



ANTIFASCISM IN MONTENEGRO

between political trend and educational policy



Centar za građansko obrazovanje
Centre for Civic Education





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Podgorica, 2018

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Publisher:

Centre for Civic Education (CCE)



Centar za građansko obrazovanje
Centre for Civic Education

Library:

Human Rights

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CONTENT

Introduction	6
Antifascism in elementary and secondary school	7
How much does the student population in Montenegro know about anti-fascist resistance in the 20th century in Montenegro, the region and the world?	12
Why teach Antifascism?	20



INTRODUCTION

Fascism is an evil with many faces. Its manifestation forms can be recognized even in societies of developed democracy, and in societies that have emerged or are emerging from the authoritarian and totalitarian forms of the rule, Fascism still has many manifestations. The actuality of the fight against Fascism coincides with the effects of the global economic crisis, which is just one of the favourable ambient for Fascism 'to get a chance'. Digestible and shallow in its expression, Fascism relatively easily mobilizes social dissatisfaction by offering simple, malefic solutions.

Fascism must be studied in a continuity, because from its appearance until today, Fascism survives by adapting its evil to the base passions of society. Therefore, it must be taught in schools, with an approach that will contribute to understanding the depth of this pestilence. Fascism is not only a great evil past, Fascism is a smouldering and constant danger.

Also, attention should be paid to those who make a fetish from the anti-fascist struggle. Instead of affirmation of the civic concept of society and anti-fascist values, political demagogy is thus being introduced. And demagogy is also the fuel of Fascism. This warns how much this leviathan is a tough opponent, this rider of evil precisely through the demographic matrix presents itself as a knight of salvation.

Fascism has countless roles that it can play in a society of non-resistance to economic crises, national-chauvinist tendencies, and bad public policies. In order to strengthen the society and make it more resistant to the evil of Fascism, it is necessary to work on building the capacities of a civil and democratic society through the affirmation of the principles of coexistence, tolerance, social responsibility and solidarity. The best and most noble method of strengthening society on a sound basis is the clear concept of antifascist education and the creation of opportunities for the citizen to become stronger and more resilient to fascist tendencies and demagogic campaigns.

Education through learning the facts, tolerance and critical thinking with the encouragement of dialogue – is the concept that must find a place in our schools.



ANTIFASCISM IN ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL

The thesis that the anti-fascist heritage of Montenegro is the foundation of its statehood and modernity is repeated so many times that it slowly begins to be used as a platitude. And if we often repeat something, we should remember it well, right? Unfortunately, examples from practice do not show this in sufficient extent.

Why do students in Montenegro do not know enough about anti-fascism? The answer should not be given only by history professors, historians, and theorists of social sciences, but by the whole society, which must be aware of the anti-fascist heritage and tradition cultivated by the state of Montenegro. And then a more logical question to be asked is: *'Where did we fail since young people who must be shaping our society do not possess elementary knowledge about the general places of our and world history?'*

Logic continues to lead us to research about how formal education allows pupils and students to learn more about this topic. Or, more precisely, how much is the teaching-subject of *History* represented in schools and what is the place of that subject in our education system? The correct answer is: never worse! In order to ascertain it, it is enough just to look at the *History* subject programme and see what changes this teaching-subject has suffered over the past few years.

We will start from the ground, and see what place this subject has in elementary schools. Until the reform of the education system, i.e. the introduction of the nine-year elementary school *History* was studied from the fifth to the eighth grade, with a total of seven classes per week. The implementation of the nine-year elementary school plan, which started in the school year 2004/05 gradually, and from the school year 2012/13 in all primary schools in Montenegro, implied that this subject is taught from the sixth to the ninth grade, also with seven classes per week.¹ The last changes, made in 2017, led to *History* being taught from the sixth to the ninth grade, with a total of six classes per week.²

¹ COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE ELEMENTARY EDUCATION AND UPBRINGING PLAN IN MONTENEGRO, THE COUNTRIES OF THE REGION AND THE COUNTRIES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION, Government of Montenegro, Council for improvement of business environment, regulatory and structural reforms, Podgorica 2013. (www.gov.me/ResourceManager/FileDownload.aspx?rId=139205)

² <http://www.zzs.gov.me/naslovnna/programi/osnovno>. Accessed on: 24 November 2018.



Those less informed will not find this information much meaningful, but it is completely changing the perception of the given topic to practitioners and history professors. Namely, anti-fascism is studied through teaching-subject *History* as an area in the final grades of elementary school. It is important to emphasize that until 2017, in the final grade of primary school, *History* was taught through two classes per week, while it has been studied only once a week since the previous school year. Pupils learn about the historical events that have shaped our today's society through a total of 30 classes a year. In short, the history of XX century in elementary schools is becoming a crash course.

Considering that the respondents in the research of the Centre for Civic Education (CCE) are aged 18 to 30 years old, it should be reminded that they all had the opportunity to get a somewhat deeper insight into the given topic, because they had already *incredible* two classes of *History* per week. However, those for whom these research results are devastating should consider what will be the case when similar research is conducted among today's primary and secondary school pupils in five or ten years. The answer is already clear.

