



Centar za građansko obrazovanje
Centre for civic education

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UNIVERSITY OF MONTENEGRO OUGHT TO BE AN EXAMPLE OF TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE WORK

In the framework of the project *Corruption in Education*, supported by the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Centre for Civic Education (CCE) requested from the University of Montenegro copies of contracts between the faculties and third persons, whose value exceeds 10 000 €, as well as copies of contracts between the University and third persons whose value exceeds 100 000 €, for the period between the day the Law on Higher Education came into force and 27/11/2008.

After failing to obtain these documents within the legal deadline, CCE submitted a complaint to the Ministry of Science and Education, which judged the complaint justified.

Only after this did the University of Montenegro send the following reply to CEE's requests: "[University] ... allows access to the requested information by informing you that the University has received information on 13 contracts concluded between the faculties and third persons, whereas the University concluded 10 contracts with third persons. It is not, however, possible to obtain information on the content of these contracts, which are related to the commercial deals to which, in accordance with the Guide for Access to Information, the University of Montenegro has the right to restrict access, as revealing them may entail damages for the economic interests of the University greater than the public interest in making this information public".

From this clearly follows that the **University of Montenegro is hiding information on its financial transactions.** It is utterly unacceptable that the University, as an independent institutions, whose organisational units are to educate the future generations of academics, should display such lack of transparency.

The question is – which and whose economic interests can be damaged by making the requested information public? CCE reminds that the University is financed from the public budget and therefore the citizens have the right to information regarding its business transactions. Besides, if all financial transactions have been conducted in accordance with regulations, there is no reason to hide them from the public or to experience every request for access to information as a direct attack on the legality of their operations. **Lack of transparency can only inspire suspicion in the citizens and the University, as the part of the society which ought to promote critical thinking and create an intellectual layer of active citizenry should serve as an example by its readiness to cooperate and make its operation open to the public.**

CCE will proceed to request these contracts before the Administrative Court, as there is no legal recommendation to conceal their contents from the Montenegrin public.

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