



Centar za građansko obrazovanje
Centre for civic education

HOW MUCH, TO WHICH MEDIA AND RELATED AGENCIES DID MUNICIPALITIES IN MONTENEGRO PAY FOR THEIR SERVICES?

October, 2012.



Introduction

The project „*How much, to which media and related agencies did municipalities in Montenegro pay for their services?*” is carried out within the sub-programme *Media and democracy* of the Centre for Civic Education (CCE) and it aims to contribute to raise awareness on responsible expenditures from the budget of local governments. The specific objective of the project is also to underline the relations between municipalities in Montenegro and media and related subjects through the allocation of financial resources based on the contractual services.

In this regard, from mid-July to the beginning of October, through the Free Access to Information Law, the Centre for Civic Education (CCE) collected data concerning the list of all media, public relations agencies, opinion polls agencies and production companies engaged and paid by Montenegrin municipalities during 2011 on the basis of contract services, specialised services or any other ground. Furthermore, the data processing included the amount paid to these entities by the municipalities in 2011 and the type of services for which the amount was paid.

The project covered all Montenegrin municipalities, the old royal capital of Cetinje and the capital city Podgorica:

- *Andrijevica*
- *Bar*
- *Berane*
- *Bijelo Polje*
- *Budva*
- *Danilovgrad*
- *Žabljak*
- *Kolašin*
- *Kotor*
- *Mojkovac*
- *Nikšić*
- *Plav*
- *Plužine*
- *Pljevlja*
- *Podgorica*
- *Rožaje*
- *Tivat*
- *Ulcinj*
- *Herceg Novi*
- *Cetinje*
- *Šavnik*

The above listed municipalities, the old royal capital of Cetinje and the capital city of Podgorica didn't provide requested information at the same time nor the quality of the information has been the same. This has significantly affected the length of the survey and of data processing.

NOTE: Associates within the Centre for Civic Education (CCE) used, during the data processing, documentation that have been submitted as the official response to the requests for free access to information. Additionally, it has been established that certain municipalities did not provide complete information, which is influencing the listed amounts in final. CCE, as the non-governmental organisation, does not have enough capacities to check the accuracy of the responses of 21 Montenegrin municipality and therefore this report presents only the findings which have been obtained based on the Free Access to Information Law.



Overview of the findings

Generally, Montenegrin municipalities proved to be not updated, given the fact that a substantial part of them violated the legal deadline of eight days and often provided incomplete information, which required further efforts of the CCE staff and direct communication. Finally, the data were gathered from all municipalities.

