



SEVEN YEARS OF MONTENEGRIN  
NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE EU

# SLOWER AND SLOWER DRIVE OF THE **BALKANS'** **LOCOMOTIVE ENGINE**

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## COMMENT

**Winter is  
coming, long  
and cold**



# WINTER IS COMING, LONG AND COLD



Photo: Vijesti



By: Vladan Žugić

They say that the firewood is better to be prepared in the summer months. Mid-term forecast says that climatic conditions are such that the cold air from Romania moves to Finland, above which, due to strong cyclone activity, a large, cold mass could be formed at the end of the year. And it could hit the Balkans strongly, especially Montenegro.

Finland will preside over the European Union by the New Year and the first next EU Summit when the enlargement will be put on the agenda.

At the last Summit of heads of states and governments in Bucharest, Montenegro was already well cooled down, but the thing is, this has only been shivered through the teeth about.

For the first time, since the opening of negotiations seven years ago, not even one chapter of the EU has been opened or closed during one EU semi-season, despite the expectations of the Government of Montenegro that the last of the 33 chapters, i.e. chapter 8 (Competition), will be opened.

In the May report, the European Commission found that Montenegro had reached the middle level of preparedness and that there was a certain progress in that chapter. Therefore, the criteria for opening this chapter are fulfilled. However, an intergovernmental conference has not been scheduled.

What is the problem then?

Prime Minister **Duško Marković** said that Montenegro has the approval of 22 members to open the competition chapter.

A part of the EU members led by France, opposes the enlargement, and we do not even fulfill our homework. Or, it is a little to the EU, and much more to us.

The EU has again postponed the opening of negotiations with North Macedonia, unjustified, and with Albania as well, but that cannot serve as a good alibi to the authorities in Podgorica, since on the other side, Serbia has opened the Chapter 9 in late June in Brussels, although the authorities in Belgrade expected to open another more.

In addition, decision of 28 states to open negotiations with a certain country or to open one chapter is not of the same weight, especially if the benchmarks for that are fulfilled. However, the news that Montenegro has opened all the chapters would be very audible and too optimistic for the public, as well as the region and the EU. This should have been earned - by completing the transitional benchmarks for chapters 23 and 24.

Since November, when the EC disclosed unofficial paper on the fulfillment of benchmarks for Chapters 23 and 24, the EC's May Report and the conclusions of the EU Council and the Stabilisation and Association Agreement' meeting, almost one and the same is

stated - now it is crucial that the entire system of rule of law provides tangible, reinforced and sustainable results. 'In particular, the EU Council highlights that progress in Chapters 23 and 24 remains crucial and that it will determine the pace of accession negotiations in general. Therefore, Montenegro now needs to proactively act and strengthen reform efforts - especially in critical areas of media freedom, fight against corruption and human trafficking - in order to meet interim benchmarks for Chapters 23 and 24.' This third item is more due to the sensitivity of part of the members towards migrants, than because of the seriousness of the problem in our country.

EU Delegation Chief **Aivo Orav** said that, if there was no progress in Chapters 23 and 24, there could be slowing down of negotiations in other areas or even the cessation of negotiations. 'But, to cease the negotiations, it means that great decline in chapters 23 and 24 has occurred', said he.

The definition of a *balance clause* says that negotiations with a certain country are being suspended until it makes a certain breakthrough in chapters 23 and 24.

Terminologically, it can be discussed whether a balance clause has been introduced on a small door or not. However, it comes down to turning the pedal of a bicycle stuck in the snow and that now we will need much more willpower to get out of it because of the climate in the EU. Potato, po-tah-to.

Prime Minister Markovic announced the reorganization of the negotiating structure, consultations with NGOs, he is calling the opposition to the dialogue on the election of members of the Judicial Council and work on changes to electoral legislation, although it is behaving like naughty children in the back seat of the car.

