



**Government of Montenegro**

**NEGOTIATING POSITION OF MONTENEGRO  
FOR THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE ON ACCESSION OF MONTENEGRO TO THE  
EUROPEAN UNION  
CHAPTER EDUCATION AND CULTURE**

**Podgorica, February 2013**

## I

Montenegro accepts the *acquis* in the area covering Chapter 26 Education and Culture valid on 21 February 2013 and does not expect any difficulties in implementation of the European legislation under this chapter by the date of the accession to the EU.

Montenegro does not request special arrangements transitional periods under this chapter.

## II

### 1. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

#### 1.1. Legislative Framework

Education system in Montenegro is regulated in more details by the set of laws: General Law on Education, Law on Preschool Education, Law on Primary Education, Law on Vocational Education, Law on Gymnasium, Law on Adult Education, Law on National Vocational Qualifications, Law on Education of Children with Special Education Needs, Law on National Qualification Framework, Law on Minority Rights and Freedoms, Law on Higher Education, Law on Recognition of Foreign Education Documents and Equal Qualification and the Law on Vocational Training of Persons with the University Degree.

#### 1.2. Institutional Framework

**The Ministry of Education** is competent for the planning, implementation and revision of education policy at all education levels (preschool, primary, secondary and higher education).

**The Education Office** is competent for the provision and improvement of the education quality and implementation of development, advisory and research activities in the area of preschool education, primary education, secondary general education, general education in vocational education and the education of children with special needs whereas the **Centre for Vocational Education** is in charge for development, advisory and research activities in the area of vocational education of adults.

**The Examination Centre** is competent for conducting the external assessment of achieved standards, knowledge and skills of pupils i.e. attendees.

**Bureau for Textbooks and Teaching Aids** is in charge of preparing and publishing of textbooks and other teaching aids for education up to the university level and issuance of publications and informative papers on education needs and the issuance of manuals for teachers and pupils.

The Government has established the **National Education Council, Higher Education Council and Qualifications Council**, for decision making in vocational matters and professional aid during the adoption and preparation of legislations i.e. provision of quality in education.

#### 1.3. Education and Training

##### 1.3.1. Preschool Education

The basic document which defines early and preschool education policy is the 2010-2015 *Strategy of Early and Preschool Education* which envisages that, in accordance with the UN

Millennium Goals at least 40% of girls and boys should be covered by the early and preschool education by 2015, from the current 36%.

Measures are taken to increase the number of children primarily through implementation of specialised shorter programmes that may be realised two or three times a week and programmes of preparation for elementary school by introducing “library of books and toys” and interactive service for rural areas in order to reduce differences in coverage of children between the regions.

### **1.3.2. Elementary Education**

Realisation of right to mandatory and free elementary education is defined by the Constitution of Montenegro and the Law on Elementary Education. This type of education is mandatory for all children of the age six to fifteen, it lasts for nine years and it is realised through three cycles.

In the area of mandatory education, special attention is given to the education of members of “vulnerable groups”.

In the last ten years, number of pupils of Roma and Egyptian nationality has increased by three times in elementary schools. With a view o providing additional support, free textbooks have been provided for 906 pupils of the first, second and the third grade.

Activities related to the enrolment of Roma and Egyptian children from camp Konik into the urban schools, including free transportation, have been realised realized since 2008/2009 continuously. These activities additionally contribute to desegregation, reduction of drop-out and improvement of the quality of acquired knowledge through the establishment of mechanisms for the detection and resolution of the identified problems.

Montenegro is especially devoted to progress in the area of education of children with special needs. Legal and strategic framework has been established, resource centres have been established, inclusive education principles introduced, teaching and professional personnel trained, mobile teams have been formed and assistants in the teaching have been introduced.

Commissions for the orientation of children with special education needs have been established in 18 out of 21 local municipalities in the territory of Montenegro.

Most children with special education needs receive their education in schools with their peers. The exceptional cases are directed to the resource centres.

Due to clear decision to objectively assess how acquired knowledge is applied, Montenegro participates in the PISA assessment of 15 year olds. The results that pupils achieve within this international testing are used to further improve the teaching and learning processes.

Further development of elementary education shall be realised through: provision of permanent monitoring and quality improvement of education process in schools; improvement of the initial and continuous education of teachers; additional rationalisation of education financing; strengthening of public-private partnership; improvement of school infrastructure; realisation of full coverage of children by elementary education;

strengthening of mechanisms of inclusion in education of children in so called vulnerable groups i.e. Roma and Egyptian population and the children with special education needs; improvement of quality of teaching and learning in regional departments in rural areas; improvement of mechanisms of professional informing and counselling; improvement of partnership of schools with parents and local community.

These measures will be financed from the state budget, loans, donor aid and the EU pre-accession support programme.