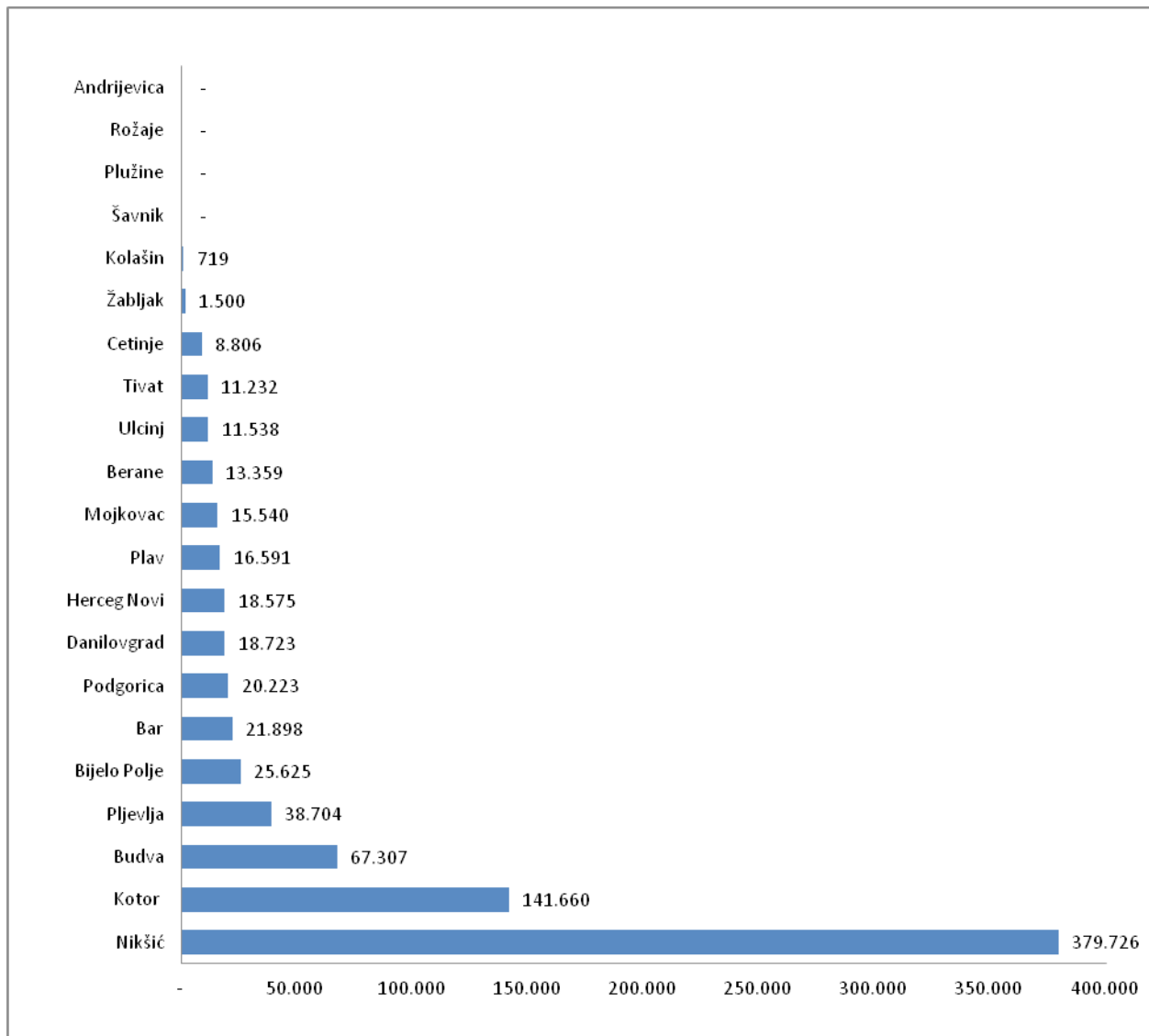
Through the Free Access to Information Law, the CCE requested the list of all media, public relation agencies, opinion polls agencies and production companies that had been engaged by municipalities in Montenegro during 2011. The overall amount paid by the Montenegrin municipalities for services of these subjects, in 2011, is **€811,726.00**. If the total of the same financial resources at the level of Montenegro, allocated by the ministries and bodies of the Government and Parliament, is added to this the amount increases to **€2 641 485. 83¹**, i.e. overall amount spent for this purpose from the Budget of Montenegro (from the side of the mentioned institutions included within the research)².

The conducted research showed that the analysed municipalities do not have same relation towards all media, as well as that the criteria applied for media are not clear, especially taking into account quality, availability of media, readership and audience ratings.

The municipality that spent the highest amount of money for this purpose is Nikšić with **€379,726.00**, which represents nearly half of the overall expenses from all the municipalities together (**46,78%**). The municipality of Kotor takes the second position with **17,45%**, i.e. **€141.660,00**. It is followed by the municipality of Budva with a bit more than **8%** of the overall expenses, i.e. **€67,307.00** and the municipality of Pljevlja with **€38,704.00** is at the fourth place. The municipality of Bijelo Polje also considerably used these services in the amount of **€ 25,625.00**. Amongst the top ten users of such services, when it comes to the contracts with media, public relation agencies, opinion poll agencies and production companies, there are municipalities of Bar (**€21,898.00**), Podgorica (**€20,223.00**), Danilovgrad (**€18,723.00**), Herceg Novi (**€18,575.00**) and Plav (**€16,591.00**). The other municipalities range between **€15,540.00** to **€719.00**, which was the amount spent by the municipality of Kolašin as the most economical in this respect. According to the received data (on the basis of Free Access to Information Law, and accompanying receipts and contracts), the municipalities of Šavnik, Plužine, Rožaje and Andrijevića did not have any expenses in this respect.

