



Well-Paid Extras' Roles on the Parliamentary Stage



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Editor:

Daliborka Uljarević

Author:

Nikola Mirković

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Introduction

The constitutive session of the 27th convocation of the Parliament of Montenegro took place on 23 September 2020. This was preceded by parliamentary elections held on 30 August 2020, which resulted in significant changes in the political landscape and, consequently, in the structure of the Parliament of Montenegro.

Specifically, the Parliament at that time entered 30 Members of Parliament (MPs) from the Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS-LP), followed by 27 MPs of the coalition "For the Future of Montenegro" (New Serbian Democracy, Democratic People's Party, Socialist People's Party, Labour Party, True Montenegro, United Montenegro), 11 MPs of the coalition "Peace is Our Nation" (Democratic Montenegro and DEMOS), four MPs of the coalition "Black on White" (URA and Civis), three MPs each from the Social Democrats (SD) and the Bosniak Party (BS), two MPs of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), and one MP each from the Albanian Coalition "Unanimously" and the Albanian List.

During the term of this convocation, they formed 10 parliamentary groups:

- Democratic Party of Socialists of Montenegro – DPS Club;
- Democratic Front - NSD, DNP, RP Club;
- "Democrats - DEMOS - Peace is Our Nation" Club;
- "Democratic Front - PZP";
- Socialist People's Party of Montenegro Club;
- "Black on White" Club;
- Bosniak Party Club;

- Social Democrats of Montenegro Club;
- Social Democratic Party SDP - Liberal Party LP Club;
- Albanian MPs Group.

Additionally, outside of parliamentary groups, during most of that term, operated the MPs Marko Milačić (True Montenegro) and Vladimir Dobričanin (United Montenegro).

Apart from the constitutive session, the 27th convocation of the Parliament of Montenegro held a total of 58 sessions, comprising 38 regular sessions and 20 extraordinary sessions.

The Parliament often operated with an incomplete composition, with a partially empty plenary hall, and recorded organized boycotts by the opposition, as well as those structures that were in power, which is noted as unusual. Some MPs extremely rarely attended, some sporadically, while some others were more frequently on official trips than in the Parliament building. Moreover, during this term, two governments lost confidence, and one President of the Parliament was dismissed.

Members of the Parliament of Montenegro are representatives of the citizens who elected them to represent their interests. They are public officials whose earnings, along with many other benefits, are funded from the state budget, i.e. the money of the citizens of Montenegro, in order to work in the public interest. Consequently, they bear a significant responsibility for their work, as well as for any lack of action when they choose such an approach.

Therefore, it is important to have insight into the activities of the MPs in the Parliament of Montenegro, their earnings in relation to their perceived or actual contribution in the Parliament, including the correlation with official trips and the associated budget implications.

Budget Increasing, Productivity Declining

Since the restoration of Montenegro's independence in 2006 until June 2023, six parliamentary elections have been held, whether in regular or extraordinary cycles. It turned out that a parliamentary career, in the Montenegrin context, is positioned as highly lucrative and often long-lasting. Across the convocations since 2006, a considerable number of the same individuals have been recorded, with some having served for several decades in both the Montenegrin Parliament and the highest legislative body of the former federal state with Serbia.

In less than three years, solely concerning the earnings of MPs and the costs of their travel and per diems, the 27th convocation of the Parliament of Montenegro cost citizens over five million euros. Additionally, these costs are further compounded by the expenses of those employed in the General Secretariat of the Parliament and related services, as well as those engaged on other grounds (legal and natural persons), ongoing expenses related to the functioning of the Parliament, capital investments, etc.

The total expenditures of the Parliament of Montenegro from 2020 to 2023, based on available reports on the funds spent, have increased, starting from EUR 7,156,162.38 in 2020, through EUR 8,523,495.14 in 2021, to EUR 8,653,568.15 in 2022. Although the data on expenditures for 2023 are not final yet, it is worth noting that the budget allocated for the Parliament amounted to a total of EUR 10,953,231.72, and it remains to be seen whether it is fully realized. If this amount remains as it is in the final figures, it will signify an increase in the operating costs of the Parliament by 53% compared to 2020. The budget had already seen significant growth in 2021, while 2022 was at a

similar level, and in 2023, it is projected again to be much larger once again.