I do not know how this could even affect changes in general when it comes to the independence of Radio and Television of Montenegro and the Agency for Prevention of Corruption, or in the fight of Special Prosecution against high level corruption.

During the mandate of **Željko Šturanović**, the Agreement on joining the EU was signed, visa liberalization was signed during the mandate of **Milo Đukanović**, during the mandate of **Igor Lukšić** negotiations with the EU were opened. As things stand now, negotiations with the EU could be ceased during the mandate of Duško Marković if the interim benchmarks for 23 and 24 are not fulfilled. And it would be announced loudly from Finland. It would not be pleasant either for him personally, as he is the most responsible person in the system, or for his party in the face of parliamentary elections.

That is why Marković would be now better off to get an axe, or even motor chainsaws, and prepare firewood for winter days while he is still on time. Rotten trees are already marked and they are first to cut down.

## SEVEN YEARS OF MONTENEGRIN NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE EU

# SLOWER AND SLOWER DRIVE OF THE BALKANS' LOCOMOTIVE ENGINE



Photo: Private archive

By: Milan Sekulović

The author is journalist  
of the daily Dan

Is the glass half full or half empty?

This is how representatives of the government, on the one hand, and civil society, on the other, perceive where Montenegro is today, after seven years since the opening of accession negotiations with the European Union.

Representatives of the authorities are satisfied with the work done, indicating that an initial balance of results has been achieved in the most important Chapters 23 and 24, and that the legislative and the established institutional system produces certain results in practice.

On the other hand, representatives of the civil sector estimate that it is insufficient and point to anomalies that indicate the lack of political will to apply European standards.

Chairman of the Board of NGO Institute Alternative **Stevo Muk** stated that Montenegro has progressed on the European path, but not enough if taking into account the resources invested in this process, primarily the investments of the EU and other international and local actors.

'It has especially made too little of a progress in those fields that were disputable from the very beginning and about which we are negotiating from the first day. However, the rule of law, good governance and corruption permeate many other

issues of negotiation, such as the environment, where it is noticeable almost on the daily basis. The impression is that enthusiasm was significantly more present in the first years of negotiations, possibly because issues of the institutional and legal framework have been mostly addressed. But, when it came time for concrete results, we entered into a phase of stagnation,' said Muk for *European Pulse*.

Muk assessed that readiness for change, unfortunately, exists only in those issues where the interests and monopolies of big ones are not threatened, while when it comes to sensitive issues, state structures change only as much as they have to.

And it seems that they have to change less and less, as stated by Muk, because the internal pressure is weak, and the EU conditionality policy shows its limitations.

Montenegro opened the EU accession negotiations on 29 June 2012 during the mandate of Prime Minister **Igor Lukšić**. It was the first state that negotiates according to the so-called new approach, upon which the first ones to be open, and the ones to be closed the last are Chapter 23 (Judiciary and Fundamental Rights) and Chapter 24 (Justice, Freedom and Security).

Photo: Vijesti



In seven years, which was the time that Croatia needed to complete the negotiations, Montenegro opened 32 out of 33 chapters, three were temporarily closed, while the opening of Chapter 8 (Competition policy) was postponed, despite the fact that the benchmarks for its opening were fulfilled.



Prime Minister **Duško Marković** said that Montenegro received support from 22 EU members for opening that chapter, but did not explain why the support of the remaining members was lacking and whether this has anything to do with the increasingly loud EU stance, that was repeated on the recent Council of the

EU and the Stabilisation and Association Council, that the progress made in Chapters 23 and 24, especially in the critical areas of media freedom, fight against corruption and human trafficking, is crucial for further progress of Montenegro, and that the final benchmarks for these chapters will be obtained only when the interim benchmarks are fulfilled. President of the parliamentary Committee on European Integration, **Slaven Radunović**, is of opinion that this is the introduction of a silent balance clause.

