



Centar za građansko obrazovanje  
Centre for civic education

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## DEMOCRACY DOES NOT LIVE HERE

Centre for Civic Education (CCE), on the occasion of 15 September, the International Day of Democracy, encourages all citizens of Montenegro to use their constitutionally and legally guaranteed rights to the greater extent.

International Day of Democracy inspires also to a review of the achieved level of democratic standards in Montenegro. The fact is that as transitional society we had series of reforms that led to certain progress. Still, we note minuses which don't have an excuse if the proclaimed desire of decision makers to stay in the circle of developed democratic societies operating in line with the long time presented Lincoln principles "rule of the people, for the people, by the people", is genuine.

**Democratic values and standards still do not live in Montenegro, but these are also not abstract or unattainable. Democracy is taught. It requires open horizons, continuous expansion of rights and freedoms, but taking commitments and responsibilities, as well.** It is not reduced to procedures, although rules, legal and political are its bases, but it must be seen in the general level of the rule of the people, or its majority, through the effective control of government and participation in the decision-making process.

The equality of citizens in front of the law - regardless of their material and social status, their ethnic origin or political and religious belief - it is imperative to which there shall be neither compromise nor games so typical to current Montenegrin reality. This is achieved by strong and effective institutions, respect for democratic rules, citizens' participation in the political and overall social life, and with the existence of control mechanisms and the possible replacement of political power, which are all serious deficits of Montenegrin reality and obstacles to transformation into genuine democratic society.

Reports from not only domestic but also international organizations are more frequently pointing to the alarming deviations and ranking us lower and lower as a country where there is a large gap between the legal framework and current practice.

**Original meaning of democracy based on equality of citizens and freedom has not lost its mandatory character. It must be basic guidelines for decision makers. It is clear that current state of affairs is not such, but the responsibility lies on the citizens to seize what belongs to them and to make decision makers responsible.**

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