### **1.3.3. General Secondary Education**

General secondary schools (gymnasium) last for four years. Following the completion of the fourth grade, students take the external Matura test. Completed gymnasium education provides for general access to universities.

### **1.3.4. Vocational Education**

Priority areas, measures and activities focused to further the development of vocational education are the integral part of the *2010-2014 Vocational education development strategy* which was compiled with the principles of Copenhagen declaration in mind.

Vocational education is realised as lower vocational education (two years), secondary vocational education (lasting 3 and 4 years) and post secondary vocational education (two years).

Out of total number of pupils in secondary education, around 33% attends gymnasiums (general education secondary schools) and 67% attend vocational schools.

Out of total number of students in vocational schools, 10 % attends programmes lasting three years. Students who complete these programmes are directly included in the labour market (hairdresser, ceramicist, welder, etc.) and are not entitled to enrol into the higher education institutions.

Students who complete the vocational education programmes lasting four years and who pass the external vocational exam have the opportunity to enter the labour market or continue their education.

Enrolment and access of secondary school students to university programmes are regulated by the special act of higher education institution on conditions, criteria and procedure of enrolment into the first study year.

Application of the modernised curricula and introduction of credit valuation based system in vocational education will begin in 2013/14 school year in sectors of tourism and agriculture. Development of programmes will be continued in other sectors in order to increase the flexibility of curricula, enable the recognition of learning outputs regardless of the acquisition context as well as the availability of the qualification acquisition to different target groups (youth, adults, vulnerable groups). The initial and continuous education of teachers will be upgraded.

With the view to improving the vocational training, Montenegro has been cooperating with the European Training Foundation (ETF) in the areas of teacher trainings, quality assurance,

social inclusion, research of the labour market demand, etc. Montenegro is involved in reporting on the basis of EU instruments (Bruges Communiqué Process 2012, Torino Process 2012) as well as in the activities of the Directors General for Vocational Education and Training. Montenegro has also been participating in the networks EQAVET, SEEVET-Net and EfVET.

### **1.3.5. Higher Education**

Reform of the higher education in Montenegro was initiated by the adoption of the new *Law on Higher Education* (in 2003), which is based on the principles of the Bologna Declaration. Entry into force of this Law implied that all higher education institutions in Montenegro were obliged to organise the teaching process in line with the Bologna principles.

Signing of the Bologna Declaration resulted in an altered structure of the educational process, by introducing three cycles of studies and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) as the measure of the scope of studies.

The reformed higher education system is characterised by continuous provision of quality assurance, introduction of the diploma supplement (an additional document which describes the programme and acquired knowledge, skills and competences), intensified mobility of students and teachers, recognition of acquired qualifications and diplomas in line with the Lisbon Convention, inclusion of students as partners in the educational process and in the decision making system, and development of a lifelong learning concept.

The *Higher Education Development and Financing Strategy 2011-2020* has been aligned with the *Europe 2020* objectives. The Strategy is aimed at improving the higher education quality, developing strong connection between the higher education and the labour market, improving entrepreneurial and innovative character of education, achieving minimum 40% share of population aged 30-34 with higher education qualifications by 2020, establishing a lifelong learning model grounded in good international practice, introducing research-oriented higher education and making the higher education international. In the period of 2012-2017, activities will be focused on reforms in financing of higher education, labour market analyses, employers' perception analyses, learning outcomes development, mobility improvement, analysis of the implementation of the Bologna principles, establishment of centres of excellence, human resources development, etc.

The Government's document *Enrolment Policy at the University of Montenegro* is aimed at regulating the enrolment policy at the state-owned university, in accordance with available premises and human resources of higher education institutions and actual needs of the labour market, thus avoiding hyper-production of hard-to-employ staff and improving the quality of higher education.

Montenegro is a member of the General Assembly of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR).

As a signatory to the Bologna Declaration, Montenegro has its representatives in the Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG). Implementation of the Bologna principles in the Montenegrin higher education system is explained in the regular Bologna stocktaking

reports and presented at regular ministerial conferences on higher education held on biannual level.

Recognising the importance of quality assurance and monitoring, the University of Montenegro founded the Centre for Studies and Quality Control.

## **2. ACCESS TO EDUCATION**

Primary education in Montenegro is compulsory and free for all children aged 6 to 15. Children of migrant workers, as foreign nationals with permanent or temporary residence, have the equal right to primary education as Montenegrin nationals.

A foreign national is enrolled in a secondary school on the competitive basis, just as a Montenegrin national, and does not pay tuition fees.

By the date of accession to the EU, Montenegro will additionally align its legislation with the *Directive on the education of the children of migrant workers* as regards their integration, Montenegrin language learning, promotion of the mother tongue and culture of their country of origin by organising individual, additional and remedial lessons, open-content curriculum for specific subjects, and direct work with children of migrant workers.