Prime Minister Markovic assessed that Montenegro is 'confidently progressing' towards EU, and pointed out that this is a demanding process. He also said that the second process, the NATO integration process of Montenegro was occurring in parallel, which was successfully carried out which represented a particular endeavour of the entire administration.

'In addition to continuous progress on the legislative plane and in the part of institutions' building, the European Commission notes the initial balance of results achieved in the fight against high-level corruption and in certain areas of organized crime, such as money laundering, financial investigations, temporary seizure of assets acquired through criminal activity,' Markovic explained.

Markovic stated that past period was marked precisely by the work on Chapters 23 and 24.

'The majority of the interim benchmarks have been fulfilled (83)', stated Markovic at the conference 'Seven years of Montenegrin negotiations with the EU' organized by the CCE with the support of the Ministry of Public Administration and the German Foundation Friedrich Ebert, in cooperation with the European Integration Office of the Government of Montenegro.

On the eve of opening of the accession negotiations 2012, first Head of the EU Delegation to Montenegro **Leopold Maurer** said that thanks to the EU, Montenegro has had the first successful case of fight against high-level corruption. He spoke about the 'Zavala' affair. The fight against high-level corruption was precisely among preconditions for opening negotiations with the EU.

A few months before that, police have arrested **Dragan Marović** and the then DPS MP **Đorđije Pinjatić** by prosecution's instructions, afterwards a series of affairs in Budva ensued that resulted in a conviction of senior DPS official Svetozar Marović who admitted he was the head of an organized criminal group. Despite this, he still walks freely today in Belgrade.

Maurer was succeeded by **Mitja Drobnič** who was much more active in promoting European values than his predecessors. This is also the

## Increase in VAT and public debt, price and wage stagnation, decline in credit rating, increase in the number of employees in the administration...

Executive director of Fidelity Consulting, **Miloš Vuković**, gives a pessimistic picture of the Montenegrin economic reality since the opening of negotiations with the EU.

He says that after the period from 2006 to 2011, when salaries and pensions grew significantly, exactly from 2012 the stagnation of wages and pensions has begun, followed by an increase in the inflation rate, which has resulted in the total decline of purchasing power of citizens Montenegro.

'If we complete these facts with precise data on the decline in the credit rating, the galloping growth of public debt, which in the period 2012-2018 was used mostly for current expenditure, with an increase in already cumbersome public administration, a large number of early retirements, two significant VAT increases (from 17% to 19, to 21%), the introduction of the 'crisis tax', the continuation of the trend of increase of the mortality rate and the trend of decrease of the birth rate, strong negative migration trends, primarily from the north of Montenegro, we can say with great certainty that most Montenegrin citizens absolutely did not feel the improvement from the economic policy that in the mentioned period was being conducted in Montenegro,' Vukovic told for *European Pulse*.



Photo: linkedin.com

He points out that if the current economic policy continues to be pursued, even those born today will not meet even the average economic standards in the EU countries, while achieving the standards of the highly developed EU member states represents utopia.

'I strongly believe that the quality of life of an average citizen of Montenegro will not be changed too much when our country enters the EU if the management of the economic policy does not change significantly and as soon as possible. Therefore, the primary task of all actors of Montenegrin society is to increase the quality of life of all citizens of Montenegro, while it is necessary to discard the performed statistics that artificially tries to beautify the difficult socio-economic situation in Montenegro,' concluded Vuković.

time of the mandate of European Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy **Štefan Füle** when there was still a good atmosphere for enlargement in the EU. **Johannes Hahn** tried to keep that atmosphere, but French President **Emanuel Macron** buried enthusiasm when he said at the EU-Western Balkans summit in Thessaloniki last summer that the Union must first take care of the situation at home, while the Western Balkans should be 'anchored'.

Current Head of the EU Delegation to Montenegro **Aivo Orav** reminds that accession negotiations with the EU are not classic negotiations.

