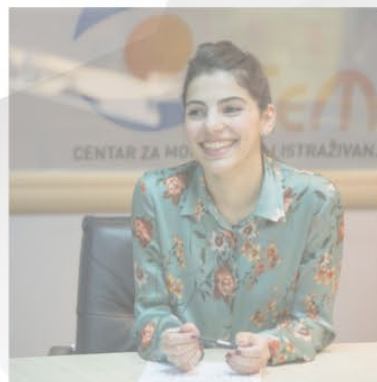


Centre for Monitoring and Research

ANNUAL REPORT 2021





CENTRE FOR MONITORING AND RESEARCH

Centre for Monitoring and Research

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Letter from CeMI President



Dear friends and colleagues,

it has been another successful and eventful year for CeMI, despite a lot of difficulties on a global and national level. CeMI has achieved great success during this year, and our most significant achievements have been presented in our Annual Report.

This report represents a compilation of activities and projects that CeMI implemented during 2021. We have successfully implemented 13 projects through three programmes: Rule of Law and Human Rights, Good

Governance and Fight against Corruption and Social Welfare and Poverty Alleviation. The projects were conducted within our three departments: Legal Department, Empirical Research Department, Finance and Public Relations Department.

During 2021 we continued to work on improvement and promotion of human rights and judiciary reform, but also on improvement of the electoral reform by successfully conducting the monitoring of Local elections in Niksic 2021, which has been our most significant project this year.

As Secretary General of ENEMO, CeMI was responsible for complete administrative management and the implementation of international election observation mission to Moldova Early Parliamentary Elections 2021.

The report consists of chapters divided by projects within which most significant project activities are listed. In the final part of this report, you can find our financial overview for 2021.

We sincerely hope that this report will properly reflect all the work we have done this year and, as always, we are welcome to any advice or suggestion for our further work that this report might inspire.

Sincerely,

Zlatko Vujovic

President of the Governing Board



About the Centre for Monitoring and Research (CeMI)

The Centre for Monitoring and Research (CeMI), is a non-governmental, non-profit organization in Montenegro, founded in March of 2000.

The organization's vision is Montenegro as a country of free citizens, social justice, rule of law and equal opportunities.

CeMI's mission focuses on continuously providing support to reforms and strengthening of the institutions of the political system and civil society organizations through proposing and monitoring the implementation of public policies in the field of human rights and freedoms of European integration and fight against corruption in Montenegro.

During its long and consistent work, CeMI evolved from a regular non-governmental organization to the concept of a research centre for the creation and representation of policy proposals. As a think tank organization, it works on proposing and monitoring the implementation of public policies in the field of human rights and freedoms of European integration and fight against corruption in Montenegro.

CeMI represents the first organization founded with the goal of monitoring the electoral process in Montenegro. Since its foundation (2000) CeMI monitored the largest number of parliamentary, presidential and local elections in Montenegro. CeMI monitored all of the parliamentary elections in Montenegro, starting in 2001. By realizing the project of civic monitoring of elections, CeMI strives to contribute to democratic conditions for the organization of transparent, free and fair elections through civic control of the electoral process on the parliamentary and local elections.

Besides the activities in the field of democratization, human rights, fight against corruption and Euro-Atlantic integration, CeMI is recognized as a think tank that provides expertise in the field of the electoral process, fight against corruption and the rule of law.

CeMI is the founder and the full member of the international organization ENEMO (www.enemo.eu) and the Global Network of Domestic Elections Monitors GNDEM (www.gndem.org). CeMI's representative is the Secretary-General of ENEMO and the member of the Governing Board of GNDEM. Through ENEMO and OSCE ODIHR members and experts of CeMI participated in many international observing missions as experts, short-term and long-term observers, and on three occasions CeMI's expert was the head of an international observing mission (Ukraine and Kosovo).

The organizational structure of CeMI consists of three departments: Legal Department, Empirical Research Department and Finance and Public Relations Department.

CeMI's support to reforms and strengthening of the institutions of the political system and civil society organizations significantly contributed to changing the social and political circumstances in Montenegro.

Goals

- Contribution to the effective implementation of public policies and international commitments in the areas of human rights and freedoms of European integration and fight against corruption;
- Contribution to the harmonization of national legislation and institutional framework with the requirements of the EU accession process;
- To improve awareness and educate the public about human rights protection and freedoms, European integration and fight against corruption;
- Contribution to improving the efficiency of the work of institutions involved in the protection of human rights and freedoms, European integration and fight against corruption;
- Increasing the transparency of the institutions of the political system and civil society organizations.

PROJECT: Civic Monitoring of Local Elections in Niksic



Election monitoring is crucial in ensuring the integrity and fairness of democratic elections. It helps to uphold the basic principles of free and fair elections, such as equal suffrage, universal and secret ballot, and equal access to the media. By providing impartial observation and assessment of the electoral process, election monitoring helps to prevent and address any instances of fraud, irregularities, and human rights violations. This ultimately helps to build public trust in the electoral process, leading to greater political stability, accountability and the strengthening of democratic institutions.

For over two decades, CeMI has been at the forefront of election monitoring in Montenegro. The organization has been dedicated to ensuring the integrity and transparency of the election process, ensuring that the democratic will of the people is accurately reflected in the outcome. With a focus on impartiality and objectivity, CeMI has been a trusted voice in the country, providing comprehensive analysis and recommendations to improve the election process. Throughout all election cycles, from local elections to parliamentary elections, CeMI has been there to provide critical monitoring and reporting.

Despite the common notion that local elections are not as crucial as national or presidential elections, CeMI recognized the importance of monitoring and observing the local elections in Niksic, as the first elections held after the 2020 parliamentary elections, which were followed by a change of government at the central level.

CeMI remains committed to upholding the highest standards of election monitoring, working tirelessly to ensure that the people of Montenegro have the right to free and fair elections.

The project “Civic Monitoring of Local Elections in Niksic” was financially supported by the British Embassy in Podgorica”.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Monitoring Electoral Campaign

CeMI monitored the election campaign from the day of announcing the election. For this purpose, CeMI formed a team consisting of Project Coordinator, Head of Mission, Deputy Head of Mission/Campaign Analyst/Legal Expert, PVT Coordinator, Network STO Coordinator, LTOs and other CeMI staff. The team was responsible for monitoring every aspect of the electoral campaign: Political context, legal framework, registration of electoral lists, registration of voters, election campaign, women participation, election day monitoring, media monitoring (traditional and social media, foreign influence etc.), international and domestic observers, complaints and constitutional initiatives. CeMI produced two reports on the monitoring of the electoral campaign: Report on Preliminary Conclusions and Findings and Final Report. CeMI also produced a policy brief about election technology – a first of its kind in Montenegro.

That the election process in Niksic had not only local, but also regional significance, is confirmed by the Serbian media attention paid to this topic. A large number of Serbian portals were recognized, such as Alo.rs, Novosti.rs, Informer.rs, 24sedam.rs, in4s.net and others, which placed information that had a positive tone towards the coalition “For the Future of Niksic”, as opposed to the coalition “European Team for Niksic”, which was written about in a negative context. For the purpose of preparing this report, CeMI monitored 9 media from Serbia that reported on the events in Montenegro during the election campaign and a total of 893 articles published in the period from 1 March 2021 till 23 March 2021. The same case as with the Montenegrin media is a rarely neutral reporting and therefore 111 articles (12.4%) of the total analyzed were in a neutral tone, while the other 782, or 87.6%, were directed positively or negatively towards some electoral list.

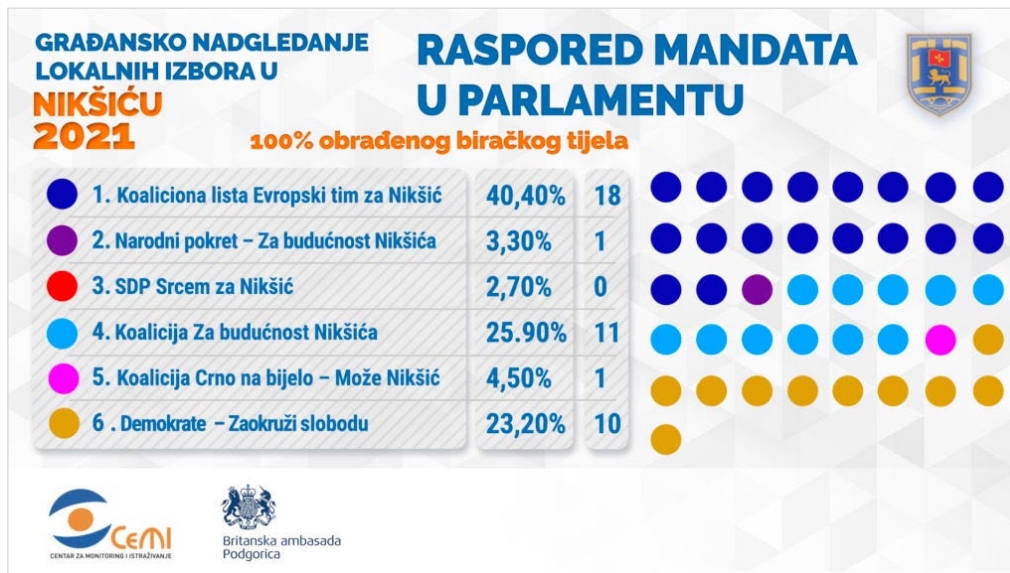
Election Day Monitoring and Conducting Parallel Vote Tabulation

Besides the Core team, which consisted of Head of the Mission, Deputy Head of the Mission, Deputy Head of Mission/Campaign Analyst/Legal Expert, PVT Coordinator, Network STO Coordinator and CeMI’s staff, CeMI has developed a network of local coordinators and 181 short-term observer.