Higher education in Montenegro is available to all and any form of discrimination is prohibited. Foreign nationals are entitled to enrolment in academic study programmes in public higher education institutions in Montenegro under the same conditions as Montenegrin nationals who pay tuition fees. They are also entitled to recognition of certificates. In the procedure of recognising foreign qualifications for pursuing regulated professions, the certificate on formal education of an EU citizen is automatically recognised as if obtained in Montenegro. Regardless of whether financed from the budget or self-financed, a student has the right to: accommodation and nutrition in dormitories; student scholarship; scholarship for the best students; co-payment in transport costs in suburban and intercity traffic; advanced training; health care.

By the date of accession to the EU, Montenegro will further harmonise the Law on Higher Education with the EU *acquis* and best practice in order to ensure equal conditions for enrolment on competitive basis and studying for the students who are EU citizens, including the possibility to be financed from the budget under the same conditions as Montenegrin nationals.

## **3. LIFELONG LEARNING**

The Law on National Qualifications Framework, adopted in 2010, has provided the basis for the development of the national qualifications framework. The national qualifications framework has been harmonised with the European Qualifications Framework and it has eight reference levels, with sub-levels at the first, fourth and seventh level. The Government established the Council for Qualifications with the view to ensuring establishment of firm connections between the labour market and the education system as well as developing the national qualifications framework. In the forthcoming period, activities will be oriented towards development of qualifications in all sectors in accordance with the principles of the National Qualifications Framework. This will: enable development of qualifications at all levels, professional qualifications and other qualifications based on learning outcomes; ensure the credibility and quality of qualifications

acquired in Montenegro and their comparability with qualifications acquired in other countries; adjust the education to the labour market demand; recognise previous learning regardless of the learning context; and provide a connection between the formal education and non-formal and informal learning.

Activities on enhancing career counselling in primary, secondary and higher education are constantly carried out.

With a view to making the lifelong learning principle operational, provisions of the Law on National Professional Qualifications govern recognition of non-formal and informal learning as well as acquisition of national professional qualifications. Thus, necessary requirements have been created for recognition of learning, regardless of the context of acquisition, by passing implementing legislation, examiners training and licensing programmes, etc.

The Law on Recognition of Foreign Educational Certificates and Equalisation of Qualifications, which has been harmonised with the Lisbon Recognition Convention and its additional documents, with the Bologna Declaration and with the Joint ENIC/NARIC Charter of Activities and Services, regulates the procedure of recognition of foreign educational certificates and equalisation of qualifications for the purpose of continuing education or employment.

The right to recognition of a certificate and equalisation of qualifications is granted to Montenegrin nationals, as well as to foreign nationals and stateless persons.

Although adult education has been promoted in various target groups (drop-out, unemployed persons with no qualification or with qualifications not demanded by the labour market, employed persons) in accordance with the Law on Adult Education and other regulations, the most widely offered programmes by education providers are programmes of additional qualification, pre-qualification, language learning, IT literacy, entrepreneurship, etc.

## **4. Youth and Sport**

### **4.1. Youth**

Montenegro participates in the open method of coordination and youth consultation mechanisms (structured dialogue) especially in the part related to youth policy at the EU level (expert group for indicators of youth policy, evaluation of the EU Youth Strategy, events of the open method of coordination under the EU presidencies). Montenegro participates in the EU and the Council of Europe Youth Partnership programme, through a group of researchers in the area of youth and the network of the national correspondents for youth policy.

With a view to supporting and facilitating transition of young people from the learning sphere to the labour sphere, the Government launched the Apprenticeship Programme in 2012, in accordance with the Law on Apprenticeship of Persons with Higher Education Qualifications. As a result of this Programme, over 4,000 persons with higher education qualifications are given the possibility to practical experience and independent performance of tasks.

*The National Action Plan for Youth 2006-2011* has been the main government youth strategy for the mentioned period. This strategy has been created through extensive cooperation, coordination and consultation with the relevant public institutions, NGOs and youth. International organisations

were also partners in the strategy drafting. The National Council for Youth has been established after the adoption of the strategy, for the purpose of monitoring, evaluating and counselling the Ministry of Education, aiming at better implementation of the national youth policy and inter-sectoral cooperation. Since 2009, the National Action Plan for Youth has been implemented through the annual action plans which were created in a participative manner, at the annual conference which gathered interested parties (youth organisations, organisations working with youth, municipalities).

The Ministry of Education, in cooperation with partners, has been implementing activities related to informing and capacity building, financing and networking of all youth policy subjects. Inter-sectoral cooperation has been enhanced by the appointment of contact persons for the National Action Plan for Youth in the ministries, as well as by communicating with them, submitting annual reports and mutual activities with other public institutions.

