



MPs and Interns must perform much better

- first six months of the 28th convocation of the Parliament through activities in the plenum and official travels -

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01

Inexperience in the Air

In the Parliamentary elections held on 11 June 2023, total of 15 electoral lists participated, of which nine lists won a certain number of the total of 81 seats in the Parliament of Montenegro.

More precisely, the Europe Now Movement (PES) won 24 seats, the coalition TOGETHER! For the future that belongs to you - Danijel Živković (DPS, SD, DUA, LP) - 21, the coalition For the Future of Montenegro (New Serbian Democracy, DNP, and the Labour Party) - 13, Aleksa and Dritan –Bravely Counts (Democrats and URA) - 11, while six seats went to the Bosnian Party, two to the Albanian Forum and the Socialist People's Party (SNP) each, and one to the Albanian Alliance and the Croatian Civic Initiative (HGI).

The last parliamentary elections also brought a sort of generational shift, largely influenced by the two lists that came out with the most seats won. Thus, PES, as a new parliamentary political entity, entered with initially 24 MPs, almost all of whom (except for the member of the United Montenegro who obtained a position through their list), practically had a parliamentary premieres. On the other hand, the list led by Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS) significantly rejuvenated and diversified its team, which was reflected in over 40% of new MPs. Also, new faces are identified, although in smaller percentages, in other parliamentary clubs.

The youngest MPs are Bojana Pićan from the coalition ZBCG, more precisely from the New Serbian Democracy (NSD), and Sonja Milatović from the DPS, with 25 and 26 years old.

The current parliamentary composition has brought not only new faces but also a lack of experience among MPs, which is felt in the functioning of the Parliament of Montenegro. Namely, a considerable number of MPs, besides lacking parliamentary tenure, also come without any work experience or with limited experience.

02

Activity of MPs in Plenum

When it comes to the activity of MPs of the 28th convocation of the Parliament in plenary sessions, the first half of the year was marked by the dominance of more experienced MPs, while the impression is gained that the new forces have been “overwhelmed” by stage fright.




As many as five MPs did not speak even once. These are Uglješa Urošević, Seid Hadžić, Gordan Stojović, and Nađa Laković from PES, and Artan Čobi from the Albanian Alternative, with the note that three out of these five MPs began their mandate in mid-November 2023, precisely on 16 November 2023, when the State Election Commission (SEC) confirmed their mandates as they replaced party colleagues who joined the Government. This applies to Stojović, Laković, and Čobi, while Urošević and Hadžić, therefore, since the beginning of the convocation on 27 July 2023, citizens who followed the plenary sessions could not hear their voices.

Although the proportions in the number of MPs and speaking time are clear, it is not a good message from the new and most numerous parliamentary group to have such a large number of MPs who have chosen to remain silent even though they were elected to use their voices to improve the situation. Furthermore, these are new faces that the public should only get to know in this function, and through their work they should demonstrate why they deserved their position on the list.

Of course, this is not an isolated phenomenon; CCE has registered it in the previous convocation, then with profiled MPs of the DPS. However, it is to be expected that new parties change bad practices, including this inactivity.







The list of the 10 least active MPs in the plenary of the 28th convocation of the Parliament of Montenegro, in this publication, covers the period of the first six months of the Parliament's work, i.e., from the constituent session on 27 July 2023 to 1 February 2024, when 12 sessions were held - nine regular sessions and three extraordinary sessions - not counting the constituent session.

The length of speaking time in the plenary is accompanied by the earnings of MPs for February 2024.¹

	MP	Party/ parliamentary club	Duration of presentation	Number of presentations	Earnings
1	 Seid Hadžić	PES	00:00:00	0	€ 1,594.01
	 Uglješa Urošević	PES	00:00:00	0	€ 702.65 (difference in earnings)
	 Gordan Stojović	PES	00:00:00	0	€ 1,695.95

¹ Statistical data were collected from the conference system (based on active microphones) of the Plenary (Grand) Hall of the Parliament of Montenegro, and the monthly earnings refer to February 2024, with the note that MPs who do not perform this function professionally receive a difference in earnings

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	MP	Party/ parliamentary club	Duration of presentation	Number of presentations	Earnings
	 Nađa Laković	PES	00:00:00	0	€ 1,653.76
	 Artan Čobi	Albanian forum (AA)	00:00:00	0	€ 3,105.71
2	 Vladimir Bakrač	PES	0:01:31	1	€ 203.56 (difference in earnings)
3	 Boris Pejović	PES	0:01:32	2	€ 2,171.79
4	 Dragana Vučević	PES	0:04:12	1	€ 162.95 (difference in earnings)
5	 Vaso Obradović	ZBCG- New Serb Democracy	0:07:29	3	€ 1,776.80