The textbook of *History for the ninth grade of elementary school*, by Jasmina Djordjevic and Slavko Burzanovic, which has been in use for years, despite all of these changes in the plan and programme, unfortunately, only experienced certain aesthetic changes. In the textbook itself, the topic of anti-fascism is largely represented through various chapters. The textbook follows the chronology of the development of the anti-fascist movement, both in the world and in the territory of Yugoslavia. The role and importance of anti-fascist struggle in the territory of Montenegro is emphasized and the pupils are clearly introduced to the importance of anti-fascism for the development of the state of Montenegro. Also, the good side of the textbook is the presentation of certain symbols of the anti-fascist struggle, for example through the figure of Ljubo Cupic and famous Partisan Joka Becir. In this manner, pupils get the impression that history is not only consisted of rulers and generals, but also gives them the opportunity to identify themselves with 'ordinary people'. However, there should be more of these symbols of anti-fascist struggle, at various levels. For example, there is a picture of a German General, Erwin Romel, in the textbook, but there are no pictures of Montgomery, Paton, Zhukov or any other leader of allied troops. The textbook should contain more of such examples, so that pupils will develop a sense of empathy towards certain positive historical figures. This can be developed also by the introduction of short historical sources about the daily life of people during the war, their misfortunes... Finally, one of the manners would be to include additional teaching material, the so-called historical writings, which would be introduced as a compulsory part of literature for primary schools.

But the question remains: how could the number of classes be reduced by 50%, and the textbook has remained the same? In other words, how to discuss with the pupils about the First



and Second World War, the interwar period, the Cold War, the wars of the 1990s in the territory of the former Yugoslavia, the creation of an independent Montenegro within the total amount of 30 classes, and also develop critical thinking or some other of the nine competencies to be developed among pupil population³, assess pupils for their demonstrated knowledge and, of course, put in focus both the anti-fascism and antifascist tradition of Montenegro. The only possibility for this is left within the open part of the curriculum, which is from 15 to 20% of the total fund of classes, i.e. the aforementioned 30 classes per year at the level of the ninth grade.

Therefore, we should start from the assumption that teachers in elementary schools will have an ear for the given topic and try to position it as much as possible in the teaching process. Or, that pupils will find the subject of anti-fascism interesting enough to explore it on their own in the process of informal education.

Of course, the answer might also be that those things that pupils did not learn in elementary school can be compensated in high school. Yes, it can be compensated if all elementary school pupils enrol to the gymnasium. History is still present there within system of two classes per week.

The textbook literature for gymnasium has been changed several times, and the last in a series of textbooks in the editorial staff of M. Scekić, Z. Andrijašević and V. Vuković are in a methodological sense a step forward compared to the previous textbooks. Besides the fact that it chronologically follows the development of the anti-fascist movement, the textbook is abundant with pedagogical tools which presents the very antifascist struggle to the pupils in an appropriate manner. It should be emphasized that this textbook provides a deeper introduction to the very importance of anti-fascism, but more importantly, it opens door to pupils for independent and deeper research into the given topic.

Without entering into further comparative textbook analysis, it should be pointed out the following: it is inconceivable and unacceptable that someone who has finished the gymnasium has no understanding of the notion of anti-fascism, the most significant personalities of the anti-fascist movement, and even the influence that the movement has brought on today's society.

In the Montenegrin education system, there are also vocational schools in which *History* is taught at least two classes per week. However, only in one grade. Thus, pupils of secondary vocational schools are studying thousands of years of human history (it should be emphasized

³ More about this can be found within Pesikan, A. & Lalović, Z. (2015). Report on Research Findings on the Role of School in Developing Students' Virtues, Values and Skills. Done within the framework of the My Values and Virtues project. Podgorica: UNICEF Montenegro and the Bureau for Education.



that the plan and programme for them does not anticipate the study of several millennia of human history), including anti-fascism. The plan and programme clearly outlines one educational outcome related to the anti-fascist struggle in the territory of our country: *'to evaluate the contribution of the Yugoslav anti-fascist movements to the victory of the allies in the Second World War.'*⁴

The textbook itself covers a given topic, through a few chapters, and again, when considering the overall structure of textbooks, it can be estimated that the topic is relatively represented, that is, that pupils have the opportunity to learn at least the basics about anti-fascism in the territory of the former Yugoslavia and even beyond. More specifically, through the textbook, pupils can obtain basic knowledge of the anti-fascist struggle, the creation of the Anti-Fascist Coalition, and, which is especially important and broadly explained, about the anti-fascist struggle in the territory of Montenegro and Yugoslavia. It is interesting, for example, that even today many schools in Montenegro carry the names of meritorious peoples' heroes and anti-fascists, but the pupils do not have sufficiently developed consciousness about it. Therefore, in the textbooks of vocational schools, the names and photographs of some of these heroes should be placed as accompanying material with the main text. This would probably intrigue the pupils to find out more about Ivan Uskokovic, Sergije Stanic, Mirko Vesovic, etc.

However, the question remains how much the professors themselves have the opportunity to i.e. how much time they have to enter deeper into a given topic.