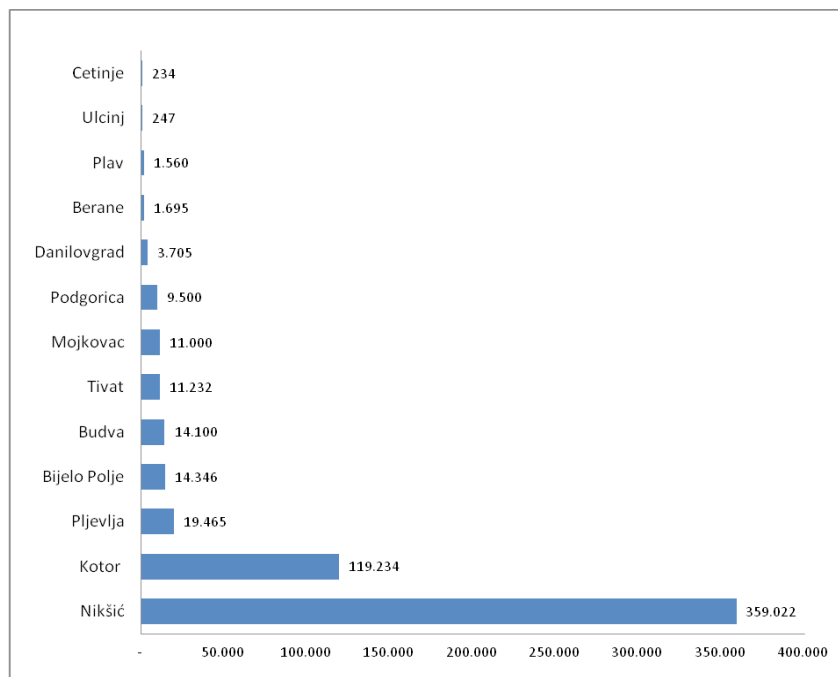
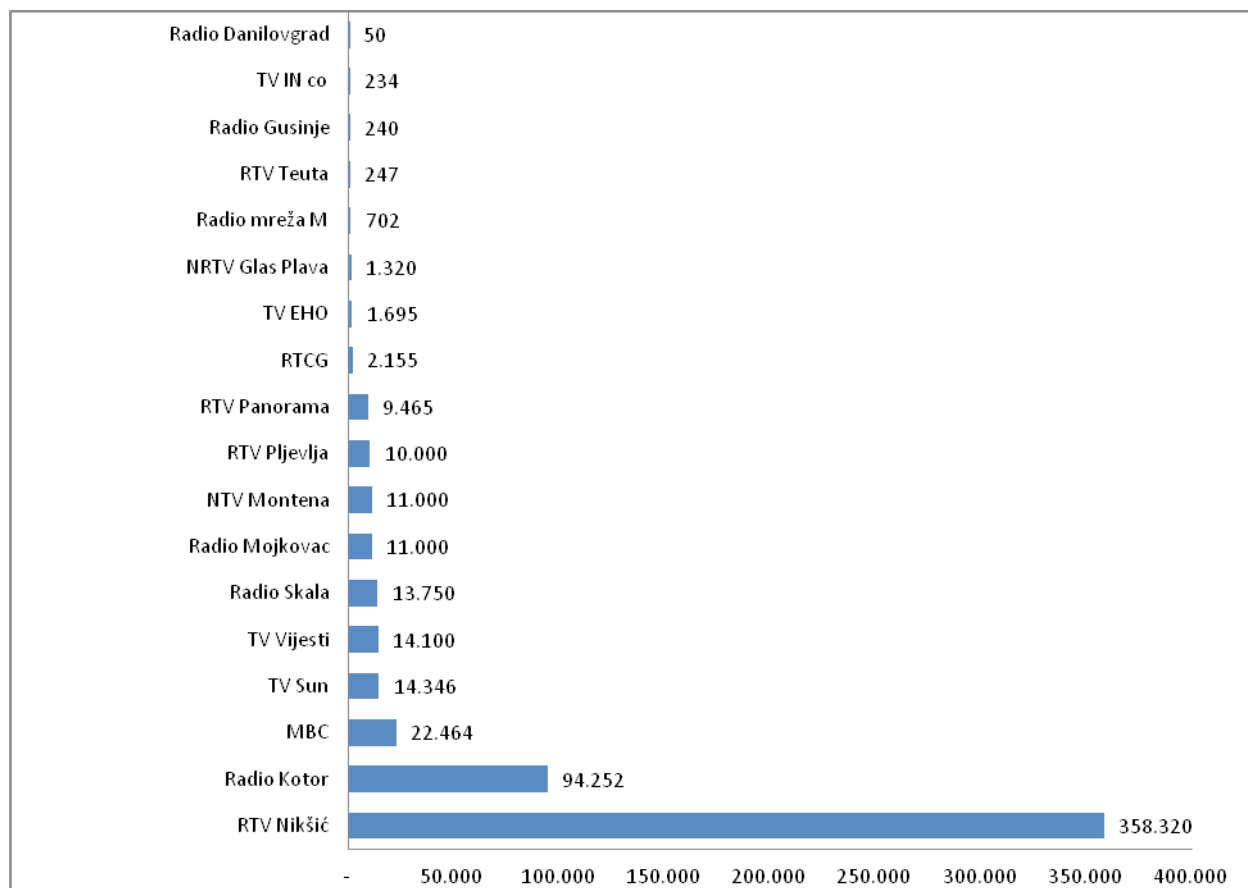
¹ An amount of € 1 830 344.83 was spent by the ministries and governmental bodies, also including the Parliament in 2011.