Training sessions were organized for short-term observers in order to prepare them for election day. Aside from training, observers received the election monitoring handbook, which contains detailed information about the election procedures and the conduct of election observers during election day. CeMI had full coverage on election day, with observers at every one of 138 polling stations. Additionally, CeMI also had a team of long-term observers.

CeMI’s Core Team had also requested access to the Central Voter Register in order to inspect the claim that almost 1.000 citizens in Niksic are also registered as voters in Serbia. During the election day, CeMI has conducted the inspection of the Central Voter Register, and we were able to confirm that 961 voters registered in Niksic are also registered in Serbia, contrary to the law. CeMI has conducted PVT (parallel vote tabulation) on election day, soon after closing of polling stations. PVT was extremely accurate and effective, with the exact estimation of all the mandates. Considering the atmosphere of high polarization on the political scene, including the violent incidents in the run up to the election, CeMI’s PVT helped to reduce the tensions and possible manipulation of election results. CeMI is recognized as the leading election observation organization in Montenegro, and our results are deemed as trusted by the participants of the election as well as the public, which is evidenced by the number of visits to our social media

profiles on election day. Our press conferences were followed live through Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, with Twitter registering more than 10,000 views on election day. CeMI's estimates of mandates received by election contestants were 100% accurate, whereas the average deviation in terms of percentages of votes received by contestants between CeMI's projections and official MEC results was 0,04%.



Informing the Public on Election Day Progress



Maja Bjelic, PR Coordinator and Zlatko Vujovic, Head of Mission, 14 March 2021

During the entire Election Day, CeMI's observers reported on main election data, including voter turnout and irregularities to the central office and operators, either by phone, or through the mobile application, specially designed for these elections and this purpose. After the first counting of votes, observers also reported on election results in the same manner and CeMI was able to disclose first projection of results only one hour after the closing of polling stations and its final estimates two hours later (using the PVT method), through press conferences, its website, mobile application and through several national media.

During the election day, CeMI regularly informed the public on voter turnout and the irregularities via social media. During the election night, after the closing of the polling stations, CeMI presented the voting trends and the projection of election results. Press conferences were held at: 20:30h, 21:00h, 22:00h and 23:15h. During the day, CeMI informed the citizens about the voter turnout at 9:00h, 11:00h, 13:00h, 15:00h and 19:00h.



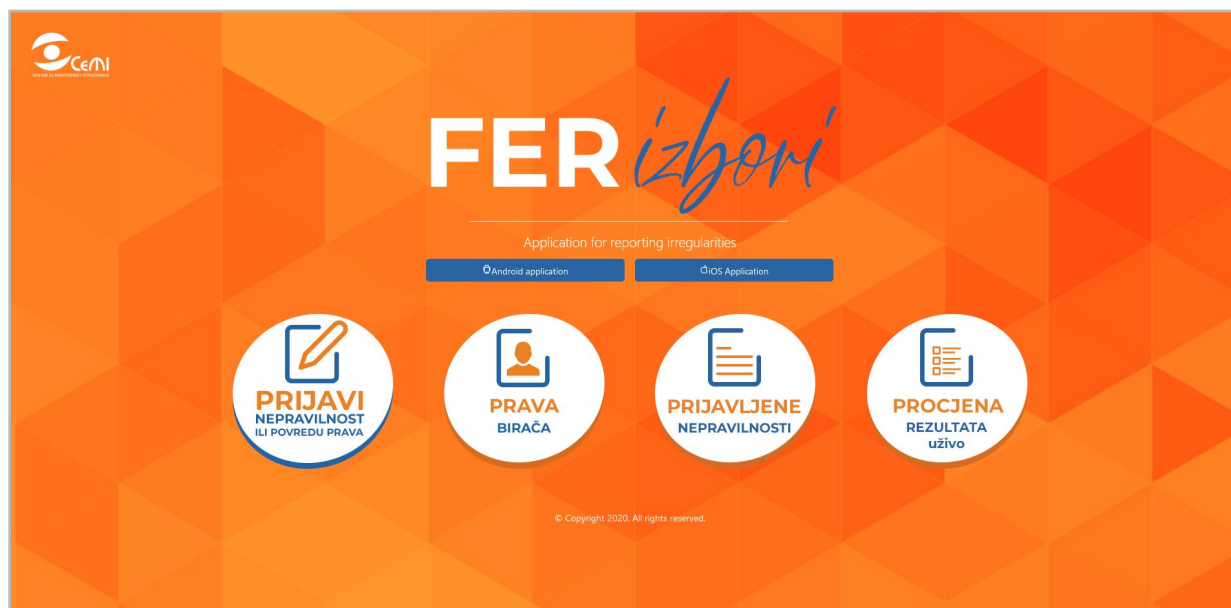
The “Fair Elections” app had almost 2.000 users, and the website ferizbori.me had almost 14.000 visits during election day, while the website www.izbori.cemi.me had 327.296 visits during election day. CeMI’s announcements on Twitter were followed by more than 10,000 people. The transparent conduct and the developed service has encouraged citizens to report irregularities, as well as to seek legal advice from CeMI.

Reporting Electoral Violations

CeMI also established the “Fair Election” mobile (Android and iOS) and web service for observers and citizens, allowing them to report election related irregularities and violations directly to CeMI’s legal team, and to stay informed of their electoral rights. CeMI’s legal team has analysed and categorised received irregularities and violations, and the most important ones have been made public. Aside from publishing the analysed violations on social media, they were also reported on Montenegro’s largest online portals. By using its “Fair elections” service, CeMI

managed to provide real-time informing of the general public about the electoral procedures and most important irregularities on E-day, though its means of communicating with the public (social media, mobile apps, web portal, YouTube...), as well as media, who reported on our social media and YouTube announcements in real time.

Throughout the election day, on CeMI's website and through the "Fair Elections" application, citizens were able to follow the voting process and the irregularities received by the CeMI Legal Team. CeMI reported to the public on irregularities at all polling stations in Niksic, on the basis of data collected from field observers and citizens who, during the election day through the application "Fair Elections" (www.ferizbori.me), and by phone. The CeMI legal team received a total of 92 reports of irregularities by the end of election day.



Homepage of the "Fair Elections" web app available at www.ferizbori.me

Final Report

CeMI produced and presented two reports: Report on Preliminary Conclusions and Findings and Final Report which contains all of CeMI's findings, conclusions and recommendations to various stakeholders, which are used for advocacy for changes related to electoral legislation. CeMI produced an additional Policy Brief titled "Review of Technology for Conducting Election Activities in Montenegro" which contains an overview of technologies used for implementing election activities.

CeMI has made 62 recommendations, out of which: 22 are related to Parliament of Montenegro, 12 are related to State Election Commission, 6 are related to Municipal Election Commissions, 1 to Constitutional court, 1 is related to Prosecutor's offices and courts, 3 are related to Ministry of the Interior, 8 to the Agency for the Prevention of Corruption, 4 to the Political subjects and 5 to the relation to the media.

Comparison of CeMI's projections of local election results with official results

Electoral list	CeMI %	CeMI Seats	MEC %	MEC Seats	Difference	Difference Seats
Sample percentage	100%		100%			
EUROPEAN TEAM FOR NIKSIC! (DPS – DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF SOCIALISTS OF MONTENEGRO, SD - SOCIAL DEMOCRATS OF MONTENEGRO, LPCG – LIBERAL PARTY OF MONTENEGRO – PATRIOTIC KOMITAS ALLIANCE)		18		18	-0,01%	0
MIODRAG DAKA DAVIDOVIC – PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT		1		1	0,04%	0
SDP – WITH HEART FOR NIKSIC!		0		0	0,06%	0
FOR THE FUTURE OF NIKSIC - DEMOCRATIC FRONT, Socialist People's Party of Montenegro, Voter Group For the Life of Niksic, United Montenegro, Workers' Party, Yugoslav Communist Party of Montenegro, Serbian Radical Party, Socialists of Montenegro, Party of Pensioners with Disabilities and Social Justice of Montenegro		11		11	0,1%	0
dr Dritan Abazovic – Black on White - Niksic Can, Civic movement United Reform Action URA and non-partisan personalities		1		1	0,1%	0
MR MOMO KOPRIVICA - PEACE IS OUR NATION - DEMOCRATS - WE WON'T GIVE NIKSIC - DEMOS - PARTY OF PENSIONERS, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND RESTITUTIONS - PLENUM 083 – CHOOSE FREEDOM		10		10	-0,17%	0
Average deviation					0,04%	0

Priority recommendations

1. Electoral reform – It is necessary to implement a comprehensive electoral reform that would include the adoption of a new (1) Law on Election of Councilors and MPs, as well as the related laws: (2) the Law on Voter Register and (3) the Law on Financing of Political Parties and Election Campaigns. The reform should also include subsequent amendments to a set of related laws: (4) the Law on Electronic Media, (5) the Law on Registers of Permanent and Temporary Residence and (6) the Law on Prevention of Corruption. Comprehensive reform would regulate all the issues from this and the previous electoral processes. Codification of election laws should also be considered.