This convocation operated turbulently, often in a half-empty Parliament Hall due to the boycott by certain political entities, marked by the dismissal of the President of the Parliament and the votes of no confidence against the 42nd and 43rd Governments of Montenegro. Simultaneously, many important legislative texts were not the focus of MPs, and crucial issues were addressed selectively and in a populist manner, lacking genuine dedication to the public interest.

Ultimately, by the decree of the President of Montenegro, the Parliament was dissolved on 16 March 2023, and extraordinary parliamentary elections were scheduled for 11 June 2023. However, the parliamentary majority disputed this decree, so the Parliament continued to function, albeit in a diminished capacity, until the elections. This included the passing of a series of laws that never came into force as the new president could not sign them, given that doing so would be unconstitutional. It is worth noting that during this period, the continued use of various benefits and extensive official travels persisted, with the President of the Parliament standing out in this regard.

The highest MP salary for May 2023 amounted to EUR 2,676.37 in net amount, received by MP Dragica Anđelić from the SDP, who replaced her colleague Draginja Vuksanović Stanković on 11 April 2023. However, this is a settlement for May and part of April when she assumed the position of MP. Excluding this, MP Branko Radulović (PzP/DF) remains the highest-paid parliamentarian with EUR 2,555.52 in May, followed by Danijela Đurović, the President of the Parliament, with EUR 2,549.16 EUR. Additionally, among MPs whose May earnings exceeded EUR 2,000 are Branka Bošnjak (PzP/DF), Boris Bogdanović (Democrats), Ivan Brajović (SD), Predrag Bulatović (DF), Branko Čavor (DPS), Dejan Đurović (DF), Dragan Ivanović (SNP), Božena Jelušić (URA), Miloš Konatar (URA), Dragan Krapović (Democrats), Simonida Kordić (DF), Jovanka Laličić (DPS), Miodrag Lekić (Democrats/DEMOS), Duško Marković (DPS), Genci Nimanbegu (FORCA), Melvudin Nuhodžić (DPS), Slaven Radunović (DF), Kenana Strujić Harbić (BS), Tamara Vujović (Democrats) and Danijel Živković (DPS).

2555.52
EUR

was the highest salary
in net amount for
an MP in May 2023
received by MP Branko
Radulović (PzP)

1586.98
EUR

was the lowest salary
for an MP in May
2023, received by MP
Bogdan Božović (SNP).

The lowest salary for an MP in May 2023 was EUR 1,586.98, received by MP Bogdan Božović (SNP).

The average net salary for MPs for the same period is about EUR 1,880, calculated based on full net amounts, excluding MPs entitled to a wage difference.

From 23 September 2020 to 1 June 2023, those MPs in the Montenegrin Parliament who served the entire term, on average, earned slightly over EUR 60,000 in net amounts.

Generally, the activities of MPs in the parliamentary plenum were not proportionate to the received earnings. Some notable examples include certain MPs from the DPS, who spoke for only a minute or two in the plenum over nearly three years (such as Mevludin Nuhodžić and Branimir Gvozdenović) or did not speak at all, attending selectively only for specific votes (like Duško Marković).

Certainly, participation in these debates is not the only job of MPs, and each party allocates its resources as it deems best in its interest. Due to procedural constraints, parties often choose to have speeches predominantly delivered by the heads of parliamentary clubs or a few other MPs. However, this does not limit MPs in their engagement, but it seems to provide a significant number with a sought-after "comfort zone". Nonetheless, activities in the Parliament Hall, as well as in committees, are crucial because public interest should not be overshadowed by various tactical and strategic party interests. In that respect, the absence of activity by certain MPs is incomprehensible, as they are ultimately elected, albeit through party lists, to contribute to parliamentary debates and the adoption of

documents aimed at improving the quality of life for citizens, which consequently should lead to societal development and emancipation. After all, it is enough for an average Montenegrin citizen to consider what would happen if they did not show up regularly at their workplace and did not achieve a certain level of performance. Undoubtedly, this would have consequences for them, ranging from a reduction in earnings to termination. This kind of work control does not exist in the case of MPs, and the consequences of their irresponsible attitude are considerable in the context of the necessary yet absent democratization and Europeanization of Montenegrin society, and the strengthening of institutions in Montenegro.