'Negotiations are something that implies that the two sides sit together, so one presents something,



Photo: gov.me

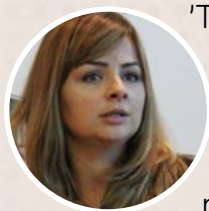
the other something else, and then they come to a compromise. Here, there will be no compromise, this is only about transposition of the EU legislation, then the implementation of it.

The only area on which we can negotiate are transitional periods, or how long it takes to transpose European legislation and apply it,' Orav said.

He declared that the lack of progress in chapters 23 and 24 could slow down negotiations in other areas or even cease the negotiations.

'But to cease the negotiations, it means that a great decline in chapters 23 and 24 has occurred. We do not want to criticize because only for the sake of criticism, but we want to help. And this is our aid to the candidate countries. We hope that greater progress in Montenegro will be made in these areas, when it comes to media freedom, the fight against corruption and the fight against organized crime.'

Executive Director of the Centre for Civic Education (CCE), **Daliborka Uljarević**, assessed that Montenegro needs a serious swerve, a realistic view of the situation, the reorganization of the negotiating structure and the manner of work.



'The latest EC Report points to the shaken Montenegrin credibility in the negotiation process. In 28 negotiating chapters we record limited progress, and the number of chapters in which Montenegro had made good progress has also decreased in one year. Although many times announced by the authorities, we did not receive final benchmarks for Chapters 23 and 24, for the

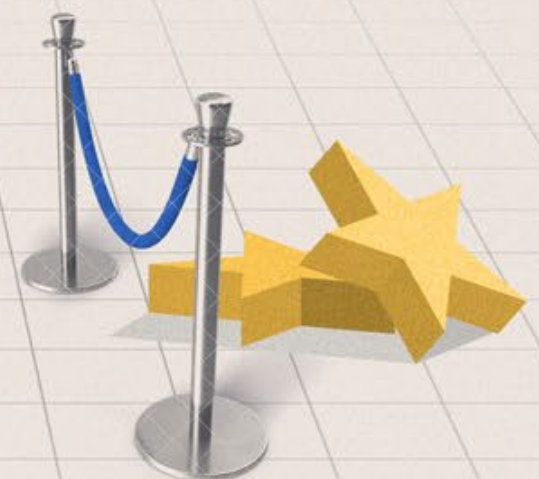
## Montenegro on 47 percentages of purchasing power of the EU, first in the region

Discussing about the economy during the accession process, Prime Minister Marković has said that Montenegro is constantly recording an increase of gross domestic product (GDP), and that the growth rate of GDP in last year has been at the level of about 4,8%, whereby we are on third place in Europe, behind Poland and Malta, thus the unemployment rate has been reduced from 20% to 15,3%.

'We are aware that the quality of life of citizens is an indicator of good direction of one society, and in that sense, I am especially satisfied that the effects of reforms are ever more visible in practice and are reflecting of everyday life of our citizens. The latest data of EUROSTAT for 2018 indicate that GDP per citizen as per standard of purchasing power, as an important indicator of life standard, has increased to 47% of the EU average. When it comes to Western Balkans, Serbia is on 40%, and other countries are beneath,' said Marković.

Since 2014, within the Berlin process, as he stated, Montenegro was awarded 120 million of Euros support of the EU for seven infrastructural projects.

'Finally, when it comes to investments into infrastructure that were financed or co-financed by resources from EU funds, during first seven years of negotiations, resources in the amount of 167 million of Euros were approved for infrastructural projects from various areas and various purposes,' stated Marković.



simple reason that the previously undertaken homework have not been done. The average assessment based on 33 chapters is the minimal progress, or 3.09, and the comparative findings of colleagues from the Institute Alternative, who measure this for years, indicate that this figure is the lowest since 2015. In summary, Montenegro is far from frontrunner in this process,' emphasized Uljarević.

For her, there is no dilemma who bears the greatest responsibility for this situation. That is, as stated by Uljarević, the Government - as the main bearer of the negotiation process, and because it has placed this process behind party and particular interests.