The CCE research conducted among the student population warns that the problem exists, that it needs to be adequately addressed, and the solution must be found in the domain of formal education. The importance of the topic and its complexity require a more multidimensional approach. Antifascism is not a topic in the domain of formal education that only historians should be dealing with. This topic should also be present in the teaching of mother tongue, foreign languages, sociology, civic education, music culture and many other subjects.

If it is in someone's interest to diminish the significance of *History* as a teaching subject, which has a primary function in the formation of national identity and development of personality, then how to expect from the future generations to create an adequate image of particular social processes? Such an indolent approach, alongside ignoring the importance of multidisciplinary approach, will ultimately lead to certain concepts interfering with their antonyms.

Therefore, when speaking about anti-fascism, the principle of obviousness should be used in teaching. The fact is that pupils often have fact-oriented knowledge about a certain

⁴ Subject programme History for I or II grade of secondary vocational school, Bureau for Education Services, Podgorica 2017.



topic, but their cognitive processes through which they acquire perception about certain processes are going slower. This can be overcome in several manners, and one of them is the use of much more diverse historical sources and additional teaching resources. Digitalisation of textbooks is becoming a necessity, because today's pupils do not find their textbooks to be interesting and they do not hold their attention.

The data of the conducted research by CCE indicate that the methodological principle was not sufficiently respected. Wherever students in the research were supposed to use the sensory perception - recognize who played a particular character in the film or a particular symbol - the results were disappointing. This further becomes more worrying when we consider that we are living in the era of complete digitalisation, where audio-visual sources should be more receptive to the younger population than historical narrative itself. The practice shows that pupils in schools in majority will be able to enlist names of certain historical figures, but not to recognize them in a photo. However, the more worrying fact is that most pupils and students will recognize a personality that is a symbol of a fascist or Nazi ideology, such as Hitler and Mussolini, and on the other hand, many will not recognize the symbols of anti-Fascism such as Churchill or Roosevelt.

Certainly, for this reason, through the teaching of *History*, but also other subjects, it is necessary to empower certain students' competences, that is, certain virtues and values, which are recognized by UNICEF as a necessity in the teaching process.⁵

It is impermissible that young people have scarce knowledge of antifascism, while taking into account that anti-fascism is one of the greatest civilization accomplishments. Antifascism, therefore, should not be considered only from the perspective of the first half of the 20th century. We need to develop the awareness for the heritage of antifascism to be cultivated today, through everyday actions. Any opposition to any form of totalitarianism is a confirmation that the spirit of anti-fascism still exists. Therefore, not only is the question posed about the knowledge about antifascism, but also its application in the society which we live in. The values of antifascism are fundamental values of the development of a healthy society, and their neglect can only lead us astray.

Of course, all of this implies certain reforms in education, which will not be aimed at reducing the role of the social science subject groups. Because, unfortunately, in the process of transformation from the so-called traditional to so-called modern school, the most important thing is lost - knowledge.

⁵ More about the initiative *My Values and Virtues* can be found at: https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/UNICEF_-_Uloga_skole_u_razvoju_vrlina_vrijednosti_i_vjestina_ucenika_i_ucenica.pdf and http://www.zzs.gov.me/rubrike/projekti/projekti/projektiMoje_vrijednosti_i_vrline/

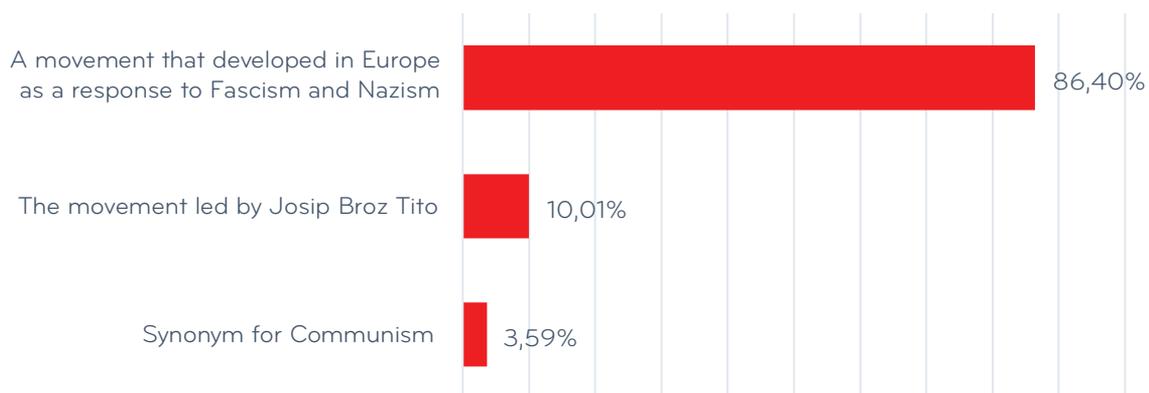


HOW MUCH DOES THE STUDENT POPULATION IN MONTENEGRO KNOW ABOUT ANTI-FASCIST RESISTANCE IN THE 20TH CENTURY IN MONTENEGRO, THE REGION AND THE WORLD?

