



CENTAR ZA GRAĐANSKO OBRAZOVANJE
CENTRE FOR CIVIC EDUCATION

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PUBLIC AUTHORITIES HAVE TO BE ACCOUNTABLE IN RELATION TO CITIZENS

Centre for Civic Education (CCE) has started with the implementation of the project **“Give an account of yourselves”** aiming at increasing transparency and accountability of the public authorities and in coming period CCE will exercise continuous monitoring of transparency of public authority through various activities.

For the clarity reasons, in defining of “public authority” CCE used the definition from the Law on Free Access to Information, whose Article 4 says: **“public authority** shall be any: state authority (legislative, executive or judicial); local self-government authority; local government authority; public institution; public company or other business entity that has been granted to perform public powers, which is founded by the State or a local self-government authority or which is funded from public revenues.”

Therefore, **CCE filed the request to the Secretary General of the Parliament of Montenegro for free access to information concerning the mobile phone numbers of President, Vice Presidents and MPs whose bills are being paid from Budget of Montenegro.** Also, **CCE asked from the Parliament to give the information on number parliamentary staff whose mobile phone bills are also covered from Budget as well as their names.**

Recently, Administrative Committee of the Montenegrin Parliament adopted unanimously the decision that mobile phone bills of the MPs shall be covered from Budget of Montenegro up to 100€, whereas the President and Vice Presidents will not have any limits concerning their bills in this regard.

Article 2 of the Law on Free Access to Information stipulates: “Access to the information filed with government agencies shall be grounded in the following principles: 1) freedom of informing; 2) equal preconditions for exercising the right; 3) **straightforwardness and accessibility to public scrutiny**; 4) promptness of the procedure.”, and Article 3 **“Publishing the information filed with government agencies shall be in the public interest.”**

This request for access to information this not include any of the restrictions listed in Article 9 of the Law, and public interest is justified.

CCE supports professionalisation of MP’s functions and consequently all measures that lead to the increase of MPs efficiency, but insists on their full responsibility towards public and openness towards citizens whose votes brought them to the Parliament and whose interests they should advocate. **We believe that publicizing of MPs mobile phone numbers paid by the citizens of Montenegro through Budget will intensify communication of citizens and interested public with MPs and contribute to the improvement of quality of work of the Parliament of Montenegro.**

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