As an illustration, in 2023, from 1 January to 30 May, 42 out of a total of 81 MPs spoke in the Parliament. Therefore, nearly 50% of MPs did not participate in parliamentary debates in the first few months. Broadly speaking, since the beginning of that parliamentary term, from 23 September 2020 to 30 May 2023, MPs collectively spoke for just under 400 hours in the plenary sessions. This means that, for about 32 months, or slightly more than two and a half years, they actively spent only 50 working days, or around 6% of their time, in that aspect of their job.

Overall, from the beginning of the term, from 23 September 2020 to 30 May 2023, the most active speaker in the plenum was MP Momo Koprivica (Democrats), followed by Branko Radulović (PzP/DF), Boris Mugoša (SD), Miloš Konatar (URA) and Slaven Radunović (DF/NSD). Among the most active MPs of the 27th convocation were also Marko Milačić (True Montenegro), Danijel Živković (DPS), Branka Bošnjak (PzP/DF), Andrija Popović (LP), and Damir Šehović (SD). In total, there were about 400 hours of speaking time in the plenum, of which the top 10 most active MPs spoke for almost 40% of that time, or 147 hours. It should be noted that this measurement includes those MPs who have had this status from the start of the term until the end of May 2023, for which period the data were collected from the Parliament of Montenegro.

¹ CCE requested and received information regarding official trips until 30 May 2023

Table: Most active MPs in the plenum and their monthly earnings²

No.	MP	Duration of speech in the plenum	Monthly earning in EUR ³	Parliamentary group / party
1	 Momo Koprivica	28h28m26s	1,949.11	Democrats - DEMOS - Peace is Our Nation / Democrats
2	 Branko Radulović	25h22m24s	2,555.52	Democratic Front - PZP / PzP
3	 Boris Mugoša	14h11m37s	1,738.13	Social Democrats of Montenegro / SD
4	 Miloš Konatar	13h39m54s	2123.14	Black on White / URA
5	 Slaven Radunović	11h52m25s	2,344.62	Democratic Front - NSD, DNP, RP / NSD

² Statistical data taken from the conference system (on the basis of an active microphone) of the Plenary (Great) Hall of the Parliament

³ Monthly salary from May 2023

6



**Marko
Milačić**

11h23m10s

1,636.17

No club / True
Montenegro

7



**Danijel
Živković**

11h21m13s

2,070.41

Democratic Party
of Socialists /
DPS

8



**Branka
Bošnjak**

10h39m06s

2,367.78

Democratic
Front - PZP / PzP

9



**Andrija
Popović**

10h24m59s

1,917.41

SDP - Liberal
Party LP / LP

10



**Damir
Šehović**






10h03m41s

1,706.49

Social
Democrats of
Montenegro / SD

The majority of MPs with the lowest level of activity in the plenum came from the parliamentary group Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS), starting with Mevludin Nuhodžić and Branimir Gvozdenović, followed by Nela Savković Vukčević, Miloš Nikolić, Abaz Dizdarević, Branko Čavor, and Dragica Sekulić. They were followed by MPs Vladan Raičević (PzP/DF), Dragan Vukić (SNP), and Maja Vukičević (DF/DNP). It should be noted that this measurement only encompasses those MPs who held that status from the beginning of the convocation until the end of May 2023, for which period data was collected from the Parliament of Montenegro. Additionally, there is no record of MP Duško Marković (DPS) speaking in the plenum during almost three years of his MP mandate.

Table: Least active MPs in the plenum and their monthly earnings⁴

No.	MP	Duration of speech in the plenum	Monthly earning in EUR ⁵	Parliamentary group / party
1	 Melvudin Nuhodžić	1m42s	2,043.95	Democratic Party of Socialists / DPS
2	 Branimir Gvozdenović	2m51s	1,987.70	Democratic Party of Socialists / DPS
3	 Nela Savković Vukčević	4m17s	1,833.05	Democratic Party of Socialists / DPS
4	 Miloš Nikolić	21m1s	1,622.12	Democratic Party of Socialists / DPS
5	 Abaz Dizdarević	29m29s	1,776.80	Democratic Party of Socialists / DPS