2. Complete professionalization and depoliticization of the SEC and partial professionalization and depoliticization of MECs – It is necessary to bring about complete professionalization and depoliticization with regard to the SEC composition. This endeavor would comprise 3–5 professionals from the field of law, as well as professionalize and depoliticize the role of the presidents of MECs.

Other recommendations

A. To the Parliament of Montenegro

3. The Law on Election of MPS and Councilors should be amended to provide individuals with an opportunity to submit individual candidacy for an MP or a councilor position.
4. It is necessary to introduce preferential voting, with more preferential votes (3) available to the voter. This change will increase the influence of voters with regard to selecting specific candidates, and it will strengthen the link between citizens and their elected representatives.
5. A precise procedure in the Law on Election of MPs and Councilors should be introduced for how an electoral list can be registered as a minority, and on that basis draws the rights to the minority representation.
6. Equal rights of members of Roma should be ensured through amendments of the Law on Election of Councilors and MPs, who do not have equal status with members of minority communities that make up a similar percentage of the total population. The obligation to prepare a certain part of the election material in the Roma language should be established.
7. In accordance with the international obligations that Montenegro has accepted, it is necessary to define the scope of election monitoring under the Law on Election of Councilors and MPs in a way that allows domestic and foreign observers of the election process to have free access to election materials. The number of signatures required to certify the electoral list should be reduced, with the introduction of mandatory verification of the authenticity of signatures by notaries. A limit on the price of this service should be introduced so that it is not a limiting factor for the nomination of candidates.
8. Reduce the number of signatures required to certify the electoral list with the introduction of mandatory verification of the authenticity of signatures by notaries. Also introduce a limit on the price of this service so that it would not be a limiting factor for the nomination of candidates.
9. The legal limitation that one citizen can support only one electoral list with his signature should be removed.
10. Voting abuses should be prevented by establishing a precise provision on the conditions for a ballot to be valid, instead of the current insufficiently precise provision on situations where the ballot is invalid. These changes should prevent compromising the secrecy of voting by labelling ballots with different geometric shapes or ornaments, combined with different colors.
11. The Law on Election of Councilors and MPs should be amended to enable the professionalization of the SEC in such a way that the commission would comprised 3–5 professionals in the field of law (preferably with an emphasis on the right to vote). The proposed professionalization of the SEC would allow it to function more seriously and efficiently and strengthen the capacity and established procedures necessary for the planning and operation of this institution. The latest public opinion poll conducted by CeMI indicates that more experts need to be introduced to the SEC. Specifically, 65.5% of respondents estimate that the SEC should consist of a combination of representatives of political parties and independent experts, with a dominance of experts.
12. It is necessary to professionalize the position of the president of the MEC, who would be appointed to that position on the basis of legally determined criteria, via public competition, by the SEC. Other members would be appointed by political parties according to a similar model.
13. In the future, the representatives of the confirmed electoral lists should not participate in

the work of the SEC and have the right to vote; they should only have the right to observe the work and inspect SEC documentation.

14. It is necessary to more precisely, clearly and legally regulate the election of members of MECs and PBs, as this would not depend on political turmoil and the decisions of the MECs or the SEC.

15. It is necessary to amend the Law on Election of Councilors and MPs so that all the aspects of functioning of PBs would be thoroughly regulated by law.

16. The Law on Prevention of Corruption needs to be amended to give the APC stronger competencies and enable it to conduct administrative investigations. Law on Election of Councilors and MPs should be amended to regulate online behavior and use of social media during electoral silence.

17. To put all categories of political entities on an equal footing, it is necessary to redefine the term political entity and adjust the deadlines for reporting costs during the campaign in a way that leaves no room for non-compliance with the Law on Financing of Political Entities and Election Campaigns.

18. State financing of regular work and pre-election campaigns of political parties should be legally conditioned by introducing into the statutes and implementing democratic procedures of selection of candidates for MP and councilors, as well as direct selection of party's leadership by their members.

19. The Law on Election of Councilors and MPs should be updated to address the behaviors and use of social media during the electoral silence day.

20. To ensure full respect for the principle of electoral silence, we believe that the law should stipulate that the responsibility for the observance of the electoral silence on social networks should lie with the political entities who are participating in the elections, rather than with social media.

21. To put all political entities on an equal footing, it is necessary to redefine the terminology of the concept of a political entity and adapt the deadlines for reporting on the costs of ongoing campaigns in such a way that leaves no room for non-compliance with the Law on Financing of Political Entities and Election Campaigns.

22. The Law on Financing of the Political Entities and Election Campaigns should be updated to address the use of social media during campaigning.

23. It is necessary to provide adequate funds to the State Election Commission for modernization of IT infrastructure.

24. Amendments to the Law on Election of Councilors and MPs must enable the presence of an additional electronic device at the polling station, for the purposes of using software for processing election material. At the same time, it is necessary, in cooperation with IT experts, to prescribe in the Rulebook the manner in which the device would be configured, the exact moment of activation of the device at the polling station, the person responsible for use and his/her deputy.

B. To the State Election Commission

25. It is necessary to adopt new procedural rules for the SEC that would regulate all disputable situations in this election cycle, as well as previous cycles (recording sessions, recording and approving the minutes during the session, the manner of putting certain questions to a vote,

adoption of a complaint mechanism, the length of breaks, the necessary number of members to put proposals on the agenda and the length of and reasons for pauses in work, among other issues).

26. The media should be provided access to SEC meetings.

27. Particular attention should be paid to verify the authenticity of signatures to avoid abuse.

28. The SEC should introduce a live broadcast of its session through the Internet, especially when there is an epidemiological emergency such as a pandemic.

29. It is also necessary to enable members of the Roma community to have election material in their own language, to enable them to fully exercise their voting rights.

30. Carrying accreditation is not an obligation in either the Rules of the Work of PBs or in the Manual for Training of PBs. To reduce the room for abuse by unauthorized people, it is necessary to introduce this obligation in a by-law.

31. The SEC should indicate to the PBs the importance of working with a full composition so that there are no situations in which the PBs conduct elections as four members and not five as provided by the Law on Election of Councilors and MPs.

32. The practice of PSs regarding the treatment of people who are not recognized by the electronic identification device should be standardized.

33. It is necessary to work on educating the presidents and members of the PBs on the ban on the use of mobile phones at PSs.

34. The State Election Commission, which is in possession of the source code of the software that OSCE has donated, must work on improving the software module for verifying signatures for the support of electoral lists, so as not to violate the provisions of the Law on Data Protection.

35. The State Election Commission should provide all employees with regular training on cyber security.

36. Before using the software for processing election data, it is necessary to conduct a cyber-attack simulation, in order to test the cyber security of the State Election Commission. The possibility to provide support to the SEC by the Service for IT Security and Technical Supervision Systems in the Ministry of the Interior should also be considered.

C. To Municipal Election Commissions

37. The MECs should protect the integrity of the electoral process so that the determination and declaration of the electoral lists will be made pursuant to the Law on Election of Councilors and MPs and according to pre-established procedures. The MECs should exclude from the electoral process all electoral lists that do not meet the formal legal conditions for participation in the elections.

38. Conditions at PSs for people with disabilities should be improved – to solve the problem of obstacles or designate other PSs – to avoid voting outside the PS.

39. Conditions at PSs for people with disabilities should be improved – to solve the problem of obstacles or designate other PSs – to avoid voting outside the PS.

40. Work is required to update the existing MEC websites with regard to proactive action and

publishing information important for conducting elections.

41. The practice of PSs regarding the treatment of people who are not recognized by the electronic identification device should be standardized.

42. It is necessary to ensure the consistent application of the legal obligation to respect the provisions concerning the representation of women on electoral lists, and to prevent the acceptance of electoral lists that do not respect the number and position of women on the list as prescribed by law.

D. To the Constitutional Court

43. The practice of the Constitutional Court of Montenegro in deciding on the appeals in the electoral process should be harmonized to avoid legal uncertainty.

E. To State Prosecutor Offices and Courts

44. Possible violations of the right to vote should be prosecuted more efficiently than in previous election processes.

F. To the Ministry of Interior Affairs

45. Automated control and deduplication of fingerprints through the AFIS system should continue, and control of identical photo identities in the voter register should be introduced. With this endeavor, the abuse of voter register would be prevented in the case of people who have been issued multiple identification cards with different identities.