6		Vladimir Dobričanin	UCG / a special club of deputies	0:08:38	4	€ 272.91 (difference in earnings)
7		Maja Vučelić	SNP – CIVIS	0:09:36	4	€ 1,801.06
8		Bojana Pićan	ZBCG- New Serb Democracy	0:09:52	1	€ 1,579.94
9		Dane Marković	PES	0:11:12	5	€ 1,685.40
10		Admir Adrović	Bosnian party	0:12:00	4	€ 1,674.86

Table: Least Active MPs in plenary sessions and their monthly earnings

After the five MPs who remained silent in the plenary for half a year, the next in terms of passivity is Vladimir Bakrač from PES, followed by Boris Pejović, a PES MP and the Vice President of the Parliament of Montenegro, who, interestingly, has the largest disparity between earnings and activity in the plenary, with just one second less. In only two recorded interventions, one of which was a 27-second speech during the constituent session, he spoke for a total of one minute and thirty-two seconds, while his earnings for February amounted to €2,171.79. The list of the least active MPs is overwhelmingly dominated by MPs from the parliamentary majority, primarily from PES, followed by NSD.

On the other hand, among the most active MPs those from the opposition stand out - Andrija Nikolić, Ivan Vuković, Jevto Eraković, and Danijel Živković from DPS, followed by the parliamentary club of URA with Dritan Abazović, Miloš Konatar, and Filip Adžić, as well as Ervin Ibrahimović from BS, while MPs Milan Knežević and Vladislav Bojović from ZBCG-DNP hold this position within the parliamentary majority.

	MP	Party/ parliamentary club	Duration of presentation	Number of presentations	Earnings
1	 Andrija Nikolić	DPS	4:22:36	79	€ 2,219.15
2	 Dritan Abazović	URA	4:04:41	67	€ 1,695.95
3	 Miloš Konatar	URA	3:04:02	53	€ 2,229.68
4	 Milan Knežević	DNP / ZBCG - DNP	2:54:40	47	€ 2,229.68
5	 Ivan Vuković	DPS	2:49:51	51	€ 316.80

6		Jevto Eraković	DPS	2:24:05	32	€1,762.73
7		Danijel Živković	DPS	2:14:10	34	€1,653.76
8		Vladislav Bojović	DNP / ZBCG - DNP	2:00:37	21	€1,706.49
9		Filip Adžić	URA	1:59:06	32	€1,601.03
10		Ervin Ibrahimović	BS	1:57:27	23	€1,790.86

Table: Most active MPs in plenary sessions and their monthly earnings

In the first six months of the 28th convocation of the Parliament, the most active among MPs in the plenary was Andrija Nikolić, the president of the DPS parliamentary club, who spoke for over four hours and 20 minutes in a total of 79 presentations. Following him is the MP Dritan Abazović, who also had over four hours of active microphone time through 67 presentations.

Official Travels of MPs of the 28th Convocation of the Parliament of Montenegro

During the first six months, three major events marked the official travels of MPs. These include visits to European institutions in Brussels, participation in sessions of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, and attendance at the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington.

The accounting period for 2023, from 27 July to 31 December 2023, indicates that MPs travelled exclusively abroad, as there were no recorded local trips. During these five months, €10,263.94 was spent on MP's official travels (per diems, travel expenses, and accommodation).

The majority of expenses were related to the visit to European institutions in Brussels, attended by 12 MPs from 12 parliamentary clubs. Travel expenses and per diem amounted to €608.00 per each, totalling €7,296, while accommodation expenses were covered by the organizers.

In 2023, there were also trips by the President of the Parliament, Andrija Mandić, to Turkey and Hungary (more details in a separate section), for which MP Simonida Kordić from ZBCG-NSD was also delegated. MPs Ervin Ibrahimović and Damir Gutić from BS attended the ceremonial academy on 20 November 20 - the Day of Sandžak and 25 November - the Day of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Hanover, Germany. DPS MP Abaz Dizdarević traveled to Moldova to participate in a conference on the role of committees for European integration.

The second period of calculation pertains to the 2024, up to 1 February 2024, effectively only for the month of January, where there is already a significant increase in these expenses. While the cost for the first five months of the Parliament's work during 2023 was slightly over €10,000, for the first month of 2024 alone, over €30,000 was spent, i.e., three times more for a period five times shorter.

The participation of six MPs at the January National Prayer Breakfast in Washington cost the citizens of Montenegro almost €15,000. These are travel expenses for Maja Vukićević (ZBCG-DNP), Miodrag Laković (PES), Ana Novaković Đurović (URA), Andrija Nikolić (DPS), Ervin Ibrahimović (BS), and Danijel Živković (DPS).

