

## Monitor CE press monitoring of European Union affairs

sample review of Polish print media: 23.11.2004

### EXTERNAL RELATIONS

#### **Suspected Ukrainian voting fraud**

Ukraine's Central Election Commission declared PM Yanukovich winner of Sunday's presidential elections. Supporters of opposition candidate Yushchenko rejected the commission's results amid reports of widespread voting irregularities. Polish Foreign Minister Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Chairman of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers, said the elections did not meet international standards. The EU, NATO and the OSCE have called for observance of constitutional norms and a review of the elections. Various Polish politicians have also rejected the apparent outcome of the elections, saying that Poland should support democracy in Ukraine and help the country assert its independence from Russia.

**Most Polish written press, Gazeta Wyborcza** (p.no. 1) Ukraine still alive, **Rzeczpospolita** (p.no. 1) Falsified victory, **Rzeczpospolita** (p.no. 8) Disappointed with counterfeits, **Gazeta Wyborcza** (p.no. 11 From abroad) Critic Brussels

#### **Comment: Polish deputy foreign affairs minister on Ukraine elections**

Polish Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Adam Rotfeld says the crisis in Ukraine demonstrates the country's attachment to the principles of democracy. Polish authorities should focus on honest results of the elections, not on which candidate won, Rotfeld writes.

**Rzeczpospolita** (p.no. 9) Standards are most important

#### **Iran's nuclear programme frozen**

IAEA Director General Mohamed ElBaradei confirmed yesterday that Iran had frozen its nuclear programme. Iran also signed an agreement with the EU that should forestall sanctions from the UN Security Council.

**Gazeta Wyborcza** (p.no. 12 Foreign affairs) Teheran froze atom, **Nasz Dziennik** (p.no. 6 Foreign affairs) Suspend uranium enrichment, **Trybuna** (p.no. 9 Foreign affairs) They keep promise, **Dziennik Zachodni** (p.no. 4 Foreign affairs) Iran suspend atomic programme

### ECONOMY AND FINANCES

#### **Excessive budget deficits in EU countries**

With France's budget deficit expected to fall below 3 % next year, EU finance ministers are likely to cancel penalties levied against that country for exceeding the deficit limit established by the Stability and Growth Pact. Commissioner Almunia has proposed the same policy toward Germany.

Poland's expected budget deficit for 2005 is PLN 35 billion (EUR 8.38 billion), 4 % of GNP.

**Most Polish written press, Gazeta Wyborcza** (p.no. 26 *Economy abroad*) Absolution for deficit, **Gazeta Wyborcza** (p.no.21*Economy*) Patching the budget, **Rzeczpospolita** (p. 2 *Economy and Market*) EU: deficits, strong euro, **Parkiet** (p.no. 10 *Economy abroad*) Germany and France: can they fix it? **Puls Biznesu** (p.no. 10 *Home*) Government has a problem, **Wprost** (p.no. 48 *Business – People – Money*) Belka's straight

## INSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

### **Controversy over Barrot continues**

Liberal Democrats leader Graham Watson and other MEPs are demanding an official explanation from the Commission and the French government regarding French Commissioner-Designate Barrot's failure to reveal an embezzlement conviction to the EP sooner. Barrot received a presidential pardon for the conviction. Barroso defended Barrot, saying he would be an 'excellent commissioner'.

**Trybuna** (p.no. 10 *Abroad*) Commissioner with conviction, **Gazeta Wyborcza** (p.no. 26 *Economy abroad*) Let Brussels explain

### **Comment: Media distorted Buttiglione's view**

Father Maciej Zieba, head of the Tertio Millenio Institute, writes that the media abused its power in reporting on Buttiglione and distorted the commissioner-designate's views.

**Rzeczpospolita** (p.no. A14) In a mist of absurdity

### **Polish MEPs adjusting to Strasbourg and Brussels**

The general impression Polish MEPs are making is a positive one. Some, however – particularly those from the LPR – are gaining a reputation for being disruptive.

**Polityka** (p.no. 28 *Home*) Our countrymen ruling in Strasbourg

## EMPLOYMENT

### **PM Belka speaks with French PM about lifting labour market restrictions**

Yesterday in Paris, PM Belka and French PM Raffarin signed an agreement to set up a bilateral commission aiming to lift labour restriction. The French labour market may open to Polish workers as soon as 2006.