46. There should be new mechanisms for better updating the voter register so that there are fewer examples of registered voters who should not be in the voter register. Alternatively, consider other models (at least temporarily until the voter register is updated), such as an active voter register, or the introduction of compulsory voting, modelled in other countries.

47. The cooperation between the Ministry of Interior Affairs and the SEC in the election process should be at a much higher level.

G. To the Agency for Prevention of Corruption

48. Despite significant progress, it is necessary to improve the proactivity of the APC with regard to training people who are subject to the law.

49. A more proactive role of the APC is necessary in terms of monitoring observance of the Law on Financing of Political Parties and Election Campaigns, through warnings and more objective and efficient filing of misdemeanor charges against those political entities that violate the law, to ensure transparency in this part of their work and to inform citizens about how their campaigns are financed.

50. The APC must create a database of potentially risky individuals and legal entities to reduce the risk of unauthorized influence and indirect action of these people outside the period in which the election campaign takes place.

51. The APC should continuously and comprehensively monitor social benefits and employment in Montenegro, in the election year, on a quarterly basis, for a more complete picture of possible abuses.

52. It is necessary to work on further improvement of the APC's PR strategy, and thus contribute to the transparency and proactivity of the APC activities as well as inform the interested

public to a greater degree. The use of creative audio-visual solutions (infographics, storytelling videos and animations) during and outside the period of election campaign, and in connection with key findings, would contribute to a positive impact on the APC's public reputation.

53. The APC should adopt new tactics to monitor abuses of state resources adapted to the on-line environment and work on capacity building for the collection of evidence of abuse of state resources using new technologies.

54. The APC should consider introducing an obligation for political parties to submit invoices for paid content on Facebook as well as a listing of its Ads Manager, which shows an overview of all advertisements and the amount of money spent on boosting or sponsoring Facebook posts for political campaign purposes.

55. The APC should investigate potential participation of the SOC in financing the political campaign of the coalition 'For the Future of Montenegro', keeping in mind that the leaders of this coalition have informed the public that the SOC participated in the management of their campaign. Political entities as well as their leader should respect the electoral silence on social media too.

H. To political subjects

56. We urge all political entities to reduce the overall level of politicization of the electoral process and of the bodies for conducting elections to increase the overall level of professionalism of the electoral bodies and restore public confidence in the elections and the election results.

57. Political entities should bear in mind the general public interest, should respect the norms of electoral legislation, and should not abuse legal loopholes and legal uncertainties for the personal interests of individuals or parties.

58. We believe that political entities should refrain from negative personal campaigns, as well as the use of minors for the purpose of political marketing.

59. Political entities and their leaders should also respect the electoral silence on social networks.

I. About the media

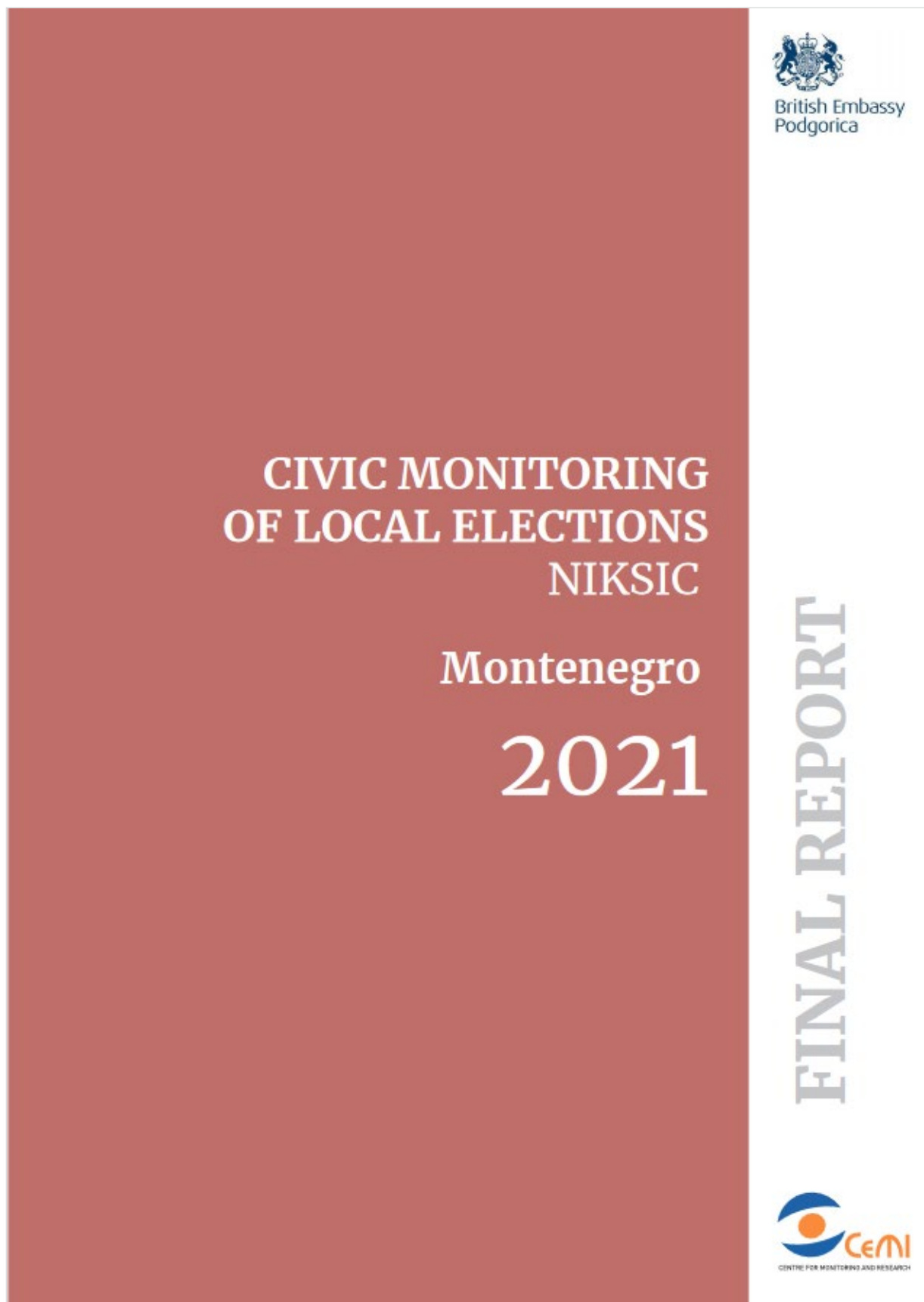
60. The legal framework for the media needs to be improved in a way that ensures equal treatment of electoral subjects.

61. RTCG, as a public broadcaster, should provide balanced coverage of political entities during the election campaign.

62. Private media should ensure balanced reporting about the participants in the electoral process.

63. Media should be educated about disinformation campaigns, in particular during elections, and should establish an intersectoral cooperation with CSOs for combating online disinformation.

64. Media should conduct online awareness raising campaigns about digital rights and ways to protect human rights.



Final Report is available at: <https://cemi.org.me/storage/uploads/SX38E5uX53vRXqXkL78afdpQ00e4JCO-d5As4un33.pdf>

PROJECT: Restorative Justice - Alternative Sanctions to Resocialization



The use of alternative sanctions in the criminal justice system represents a shift away from traditional punitive methods towards a more humane and restorative approach that recognizes the importance of addressing the root causes of criminal behavior. Greater use of alternative sanctions can lead to a reduction in prison overcrowding, lower recidivism rates, and improved public safety. Furthermore, it provides individuals with the opportunity to take responsibility for their actions and make amends in a way that benefits both themselves and the community. By prioritizing rehabilitation and reintegration, alternative sanctions offer a brighter future for both the offender and society as a whole.

Recognizing the potential of alternative sanctions, which is a relatively new concept in Montenegro, the Centre for Monitoring and Research (CeMI) has implemented the project “Restorative Justice – Alternative Sanctions to Resocialization”, which aimed to contribute to the improvement and promotion of the system of alternative sanctions, in accordance with the standards of the European Union and the best international practice.

The project was financially supported by the Ministry of Justice of Montenegro.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Presentation of key research findings

CeMI conducted comprehensive research as part of our efforts to assess the state of the system of alternative sanctions in Montenegro. As part of research, CeMI conducted interviews with key stakeholders from the judiciary, State Prosecutor's office, the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, Bar Association, and other legal experts, as well as with representatives of organizations, institutions and other legal entities where the sentence of community service is being carried out. CeMI also conducted a CATI based quantitative research in order to assess the level of public awareness regarding alternative sanctions. The findings were presented at a press conference.



Teodora Gilic, Executive Director of CeMI and Vladimir Simonovic, Project Coordinator, presenting the research findings within the project "Restorative justice – Alternative Sanctions to Resocialization", 8 March 2021

Promotional campaign

Throughout the project, CeMI also engaged in a promotional campaign, aimed at informing the general public of the functioning and the benefits of the system of alternative sanctions, with a special focus on community work and house arrest.