⁴ Statistical data taken from the conference system (on the basis of an active microphone) of the Plenary (Great) Hall of the Parliament

⁵ Monthly salary from May 2023

6



**Branko
Cavor**

32m4s

2,156.46

Democratic
Party of
Socialists / DPS

7



**Dragica
Sekulić**

43m36s

1,717.03

Democratic
Party of
Socialists / DPS

8



**Vladan
Raičević**

55m1s

1,664.30

Democratic
Front - PZP / PzP

9



**Dragan
Vukić**

1h8m57s

1,629.15

SNP

10



**Maja
Vukićević**

1h22m47s

1,892.87

Democratic
Front - NSD,
DNP, RP / DNP

When it comes to the work of parliamentary committees, the NGO Institute Alternative has documented varying levels of their activism between 2019 and 2022⁶, and for comparison purposes, we take the years 2021 and 2022.

Namely, in 2021, the most active committee was the Committee on Economy, Finance, and Budget, with a total of 94 hours of session duration the Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration stood out

⁶ <https://institut-alternativa.org/pojedini-odbori-i-dalje-bez-odrzane-sjednice-u-2022-godini-2/>

in terms of the number of sessions held (31). Conversely, the most passive committee was the Anti-Corruption Committee, with five sessions totalling 14 hours and 30 minutes.

In 2022, the Legislative Committee held the highest number of sessions (36), while the Committee on Political System, Judiciary, and Administration had the longest discussions, lasting 83 hours and 15 minutes. In the same year, the Committee on European Integration debated the least - 3 hours and 5 minutes at only three held sessions.

From Brussels to Colombia

The work led the Members of the Parliament of Montenegro around the world – from the region and EU member states and Nordic countries, Russia, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Morocco, the United Arab Emirates, Colombia, the USA, and beyond. Thus, the MPs of the 27th convocation, from the fall of 2020 to June 2023, visited a total of 61 cities in 44 countries, taking part in various conferences, sessions, forums, summits and observation missions.

Official travels continued even after the decree of the President of the State dissolving the Parliament. In this regard, the President of the Parliament, Danijela Đurović, stood out, including her multi-day visit to the United States of America (USA). It is worth noting that her international activities notably intensified after the dissolution of the Parliament, and she utilized the right to use the private plane of the Government of Montenegro, which will be elaborated further below.

Although part of the expenses for the MPs travels was covered by the organizers of specific events abroad, a part of it was also covered by the state. According to available data, these travels cost the citizens approximately EUR 330,530.64 ⁷, which includes flight tickets, accommodation, transportation, insurance, and other expenses, where they

⁷ Official travels, travel expenses, and per diems are related to the period from 1 January 2021 to 30 May 2023. Note: The amount includes travel expenses within the territory of Montenegro, which were significantly lower than international ones, consisting mainly of transportation costs and per diems. This does not include travel expenses related to the attendance of Members of Parliament at the Parliament sessions."



Autumn 2020 ● ————— ● June 2023

**MPs of the 27th convocation
visited a total of**

61 cities in **44** countries

were not covered by the organizers, as well as per diems.

Among the MPs whose official travels incurred the highest expenses, Predrag Sekulić (DPS) topped the list, who was the Deputy Chairperson of the Committee for Comprehensive Electoral Reform, a member of the Committee on European Integration, the Committee on Tourism, Agriculture, Ecology and Spatial Planning, the Commission for Monitoring and Control of the Privatisation Procedure, and the Permanent Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe – PACE. More precisely, during this shortened term of the Parliament, Sekulić earned a net income of EUR 71,819.37 over 32 months. When including the costs of official travels, the total expenses exceeded EUR 100,000. During the same period, he spoke for 3 hours and 55 minutes in the parliamentary plenum.

He is followed by MP Vladan Raičević (PzP/DF), who cost the state over EUR 80,000, which includes salaries, per diems, and travel costs, while, on the other hand, in the same period, it was recorded that he spoke in the Parliament for only 55 minutes.

Among those who travelled extensively, the most active in the plenum was the MP Slaven Radunović (DF/NSD), with over 11 hours of active engagement in the plenary sessions, receiving salaries and per diems totalling EUR 72,262.04.