**Most Polish written press, Gazeta Wyborcza** (p.no. 13, *Abroad*) Belka is looking for a job for us, **Rzeczpospolita** (p.no. 11 *Abroad*) We will have full support

## FISHERY

### **EU fishing quotas**

If the Commission divides the Baltic Sea into eastern and western sections and cuts quotas, Polish fishermen stand to lose up to PLN 50 million (EUR

11.9 million) a year. The Commission would like to halve the number of fishing boats in two years, and is offering monetary compensation for fishermen who take their boats to the scrap yard. Polish Agriculture Minister Olejniczak and representatives from Denmark, Finland, Latvia and Lithuania are trying to lift the quota on cod.

**Rzeczpospolita** (p.no. 2 *Economy and Market*) Small fleet is disappearing, **Puls Biznesu** (p.no. 13 *From home/From abroad*) Fishermen are going to lose, **Dziennik Bałtycki** (p.no. 10 *Economy*) About limits in Brussels

## AGRICULTURE

### **Polish farmers: EU subsidies and Polish debts**

The Sejm passed an amendment on 18 November that would prevent debt collectors from demanding that indebted farmers provide them with the farmers' account numbers with the Agency for the Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture (ARMF). The measure would prevent executors from taking farmers' EU money. According to the Polish Institute of Agriculture, farmers are spending in anticipation of subsidies and thereby sinking further into debt.

**Newsweek Polska** (p.no. 24 *Poland*) The Europe of empty accounts, **Polityka** (p.no. 38 *Home*) Half litre for five

## TAXATION

### **Taxes on EU grants**

Scientists and firms drawing EU grants want to know whether they are expected to pay taxes on those funds. There is debate over how to interpret rulings from the Department of the Exchequer; some tax advisors argue that EU grants are tax-free. The Department of the Exchequer, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Information Technology want to find a solution with the Commission.

**Rzeczpospolita** (p.no. 1 *Everyday law*) Indistinct rules harming grants

## DEFENCE

### **Polish troops in EU rapid reaction force**

Germany, Poland and Slovakia signed an agreement yesterday to establish a common combat unit as part of 13 EU battle groups. The unit will be ready for deployment in 2009 or 2010. Poland will initially command the unit and be responsible for planning and logistics. Polish troops will make up 55-60 % of the manpower.

**Rzeczpospolita** (p.no. 11 *Abroad*) Poland establishes rapid reaction unit, **Gazeta Wyborcza** (p.no. 12 *Abroad*) Polish in troops of rapid reaction force

## HEALTH

### **Abortion issues raise concerns**

The EP and the UN Human Rights Commission expressed concern about the situation of women in Poland, where women who have a legal right to an abortion often cannot obtain one legally. Young girls are not receiving sex education, and black-market abortions are common. Activist Kazimiera Szczuka, author of the book "The Silence of the Lambs", is interviewed.

**Polityka** (p.no. 33 Home) Alice in horror-land

## REGIONAL POLICY

### **Coalition to defend regional policy**

Spain is seeking to form a coalition of new Member States, Greece, and Portugal to counterbalance the efforts of richer Member States in restricting EU aid. Polish Minister for European Affairs Jaroslaw Pietras said Poland welcomes allies to help support regional funding. Representatives of the coalition will meet in Warsaw in December.

**Gazeta Wyborcza** (p.no. 26 Economy abroad) Play about EU budget, **Rzeczpospolita** (p.no. 2 Economy and Market) Lunch in Warsaw, please, **Życie** (p.no. 16 Economy) Defence of the budget UE

## INDUSTRY / ENTERPRISES

### **Rabobank gets the go ahead for investment in BGZ**

The Commission gave Dutch Rabobank approval to invest in the Polish-based Bank Gospodarki Żywnościowej (BGŻ). Rabobank will have 33 % of the votes in BGŻ's general assembly.

**Puls Biznesu** (p. no. 5 Country) BGŻ is a step away from the capital, **Rzeczpospolita** (p.no. B7 Banking) KBN: new departments

### **Conference on establishing firms in EU**

The fourth annual Conference of Businessmen will be held today in Warsaw. This year's conference will focus on how to establish a firm in the EU and how to obtain trade certificates in other Member States. Experts will discuss the conditions in the EU-15 as well as in new Member States.