The aforementioned press conference was also a part of CeMI's promotional campaign. The press conference hosted several media outlets (Vijesti, RTCG, FOS, Kodex.me, PR Center, Radio Podgorica) and reached a wide audience.

Promotional campaign was also followed by the development of three videos and infographics.

VRSTE ALTERNATIVNIH SANKCIJA U CRNOJ GORI

RAD U JAVNOM INTERESU

Član 41 KZCG

Alternativna novčana kazna i kazni zatvora do pet godina vrsti se u rasponu od 60-360 sati u periodu od 30 dana do šest mjeseci.

NOVČANA KAZNA

Član 39 i član 40 KZCG

Ne može se primeniti novčasta kazna na osuđenika koji je u javnom interesu ako neplaćena kazna ne prelazi 5.000 EUR.

KUĆNI ZATVOR

Član 36A KZCG

Ne može se izdati na kućni zatvor protiv osoba i porodice ako osuđeni živi sa osuđenikom u istom porodičnom domaćinstvu ili porodičnog zajednici.

SUDSKA OPOMENA

Član 65 KZCG

Ne može se primeniti kaznom opomene osuđenika koji je u javnom interesu ako neplaćena kazna ne prelazi 5.000 EUR.

USLOVNA OSUDA

Član 53 KZCG

Moguća opomena i naglaske izricanja kazni u Crnoj Gori. Propisuje se sa prijetnjom izricanja utvrdene kazne zatvora.

USLOVNI OTPUST

Član 37 KZCG

Direktno učinci na smanjenje zatvorske populacije i na tražene koji pomažu socijalno-kalibriranje, iz uslovnog otpusta može se izdati jedna ili više obaveza.



Centar za monitoring i istraživanje

Projekat: "Restorativna pravda - alternativnim sankcijama do resocijalizacije" realizuje se uz podršku Ministarstva pravde Crne Gore, u okviru javnog konkursa "Podrška integraciji" za finansiranje projekata iz oblasti uspravljanja ljudskih prava pritvorenih i osuđenih lica u Crnoj Gori.



Ministarstvo pravde

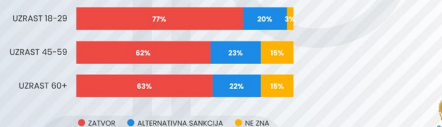
ZATVORSKA KAZNA ILI ALTERNATIVNA SANKCIJA

21% GRAĐANA

SMATRA DA SU ALTERNATIVNE SANKCIJE EFEKTIVNIJE OD ZATVORSKE KAZNE

69% GRAĐANA

SMATRA DA JE ZATVORSKA KAZNA EFEKTIVNIJA OD ALTERNATIVNIH SANKCIJA



Centar za monitoring i istraživanje

Projekat: "Restorativna pravda - alternativnim sankcijama do resocijalizacije" realizuje se uz podršku Ministarstva pravde Crne Gore, u okviru javnog konkursa "Podrška integraciji" za finansiranje projekata iz oblasti uspravljanja ljudskih prava pritvorenih i osuđenih lica u Crnoj Gori.



Ministarstvo pravde

USPJEŠNOST KAZNENOG SISTEMA CRNE GORE

32%

GRAĐANA SMATRA DA JE KAZNENI SISTEM DOVOLJNO USPJEŠAN U SPRJEČAVANJU KRIMINALITETA

64%

GRAĐANA SMATRA DA JE KAZNENI SISTEM NEDOVOLJNO USPJEŠAN U SPRJEČAVANJU KRIMINALITETA



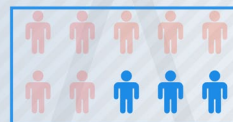
Centar za monitoring i istraživanje

Projekat: "Restorativna pravda - alternativnim sankcijama do resocijalizacije" realizuje se uz podršku Ministarstva pravde Crne Gore, u okviru javnog konkursa "Podrška integraciji" za finansiranje projekata iz oblasti uspravljanja ljudskih prava pritvorenih i osuđenih lica u Crnoj Gori.



Ministarstvo pravde

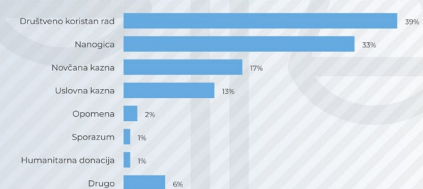
UPOZNATOST GRAĐANA SA ALTERNATIVNIM SANKCIJAMA



7 OD 10 GRAĐANA NIJE ČULO ZA ALTERNATIVNE SANKCIJE

23% GRAĐANA KOJI SU ČULI ZA ALTERNATIVNE SANKCIJE NE MOGU DA NAVEDU KONKRETNU ALTERNATIVNU SANKCIJU

GRAĐANI POJAM ALTERNATIVNIH SANKCIJA VEZUJU ZA



Centar za monitoring i istraživanje

Projekat: "Restorativna pravda - alternativnim sankcijama do resocijalizacije" realizuje se uz podršku Ministarstva pravde Crne Gore, u okviru javnog konkursa "Podrška integraciji" za finansiranje projekata iz oblasti uspravljanja ljudskih prava pritvorenih i osuđenih lica u Crnoj Gori.



Ministarstvo pravde

STAV GRAĐANA O ALTERNATIVNIM SANKCIJAMA

33%



UGLAVNOM POZITIVAN

16%



VEOMA POZITIVAN

17%



VEOMA NEGATIVAN

23%



UGLAVNOM NEGATIVAN

49% + 40% -



Centar za monitoring i istraživanje

Projekat: "Restorativna pravda - alternativnim sankcijama do resocijalizacije" realizuje se uz podršku Ministarstva pravde Crne Gore, u okviru javnog konkursa "Podrška integraciji" za finansiranje projekata iz oblasti uspravljanja ljudskih prava pritvorenih i osuđenih lica u Crnoj Gori.



Ministarstvo pravde

NAJDEJELOTVORNIJE ALTERNATIVNE SANKCIJE PO MIŠLJENJU GRAĐANA

44% GRAĐANA

SMATRA DA JE NOVČANA KAZNA NAJDEJELOTVORNIJA ALTERNATIVNA SANKCIJA



26% GRAĐANA

SMATRA DA JE RAD U JAVNOM INTERESU NAJDEJELOTVORNIJA ALTERNATIVNA SANKCIJA



10% GRAĐANA

SMATRA DA JE KUĆNI ZATVOR NAJDEJELOTVORNIJA ALTERNATIVNA SANKCIJA



Centar za monitoring i istraživanje

Projekat: "Restorativna pravda - alternativnim sankcijama do resocijalizacije" realizuje se uz podršku Ministarstva pravde Crne Gore, u okviru javnog konkursa "Podrška integraciji" za finansiranje projekata iz oblasti uspravljanja ljudskih prava pritvorenih i osuđenih lica u Crnoj Gori.



Ministarstvo pravde

Infographics for the project "Restorative Justice – Alternative Sanctions to Resocialization"

National Conference

At the National Conference “Results and Effects of the Application of Alternative Sanctions in Montenegro”, held on 10 March 2021, CeMI presented a comprehensive analysis titled “Results and Efficiency of the Application of Alternative Sanctions in Montenegro – recommendations for improvement”.

During the presentation of the analysis, the **Program director of CeMI, Ivan Vukčević** said that the level of awareness of the general public about the importance and positive effects of alternative sanctions is low. According to him, in order for the expected effects of alternative sanctions and measures to be fully realized, it is necessary that alternative sanctions and measures be accepted by the general public as an adequate replacement for imprisonment, so informing the public about the positive effects of alternative sanctions is an important step. He pointed out the Law on the Execution of Probation and Community Work is not fully harmonized with international standards in the field of probation and alternative sanctions.



Natasia Radonjic, authorized person in the Directorate for the Execution of Criminal Sanctions in the Ministry of Justice, Human and Minority Rights, said that each year there’s an increase in the use of alternative sanctions, primarily the community work.

She said that community work is a form of punishment through which the purpose of alternative sanctioning and probation can be carried out the best. When it comes to house arrest, she said that Montenegro has seen significant results in terms of increase of the use of this type of

sanction. According to her, through the work and control of the Directorate, they have seen that, when it comes to these two sanctions, a small number of convicted persons fails to complete the sentence as determined by final court decision, which results in the remaining part of that sentence to be replaced by an effective prison sentence. She emphasized that, in the area of alternative sentencing, there must be proper sanctions for those persons who do not respect the program of execution of alternative sanctions, she emphasized.

