

UACES Scholarship 2010

Katarina MACARIEOVA, *Goldsmiths, University of London*

Outline of project

In my research I examine the ways in which the EU shapes the foreign policies of member states by analysing the case of Slovakia's policy towards the question of Kosovo's status. The main goal is to analyse the position of the Slovak Government on the question of the status of Kosovo, examine what pressure was brought to bear on Bratislava by its EU partners and by other EU institutions, and explain why this did not lead to a substantive change in Slovakia's policy on the issue of recognition. Slovakia is among the five countries of the EU which have not recognised Kosovo and appear unlikely to do so in the near future.

Academic achievements

The UACES scholarship enabled me to spend five weeks in Bratislava (April-May 2010 and July 2010) and one week in Brussels (July 2010). My aim in Bratislava was to visit libraries and archives to find relevant documents and books available only in Slovakia and conduct interviews with officials. In Brussels I mainly concentrated on carrying out interviews with the EU representatives. I have successfully completed all trips and gathered valuable information. In total, I conducted 15 semi-structured interviews. In Bratislava, I interviewed Slovak MPs, analysts, journalists and other officials who deal with the Balkans and particularly with Kosovo. I also participated at the 11th Annual Review Conference on the Foreign Policy of the Slovak Republic in 2009 which was organised by the Research Center of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association. In Brussels I obtained valuable information from the Members of the European Parliament, Representatives of the EU Commission and journalists. The interviewees were interested in my research and confirmed their availability for follow up interviews. In addition, I have obtained new contacts which will be useful for my further research.

Use made of resources, facilities abroad

In Bratislava I benefited mainly from the access to the Library of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association, Central Library of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, University Library in Bratislava, Archive and Library of the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs and archives of daily newspapers. In Brussels I used the European Commission's Central Library facilities.

Positive and negative aspects

All trips were a good research experience and I managed to obtain very useful data. My first trip to Bratislava (April-May 2010) was shortly before the parliamentary elections. As a result, it was more difficult to organise meetings with the officials due to their lack of time. Some officials unable to meet me have agreed to answer my questions in written form. However, in July during my second trip to Bratislava I was able to follow up some questions that occurred during/after the first trip.

I would like to thank for the support of the UACES and the European Commission as it was invaluable for the progress in my studies and it enabled me to fully focus on my research.