MP	Per diems	Plane ticket	Accommodation	Transport	TOTAL
Maja Vukićević	€ 674.10	€ 895.84	€ 1,252.50	€ 52.05	€ 2,874.49
Miodrag Laković	€ 674.10	€ 795.84	€ 1,252.50		€ 2,722.44
Ana Novaković Đurović	€ 505.58	€ 1,201.54	€ 860.00		€ 2,567.12
Andrija Nikolić	€ 505.57	€ 667.65	€ 825.00	€ 269.29	€ 2,267.51
Ervin Ibrahimović	€ 786.45	€ 830.00	€ 559.00		€ 2,175.45
Danijel Živković	€ 505.57	€ 667.65	€ 825.00		€ 1,998.22
TOTAL	€3,651.37	€ 5,058.52	€ 5,574	€ 321.34	€ 14,605.23

Individual costs for the travel of each MP to the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington

Additionally, the participation of five MPs at the January session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg cost the citizens almost 8,000 €. The delegation from the Parliament of Montenegro consisted of Miloš Konatar (URA), Nikola Camaj (AF), Nađa Laković (PES), Maja Vukićević (ZBCG-DNP), and Boris Mugoša (SD).

MP	Per diems	Plane ticket	Accommodation	Transport	TOTAL
Miloš Konatar	€ 471.63	€ 470.77	€ 700.00	€ 94.29	€ 1,736.69
Nikola Camaj	€ 471.63	€ 470.77	€ 700.00		€ 1,642.40
Nađa Laković	€ 471.63	€ 470.77	€ 700.00		€ 1,642.40
Maja Vukićević	€ 385.88	€ 380.77	€ 571.00	56.40 €	€ 1,394.05
Boris Mugoša	€ 385.88	€ 380.77	€ 560.00	11.00 €	€ 1,337.65
TOTAL	€ 2,186.65	€ 2,173.85	€ 3,231.00	€ 161.69	€ 7,753.19

Individual costs for the travel of each MP to the session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg

MP from the ZBCG-DNP parliamentary club, Maja Vukićević, was the only one who travelled to both events in January. She was in Strasbourg from 21 to 25 January and in Washington from 28 January to 4 February. For these two trips, Vukićević received €1,059.98 in daily allowances, and the total costs of both her trips amounted to €4,268.54. She is the MP with the highest expenditure on official trips in the 28th convocation during the first six months of her term. As a reminder, Vukićević was among the most frequent traveling MPs in the previous convocation, with almost €20,000 in expenses during official trips.

Year	Per diems	Plane tickets	Acomodation	Transport abroad	Fuel	Insurance and visas	TOTAL
2023.	€ 1,780.03	€ 7,904.52	€ 569.00	/	/	10.29 €	€ 10,263.84
2024.	€ 7,357.39	€ 10,995.48	€ 12,170.51	€ 483.03	€ 58.73	/	€ 31,065.14
TOTAL	€ 9,137.42	€ 18,900	€ 12,739.51	€ 483.03	€ 58.73	€ 10.29	€ 41,298.98

Review of the official trips of MPs of the 28th convocation of the Parliament of Montenegro

In summary, over the past six months of the 28th convocation of the Parliament of Montenegro, the official trips of MPs cost €41,298.98. This amount includes expenses for per diems, airfare, accommodation, transportation, fuel, insurance and visas, but does not include costs covered by the organisers.

04

Frugal Mandić

The President of the Parliament, Andrija Mandić, chaired the sessions speaking for a total of 8 hours, 16 minutes, and 13 seconds. Apart from chairing, he had 14 interventions totaling 58 minutes and 19 seconds. Considering his position, which gives him significantly more procedural opportunities to speak, this was not included in the overall summary with the most active MPs.

His February salary as President of the Parliament amounted to €2,693.83.

During the first half of the year, Mandić traveled twice, to Ankara (Turkey) and Budapest (Hungary). In Ankara, Mandić was on an official visit to the Republic of Turkey, with accompanying participation in the 2023 World TRT Forum and the 7th Istanbul Summit, while in Budapest, he participated in the 11th meeting of the Presidents of the Parliaments of Southeast Europe.

For the trip to Turkey, the President of the Parliament used a government plane, while the travel expenses to Hungary amounted to €199.26, and the accommodation costs were covered by the organizer, also Mandić waived his per diem in both cases.

His party colleague, MP Simonida Kordić, was also delegated to the same trips. She did not waive her per diem for Ankara, but she did cancel her participation in the Budapest trip. However, according to the

data provided from the Parliament's service, the expenses for the plane ticket and accommodation for that trip remained, which is not a responsible approach to parliamentary resources.

In response to inquiries about the expenses of the official card of the President of the Parliament, the CCE

received a response from the Parliament stating that Mandić does not possess one.

€ 2,693.83

amounted the February salary of the President of the Parliament

Taking this into consideration, it can be concluded that the President of the Parliament currently exhibits a more responsible approach towards taxpayers' money compared to the former President of the Parliament, Danijela Đurović, who stood out with travel expenses and expenses related to the official credit card, especially in the period after the dissolution of the Parliament. Namely, within just over a month, Đurović then presented invoices to taxpayers for per diems, airfare, hotel accommodation, and transportation totalling nearly €10,000. Simultaneously, she used the official credit card more intensively for representation purposes during that period, with expenses exceeding €4,000. Other expenses related to the use of the government plane remain unknown, and the media reported significant accommodation expenses at the location of the Parliament sessions, totalling around €24,000.