The Centre for Civic Education (CCE) has conducted a field research under the framework of the *Transition Justice* sub-programme, as part of a wider analysis of the representation of issues relating to anti-fascism in the Montenegrin education system and knowledge of this period and the anti-fascist values that young people carry from the education system, with the aim to illuminate the situation in this area and offer recommendations for improving the existing education system. Consequently, the questions conceived in the questionnaire were related exclusively to anti-fascist resistance in the 20th century in Montenegro, the region and Europe.

Field research was conducted from 1st to 6th of November 2017, among students aged between 18 and 30 years, that is, those born between 1987 and 1999. Of the total number of respondents, there were 47% of men, 53% of women. This is a sample of 280 students, out of which 230 students from the faculties of the University of Montenegro and 50 students from the University of Donja Gorica. More precisely, when it comes to the University of Montenegro, the respondents are from the Faculty of Philosophy (courses: History, Sociology, Teachers' Education, Geography), Faculty of Law, Faculty of Political Sciences, Faculty of Economics and Technical Faculties. Students at the Faculty of Law, Faculty of Food Technology, Faculty of Culture and Tourism and Faculty of Management in Economics were surveyed at the University of Donja Gorica (UDG).

The surveyed students of the two Montenegrin universities are significantly aware of the term anti-fascism (86.43%). In this segment, the students of the Faculty of Political Science – University of Montenegro are leading (94% of correct answers), and on the second half were UDG students (30% did not have the correct answer).



Graphic 1: What is Antifascism?

As the questions are being more specified, thus the more limited level of knowledge of students is shown, so only one fourth (25.36%) of the respondents knew that anti-fascism developed between the two world wars, i.e. even as much as 74.64% do not know when antifascism as a movement developed.

Viewing as per faculties, the lowest level of knowledge was demonstrated by the students of the University of Montenegro's technical faculties, followed by the students of the Faculty of Law (University of Montenegro), as well as the students of UDG.

It is a worrying fact that only a little bit over a third (34%) of the surveyed students at Faculty of Philosophy (University of Montenegro), where there are, among others, departments of history and pedagogy, knew when antifascism developed.

Just over half (58%) of the surveyed students accurately defines fascism as a movement that developed in Italy in the first half of the 20th century. The best knowledge was shown by students of the Faculty of Philosophy (University of Montenegro), 82% of whom knew the answer, while UDG students and the Faculty of Economics (University of Montenegro) were somewhat worse with 60% of incorrect answers.

Among the respondents, 61% of students differentiate between Fascism and Nazism, while 39% of them believe that there is no difference between these terms.

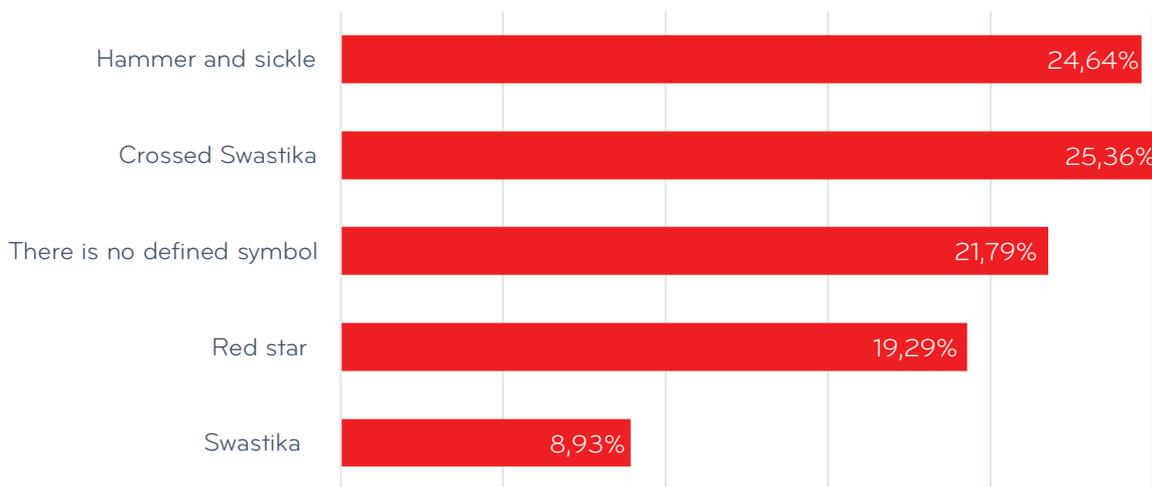
Furthermore, 70% of students know that Nazism has emerged in Germany, and it is the same number of those who know that the term *quisling* refers to a traitor, that is, the one who is in the service of strangers, and against the interests of his people (according to Norwegian politician Quisling, who served the German occupiers).



Among the figures that are the symbol of antifascism, students most often refer Josip Broz Tito (72.5%), followed by Winston Churchill (61.79%) and Franklin Roosevelt (56.43%). Almost a quarter of Montenegrin students (24%) mention Krsto Popovic as an antifascist, although it is a controversial personality of Montenegrin history, which was closely related to Fascist Italy.