² This research was made public by CCE on 19/04/2012, and it is available on the CCE website



The largest amount for support of media programme activities or for the promotion of the activities of the municipalities on TV and radio stations was allocated to RTV „Nikšić“ (63,38%), i.e. €358,320.00 (overall amount paid by the municipality of Nikšić), then for Radio “Kotor” with a bit more of 16% of overall expenditures, i.e. €94,252.00 (the whole amount paid by the municipality of Kotor), followed by the television „MBC“ with €22,464.00 (€11,232.00 paid by the municipality of Kotor and Tivat each for the production of the programme „Hronika Kotora“ and „Hronika Tivta“). The fourth and fifth position is taken by the local television „Sun“ from Bijelo Polje (the whole sum paid by the municipality of Bijelo Polje) and television „Vijesti“ (the whole sum paid by the municipality of Budva) with the amount of €14,346.00 and €14,100.00. This is followed by Radio „Skala“ that received €13,750.00 from the municipality of Kotor, whereas municipality of Mojkovac paid to Radio “Mojkovac” €11,000.00 for broadcasting of the sessions of local Parliament and production of programmes in the interest of the municipality. The same amount of €11,000.00 was paid to the television „Montena“, out of which €9.500 by the capital city of Podgorica for the production and broadcast of the programme „PG raport“ and €1,500.00 by the municipality of Danilovgrad for the services of covering activities related to the celebrations of the municipality day. For the public broadcasting service RTCG municipalities

allocated **0,38%**, i.e. only **€2,155.00** (overall sum paid by the municipality of Danilovgrad in the amount of **€1,755.00** for the broadcast of the new year's congratulations and **€400** for the services of media promotion at the public broadcasting service).

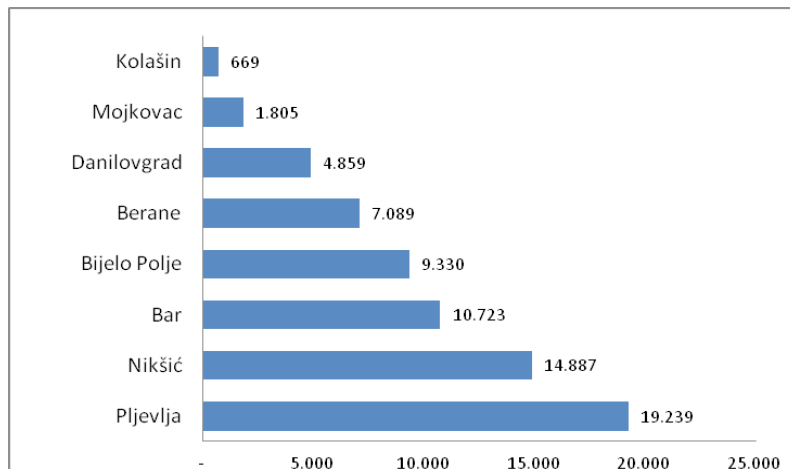
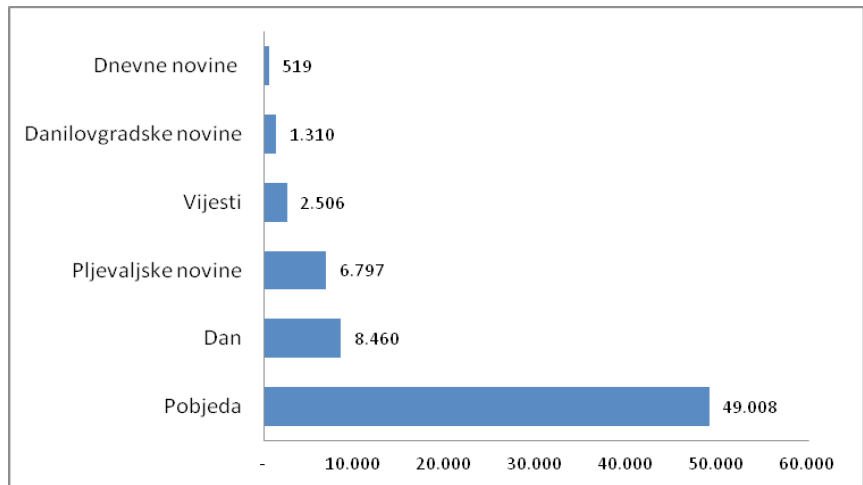


