As a Fulbright research fellow living in Zagreb, I have witnessed several exciting political phenomenon. Late last year, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia acquitted two Croatian generals on appeal. Ante Gotovina and Mladen Markač were returned to Croatia, and people celebrated throughout the country. Then former Prime Minister Ivo Sanadar was found guilty on corruption charges and sentenced to 10 years in prison. Croatia’s upcoming entry to the European Union seemed like dull news by comparison. However, at the beginning of 2013, the domestic political scene began to shift its focus to the EU and my research began to take off.

A portion of my dissertation examines the relationship between the behavior of members of the European Parliament (MEP) and the candidate selection mechanism within political parties. Therefore my stay is perfectly timed with Croatia’s entry into the EU. In February, a debate over the date of the election for members of the European Parliament began. In 2010, the Croatian Parliament had passed a law requiring the election of MEPs to take place before the admission of Croatia to the European Union and membership for Croatia is set to start on July 1 of this year. What was evident in the local media, and through my research, is that the timing of this election was likely to influence voter turnout and the results. Announcement of the date was required at least 60 days before the election. In February, division existed between the main parties in Croatia over whether or not to hold these elections at the same time as the local elections on May 19. The split on this issue resembled many of the divisions in Croatian politics that are largely structured by competition between its two main parties: the Christian Democratic Party, also known as the HDZ (Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica), and the Socialist Democratic, or SDP (Socialdemokratska partija Hrvatska). While Croatia also

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CONVERSATIONS ON EUROPE

On April 18, the EUCE/ESC continued its monthly virtual roundtable series, Conversations on Europe, with a video conference devoted to “Sharing the Wealth: An EU-US Free Trade Agreement.” The panel of experts included (back row, right to left): Ambassador (ret.) J.D. Bindenagel, a special Advisor to the President at DePaul University, EUCE/ESC Director Ronald Linden (moderator), and GSPIA Professor Martin Staniland. Seated in the back row, far left, is EUCE/ESC External Advisory Board Member David Murdoch, who also represents the American Council on Germany, which co-sponsored the Conversation along with the World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh. Other experts included David Cleeton, a Professor of Economics at Illinois State University, Zaki Laidi, Director of Research at Sciences Po in Paris, and Ben Beachy, Research Director with Public Citizen’s Global Trade Watch.

A VISIT FROM THE HELLENIC REPUBLIC’S AMBASSADOR-AT-LARGE

On March 28, Ambassador-at-Large of the Hellenic Republic, Gianna Angelopoulos-Daskalaki, gave a lecture titled, “For the Glory of Greece: Looking Forward by Looking Back.” A reception in honor of Her Excellency was held following the talk. In 1998, the Republic of Greece appointed Mrs. Angelopoulos-Daskalaki Ambassador-at-Large for her service leading Greece’s successful bid to host the 2004 Olympic Games. She was previously a Member of Parliament. Her book, My Greek Drama: Life, Love and One Woman’s Olympic Effort to Bring Glory to her Country, will be published in May.

“COMPARING THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT WITH THE U.S. CONGRESS”

On March 21, Dr. Selma Bendjaballah presented a lecture titled “Comparing the European Parliament with the U.S. Congress: Theoretical and Methodological Challenges.” Dr. Bendjaballah is a research manager at the Centre for European Studies at Sciences Po in Paris. She specializes in comparative politics with an emphasis on legislatures and party systems of the European Union, individual countries within Europe, and the American Congress. Her book, Introduction to Legislative Studies, co-authored with Oliver Rozenberg and Anne-Laure Beaussier, will appear in print this year.
THE POMAKS IN THE BORDERLANDS OF BULGARIA, GREECE, AND TURKEY

by Cengiz Haksoz, PhD Candidate
Anthropology Department, University of Pittsburgh

Last year, I conducted research in the borderlands of Bulgaria, Greece, and Turkey thanks in part to a generous pre-dissertation grant from the European Union Center of Excellence/European Studies Center. My project focuses on the Pomaks, a minority group who live in these borderland areas. Pomaks are Muslim. Their ancestors were converted to Islam around the 17th Century, and they live mainly in the Rhodopes Mountains, which are divided between Bulgaria and Greece. The Pomak groups in Turkey are mostly immigrants from Bulgaria and Greece as a result of forced population exchanges and migrations.

Pomaks speak variants or dialects of Bulgarian, and even though they don’t share the same religion as ethnic Bulgarians, they at least have a bond through language. Islam connects Pomaks with ethnic Turks, but there is a language barrier. The Pomaks do not have language or religion in common with Greeks.