Other frequent travellers from the parliamentary benches include Maja Vukićević and Maksim Vučinić from the Democratic Front (DNP and Labour Party), President of the Parliament Danijela Đurović from SNP, Ivan Brajović from SD, as well as Danilo Šaranović and Dragan Krapović from the Democrats, along with Andrija Nikolić from DPS.

President of the Parliament, Danijela Đurović, became more actively involved in travel after the decree of the President of the State dissolving the Parliament. Within a span of just five weeks from 23 April to 3 June, she managed to position herself as the fifth-highest traveller. This is particularly striking as she had been eight positions lower in the previous period, not even being among the top 10 most frequent travellers of the Montenegrin Parliament. Thus, towards the end of the mandate, during the period of the dissolved Parliament, she utilized the plane of the Government of Montenegro for visits to the Czech Republic and Turkey, and towards the end of May, she travelled on official visits to Washington, Sofia, as well as Baku and Vilnius. In these

five weeks, she submitted invoices to taxpayers for per diems, flights, hotel accommodation, and transportation, totalling nearly EUR 10,000. Simultaneously, Đurović intensified her use of the business card for representation expenses, amounting to slightly over EUR 4,000 for that period. The exact costs of using the Government's plane for Đurović's travel purposes remain unknown, as the Secretariat-General of the Government of Montenegro has not provided this information to the CCE.

Apart from the accommodation costs on official travels, the President of the Parliament made the largest expenses for accommodation in the place of holding the sessions of the Parliament. Specifically, between 28 April 2022 and 27 July 2023, according to information that media obtained from the Parliament⁸, her accommodation expenses amounted to around EUR 24,000. During her mandate as the President, Đurović chose hotel accommodation, which was several times more expensive compared to the option of using the housing allowance for renting an apartment in the city where the Parliament sessions are held. Compared to the costs for the 15-month period related to the paid hotel accommodation, utilizing the housing allowance for the same period would have amounted to EUR 4,950, nearly EUR 20,000 less.

Also, according to the data provided to the media, there are contracts with the same hotel indicating an annual allocation of EUR 20,000, which raises questions about the total expenses of other MPs on an annual basis, who uses the hotel and who utilizes allowances, and how much responsible approach is exercised in this regard.

According to the data available to CCE from the Parliament of Montenegro, Đurović used the Government's plane seven times - for trips to Morocco, Austria, Croatia, Serbia, the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic, and Turkey. However, CCE was unable to obtain data on the costs of using that plane. It is especially questionable why the Government's plane was used for Serbia, considering that there are several daily flights to Belgrade.

Aleksa Bečić, as the previous President of the Parliament, used the plane of the Government of Montenegro only once to travel to Hungary.

Overall, the list of the 10 most frequent MPs is dominated by those from the Democratic Front parliamentary group - 40%.

⁸ <https://www.antenam.net/politika/308664-danijeli-djurovic-smjestaj-u-hotelu-placen-24-hiljade-eura>

Table: The most frequent travellers among MPs and the expenses from the Budget for those travels

No.	MP	Business travel expenses in EUR	Per diems in EUR	Destinations ⁹
1	 Predrag Sekulić	38123.48	8957.40	Paris (x7), Strasbourg (x6), Carpaccio, Bern (x2), Neuchatel, Bucharest, Ohrid, Athens, Larnaca
2	 Vladan Raičević	23365.26	4981.01	Washington (x2), Belgrade (x2), Lisbon (x2), Budapest (x2), Antalya (x2), Madrid, Paris, Helsinki, Berlin, Kassel, Prague, Istanbul, Vilnius, The Hague, Athens, Brussels (x2)
3	 Maja Vukićević	23341.40	6196.79	Rome, Budapest, St. Petersburg, Strasbourg (x6), Paris (x2), Hangzhou, Riga
4	 Slaven Radunović	20785.03	3968.54	Bishkek, Glasgow, Rome, Vienna (x3), Washington, Istanbul, Birmingham, Nicosia, Warsaw, Strasbourg, Stockholm

⁹ The list of destinations does not include travel on a local level or within the territory of Montenegro.

