

SEECOM wants to promote political dialogue with citizens

EXPERTS MEET IN PODGORICA (MONTENEGRO) TO DISCUSS ADVANCEMENT OF POLITICAL COMMUNICATION IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE

The communication of governments and authorities in South East Europe professionalizes. Instead of propaganda a dialogue with citizens is in demand. The Web and Social Media play an important role – and the EU integration of the Balkans is a central issue. Experts connected to the new professional association SEECOM discussed the advancement of their profession on 14 and 15 April 2014.

The abbreviation SEECOM stands for “South East Europe Public Sector Communication Association” – since September 2013 this forum is a new player in the scene of political communication in Europe. More than 80 government and administration spokespeople from above 15 European countries consolidated under the roof of SEECOM to promote a citizen oriented communication – especially in transition countries.

The KAS Media Program South East Europe, a co-founder of SEECOM, invited experts from the association and external specialists to exchange ideas. Besides the heads of SEECOM, association president Krunoslav Vidić and secretary general Vuk Vujnović, board members were present, among them Christian Spahr, head of KAS Media Program South East Europe. The secretaries general of the Club of Venice and the South East European Media Organization, Vincenzo le Voci and Oliver Vujović, joined as external partners as well as Ognian Zlatev, representative of the EU commission in Bulgaria.

Two essential challenges for political PR in the region were identified. For one thing it is important to provide better working conditions for communication experts and to announce successful projects as role models in the region. Another working field is the more intense information about all the processes of European integration in the Balkan countries in order to clarify the political priorities of the EU. Citizens shall get to know the possibilities of political participation and shall be convinced to espouse a further approach of their countries to EU standards.

SEECOM secretary general introduces new work programmes

With this in mind, SEECOM general secretary Vuk Vujnović outlined two new work programmes of the young association. The first is called “Transparency, Accountability and Public Participation Program” (TAPP) and is expected to promote openness and readiness to engage in dialogue. The aim is to strengthen the faith of citizens in democracy and increase their participation in decision making.

A second working program shall reinforce citizens' participation in questions concerning the European Union. Regarding this point, cooperation with the Club of Venice, which has a range of common topics, was arranged. EU representative Ognian Zlatev furthermore suggested a stronger interconnectedness of SEECOM and various experts in Brussels.



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