'The legislative and judicial authorities have quite responsibility as well,' she emphasized.

She also pointed to a narrative of authorities that often try to find an alibi in the EU crisis for unacceptable regression in some areas.

'It is not unexpected, because as negotiations continue, the collapse of certain monopolies of power ensues as well as the introduction of regulations that should apply to all equally. Those who are at risk of losing the most are the ones resisting the most, and the most to lose have those who have violated the law and who can be prosecuted during this process. These are different 'veto' players who are in and out of the structure of authorities, but nevertheless close to the authorities,' Uljarević explains.

Integration process, as she pointed out, cannot be based solely on negotiations with Brussels.

'The most important negotiations are taking place here, in Montenegro, because European affairs are our domestic affairs. Nothing good was brought to us with the 'pink' glasses

through which a parallel reality was tried to be imputed to us, nor dirty campaigns conducted against those who criticized the bad decisions of the authorities and questioned the legality of some branches of government or an individual,' told Uljarević.

Chief Negotiator for Montenegro with the European Union **Aleksandar Drljević** said that he is pleased by the fact that the European idea in Montenegro is very alive!

'Good results have been achieved in a numerous fields and significant changes are recorded. Focus of attention are areas related to the rule of law. Should we be absolutely satisfied? Absolutely no. I think we could have done much better and that this what we have done should be an additional incentive to continue to carry out our homework and reform activities more intensively. I think that for seven years of negotiations we prove that the established system already produces certain results in practice,' assessed Drljević.

When asked whether he believes that Montenegro could be a part of the EU by 2025, which the EU mentioned as a possible year for membership in Serbia and Montenegro, Muk says it depends on both sides.

'Indicators say that the climate in many countries of the Union is not favourable to enlargement. On the other hand, Montenegro has to achieve significantly better results in the next two years, in order to apply for closure of the negotiations in 2023 and enter the formal accession procedure.'



Photo: Z. Đurić



# THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT SIMILAR TO THAT IN THE EU BY ALIGNING TAX POLICY



Photo: gov.me



By: Biljana Peranović

The author is acting Director General of the Tax and Customs System Directorate at the Ministry of Finance



Source of illustration: www.expatica.com

Tax policy is an important part of the fiscal, i.e. the overall economic policy. In the case of Montenegro, as an eurized economy, fiscal policy is a key instrument of economic policy. It is the subject of continuous reforms that need to make the tax system easier and more attractive for investment. In this sense, the process of EU membership negotiations has a special significance in harmonizing tax policy with the EU acquis, thus the business environment in Montenegro is continuously being improved and becoming more similar to that in the EU.

Montenegro opened negotiations in Chapter 16 – Taxation, on 30 March 2015. The legal framework in the field of taxation is based on the harmonization of tax forms in the field of indirect and direct taxation in order to avoid national tax measures that can negatively affect the functioning of the EU internal market.

The requirements for accession to the European Union in chapter 16 are defined through three final benchmarks related to: the harmonization of this chapter with regard to the adoption of *legislation* (in the field of VAT, excise, and direct taxation), *the establishment of administrative cooperation* necessary for the application of tax legislation (establishing the Central Liaison Offices and Central Excise Offices), as well as *information-technical systems* necessary for cooperation in taxation and exchange of information in the field of direct taxation.

When it comes to the area of indirect taxation (VAT), the tax rates applied in Montenegro are in line with the acquis, which stipulates that the reduced rate can be minimally at 5 percent, and the general rate is 15 percent, while there are no restrictions for the maximum rate. In the current year, amendments to the Law on Value Added

Tax are planned, which will continue to harmonize the applicable law with the EC Directive 2006/112 in terms of establishing detailed rules for the return of value added tax in tourism.