Less than half of the surveyed students (43.57%) can enlist at least three countries that belonged to the anti-fascist movement, i.e. 56.43% of them did not know the answer to this question.

More than three quarters (78.22%) of students believe that the anti-fascist movement has its own universal symbol, most often referring to a crossed swastika, hammer and sickle, then a red star, although the official symbol does not exist. It is surprising that there are those who believe (8.93%) that the hooked cross (the so-called Swastika) is a symbol of anti-fascism.



Graphic 2: Which of these symbols is anti-fascist?

Most Montenegrin students (64.29%) know that Montenegro was under the Fascist / Nazi occupation. However, there are differences between them, thus even 60% of the surveyed students of UDG believe that Montenegro was not under Fascist / Nazi occupation, as well as 42% of surveyed students from Faculty of Political Science (University of Montenegro).

Just over three quarters (76.07%) of the surveyed students know that on July 13, 1941 there was an uprising in Montenegro against the fascist occupation. And there are variations among respondents - more than half of UDG students (53.3%) and



more than one third of students of the Faculty of Law – University of Montenegro (36%) do not know that there was an uprising by which Montenegro marks one of the most important public holidays.

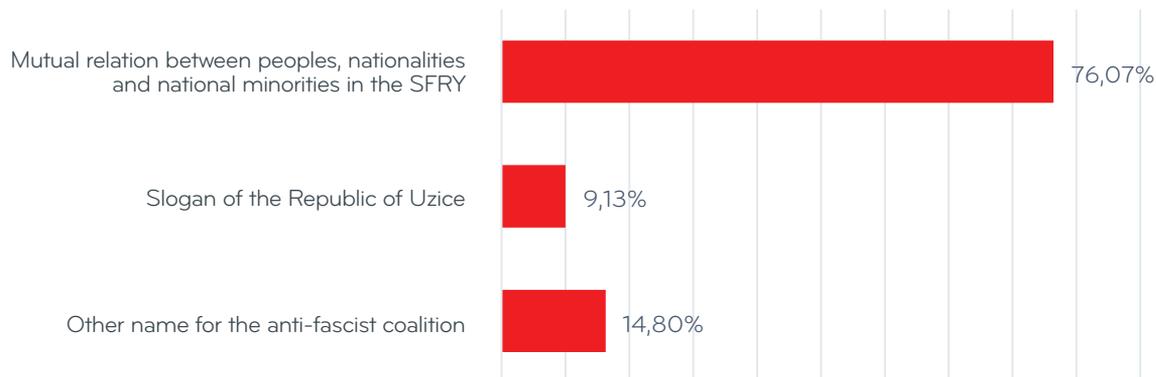
More than two thirds (68.21%) of surveyed students do not know that the Kragujevac massacre happened in 1941. The lowest level of knowledge was shown by students of technical faculties at University of Montenegro (12%), while the best were the students of the Faculty of Philosophy (52%) and the Faculty of Political Science (44%).

More than half (59.64%) of surveyed students know that the other name for the battle of Neretva is «a battle for the wounded». Analysis of answers by faculties shows that more than half of the surveyed students of the Law Faculty of University of Montenegro (56%) and UDG (53.33%) did not know the correct answer to this question.

Montenegrin students in significant numbers (86.79%) do not know that the Declaration of the United Nations was proclaimed in 1941, and the highest level of knowledge was shown by students of the Faculty of Political Science, although just over a third of them (34%) knew the correct answer, which is a worrying fact since this document is studied through several subjects during Bachelor studies. Asked to evaluate the significance of the United Nations Declaration, only one third (33.57) of Montenegrin students responded briefly, and most of them gave some of the following responses: *'because of tolerance among peoples', 'for the sake of preserving peace', 'for the organization of the post-war world', 'in order to establish global cooperation among states', 'in order to combat Nazism', 'due to the cessation of wars and further conflicts', 'in order to combat fascism', 'for the proclamation of unity and peace', 'in order to guarantee human rights and freedoms'.*

Also, as many as 70% of surveyed students do not know that the UN Charter has been signed in San Francisco. Asked to state what was the goal of the United Nations Charter, a third (31.07%) of respondents answered, citing the most commonly: *'peace', 'unification', 'preventing future conflicts', 'fighting fascism and dictatorship', 'freedom and equality of all people', 'creating unity', 'peace in the world', 'respect for the independence of each state', 'establishing control over the states'.*

More than three quarters of students (76.07%) know that the term 'Brotherhood and Unity' refers to the mutual relation between peoples, nationalities and national minorities in the SFRY, while almost a quarter (23.93%) of them did not give the correct answer, although they had three choices offered.



What does the term 'Brotherhood and Unity' refer to?

Asked to answer what do they recognize as anti-fascist values, with the possibility of circling more responses, 92.86% of Montenegrin students state that it is freedom, followed by 89% with solidarity (89%), tolerance (79.64%) and non-violence (68.93%).