However, Pomak identity is claimed by all three states. For example, Greek circles have developed a theory that Pomaks are descendants of Hellenized Thracian tribes, Turkish scholars argue that Pomak ancestors were proto-Turkic tribes, and Bulgarian scholarship tries to establish the idea that Pomaks are “ethnic” Bulgarians but Muslims in faith by naming them as “Bulgaro-Mohamedans.” At the same time, Pomaks in each country also have poverty in common. This is a result of low-income agricultural jobs and weak infrastructural development due to mountainous terrain. Already at the bottom of the economic spectrum, the Pomaks have been hit hard by the recent Euro crisis in Greece and an ongoing political crisis in Bulgaria. Furthermore, neo-liberal agricultural policies that have led to a substantial decrease in subsidies in the three countries have worsened their economic situation.

During my research, I drove around Smolyan, Xanthi, and Edirne. In Greece and Bulgaria, I used the
CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!

The European Union Center of Excellence/European Studies Center congratulates the following undergraduate and graduate students who completed certificates in West European and/or European Union Studies this year:

WESTERN EUROPEAN STUDIES CERTIFICATE
Undergraduate Students and Themes:
Thea Berthoff - European Humanities
Patrick Bewick - Contemporary European History and Politics
Robyn Cheeseman - Spanish Studies
Amy Frisbie - Ancient Greece and Rome
Justine Howe - Fashion and Culture of France and Italy
Priyanka Kaura - Contemporary European Culture and Society
Tamara Lelli - European Humanities
Katharine McMullen - Spanish Studies
Alexandria O'Neill - British Studies
Suzanna Ploszaj - Multiculturalism and Identity in the Netherlands
Gina Pucci - Contemporary European Culture and Society
Rachel Queenan - European Humanities
Amanda Taylor - Contemporary European Culture and Society
Graduate Student:
Andrea Aldrich - West European Certificate

EUROPEAN UNION STUDIES CERTIFICATE
Undergraduate Students:
Callum Abbot
Dana Bodnar
Patricia Dougherty
Natalie Fiato
Alexander Rongione
Stephanie Schneider
Sally Ann Stadelman
Graduate Students:
Andrea Aldrich
Harrison Grafos (December 2011)
Yasemin Irepoglu
Evgeny Postnikov (April 2012)

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minarets of village mosques as indicators of Pomaks’ presence. This method didn’t work in Edirne, where almost all the villages have at least one mosque, and they may belong to different Muslim ethnic groups. Thus, in Turkey, I spoke to people in the street and relied on Internet forums to find Pomak villages. I also occasionally crossed the Bulgarian-Greek border at the Zlatograd-Thermes checkpoint. Bulgaria is not part of the Schengen agreement, yet, but Greece is. Therefore, there are still border checkpoints between Bulgaria and Greece. Bulgarian and Greek citizens can cross border checkpoints without passports. As a result, there is a significant volume of travel between Smolyan and Xanthi. Usually, Bulgarian citizens travel to the Aegean Sea, which is closer than the Black Sea coast. Greek citizens, on the other hand, travel to Bulgaria buy oil and other goods from cheap markets. Unfortunately, Pomaks in Turkey are not that lucky. They need passports and visas to travel to either Bulgaria or Greece.

I was able to observe how Pomaks’ identity performances in their daily lives may dramatically vary in different countries and in different localities within the same countries. For example, heterogeneity in choices of language of communication, different assertions to religious practices, complex inter-ethnic and inter-religious interactions, as well as diverse political affiliations are among these different performances and practices. Thanks to the generous support of EUCE/ESC, I am confident that I will be able to use these insights and preliminary findings to write grant applications to fund my dissertation fieldwork research. €
EUCE/ESC Spotlight: Christopher Burdick

This month, EUCE/ESC newsletter editor Gavin Jenkins interviewed alumnus Christopher Burdick, who is Assistant Director for Europe and South Asia in the Treasury’s Office of Terrorist Financing and Financial Crimes. He was raised outside Allentown, PA, where he graduated from Parkland High School in 1997. In 2001, he graduated from the University of Pittsburgh with degrees in Political Science and Economics, along with Certificates in West European Studies and Business German. As an undergraduate student, Burdick was active in the Phi Sigma Pi honors fraternity and the Pi Sigma Alpha Political Science Society. Burdick earned a Master’s of Arts in Law and Diplomacy from Tufts University’s. While in graduate school, he interned at the Defense Intelligence Agency and completed courses on Public International Law and International Trade and Commercial Policy.

Q: What classes at the University of Pittsburgh helped you the most in your career?

