

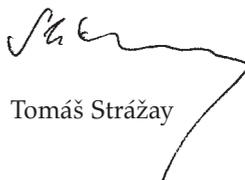
Dear readers,

Within the European Union, Slovakia belongs to the small countries, with the size of population being comparable to the population of the biggest European cities. This fact determines also the conditions for publishing activities. Therefore, the Research Center of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association, the publisher of three periodicals and numerous other publications recently decided to innovate its publication program. The reasons were both organizational and financial. As a result, the journal named *International issues & Slovak Foreign Policy Affairs* appears on the market.

The journal you have just opened is neither brand new, nor an old one. It was created by the fusion of two journals formerly published by the RC SFPFA, both with quite a high reputation in Slovakia and abroad. *Medzinárodné otázky/International Issues* was the first foreign policy quarterly on the territory of Slovakia – the first issue was already published in 1992. On the other hand, the *Slovak Foreign Policy Affairs* was the first Slovak review of international affairs published in English. The overall goal of the publisher is to continue in the tradition of both journals equally by increasing the quality of the contents and its attraction to the readers and potential contributors.

The first 2006 issue of *International Issues & Slovak Foreign Policy Affairs* touches the issue of the “European identity”. Most of the articles in the current issue are based on the contributions to the conference “European Identity – Views from the West, Center and East of Europe”, which was held in Bratislava in October 2005. The authors from four countries, including the so-called old EU members like Germany and Austria, the new member (Slovakia), as well as a country that is still on the waiting list to the EU accession (Turkey) discuss various approaches and concepts of identity and evaluate the role of the nation state in the ongoing process of European identity formation. Last but not least, some of them attach the process of the European identity creation to the European integration processes, while for the others the question of the borders of Europe remain the key issue for their analysis of European identity.

Hopefully the current issue of *International issues & Slovak Foreign Policy Affairs* will bring some light in the research of European identity, which still remains biased and without adequate responses to the research hypotheses.



Tomáš Strážay