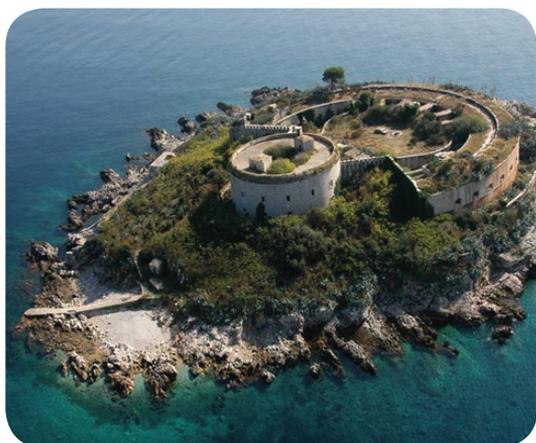
What are anti-fascist values for you? (it is possible to circle several options)

Students in majority (65.36%) recognize that anti-fascism is being very little studied via formal education, somewhat less than a quarter (21.01%) estimates that it is being studied enough, and a small percentage of them (3.21%) assesses that it is being studied too much. Thereby, 61.79% of the surveyed students state that they had had a chance through elementary/secondary education to discuss topics related to anti-fascism with their teachers outside the teaching material from textbooks.

Of the total number of surveyed students, more than a half (58.93%) state that they have



never visited monuments of anti-fascist resistance through formal educational system, nor that they have had a chance to learn about anti-fascist movement in that manner.



Only 40% of Montenegrin students know that on the island of Lastavica, in the fortress of Mamula, there was a fascist camp during the Second World War, and even as many as 76% of the students of the Faculty of Law (University of Montenegro) did not give the correct answer even though it is a locality that is already for a long time present in the media, and incites public attention also due to numerous controversies about planned investments, along with the reactions of the civil sector which advocates the establishment of a culture of memory.



Somewhat less than half of surveyed students (46.43%) has responded to the question of who was Ljubo Cupic, most often stating that he is: 'a people's hero', 'political commissioner', 'fighter for human rights', 'a communist', 'a people's hero who went with a smile to be shot by a firing squad', 'a revolutionary and anti-fascist', while 40.71% of those surveyed does not know who Ljubo Cupic is, and 12.86% of them did not give any answer.

More than three quarters (77.5%) of surveyed students do not know today to enlist at least three people's heroes from





Montenegro, that is, only 22.5% of them knew to correctly enlist three people's heroes from Montenegro. No student surveyed from UDG gave a complete answer and accurately stated three people's heroes from Montenegro. Also, 78% of the respondents of the Faculty of Political Science (University of Montenegro) and 76% of the Faculty of Law (University of Montenegro) did not give a complete answer, while better knowledge was shown by the students of the Faculty of Philosophy, among which 52% accurately enlisted three people's heroes from Montenegro. Asked to name three women who were people's heroes during the anti-fascist struggle in the territory of former Yugoslavia, only 14.29% of students knew their names. As for female people's heroes, students mostly mentioned: Ljubica Popovic, Djina Vrbica, Olga Golovic.

Also, more than half (54.29%) believe that there are no anti-fascist associations in Montenegro. Among those who know that such associations exist, when asked to state their names, we got the following most common answers: 'SUBNOR', 'KPCG', 'NOP (National Liberation Movement)', 'Anti-Fascist Alliance', 'Young Anti-fascists of Montenegro' or that there is only one anti-fascist association.

Literature from this field is no longer popular, as indicated by the fact that 71.07% of them did not read in the spare time some literature that addresses these issues. Those who have read something in this area mainly mention the following: 'The works of Milovan Djilas', 'Mein Kampf-Hitler', 'Marxism', 'The sources of totalitarianism', 'History of Yugoslavia', 'The Time of the Bigoted-A.Mitrovic', 'The Evil Spring-Mihailo Lalic', 'The Mountain of Cries-Mihailo Lalic'.

When asked which three Partisan films they know, slightly more than one third of students (37.14%) stated three films, while more than half (54.29%) gave a partial answer and were able to state one or two films, and almost a quarter (22.5%) did not know the answer to this question.

The surveyed students most frequently stated the following: 'Battle of Sutjeska', 'Battle of Neretva', 'Republic of Uzice', 'Kozara', 'The Written Offs', 'Walter Defends Sarajevo', 'Pretty Villages, Pretty Burn', 'Igman March', 'Bosko Buha', 'The Partisan Squadron'.

Most Montenegrin students (59.21%) do not know that famous Hollywood actor Richard Burton has played Josip Broz Tito in the film 'The Battle of Sutjeska', but rather gave a priority to Bata Zivojinovic, and small number of them to Petar Bozovic.



Bata Živojinović

57,21%



Richard Burton

40,79%



Petar Božović

2,00%

Who played Josip Broz Tito in the film 'The Battle of Sutjeska'?

Partisan songs are also not familiar to the young, so only 17.14% of the surveyed students were able to state three partisan songs, while slightly more than half of the students (58.21%) gave a partial answer and were able to state one or two songs, while a quarter (24.64%) did not specify a single song.