Milorad Markovic, legal expert, assessed that the system of execution of alternative sanctions and its reform should be viewed as a process that cannot be established in a short period of time. According to him, society must be aware that for the establishment of any system in full, among other things requires that the objective conditions are such that they make further development and improvement of the system possible. He believes that the current system of execution of criminal sanctions and the system of execution of alternative sanctions is at the highest possible level, having in mind the objective conditions. The key element of improvement and reform of the system of execution of criminal sanctions, according to Markovic is the state of consciousness that must be observed from the aspect of the entire society,



as well as from the aspect of state bodies, courts, prosecutor's office and the Directorate for Execution of Criminal Sanctions and Probation Service.



Srdjan Popovic, the Secretary of Legal Affairs in the Health Center in Podgorica, said that the institution he works for has been cooperating with the Directorate for the Execution of Criminal Sanctions since 2015, stating that since then they have received the first users who have done the community work sentence. He explained that in the beginning, when the program started, there was a lot of skepticism towards the institute of community work. There was great resistance and people were afraid. Out of 36 users, most were convicted of failure to pay alimony, participating in a fight, inflicting severe bodily injuries and

endangering public traffic. He explained that later on, the employees started to get used to persons convicted to community work.

Matija Vucicevic, attorney at law, believes that alternative sanctions are a very sensitive issue. He assessed that there is a gap between the level of awareness of Montenegrin society and the quality of legislation regarding alternative sanctions, stating that Montenegro managed to adopt international standards when it comes to alternative sanctions, but the gap was made in terms of affirming the level of awareness of the general public.



National Conference "Results and Effects of the Application of Alternative Sanctions in Montenegro", 10 March 2021.



The analysis is available at: <https://cemi.org.me/storage/uploads/sbcOPYiV90llUeLRctjNni4u0FeOTeL-jvwIq7mkB.pdf>

PROJECT: Contribution to the Development and Promotion of the Rights of Minorities and other Minority National Communities in Montenegro



Minority rights are critical in a multicultural society as they ensure that all members of society, regardless of their background, are treated fairly and have equal access to opportunities. In a multicultural society, where people from different cultural, ethnic, religious, and linguistic backgrounds coexist, it is important to recognize and respect the unique identity and contributions of each group. This helps to foster a sense of belonging and inclusion for minority groups and promotes social cohesion. For more than 20 years, CeMI has been steadfast in its commitment to improving and promoting minority rights, working tirelessly to create a society where all citizens can live together with equality and dignity.

The project “Contribution to the development and promotion of the rights of minorities and other national minority communities in Montenegro” aimed to protect and celebrate diversity in the country. With a focus on human and minority rights, the project aimed to create a more inclusive society where everyone has a voice and equal standing. The team worked towards strengthening the conditions for a harmonious community, encouraging members of minorities to actively participate in shaping public policies and engaging with the private sector. This project strived to promote equality and create a brighter future for all citizens in Montenegro, and to bridge the gap between different ethnic groups and create an equal society for all citizens. Key members of minority communities were trained and empowered through various activities to play a more active role in the public and private sector. The project also established a network of cooperation by signing a Memorandum of Cooperation with national minority councils and the Ombudsman’s office, laying the foundation for sustained progress and future policy development focused on protecting the rights of minorities.

The project was financially supported by the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights of Montenegro.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Free Legal Aid

For seven months of the project, CeMI provided members of minorities and other minority national communities the ability to apply for free legal aid to CeMI's legal team if their rights have been violated. CeMI had established a special phone number and e-mail address created for this purpose.

Project coordinator, Maja Bjelic, promoted free legal aid service as guest on TV Vijesti, during their morning show Boje jutro, as well as on national TV provider RTCG. She emphasized the fact that CeMI has been providing various forms of free legal aid for many years, and she invited members of minorities and other minority national communities to apply and receive legal advice, in order to prevent discrimination against minority groups in Montenegro in court processes. She noted that members of minorities and other minority national communities in Montenegro face unequal treatment before and during court processes.

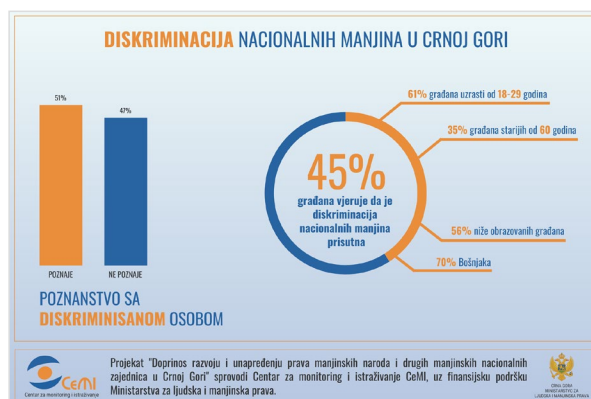
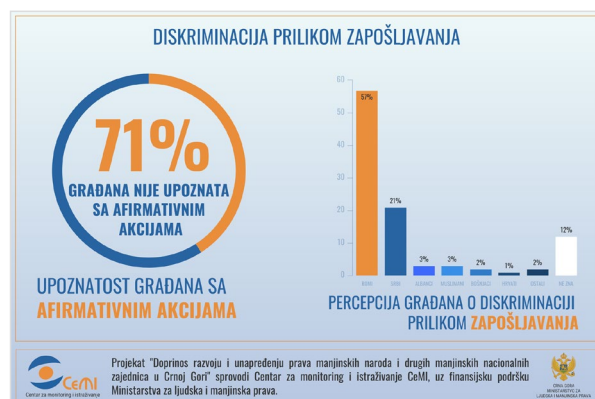
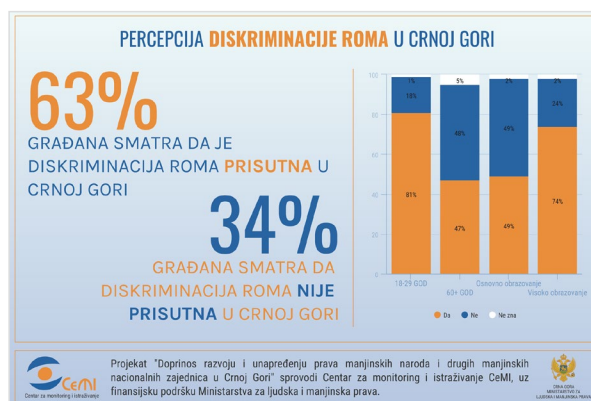
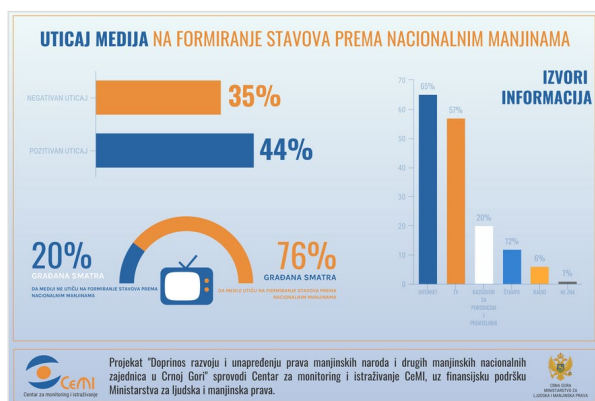


Anti-discrimination campaign for reduction of ethnic distance

Antidiscrimination campaign for reduction of ethnic distance involved the use of traditional and new media, with the aim of promoting the respect for the human rights of minorities and improving their position in society. As part of the campaign that used traditional media to spread the message of tolerance and antidiscrimination were guest appearances on TV shows of two of the largest TV programs in the country – TV Vijesti and national public broadcaster



RTCG, as well as publication of eight articles in the newspaper. As part of the new media outreach, CeMI created and published infographics and a story-telling video that presented the current situation to the general public, in order to appeal to the need to reduce ethnic distance and discrimination on ethnic grounds. The newspaper article were also published on online newspaper.



Infographics for the project "Contribution to the Development and Promotion of the Rights of Minorities and other Minority National Communities in Montenegro"

Presentation of key research findings

One of the aspects of this project was conducting of qualitative and quantitative research. Quantitative research was done using CATI method, in order to assess the public perception of the presence of discrimination and knowledge of the rights of minority peoples and other minority national communities and their representation in the public and private sector. The results of this research were presented to the public at a press conference.



Teodora Gilic, Executive Director of CeMI and Maja Bjelic, Project Coordinator, presenting the research findings, 12 March 2021

Memorandum of Cooperation

CeMI signed Memorandums of Cooperation with the Institution of the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro, the Council of the Muslim People of Montenegro and the Council of Bosniaks in Montenegro, thus ensuring further cooperation and exchange of knowledge, information and mechanisms for improvement and protection of minority rights, which will ultimately improve the position of minorities at a higher level.

Roundtable

As part of the qualitative research, CeMI conducted desk research, interviews with key stakeholders and a focus group in order to collect and analyze the relevant information for development of an analysis about the protection and the position of members of minorities and other minority national communities in Montenegro.

The analysis, titled “Respect for the Rights and the position of minorities and other minority national communities in Montenegro” was presented at the roundtable.