Comparatively, the municipality of Nikšić spent largest amount for television and radio stations, i.e. **63,51%** or **€359,022.00**. The municipality of Kotor is positioned as second with **€119,234.00 (21,09%)**. These are followed by the municipality of Pljevlja with a bit more than 3%, i.e. **€19,465.00**, then the municipality of Bijelo Polje with **€14,346.00** spent, resulting into 2,5%. Two hundreds euro less were spent by the municipality of Budva (**14,100.00€**) which in comparison to the overall expenditures from municipalities to television and radio stations amounts to **2,49%**. The Old Royal Capital of Cetinje



is the municipality with lowest expenditures in this regard, i.e. **234.00€ (0,04%)**.

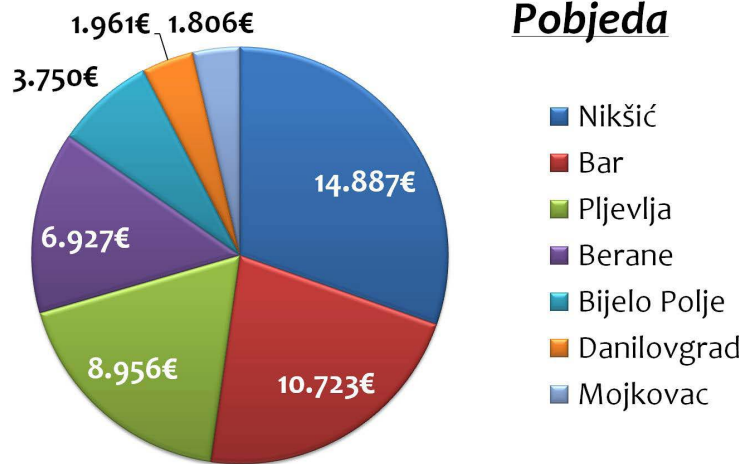
Alongside with electronic media, the research included printed media, portals and news agencies. The largest amount allocated to printed media for the promotion of the municipal activities was paid to the daily newspaper „Pobjeda“ - **€49,008.00 (71,44%)**. For daily „Dan“ was allocated nearly € 40,000.00 less, precisely **€8,406,00**, which is slightly more than **12%** of total amount, and the paper „Pljevaljske novine“ got **€6,797.00**. For the newspaper „Vijesti“ **€ 2,506.00 (3,65%)** was allocated.



For this purpose, the municipality of Pljevlja paid **€19,239.00**, out of which the biggest part was dedicated to the newspaper „Pobjeda“ in the amount of **€8,956.00**, followed by the municipality of Nikšić with **21,70%**, i.e. **€14,887.00** (overall sum paid to the newspaper „Pobjeda“). The municipality of Bar is ranked as third with **€10,723.00 - 15,63%** (overall sum paid to the newspaper „Pobjeda“), then comes the municipality of Bijelo Polje with **9,330.00€ (13,60%)**,

