

The role of civil society in the processes of European integration in Macedonia and Kosovo

Joint Seminar of excellence in the framework of EuroPS project

Avdi Smajljaj and Aneta Cekik

25-28 April, 2017

FAMA College- Pristina

The accession to the European Union is one of the most important processes that are currently taking place in the Balkan countries. Because of its complexity, in addition to political institutions, which are in charge of governing this process, it necessarily involves other actors affected by the European integration. In this course we look at the role of interest groups and civil society in general* in this process, which can be two fold. On the one hand, political institutions need the input of the civil society in terms of expertise in specific policy areas during the transposition of European legislation, the responding of the European Commission's questionnaire and in the future phase of accession negotiations. Civil society actors on the other hand use the EU conditionality demands in order to improve the position of the specific interests/causes they represent in the society, as well as to keep political institutions accountable during the process of democratic consolidation.

The goal of this seminar of excellence is to assess the role of civil society in the pre-accession process to the EU in Macedonia and Kosovo. After discussing the role of vivid civil society for a democratic society, the seminar will elaborate the theoretical approaches on the role of civil society in the European pre-accession process. The next part of the seminar will analyze the role of civil society in Macedonia and Kosovo in this process, which will involve discussion with students about examples of interaction of political institutions and civil society organizations.

* By **interest groups and civil society organizations** we think of formal associations which main goal is to advance the interest of their membership without being part of the institutions of power. These can be business associations, professional associations, trade unions, citizen associations, Non-governmental organizations etc.

Teachers:

Prof. Dr. Aneta Cekik is Associate Professor of Political science at the Institute for sociological, political and juridical research, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje. Her areas of interest include EU politics, EU lobbying, interest groups, democratization and EU accession, and ethnic conflict study. She

has published a number of articles and book chapters on these topics in domestic publications and abroad. She teaches a number of MA Political science courses including Democracy, power and citizenship, Political system, Globalization and European integration, as well as the PhD course on Contemporary Europe- main developments and trends in EU politics.

Prof. Dr. Avdi Smaljaj is Assistant Professor of Political Sciences and International Relations at Fama College in Prishtina. He has finished PhD in Political sciences at University Duisburg-Essen. His areas of interest include European integration, democracy and democratization, parties, elections, and policy making. He has published a book and a number of articles on these issues. He teaches group of courses at BA and MA level in the field of Political sciences and International relations.