5



**Đurović
Danijela**

19485.88

3503.53

Rome, Zagreb,
Riga, Belgrade (x2),
Tashkent, Birmingham,
Monaco, Athens,
Strasbourg, Nicosia,
Vienna, Prague,
Ankara, Washington,
Sofia, Vilnius

6



**Ivan
Brajović**

17160.48

3603.37

Belgrade, Carpaccio
(x2), Madrid, Helsinki,
Istanbul, Vilnius, Paris,
Brussels, Stockholm,
Luxembourg

7



**Maksim
Vučinić**

15858.56

2615.17

Brussels, Strasbourg
(x5), Rome, Paris (x2),
Washington,

8



**Dragan
Krapović**

15145.64

2973.32

Vienna, Rome,
Strasbourg, Paris,
Carpaccio, Monaco,
Dubai, Marrakech,
New York, Stockholm

9



**Danilo
Šaranović**

14331.86

3198.24

Washington,
Belgrade, Bogota,
Lisbon, Antalya,
Madrid, Berlin, Kassel,
Vilnius, Athens,
Brussels (x2), Oslo

10



**Andrija
Nikolić**

13773.56




3214.61

Washington (x3),
Belgrade, Prague,
Berlin, Paris,
Strasbourg, Stockholm

Travel, allowances and plenum activity

It is noticeable that MPs Vladan Raičević (PzP/DF) and Maja Vukićević (DF/DNP) had inversely proportional engagement in plenum compared to their official travel.

Table: MPs whose business travels incurred the highest expenses alongside their total monthly earnings, daily allowances, and duration of speeches in the plenum

MP	Total amount of monthly earnings ¹⁰	Total amount of allowances paid for business travel ¹¹	Total earnings and allowances	Duration of speeches in the plenum ¹²
 Predrag Sekulić	62,861.97	8957.40	71,819.37	3h55m05s
 Vladan Raičević	50,733.33	4981.01	55,714.34	55m01s
 Maja Vukićević	52,067.83	6196.79	58,264.62	1h22m47s

10 Monthly earnings refer to the period from September 2020 to May 2023 (including earnings for May)

11 Paid daily allowances refer to the period from 1 January 2021 to 30 May 2023

12 The duration of the speech in the plenum refers to the period from the beginning of the convocation until 30 May 2023



Slaven

Radunović 68,293.5

3968.54

72,262.04

1h52m25s



Đurović

Danijela 64,316.88

3503.53

67,820.41

4h32m29s
(excluding
chairing)



Ivan

Brajović 69,860.99

3603.37

73,464.36

3h52m25s



Maksim

Vučinić 51,650.9

2615.17

54,266.07

5h03m30s



Dragan

Krapović 56,050.44

2973.32

59,023.76

7h48m31s



Danilo

Šaranović 51,321.99

3198.24

54,520.23

4h31m08s



Nikolić

Andrija 50,758.35

3214.61

53,972.96

4h03m35s

It is important to note that certain number of MPs have renounced daily allowances for official travel. These are the MPs of Democrats – Boris Bogdanović and Aleksa Bečić – who did not take a daily allowance for Baku, Brussels, Washington, Istanbul, Antalya, Skopje and Ljubljana. Additionally, MP Božena Jelušić waived several daily allowances for travel within the country (to Budva, Herceg Novi and Tivat), while the President of the Parliament, Danijela Đurović, waived her daily allowance for visiting the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, but for that she used the plane of the Government of Montenegro.

The extraordinary parliamentary elections in Montenegro were held on 11 June 2023, at the end of July 2023, the constitutive session took place. Some long-term MPs left parliamentary benches, and the Parliament got a lot of new faces. It remains to be seen whether this sort of generation change in the Montenegrin Parliament will also bring some qualitative changes in terms of greater engagement and responsibility of the MPs towards the public interest.

The source of all data published in this publication, related to earnings, travels, allowances, and activities of MPs is the Parliament of Montenegro. Some of this data is publicly available on the Parliament's website, but the majority was collected by the CCE team through requests for free access to information.

Although an increasing amount of information regarding the work of the Parliament and its MPs is publicly available on the Parliament's website, in order to increase transparency and accountability, the recommendation is to expand this scope further as well as to publish on a monthly basis the information about earnings, travels, allowances, and activities of MPs, along with accompanying quarterly and annual overviews, so that citizens have a clear picture of who represents them, to what extent, and in what manner.

