April this year.

Some bees haven't flourished, as was the case with Gashi's.

“There are recipients who did not take our advice and lost their bees,” said Sylejman Zogian, whose Blerta company won the two tenders to supply the bees.

Zogiani, who also heads the Prishtina beekeepers association, Bleta, said the municipality didn't adequately prepare for the project. He also questioned the selection process, saying he'd



Honey bees hard at work in Podujevo. (Photo/Kaltrina Rexhepi)

advise the municipality to include people in need and families living on social assistance.

With the bees long distributed, the municipality is now offering training to the fledgling beekeepers.

The municipality began a three-month training programme for bee recipients in late April, run by the Llapi association of

beekeepers in Podujevo.

“I am learning many things,” said Afrim Gashi, a clerk for the Mramor village in Prishtina Municipality. “The lecturer is very capable.”

Still, some beekeepers haven't attended the training sessions. Two municipal employees and one official told Prishtina Insight that they couldn't attend as they

had to be at work.

Hyseni, who is heading the project, said he would have preferred to do the trainings when the bees were distributed, but funds weren't available.

The beekeeping project has been a learning experience, Hyseni said. “The criteria will be more rigorous in the future,” he said.

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				7			5	
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Medium

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