The most frequently mentioned songs were: 'Count on Us', 'Ciao Bella', 'Through the Forests and Mountains', 'From Vardar to Triglav', 'Near Sutjeska, the Cold Water', 'Us the Two Brothers', 'Comrade Tito, We Swear to You', 'Oh, Kozara!'.
The advantage of Montenegro is that we do not have the attempts to revise anti-fascist history and heritage, neither from the state level nor from any other relevant structures.

However, the findings of the research indicate that much more work needs to be done to ensure that antifascist history and its heritage are an integral part of the education system, and therefore that they also have a stronger expression in the society.

Montenegrin students have certain knowledge, but also many of those uncertainties that they should not have about this important topic, which gives also a value-oriented dimension to society.



WHY TEACH ANTIFASCISM?

Antifascism as an idea emerges in Europe in the twenties of the last century, in a broad aspect of the political left, centre and right, as a response to the growing violent ideologies of Fascism and later Nazism. Strengthening of Fascism and Nazism was induced by a new war that swallowed millions of lives, led to the systematic extermination of entire nations and almost pushed Europe over into the abyss. In this context, antifascism has become one of the fundamental ideas of modern European nations.

Today anti-fascism as a term has disappeared from the official political vocabulary of certain European countries. However, their official policies, which include intolerance to hate speech, to the promotion of fascist ideals and the works of fascist and Nazi leaders, as well as their national collaborators, and denial of the Holocaust and other crimes, indicate that Europe remains firmly in the position of zero tolerance towards fascism.

What is behind these rigid views of the most developed European countries and the European Union? Attitudes that some today denote as strict and as a threat to freedom of speech?

The causes of the emergence of Fascism are complex, but its development, action and attempt of survival, regardless of the country in which it has occurred, are the same. Potentiating the unity, a strong leader, national power, and fighting are proclaimed principles around which Fascism attracts citizens. The illusion of economic prosperity, less realistic and more often shown through the lens of strong propaganda, aims to point to the positive effects of such action. Fascism (and other extreme political tendencies) often arise after a time of crisis (military or economic) and are presented as a solution to personal and national suffering. Fascism (and its ideological counterparts) always arise in the atmosphere of finding an inner or outer enemy, or an enemy who has historically been guilty of the suffering of a given nation. The enemy is often the first border state that has the pretensions to a given country and culture, or a national or religious minority that contaminates the given pure nation or internally undermines its stability and centuries-old ideals.

As hatred towards the otherness is one of the basic elements of Fascism and its survival, especially in times when the promised economic prosperity does not occur, it will always be based on the constant creation of an enemy from which only a



firm hand can bring protection. In such an atmosphere, no other opinions are permitted, and the freedom of thought and press is suppressed while the control of education occurs. Fascism always creates perfect conditions for violence arising from a combination of ignorance and fear.

Zero tolerance towards Fascism is a justifiable thing, because Fascism always and quickly creates perfect conditions for conflict. By introducing it into the history of Europe, and transforming the world war from the war between the states to war between ideologies, will lead to greatest atrocities that Europe has seen. Humanity has succumbed towards the ideological toxicity, and full pits, concentration camps and regions of Europe that have lost more than 50% of their population are warning signs.

In the territory of former Yugoslavia, before the Second World War, apart from the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, there was no organized anti-fascist activity. Everything will change by the attack of the Axis Powers on the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in April 1941 and its fragmentation among the members of that pact - fascist Italy, Nazi Germany and other fascist satellite governments. The occupation of Yugoslavia opened the door to the nationalist rampage of all nations in a civil war that can only be described as 'everyone against everyone'. Imbued with the fascist ideals, the local tribal leaders have strengthened their position on the ghosts of the past by collaborating with fascist and Nazi troops and carrying out war crimes against neighbours of other nation and faith.

In a general chaos, only the Partisan National Liberation Movement of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia opted for an uncompromising fight against the occupiers. Recognized by the Allies at the Tehran Conference in 1943, and by the Royal Yugoslav Government in 1944, as the only legitimate military formation on the soil of occupied Yugoslavia, this movement, as we see during the war, is recognized as the only legitimate antifascist force. On the territory of Yugoslavia there were other formations that fought fascists and Nazis at certain times. However, later examples of obvious co-operation, apathy or crimes committed on a national and religious basis have long since discredited them. On the other hand, the Partisan movement committed certain crimes with justification of the struggle against the class enemy, which was in fact an unprincipled retaliation. It is precisely the complexity of the civil conflict during the Second World War in the territory of Yugoslavia that leads to the division of public opinion about this period.

In Montenegro, the situation is somewhat simpler. The open rebellion against the occupiers was organized under the leadership of the Communist Party on 13 July, 1941. In the beginning, the rebellion was nationwide, and after its crush, the division



among rebels occurred. One part of the insurgents sided with Tito's National Liberation Movement, while most other insurgents joined the composition of the Yugoslav Army in the homeland (Chetnik Movement) and other national movements. In the territory of Montenegro, only the National Liberation Movement fought against the occupiers. No conflict of other military formations with fascist and Nazi units was recorded. Members of the National Liberation Fight from Montenegro will constitute almost a third of the supreme command of this movement at the end of the war, will give 10% of national heroes and a large number of other important figures, with all this bearing in mind that in Montenegro a 4% of the total Yugoslav population has lived.

