



*Centar za građansko obrazovanje
Centre for civic education*

Podgorica, 18 January 2012

LAWS AND INSTITUTIONS SHOULD BE IN CITIZENS' SERVICE

Centre for Civic Education (CCE) is receiving calls, these days, from many citizens concerned about obtaining their rights on the basis of amendments to the Citizenship Law.

Unnecessary bureaucratisation of the process for obtaining Montenegrin citizenship lead by the competent authorities could be assessed as discrimination and human rights violation through the abuse of discretionary powers of the officers in charge.

CCE will send a series of interventions to the relevant state bodies requesting the removal of the unnecessary bureaucratic obstacles for the realization of the right to obtain Montenegrin citizenship. **We stress out all these cases are related to people who linked their fate to Montenegro, who are registered into electoral lists, who have assets and income in Montenegro and whose family members have Montenegrin citizenship.**

The initiative in Parliament, which intends to extend the deadline for submitting applications and obtaining Montenegrin citizenship, is encouraging due to the fact that the proverbially slow and inefficient application of legal norms have serious consequences on the rights of citizens of Montenegro to obtain Montenegrin citizenship.

Apart from problems concerning implementation, we also noticed the problem of communication between local government and state bodies, where the insufficient level of coordination lead to the detriment of citizens' rights and substantially contributed to the difficulties in exercising the right to obtain Montenegrin citizenship.

Montenegro, as the state, must demonstrate higher level of sensitivity toward the needs and problems of its citizens and their right to citizenship. The inability to obtain citizenship is resulting with very inconvenient situation for affected citizens and implies number of other problems as a consequence of the impossibility of obtaining the necessary official documents, which creates uncertainty and legal insecurity. **In addition, this is not conducive to the political stability since people who should with their work contribute to the development of Montenegro, as their own state, and converted to those who should see Montenegro as a foreign country.**

Boris Maric,
Senior Legal Advisor