The National Youth Forum was established in June 2012 as a national chief youth organisation the founding of which was supported by the National Council for Youth and the line Ministry.

Further institutionalisation and regulation of the youth policy and the manner of its implementation will be set by the Law on Youth which will be adopted by the end of 2013. It will define the manner of the creation, application and monitoring of the national and local youth policy, mechanisms and the participation of youth in the social life and decision making, cooperation with other youth organisations, informing youth as well as youth labour.

The new Strategy for Youth which will be drafted after the adoption of the Law will focus on the issues of employment, social inclusion, health, volunteering and human rights of youth.

#### **4.2. Sport**

Legislative and strategic framework in the area of sport in Montenegro is composed of: the National Sport Development Programme, the Law on Sport, the Law on Ratification of the International Convention against Doping in Sport, the Law on the Prevention of Violence and Misconduct at Sport Events, the Law on Public Ski-Runs and Statutes of sport organisations (the Montenegrin Olympic Committee, 47 national sport federations and sport organisations).

For the purpose of a successful implementation of the National Sport Development Programme, Montenegro ensured full coordination of activities of the Ministry of Education and the National Sports Council with all relevant actors, first of all with the ministries competent for health, labour and social welfare, internal affairs, sustainable development and tourism, finances, local self-government units, higher education institutions (especially the Faculty of Sports and Physical Education), the Montenegrin Olympic Committee, the Paralympic Committee of Montenegro, the association of school sport societies of Montenegro, the sport federation of the University of Montenegro, the Montenegrin association "Sport for All" and other national sport associations.

### **5. EU PROGRAMMES**

Montenegrin higher education institutions have considerably benefited from the possibilities of Tempus, Erasmus Mundus and Jean Monnet programmes. The capacities of the academic and administrative staff have been considerably improved through projects and cooperation with

higher education institutions from the EU and the region. Furthermore, there is also a framework created for the enhancement of cooperation at the local, regional and international level and the working conditions in the higher education institutions are considerably improved through the provision of modern equipment, new teaching materials and improvement of teaching methods.

Montenegro showed readiness to participate in the *Lifelong Learning Programme* (LLP), as well as to sign the Memorandum of Understanding for the participation in the centralised actions of the LLP.

Montenegro will continue to support the activities directed at the improvement of student mobility, especially regarding “vulnerable groups” of students (azylants, students with special needs, displaced persons), as well as the activities directed at the improvement of conditions for the enhancement of the interest and admission of foreign students to Montenegro by providing them with accommodation in student dorms and extracurricular activities necessary for the full integration into the student community in Montenegro.

Montenegro is a member of the *Euridyce network* and in the coming period will also join the *Europass network* or the *Euroguidance network*. Montenegro also records progressive participation in the Youth in Action programme.

In the coming period Montenegro will actively work on creating conditions for establishing an independent legal body for the decentralised management of the EU educational programmes.

## **6. CULTURE**

### **6.1. Institutional Framework**

The Ministry of Culture as well as the national and local public institutions of culture are responsible for the implementation of the culture policy and the realisation of activities in the area of culture. The National Council for Culture is authorised to monitor the state in certain cultural areas and activities as well as to propose measures for the enhancement and development of culture.

### **6.2. Culture Policy**

*The National Programme for the Development of Culture 2011-2015* establishes the state, priorities, measures and goals of a comprehensive reform in the Montenegrin culture.

Valorisation and revalorisation of cultural riches and efficient application of an integral protection of the cultural heritage is the strategic goal of Montenegro, whereas cultural policy stimulates and supports the development of culture through co-financing programmes and projects in the area of culture and art creation via annual competitions by the Ministry of Culture.

The improvement of the international cooperation is Montenegro’s priority under the implementation of the culture policy, whereas the dynamics of the realisation of priorities is defined by the Action Plan for the implementation of the National Programmes. By signing agreements on cooperation with the EU member states Montenegro stimulates the cultural exchange and intercultural dialogue. The European Agenda for Culture is given in the National Programme for the Development of Culture of Montenegro.

In 2008 Montenegro ratified the UNESCO Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and will continue to work on developing their own policies in this field.

Through the participation in the work of international organisations and initiatives such as UNESCO, the Council of Europe, the Council of Ministers of Culture of South East Europe, the Forum of Slavic Cultures, the Anna Lindh Foundation, the Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and Mediterranean, the Ljubljana Process, Montenegro has continued to strengthen the cultural cooperation and promotion of diversity of cultural expressions.

### **6.3. EU Programmes in the Area of Culture**

Montenegro participates in the programmes *Culture 2007-2013* and *Europe for the Citizens* and for the purpose of promoting these programmes Montenegro also appointed a *culture contact point* (CCP) as well *Europe for Citizens Points* (ECP). Montenegro is also ready to access the new EU programme *Creative Europe*.