CeMI Project Coordinator, Maja Bjelic said that, when it comes to the national legislative and institutional framework, although there is a well-defined legislative framework, the implementation is not adequately regulated and controlled. She said that CeMI’s research showed that 75% of citizens believe that the media influences the formation of attitudes towards national minorities, while almost half believe that the influence of the media is high. She noted that the fact the affirmative action is perceived as unfair advantage in employment is worrying according to the majority of citizens.



The CEO of CeMI, Teodora Gilic, said that she hopes that through this project CeMI has managed to encourage members of minorities to react in cases of discrimination on the basis of nationality, but also to influence their level of awareness about their rights. She explained that in cooperation with the Ombudsman and representatives of the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, CeMI organized a seminar for members of minorities and minority national communities in July of 2020, in order to improve their knowledge about their rights and opportunities.

Law professor and former judge of the European Court of Human Rights, Nebojsa Vucinic, who joined the roundtable via Zoom, said that in European reports about the protection in Montenegro note a high level of tolerance in society, however, this doesn’t mean that more cannot be achieved in the context of real protection of minority rights, both in terms of integration and in terms of the principle of affirmative action. He assessed that by abolishing the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights Montenegro took a step back, and that this decision could have negative consequences for the exercise of the rights prescribed by the European Convention. He stated that it is necessary to form an antidiscrimination body in order to suppress discrimination.



Representative of Montenegro before the European Court of Human Rights, Valentina Pavlicic, said that Montenegro has a well-established legislative framework in this area, but the problem is in the application of the practice of that legislative framework, i.e., how national laws and regulations are interpreted. According to her, until representatives of certain state institutions start to interpret national legislation in accordance with the Convention, Montenegro will be in a position to violate human rights

by formally and linguistically interpreting certain legal regulation.

Fikret Lulanaj, Chairman of the Commission – Independent Advisor at the Ministry of Justice, Human and Minority Rights, said that CeMI's project contributed to informing the public about minority rights, but also the development and promotion of rights of minorities and other minority national communities. He believes that minority in Montenegro are recognized as a well-protected group of people, however, the government will, as a strategic goal, ensure that more is done to protect the rights of minorities.



Deputy Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro, Nerma Dobardzic, said that although solid progress has been made in establishing a normative- legal framework for the protection of minority rights and implementing a policy of multiculturalism, some issues remain open. He believes that in order to strengthen the position of minorities, it is necessary to continuously apply the institute of affirmative action, consistently monitor the implementation of measures and activities from all

strategic documents and strengthen the role of national councils.



Roundtable "At the same table on diversity and equality", 19 March 2021.



**POŠTOVANJE PRAVA I POLOŽAJ MANJINSKIH
NARODA I DRUGIH MANJINSKIH NACIONALNIH
ZAJEDNICA U CRNOJ GORI**

Mart, 2021.

The analysis is available at: <https://cemi.org.me/storage/uploads/IWkeusTbQKvsZpORHlsljmKafrxvF-vDwZZXiTrkQk.pdf>

PROJECT: Equality of LGBTIQ Persons Before the Law - Promoting the Rights of LGBTIQ Persons in Court Proceedings



As our society continues to evolve, it's crucial that we recognize the importance of protecting and promoting the rights of all individuals, including those who identify as LGBTIQ+. The journey towards equality and inclusiveness has been a long one, and while progress has been made, there's still a long way to go.

The LGBTIQ+ community in Montenegro has faced discrimination, prejudice, and marginalization, leading to a lack of access to human rights and opportunities that many of us take for granted.

As a member of the Coalition "Together for LGBT Rights," CeMI has been working tirelessly to create a more equal and inclusive society. Through various projects aimed at advancing LGBTIQ+ rights, CeMI has been at the forefront of advocating for the human rights of this marginalized community.

Our latest project, "Equality of LGBTIQ persons before the law - Improving the rights of LGBTIQ persons in court proceedings" delves deep into the crucial issue of protecting the human and minority rights of the LGBTIQ community in the legal system. With a comprehensive analysis of the legislative and institutional framework, this project also involved a media campaign and educational seminars and workshops for judicial, prosecutorial, and police officers, with the aim of raising awareness and promoting equal treatment before the law.

The project was financially supported by the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights of Montenegro.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Seminar for judges and prosecutors on sensitive treatment of the LGBTIQ population

The two-day seminar was held in Budva in January of 2021. The lecturers on the first day were Semra Martinovic from the Directorate for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms in the Ministry of Justice, Human and Minority Rights, Ivan Vukcevic, Program Director of CeMI, Danijel Kalezic, President of the Board of Queer Montenegro and Jovan Jolie Ulicevic, Executive Director of the Spectra Association.

Participants in the seminar were judges and prosecutors with no prior experience working with members of LGBTIQ population.

The topics during the first day of the seminar were Theoretical Introduction to Gender, Gender boxes (exercise in differentiating gender and sex characteristics), Theoretical Explanation of LGBTIQ identity, Stereotypes and Prejudices Related to Gays and Lesbians and a discussion of differences between them, as well as Transgender and Intersexual persons – specifics and best practice.



First day of the seminar "Sensitive treatment of LGBTIQ persons in court proceedings", 28 January 2021

The topic of the second day of the seminar was Theoretical explanation of the mechanisms of homophobia and transphobia. During the second day, the lecturers presented cases of discrimination and violence against LGBTIQ persons in the previous period, as well as during the first half of 2020. The lecturers during the second day were Danijel Kalezic, President of the Board of Queer Montenegro and Jovan Jolie Ulicevic, Executive Director of the Spectra Association.



Second day of the seminar "Sensitive treatment of LGBTIQ persons in court proceedings", 29 January 2021

Roundtable

Representatives from the judiciary, state bodies and institutions, state prosecutor's office and the NGO sector participated at the roundtable "Between Law and Practice: Key Obstacles and Challenges in the Field of Protection of LGBTIQ Persons in Montenegro" during which participants engaged in a discussion and dialogue on discrimination and equality of LGBTIQ community in Montenegrin society.

Public Policy Researcher at CeMI, Milica Zrnovic said that despite the progress made when it comes to the position of LGBTIQ persons before the law, issues of concern still remain. She noted that the research conducted by CeMI indicates that most acts against LGBTIQ persons are prosecuted as misdemeanors and under the Law on Public Order and Peace and rarely as felonies and under the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination".



The representative of the Directorate for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms in the Ministry of Justice, Human and Minority Rights, Semra Martinovic, said that CeMI's project was recognized as a quality contribution to the Government's policy in improving the quality of life of LGBT people in Montenegro. She noted that Montenegro has set the basic normative framework for protection against discrimination and violence against LGBT population in a quality manner and in accordance with international standards and emphasized that the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination provides for prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity and intersex characteristics. She also added that the Law prohibits hate speech based on the personal characteristics of any individual.

The President of the Board of Directors of Queer Montenegro, Danijel Kalezic, said that most cases of violence against the LGBTIQ community do not end before the judiciary and that they do not even reach the police. Kalezic assessed that the legislation is changing rapidly, but that the implementation doesn't follow at the same speed, and neither do the social changes as regards the acceptance of LGBT people. According to him, greater effort is needed to strengthen the implementation of existing laws and to ensure that the judicial system can follow the legislation. One of the main problems, according to Kalezic, is that Montenegro doesn't have a standardized case law, which is somewhat understandable considering that not all judges have been trained and are not sufficiently sensitized.



He also noted that only one verdict for hate crime was passed, which wasn't final, but was instead returned to the higher court for new deliberations. He cited the example of Croatia, which introduced hate crime as aggravated circumstance into its criminal legislation long before Montenegro, resulting in a significant drop in attacks on LGBT population. He stated that dissuasive punishment for perpetrators are necessary, and that they should be standardized.



The CEO of Spectra Association, Jovan Ulicevic, said that practice shows that the legislative framework, although improved, often doesn't mean much. He stated that the issues of intersex persons is not open at all, while the issues of transgender people have been opened relatively recently. According to him, the LGBTI community is treated as a homogenous whole, without recognizing the specifics that certain communities within the LGBTI community encounter. He pointed out that transgender people in Montenegro are

still the only group that has to undergo sterilization in order to obtain personal documents that correspond to their gender identity.

The Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms in Montenegro, Sinisa Bjekovic, stated that the misdemeanor courts in their practice had cases concerning the victims of varying orientations and identities. He assessed that court proceedings in practice turn into condemnation, not protection of the victim. According to him, that is something that must be worked on and that we must understand that creating social awareness about recognizing the vulnerability of other groups the same way we recognize when we are not equal.



Project Coordinator at CeMI, Maja Bjelic, said that CeMI strives to contribute to increasing the level of respect for human rights of LGBTIQ community in Montenegro, to reduce discrimination and increase public awareness of sensitive treatment of LGBTIQ persons in Montenegro in court proceedings. She stated that the project is aimed at strengthening the capacity and greater training of members of the judiciary in the processing of crimes against the LGBTIQ population, as well as the treatment of LGBTIQ persons in

proceedings in an equal and adequate manner.



Roundtable "Between Law and Practice: Key Obstacles and Challenges in the Field of Protection of LGBTIQ Persons in Montenegro", 19 February 2021.