A: During my time at Pitt, I took classes with many great professors, but I would have to say that every course I took with the Political Science Department’s Alberta Sbragia and the Communication Department’s Gordon Mitchell were especially helpful in guiding my career.

Q: What was the best advice you ever received from a professor here at Pitt? And, what inspired you to get into this field of work?

A: One piece of advice that I heard from several professors while at Pittsburgh was about the importance of building a resume and finding worthwhile internships. As an undergrad, I interned in U.S. Senator Arlen Specter’s Office, at the EU Center at Pittsburgh, as well as the Department of State’s Bureau of European Affairs, and the U.S. Mission to the European Union in Brussels, Belgium. These experiences working on foreign policy issues on a day-to-day basis, coupled with my studies at Pitt, inspired me to take up a public service career in international affairs.

Q: You once worked for Booz Allen Hamilton. What were your duties there, and how did you transition from working for a consulting company to working for the government?

A: After graduate school, I joined Booz Allen Hamilton in the National Security practice. For almost 2 years, I supported clients in the U.S. Intelligence Community working on foreign policy and cyber security issues. I moved over to Treasury in 2003 and worked as an analyst in the Office of Foreign Assets Control developing cases for Treasury’s terrorism sanctions programs. Since then, I have worked as Treasury’s Liaison to the U.S. Department of Defense’s European Command in Stuttgart, Germany, a Requirements Officer in the Office of Intelligence & Analysis, and a Policy Advisor in my current office.

Q: You recently got a promotion. What are the duties of your new job?

A: In February, I was promoted to the position of Assistant Director for Europe and South Asia in Treasury’s Office of Terrorist Finance & Financial Crimes. I am responsible for managing a team of policy advisers that coordinate Treasury’s illicit finance policy for the EU, Russia & the Former Soviet Union, as well as Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India.

Note to EUCE/ESC Alumni:

Please keep in touch! We would love to hear about and celebrate your accomplishments. Send news of awards offered, grants received, books recently published, job appointments accepted, etc., to the Newsletter Editor at eucnews@pitt.edu.
In late March, I was one of 10 Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (GSPIA) students who traveled to Washington, D.C. This was the second annual D.C. Study Trip, and it was organized by “EU and the World” (EUaW), a student-run group within GSPIA that promotes interest in and knowledge of the European Union through scholarly and social events.

We visited the member state embassies of the current and upcoming holders of the rotating presidency of the Council of the European Union, Ireland and Lithuania, respectively. We also visited the EU Delegation to the United States.

EUaW was created in 2009 to initiate EU-focused programing, and as its current president, I think the D.C. Study Trip is a great way to conclude a school year that was highlighted by informative panels and cultural events relevant to the EU.

The dialogue we started here in Pittsburgh inspired us to ask a lot of questions during our tours in the capitol, and at the Lithuanian embassy, Ambassador Zygimantas Pavilionis spent 90 minutes talking to us. He outlined Lithuania’s global interests and answered questions on topics ranging from tourism to Russian influence.

“I liked how frank the ambassador and his diplomatic staff were with us,” said Janet Guo, a first-year GSPIA student.

In July, Lithuania will become president of the Council of the European Union. Ireland currently holds this position, and the Irish embassy was our second stop. At the Irish embassy, we participated in a roundtable discussion with members of the press office staff. They, too, were very candid. The press officers described the responsibilities that go along with leading the Council of the European Union. Their agenda had to react and adapt to the problems at hand, namely the economic crisis.

This visit also helped us understand that while each country holds the council presidency for only six months, the planning and coordination that go into this leadership role make up a much longer process. Each member state works with the president country directly before and after in order to ensure continuity.

The academic portion of the trip concluded with a visit to the EU Delegation to the United States. We met with EU experts on trade and energy, which are two topics we as a group have been discussing throughout the school year. Energy is especially important to many of us, since western Pennsylvania is involved in the ongoing debate about shale energy. The EU delegation members gave us a presentation about energy in the EU and spent almost two hours discussing the topic with us.

“I found the discussion on energy to be the most engaging conversation of the trip,” said Daniel Mason, also a first-year GSPIA student.

Many of the themes raised earlier in the day by

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has its share of liberal, labor, pension, and regional parties that have played a role in coalition building in the past, political competition has revolved around these two parties since Croatian independence in 1991. The current ruling coalition is comprised of the SDP with Zoran Milanović as its president, the HNS (Croatian People's Party), IDS (regional party of the Istrian Democratic Assembly), and the pensioner's party, the HSU. This coalition won its four year mandate in the December 2011 elections and is the 10th government of an independent Croatia.