**Puls Biznesu** (p.no. 22 Entrepreneur) How to establish a firm in EU

### **IMF managing director praises Polish economy**

IMF Managing Director Rodrigo de Rato praised the Polish economy yesterday in Warsaw, but said that the country needs to improve its fiscal policy. He expects that Polish inflation will not exceed 2.5 % in 2005, and that global GDP will not match IMF expectations. De Rato told *Rzeczpospolita* the IMF would set up a permanent regional representation in Warsaw to emphasise the Fund's involvement in Central Europe as well as Poland's role in the region.

**Rzeczpospolita** (p.no. B3 Economy) Polish economy praises, **Parkiet** (p.no. 8 Finance/economy – country) Worse IMF prognosis, **Życie Warszawy** (p.no. 13 Gospodarka) Stranger eye

## ENERGY

### **New wave of nuclear power stations in Europe**

New nuclear plants are being built in Finland, France and Romania. According to the Commission, Europeans will soon need 1.3 % more energy per year. Only 30 % of Poles support building nuclear power plants in their country.

**Newsweek Polska** (p.no. 78) Chain reaction

## MEMBER STATES / INTERNAL AFFAIRS

### **Sejm commission cries foul over ABW questioning in PKN Orlen investigation**

On Saturday, officials of the domestic security agency ABW questioned members of the Sejm commission investigating the PKN Orlen affair. Opposition MPs decried the questioning as an attempt to disturb the work of the commission. Commission deputy chair Giertych called for the resignation of ABW chief Andrzej Barcikowski and wants an investigation into the matter, but Sejm speaker Józef Oleksy did not object to the questioning. The commission questioned former PM Miller on Saturday and will interview businessman Jan Kulczyk next; it expects to question President Kwaśniewski in spring.

**Most Polish written press, Rzeczpospolita** (p.no. 3 Home) After ABW questioning in Sejm, **Rzeczpospolita** (p.no. 4 Home) Left destruction in front, **Gazeta Wyborcza** (p.no. 2 Affairs) ABW blustered in Sejm, **Trybuna** (p.no. 3 Home) No anxiety, **Życie Warszawy** (p.no. 3 Affairs) Sejm full of agents, **Dziennik Zachodni** (p.no. 5 Home) Opposition needs explanation, **Głos Wielkopolski** (p.no. 5 Poland) Discussions, **Nasz Dziennik** (p.no. 3 Poland) Abortive provocation, **Gazeta Wyborcza** (p.no. 1) ABW comes into Sejm, **Gazeta Wyborcza** (p.no. 6 Home) Who let the ABW in here?

### **Polish opposition wants radical reform**

In light of such recent scandals as Rywingate and Orlengate, Polish opposition parties want to introduce radical reforms, such as penalising politicians who do not reveal the sources of their incomes. Some 46 % of Poles support reform of the country's constitution.

**Newsweek Polska** (p.no. 14 Poland) How to clean a cesspool

### **Public aid in Poland hit record high in 2003**

In a report to be published today, the Consumer and Competition Protection Office notes that PLN 26 billion (EUR 6.23 billion), or about 3.5 % of Polish GDP, was given out as public aid in 2003, mainly to unprofitable coal mines, shipyards and ironworks. According to EU regulations, subsidies should not exceed more than 0.5 % of GDP in 2005.

**Gazeta Wyborcza** (p.no. 21 Economy) We are paying a lot! **Gazeta Wyborcza** (p.no. 21 Economy) Banasiński: The Union for itself, Poland for itself

OPINION POLLS

**Confidence in Polish government remains constant**

According to an opinion poll conducted 5-8 November by CBOS, 30 % of Poles support PM Belka, a 1 % rise since September. The poll also shows that 29 % disapprove of the government and 40 % have a negative opinion of Belka; 42 % of Poles are indifferent to the government.

**Życie** (p.no. 6 Country) Support given to the government and prime minister, **Gazeta Wyborcza** (p.no. 4 Country) Opinion of prime minister and the government is consistent