In the process ahead, a special challenge is the harmonization of excise legislation with European directives. Namely, the excise legislation in terms of the level of tax rates is fully aligned with the minimal amounts prescribed by EU directives, except for the taxation of cigarettes (The Directive stipulates a minimum of 90 € / kg and in Montenegro it is currently 63.6 € / 1000 pieces), where this increase will be made by the gradual harmonization dynamics until full compliance is achieved.

For the purpose of further harmonization in the field of direct taxes (income tax for legal entities), activities on preparation of amendments to the Corporate Income Tax Law are in progress, which will partially harmonize the applicable law with the Directives on taxation of dividends and profit shares between parent companies and affiliated companies from different Member States, as well as taxation of interest payments and copyrights fees between related companies of different Member States. Also, the taxation of income from transactions between related parties (transfer pricing) will be regulated in more detail.

On April 4, 2018, Montenegro became a member of the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes, and thus demonstrated its commitment to combating tax fraud and tax evasion. In order to be fully committed to this task, an intensive work is imminent for us with regard to the implementation of the Administrative Cooperation Directive, therefore, the adoption of amendments to the Law on Tax Administration is planned.

## WE DID NOT USE ERASMUS ENOUGH, INVESTING IN EDUCATION AND SCIENCE IS THE BEST INVESTMENT FOR THE EUROPEAN FUTURE



Photo: private archive



By: Miloš Žarković

The author is a Hubert H. Humphrey researcher at Boston University

Although Montenegro began its European story, in terms of negotiating with the European Union, in 2012 with the motto 'quality before speed', it seems that the process itself will last significantly longer than what was originally meant when formulating this catchword.

With the currently three temporarily closed and 29 open chapters, Montenegro is a negotiating leader compared to other candidate countries in the process that currently lasts a year longer than the Croatian negotiation process. Bearing in mind that the chapters of *Education and Culture*, and *Science and Research* were first temporarily closed, the fact is that our country has not achieved the European standard or fully utilized the numerous benefits that are being provided to it in these fields. By that I mean the Erasmus student exchange programme, first of all.

During my education, I had the opportunity to spend part of it in several EU countries, precisely thanks to Erasmus.

Erasmus is one of the most used programmes of the European Union, which has so far been used by more than 4.5 million Europeans. In 2017, the programme celebrated 30 years of existence and aims to provide funding for projects for cooperation in the field of education, youth and sports. In the field of education, the primary focus is on student mobility, which is more and more frequent in today's education. The programme symbolically carries the name of the philosopher Erasmus of Rotterdam, who lived and worked in various parts of Europe, believing that only contacts with other countries could bring the new knowledge and experience he was searching for. Erasmus consists of partner countries, which encompass Montenegro, and programme countries composed of EU Member States, Norway, Iceland, Serbia, Northern Macedonia, Liechtenstein and Turkey.

According to the data of the Office for International Cooperation of the University of Montenegro (UoM), in the previous year, 2018, 24 students from foreign partner universities visited UoM. You will admit, this symbolic figure unambiguously confirms that our universities, and even the country did not fully utilize the benefits provided by the programme, nor did they attract a greater number of foreign students. It should be noted that the incoming mobility is one of the items that positively influences the ranking and development of universities. Some of our neighboring countries, which are also programme countries, are far ahead of Montenegro in terms of the number of incoming mobility achieved, especially Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia.

When a country gets the status of a programme one, it can engage in a much wider range of activities. In addition to higher education and youth, the country can enjoy the benefits of participation in sports, vocational education, and in adult educational projects. In that sense, these countries are in a position to contribute to the construction of bridges and create more space for human contacts within the EU as well as with partners outside Europe. Unlike programme countries, partner countries can participate only in a narrow range of activities.

We often have the opportunity to hear that staying abroad can change life. It is one thing to know, and it is completely different to experience it. It is always interesting to visit a foreign country as a tourist, but the opportunity to stay in another country for a longer period of time provides much more. Thanks to Erasmus, over 300 Montenegrin students and researchers have had the opportunity to be part of the Erasmus family since 2008, i.e. since universities in Montenegro participate in the programme.