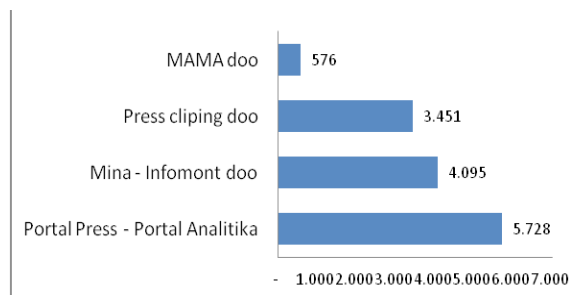
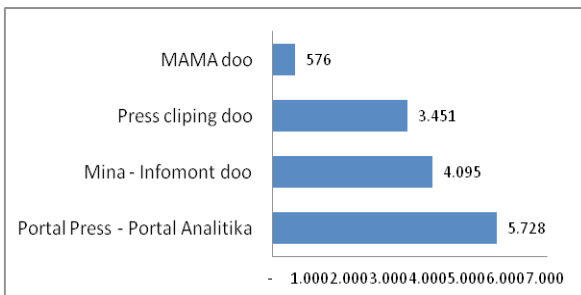
which used more balanced approach when it comes to the services provided by the printed media of Montenegro³. The municipality of Berane spent **€7,089.00** to printed media, and out of this sum **€6,926.00** were paid to the newspaper „Pobjeda“. The other municipalities spent less than **€ 7,000.00** for advertising or payments for other services transferred to print media. The municipality of Kolašin is the one with least expenditures, i.e. **€ 669 (0,98%)**. According to previous researches, in 2011 the Parliament of Montenegro allocated to print media an amount of **€ 11,319.00** (**€ 2,116.00** to „Vijesti“, **€ 1,785.00** to „Dan“ and **€ 7,418.00** to „Pobjeda“). If we add to the amount of **€ 49,008.00** the allocations from the ministries and other governmental bodies in 2011 to the newspaper „Pobjeda“ for such services, which amounted to **€ 189,369.00**, and the mentioned **€ 7,418.00** from the side of the Parliament, we get the total of **€ 245,795.00**. This represents the overall amount allocated from the budget of ministries, governmental bodes, Parliament and local authorities to this newspaper, an amount which is more than the total expenditures allocated to the other print media by these institutions altogether.

³ Newspaper „Dan“ €4,990.00, newspaper „Pobjeda“ €3,750.00, newspaper „Vijesti“ €590.00



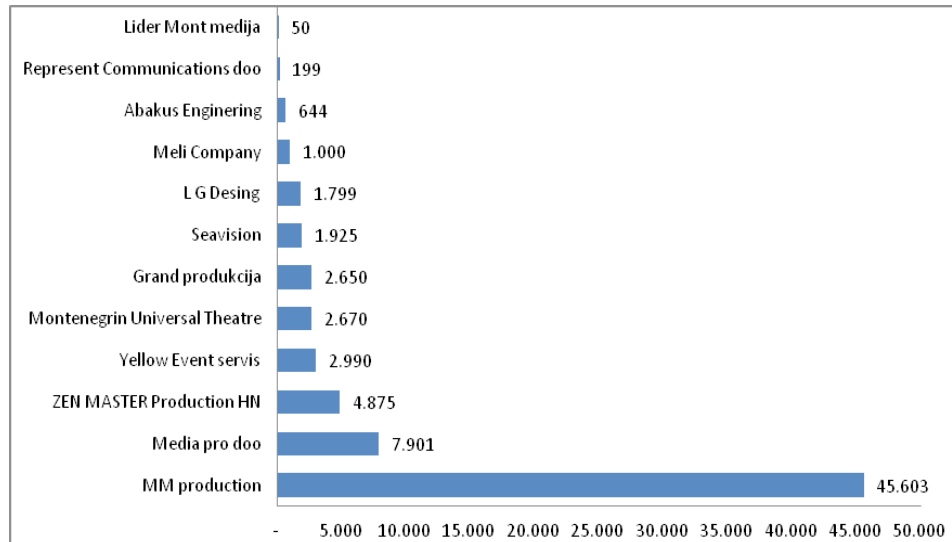
Portals are becoming a closer medium to the part of Montenegrin municipalities. According to the information received by CCE, the portal „Analitika“ received € 5,728.00, out of which € 1,989.00 from the municipality of Danilovgrad and from the Old Royal Capital Cetinje each, plus € 1,750.00 from the municipality of Bijelo Polje.

As far as agencies are concerned, „MINA“ was paid € 4,095.00€ for its service by the municipality of Budva. This amount refers to the yearly news service produced by this agency.