Today's Montenegro has incurred on the foundations of the anti-fascist struggle during the Second World War.

The movement that led this struggle has united the citizens of Montenegro of all faiths and nations in the struggle against a common galloping evil. Fascism in Montenegro has encouraged the closure and confrontation between the national impounds, while anti-fascism continued the tradition of tolerance that was also exercised by the Kingdom of Montenegro. Although contemporary Montenegro rightly points out its foundations on the national struggle for the liberation of the 18th and 19th centuries, the real foundations lie in the anti-fascist struggle. Montenegro, which renewed its independence in 2006, did so within borders, civic ideology and institutions that emerged after 1945. Therefore, the protection and teaching of anti-fascism and antifascist heritage is of the highest priority.

The disintegration of Yugoslavia and the wars that followed this process have had multiple causes, of which the return to the scene of the same national ideals that caused bloodshed during the Second World War was crucial. Namely, in the first multi-party elections after the formation of socialist Yugoslavia, in all the republics, the nationalist currents have won. Undoubtedly, these currents conquered power using the principles of the fascist currents of Europe in the twenties and thirties of the last century. The creation of new countries was accompanied by the creation of new historical narratives aimed at strengthening new national structures. It did not matter whether these new national ideals were historically correct, as long as they served the purpose of creating a glorious past. In such conditions, which primarily promoted the unity of all the South Slavic nations, there was no place for the socialist narrative. Often knowingly, but sometimes even unintentionally, the revision of the narrative of socialist Yugoslavia jeopardized or completely replaced the anti-fascist narrative, which obviously had incomprehensible consequences for the region.



Montenegro was in largest extent spared the unscientific destruction of the anti-socialist narrative. Most socialist monuments are preserved, schools continue to learn about national liberation struggle, and streets of Montenegrin towns still carry the names of Partisan heroes. However, the question then arises; if antifascism is such an important element in the foundations of the Montenegrin state, if the anti-fascist heritage is preserved and if the preservation and promotion of this heritage is still officially supported, why its citizens know so little?

The first factor - the antifascist heritage has become a dissonant inheritance, which means it provokes controversy and different feelings among citizens. Unscientific revisionist tendencies from the surrounding area did not circumvent Montenegro, they were not locally produced, but were imported. As such, they serve to consolidate a minority national identity that sees a socialist narration as an enemy. Unscientific revisionism equates anti-fascist struggle with later socialist power, and therefore wants to historically discredit antifascist struggle. As the Partisan movement committed certain crimes in the name of the class struggle, these crimes are used by revisionist scientific tendencies in their struggle for discrediting The National Liberation Fight and antifascist struggle. Moreover, the totalitarianism of the future socialist government is also used as a tool in the struggle for the discrediting of the anti-fascist struggle. All this led to the assessment, among certain groups of citizens, that the period of anti-fascist struggle was controversial.

The second factor is the complexity of the topic. Fascism and anti-fascism are, from a historical perspective, more recent phenomena, although they represent the formulation of older human tendencies. Their development is related to complex social phenomena and are intertwined with many other socio-political tendencies. The consequences of fascism and anti-fascist struggle are still being perceived today. Thus, although it is relatively easy to explain the principles of anti-Fascism, the accompanying elements that jeopardize the ideal picture of this idea can influence the formation of different opinions. Moreover, it is necessary to devote more time to the study of antifascism in the educational system.

The third factor is the lack of a clear state policy in promoting anti-fascist heritage. The movable and immovable cultural goods of this period have been abandoned for almost two decades. Although their systematic destruction, as in the region, did not occur, however, a part of it decayed due to the negligence. Efforts to preserve this heritage, which were invested after 2006, have somehow improved the image. However, these efforts were not accompanied by an adequate promotion plan, both for educational and tourist purposes.



These factors led also to an inadequate lecture on anti-fascism in schools. As much as the lessons in the textbooks were well processed, if they are not adequately addressed (through a multi-perspective approach based on source analysis) with controversial aspects of this struggle, if there is no teaching at historic sites, if there is no cooperation with museums, and if there is no teaching about local antifascist heritage, it will never be adequately presented.

Antifascism is one of the foundations of the existence of Montenegro and the main protection of the model of Montenegrin civil society, that is, the only model that guarantees the stability of contemporary Montenegro. Unscientific historical revisionism aims at clashing with all the ideologies it considers threatening, and therefore the socialism as well. Anti-Fascism is not the same as Socialism, although in Montenegro these two terms are intertwined. We must not allow for founded or unfounded critique of a political movement to jeopardize one of the greatest principles of humanism.

It cannot be sufficiently emphasized the importance of lectures on antifascism. As one of the guardians of a modern democratic society, more attention must be paid to antifascism. Through critical review of the process of the emergence and development of anti-fascism, a critical thinking against ideas on which it emerged develops as well. Antifascism is the basis of modern democracy and tolerance, so only the study and promotion of anti-Fascism is nothing less than a patriotic act. In the end, the wraiths that led to the sufferings of 1941-1945 and 1991-1995 have never disappeared.