Indeed, investment in education and science is the best investment for the European future of Montenegro and its commitment to become a programme country in the Erasmus programme.



## PRESENTATION OF KEY FINDINGS OF REPORT ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN MONTENEGRO – THE HUMAN RIGHTS BAROMETER

# HUMAN RIGHTS IN MONTENEGRO ARE NOT THE PRIORITY OF THE DECISION-MAKERS



Prepared by: Milica Zindović  
Programme Assistant

Human rights in Montenegro are not the priority for the decision-makers, and the human rights culture has not come to life, which has a reflection on effective exercising of these rights, as it was assessed at the presentation of key findings of the report on human rights situation in Montenegro - *the Human Rights Barometer*, which gives an overview of the human rights situation for the period of 2017 and 2018, and part of 2019.

The right to an adequate standard of living is most often violated in Montenegro and according to the data from the previous year, over 23% of citizens of Montenegro are at risk of poverty, while more than ten percent of citizens are at risk of social exclusion. In addition, in recent years there have been no records of a significant creation of new workplaces, and the main characteristic of the labour market remains high unemployment rate.

When it comes to the human rights of persons with disabilities (PWD), although it has ratified the key international documents in this field, the state does not fully understand the obligations related to the specific rights as prescribed by these acts. Thus, the existence of a legal concept of deprivation of PWD's business capacity, only on the basis of disability, is contrary to the guarantees of the UN Convention, as stated by the authors.

The findings of *the Human Rights Barometer* also indicate that the affiliation to the Roma national minority still continues to result in negative treatment in society, and despite the efforts of the Government and the civil sector, a large number of children are leaving school early, while preventive measures envisaged for early school drop-out are not implemented effectively enough. Additionally, the representation of Roma in the cultural life of Montenegro, the lack of media content dedicated to the promotion of Roma culture, language and community additionally aggravate the inclusion process.

When it comes to LGBT rights, the legal framework has been significantly improved in the part of their participation in social, economic and political life. However, there is a lack of self-initiative inclusion of this population. Cases of discrimination and violence against LGBTIQ people continue to occur, which warns of the lack of capacities and political will to severely sanction such cases.

It is necessary that the state define budgetary lines for children in unfavourable or

endangered living conditions, including Roma, Egyptian and children with disabilities, as it was assessed in the section on children's rights. Healthcare institutions are in a poor condition, which hinders their everyday functioning, and the children with mental disabilities do not enjoy the right to adequate health care, thus, it is necessary to establish an institution dealing with diagnosis and treatment of children with mental disabilities.

In the human rights area in the security sector, a monopoly on the use of force and the secrecy of the work of bodies in that sector has been recorded. It has been assessed that police officers are not sanctioned for criminal offenses in an adequate manner, moreover, they are often progressing in the system, and the authorised institutions do not work enough to build a culture of responsibility and respect for human rights by the authorities.