On March 1, Prime Minister Milanović announced that the elections would take place on April 16. The HDZ opposed this date and wanted the elections to take place on the same day as local elections. They argued that this would not only save millions of Kuna (Croatia’s local currency), but would also increase the number of people participating. Milanović’s SDP and the ruling coalition proved victorious, stating that European issues will be left out of political debates if the election takes place in the shadow of local races. The media also predicted that same day elections would prove treacherous for the SDP, which is facing a public experiencing economic difficulties, but could help the HDZ because they generally do quite well at the local level.

The elections also presented challenges to many traditional electoral practices in Croatia. The debate over the date of the election involved speculation about turnout and voter awareness in EP elections. Members of the HDZ were not wrong in their assumption that voters would not turnout on an additional date. Local elections, while important in their own right, only draw about 45% of the population, which is low by European standards. The turnout on April 14th proved to be much lower, with around 20% of registered voters participating. Many Croatian political experts pointed to a sense of apathy in the public over both the elections and Croatia’s entry into the European Union. There was also a shared sentiment that the general public was simply uninformed of the election and of European issues.

While seldom addressed in public debates, perhaps the greatest challenge faced in the campaign was the lack of time. Parties had just six weeks to prepare for the elections, and with the mandate of MEPs lasting only one year, most parties have opted to focus preparation on the European wide EP elections that will take place in 2014. Furthermore, the timing discouraged small parties from attempting to challenge the major ones, as many of them were unable to invest resources.

Apart from the turnout, these elections are important for Croatian democracy because they serve as the first time that Croatians will be able to use preferential voting within party lists. This means that the selection of MEPs no longer depends on the order of candidates assigned by the party. In local and national elections, proportional representation is used to send members to the government according to the share of vote the party gets in the election. Candidates are ordered by the party and given mandates as the votes allow. People do not cast individual votes for individual candidates, thus keeping the selection of individual politicians in the hands of a select few. Two major lists were made public after the announcement of the election data: a list of the ruling government that contains candidates from the SDP, HNS, and HSU with their slogan “Bravely in Europe,” and the main opposition list, which has candidates from the HDZ, HSP, and the BUZ with the slogan “Croatian European Power.”

These lists reflect the regional distribution of Croatia’s population and promote candidates who had some experience working in European politics. Some members of the list are current government officials, members of the Croatian parliament, party leaders, and/or some current observers to the EP. Many of the SDP coalition list candidates have spent years working in administration positions during the accession process; in the Foreign Ministry, for example, or as delegates and leaders in the European Socialist and Liberal parties, and as trainees (stagiaires) in the EP. Each list has twelve candidates for the twelve EP seats given to Croatia. The SDP coalition lists offered seven woman and five men, while the HDZ coalition list offered five women and seven men. The results of the election may be considered a win for the HDZ who gained six of the twelve seats. The SDP list garnered support for five MEPs and the Labor party will be sending one MEP to the parliament. The selected candidates are placed 1-6 on the list for the HDZ and 1-5 for the list of the SDP. These MEPs will begin their term with the advent of the next parliamentary session in September and serve until new MEPs are elected in May or June of next year. Croatia will then have only eleven seats in the EP due to changes brought forth by the Lisbon Treaty, which restricts the size of the EP to 751 seats and thus reappor-
the Lithuanian ambassador returned in the context of EU energy. Lithuania’s leadership had articulated the need for energy independence from Russia. The EU Delegation also addressed this as a motivating factor for many developing energy policies.

Mason, who majors in Security and Intelligence Studies, said, “I especially appreciated the brutal honesty of the European delegation with regard to Russian energy.”

Our group was made up of students from five countries, many of whom had never been to D.C. before this trip. We visited the landmarks that make D.C. great, but it was the chance to engage with experts on topics we’ve been studying all year that made this trip memorable.

Julianne Norman, a first-year GSPIA student and EUaW vice-president, said the trip gave her a new perspective on these topics.

“The trip helped me more narrowly define my interests within the EU and explore other avenues I didn’t think I was interested in,” she said.

Pitt-Bradford professor teaches in Germany
For two weeks last May, Shailendra Gajanan, a Professor of Economics at the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford, and some of his students, visited Hochschule Heilbronn (Heilbronn University) in Germany. The course he co-taught with Professor Mathias Moersch was part of a collaboration between the two universities. The class was titled International Economics, and it focused on the global financial crisis, capital movement, and outsourcing. Working as teams, students wrote and presented papers at the end of the course. Topics included the crises in Greece, Spain and Portugal, and Germany and the implications for the Euro.

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