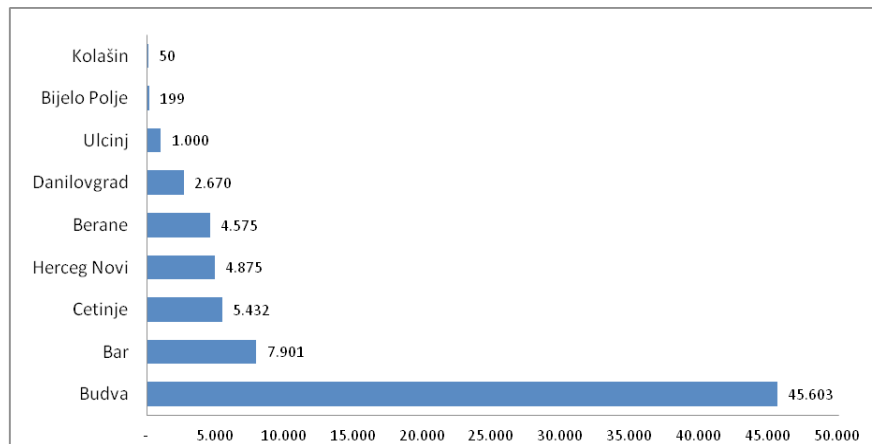


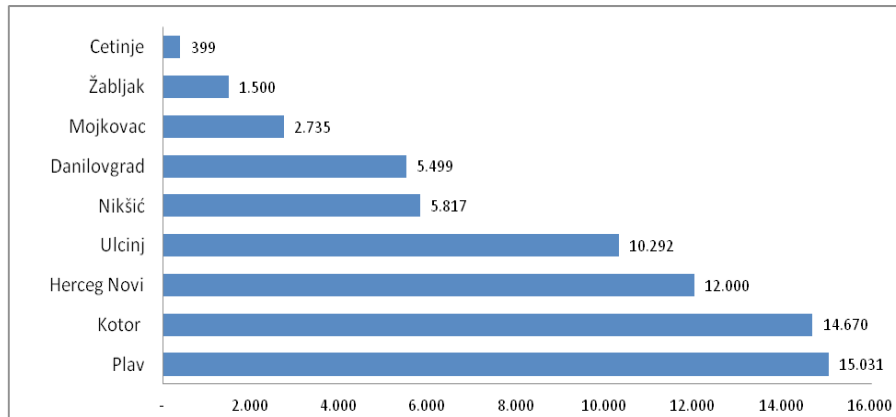
Users of portals and agencies' services were only the municipalities of Budva, Bar, Bijelo Polje and Danilovgrad, as well as the Old Royal Capital Cetinje, while the other municipalities did not have any expenses on this ground.

During 2011 municipalities engaged also marketing agencies, production companies and similar agencies. The municipality that used the services of these companies to the greatest extent is Budva with €45,603.00, i.e. 63%. The overall amount was paid to the production company „MM production“ for the TV serial „Budva na pjenu od mora“. After Budva, the second position is taken by the municipality of Bar, i.e. €7,901.00. The amount was paid to the company „Media pro“ which, according to the data



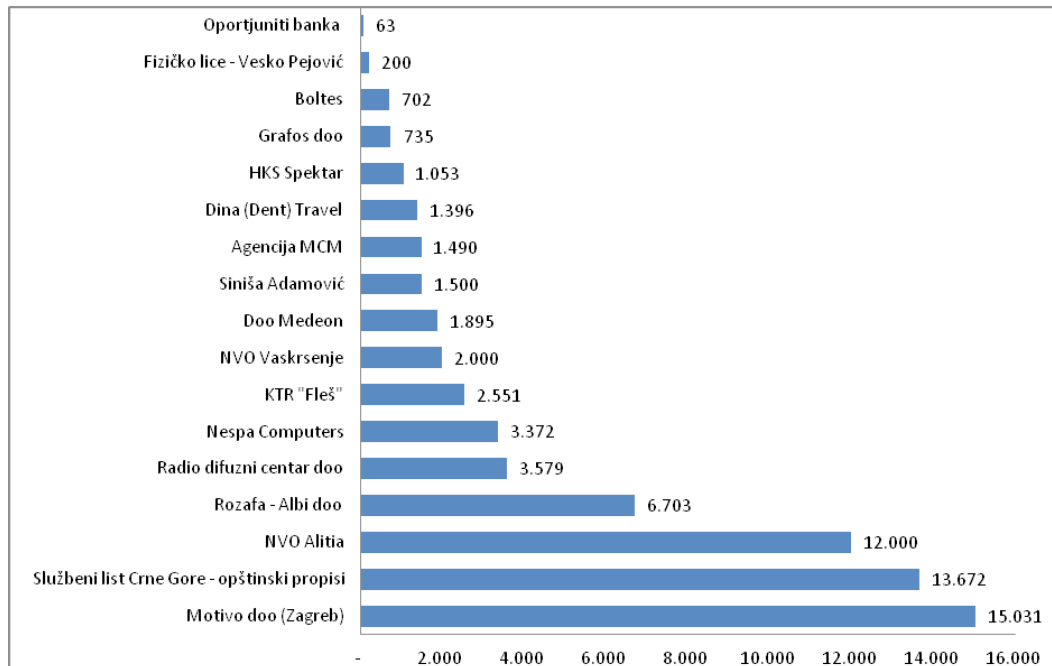
data from the Central registry of commercial entities, deals with photography. The Old Royal Capital of Cetinje is placed as third when it comes to the engagement of marketing agencies, production companies and similar agencies with an expenditure of **€5,432.00**, i.e. **7,51%** of the overall amount spent from municipalities for these services. This is followed by the municipality of Herceg Novi, which spent **€4,875.00**, and this was paid entirely to the television house „*Zen Master production*“ for the production and broadcasting services for promotion of the town of Herceg Novi. The municipality of Berane paid **€2,650.00** to „*Grand produkcija*“ on the basis of a contract of engagement and performance.