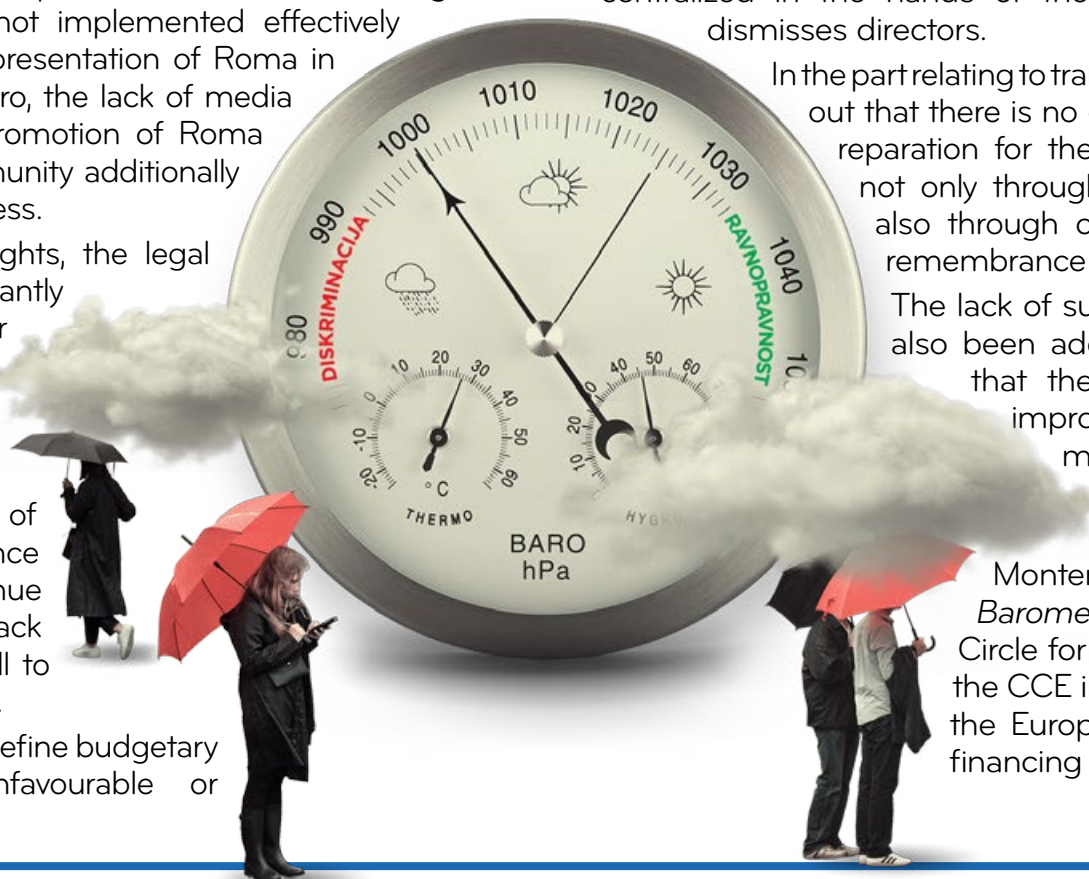
At the same time, in the area of judiciary, the inconsistency of constitutional and legal provisions is recorded, and the issue of disciplinary liability is also emphasized. Within the observed period, the rate of conducted disciplinary proceedings is extremely low, both before the Judicial and the Prosecutorial Council and the shortcomings can be found both in the normative framework and in its implementation.

A significant number of amended laws have been noted in education, but certain shortcomings are still visible. One of the most highlighted problems, in terms of human rights violations, is the manner of appointing school directors as everything is centralized in the hands of the minister who appoints and dismisses directors.

In the part relating to transitional justice, it is also pointed out that there is no comprehensive programme of reparation for the families of missing persons, not only through material compensation, but also through criminal justice and culture of remembrance through memorials.

The lack of substantial media pluralism has also been addressed, with the expectation that the new media laws will bring improvement of the position of the media in Montenegro.

The report on the human rights situation in Montenegro - *the Human Rights Barometer* is part of the '360° - Full Circle for Human Rights' project, which the CCE implements with partners from the European Union, and with the co-financing by the Australian Embassy.



**EIC Bulletin – *European pulse* – electronic magazine  
issued by the Centre for Civic Education (CCE/CGO).  
It is filed in Ministry of culture under number 578.**

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**Production:**  
Centre for Civic Education (CCE/CGO)

You can download *European Pulse* at [www.cgo-cce.org](http://www.cgo-cce.org)



Publication of this magazine was supported by the Ministry of Public Administration within the framework of project "*Let's together negotiate for Montenegro in the EU*"

Views expressed in *European pulse* are sole responsibility of the CCE/CGO and do not necessarily represent the views of the Ministry of Public Administration