When it comes to other business entities which do not fall within the categories of radio-television, print media, portals, news agencies, marketing agencies and production companies, the highest expenditures were done by the municipality of Plav, in specific **€15,031.00** paid to the company „*Motivo*“ from Zagreb for the participation of the Croatian singer Severina at the opening of the cultural event „*Dani borovnice*“. This is followed by the municipality of Kotor with an amount of **€14,670.00**⁴ spent, while the municipality of Herceg Novi is placed as third with **€12,000.00** spent for the publication of the monthly „*Novske novine*“ produced by the NGO Atilia. To the „*Službeni list*“ (Official gazette) was paid an amount of **€13,672.00** for the municipalities’ regulations by the municipalities of Kotor (€ 7,719.00), Nikšić (€ 5, 817.00) and the Old Royal Capital of Cetinje (€ 136.00).

It is interesting to note that the non-governmental organisation „*Vaskrsenje*“ from Mojkovac got **€ 2,000.00** for the broadcasting of the sessions of the local Assembly of Mojkovac and production of programmes of interest for the municipality. According to the registry of non-governmental organisations, available on the website of the Ministry of Interior, the only NGO with such a name is the Youth Association– Vaskrsenje from Mojkovac, whose main field of action is culture.



⁴ The amount is paid to three entities: Službeni list Crne Gore - Official gazette of Montenegro (€7, 719), to the Radio difuznom centru (€3, 579) and to the company Nespa Computers (€3, 372) for a catalogue of state and municipalities' regulations



As far as regional media are concerned, the municipality of Kotor paid the Croatian radio-television (HRT) an amount of € 7,755.32 as a settlement of liabilities incurred during a previous period since the contract on conclusion of provision of technical facilities for the broadcasting building Vrmac necessary for the broadcasting of HRT was concluded in December 2007. In such a way, the municipality of Kotor regulated all belated obligations as prescribed by this contract. In addition, amongst the regional media, „Večernje novosti“ was paid 1,700.00€ by the municipality of Herceg Novi.

Municipalities did not particularly focus on public opinion researches, as only the municipality of Budva and the Capital City Podgorica engaged the public opinion agency „Damar“ in the amount of €10,723.00 that spent by Podgorica and €3,509.00 by the municipality of Budva. Interesting is to point out the means of payment in the case of the municipality of Budva. Namely, within the engagement of the agency „Damar“, a contract on the takeover of the debt between the municipality of Budva as debtor, the agency „Damar“ as creditor, and the company „Princ & co“ from Herceg Novi as takeover of the debt was made. According to this contract, which copy is in possession of CCE, the company from Herceg Novi owed to the municipality of Herceg Novi an amount concerning urbanisation taxes. Hereby it is stated that this company must pay the amount to the public poll's agency „Damar“, with whom the municipality of Budva signed the contracts, thus eliminating its previous debt and at the same time fulfilling the obligations of the municipality of Budva towards „Damar“.

Conclusions and recommendations

- **Taxpayers and citizens of Montenegro have the right to be informed on how the budget of local municipalities is spent and which benefits they enjoy from such expenditures, in particular bearing in mind the criteria for allocation of such costs.**
- **CCE believes these data and expenditures related to marketing and similar agencies costs should be made public on the websites of all municipalities.**
- **CCE is in the opinion that local administrations should have clear and objective criteria when investing into media, marketing agencies and similar. So far, it seems that this is not practice and that decisions are brought on the basis of subjective assessments and bilateral agreements.**
- **Municipalities should be more updated and ready to comply with the obligations set out in the Free Access to Information Law, hence respecting the deadlines for replying to requests.**

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