Press Conference

Final project activity entailed the organization of a press conference for presentation of project results and of the analysis “Equality of LGBTIQ Persons Before the Law”. The analysis was the result of qualitative research that CeMI conducted as part of the project, which involved desk research, interviews with relevant stakeholders and organizing of two focus groups with members of LGBTIQ population and others involved in the area of protection and promotion of LGBTIQ rights.

During the press conference, Public Policy Researcher at CeMI, Milica Zrnovic stated that based on the collected data, it is noticeable that the largest number of reports due to discrimination based on sexual orientation registered with the Police Administration is based on comments made by citizens on social media. She added that in 2019 there were 94 such reports, out 102 total criminal charges filed for discrimination based on sexual orientation. She also spoke about the lack of deterrence in the legal framework for prohibition of discrimination, adding that the response to hate speech must be effective, proportional and dissuasive, and that the sanctions must reflect that.

Zrnovic added that for further improvement in the area of protection of LGBTIQ population, it is necessary to ensure that all conditions are fulfilled for full and unhindered implementation of the Law on Life Partnership of Persons of the Same Sex.

CeMI Project Coordinator, Maja Bjelic said that the focus of the project was harmonization of human rights policy with their implementation in Montenegrin legislation, in accordance with international standards recognized through numerous international documents, treaties and conventions, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its Protocols, the UN Declaration on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity etc.



Public Policy Researcher, Milica Zrnovic and Project Coordinator, Maja Bjelic, Presentation of the analysis “Equality of LGBTIQ persons before the law”, 23 February 2021.

JEDNAKOST LGBTIQ OSOBA PRED ZAKONOM



The analysis is available at: <https://cemi.org.me/storage/uploads/tTM6KUf07r9Bjfr02000Sa5knldOc-12qpRIwk4yS.pdf>

PROJECT: Society Without Prejudice - With Solidarity to Equality and Inclusion



Human rights are universal, meaning they apply to everyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, or immigration status. For migrants, this is especially crucial, as they often face discrimination and exclusion in their new communities.

CeMI acknowledges the challenges faced by migrants in society and is committed to promoting their human rights and fighting against discrimination and marginalization. By educating young people and empowering migrants to take part in the project, it is raising awareness about the rights of migrants, fostering social cohesion between them and the local population, and breaking down barriers of discrimination and intolerance. We believe that by advocating for their rights and promoting intercultural tolerance, we can create a more inclusive and just society, in line with the EU's best practices and standards.

For these reasons, CeMI decided to implement the project "Society without Prejudice: With Solidarity to Equality and Inclusion", which aimed to promote intercultural tolerance and combat the discrimination towards migrants in Montenegro, by educating citizens about the rights of migrants and encourage their integration into society through activities such as informal education for young people and direct involvement of migrants in project implementation. By doing so, the project made a positive impact on the understanding and acceptance of migrants by the local population, and helped protect their human rights.

The project was financially supported by the International Organization for Migrations (IOM) within the project „Regional Support to Protection-Sensitive Migration Management in the Western Balkans and Turkey (IPA II Funds)“.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Research and development of the analysis

One of the outputs of this project was the development of a comparative analysis of the legislative framework and good practice in the area of migrant protection and their integration into host country in the EU and in Montenegro. The analysis was based on desk research, interviews with relevant stakeholders and conducting of a public polling of the perception of the status of migrants and level of awareness of citizens about migrant rights in Montenegro. The analysis was presented at the final conference.



The analysis is available at: <https://cemi.org.me/storage/uploads/KBSWzRsqa59qMW6a-jrkwCoL2FlOWS3Xfc2Wz1HFQ.pdf>

Organization of three-day workshop for students on the subject of EU and Montenegro immigration policy and application of good practice

CeMI published a public call for students to participate in the three-day workshop on the subject of EU and Montenegro immigration policy and application of good practice. A total of 23 students applied, showing a great interest in this subject. The project team selected 15 applicants to participate in the aforementioned workshop.

During the first day of the workshop, students had the opportunity to get acquainted with the international legal and institutional framework, examples of good migration management practice, and international standards, legal and institutional solutions for the protection of vulnerable groups.



During the second day, the focus was on migration management in Montenegro (strategies, laws, measures to combat illegal migration, case studies, statistics, migration routes, differences between the terms migrant, asylum seeker, refugee), as well as current challenges in migration management, with a special focus on Montenegro and the Western Balkans Region. The afternoon session also covered the national framework for the protection of migrants' rights and relevant international documents applicable in Montenegro, with a special focus on discrimination and protection of minority rights in Montenegro.

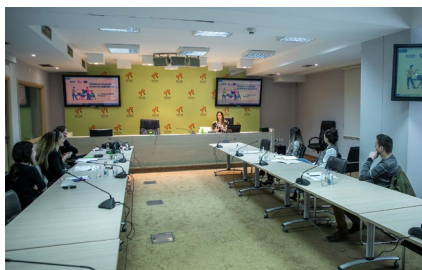


On the last day of the workshop, students learned about the topics of multicultural dialogue, tolerance, anti-discrimination, and vulnerable groups, as well as the role of young people in the process of integration of migrants in society. During all three days, interactive exercises and work in groups were conducted in order to involve students and more efficiently acquire new knowledge. Lecturers at the workshop were prominent personalities and experts in the field of migration and human rights protection.



The volunteer program

After the three-day workshop, the project team selected six students to participate in the volunteer work with migrant children at the Centre for Reception of Foreigners Seeking International Protection. The six students had undergone a training during which they gained knowledge of the system of international protection of foreigners in Montenegro, as well as with the work and the role of the Center for Reception of Foreigners.



After the training, students started a two month volunteer program with minors at the Center for Reception of Foreigners. Based on their work, they developed a case study about the experience and status of migrants, with the focus on minors.

Organization of art exhibition

After the end of the two month volunteer program, CeMI and our volunteers organized an art exhibition at the National Library, presenting the works that resulted from the workshops conducted by CeMI volunteers with the children from the Center for Reception of Foreigners. The children and their families also attended this event, which was presented to the general public. In this way, the general public had a rare opportunity to directly interact with migrants, which has a positive effect on public perception of this vulnerable group.



Migrant children art exhibition, 2 April 2021.

Conference

At the end of the project, CeMI organized a conference to present the results of the project, i.e., the comparative analysis of the legislative framework and good practice in the area of migrant protection and their integration into host country in the EU and in Montenegro, as well as the case study developed by the students based on their work with migrants, and to advocate for adoption of recommendations that CeMI research team has developed. During the conference, we also presented a short video about the status of immigrants in Montenegro, with the focus on minors and the experience of volunteers in their work with immigrants at the Center for Reception of Foreigners.



The CEO of CeMI, Teodora Gilic, opened the conference, stating that the rule of law, strong institutions and good legislation are the basis for adequate and humane migration management, and in Montenegro half of the citizens are neutral about the increasing number of migrants entering the country, while two thirds are not sure that the state is able to adequately care for migrants.

Project Coordinator at CeMI, Milica Zrnovic, said that the study of public opinion about the attitudes of citizens in relation to the situation of migrants in the Montenegrin society, showed that half of the citizens have a neutral stance on the increasing number of migrants who enter the country while only 11% of citizens have a positive opinion when migration is in question.



IOM Montenegro Project Assistant, Bojana Tomovic, assessed that the rule of law, strong institutions and good legislation are the basis for adequate, humane, and orderly migration management. According to her, it is very important that policies and projects, as well as data-based initiatives have a human aspect and protection of human rights.

The head of the Directorate for the Reception of Foreigners at the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Montenegro, Irena Rakocevic, believes that everyone is obliged to avoid provisionalism and that it is important that there is a humanitarian aspect to migration at all times. She stated that the migration system in Montenegro is completely regulated. According to her, it is the imperative of all state bodies to enable foreigners residing in Montenegro to enjoy basic human rights in full capacity. She noted that the facts show that exercising these rights is much more difficult for this category of persons and that, unlike everyone else, migrants are very often deprived of their basic human right by birth, which is the right to freedom of choice.





Conference "Migrations, human rights and social inclusion", 2 April 2021.

PROJECT: Online Trials – A Pathway to Efficient Judiciary



During the COVID-19 pandemic, it became clear that out of the three branches of the government, the functioning of the judiciary was hit the hardest, and a solution was needed in order to continue administering justice, even in such circumstances. CeMI was the first CSO in Montenegro to recognise the potential of remote hearings, and we used our expertise in the field of rule of law and judicial reform, to contribute to creating the environment necessary for the introduction of remote hearings in Montenegro, in order to address some of the long-standing problems with the efficiency of the judiciary that have been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through this project, CeMI will provide the stakeholders with a set of recommendations for legislative and procedural changes necessary for the introduction of remote hearings, as well as inform members of the judiciary about the benefits of remote hearings, by developing the first policy study on this subject in Montenegro, which will include an analysis of the current system compared to new solutions, as well as a comparative analysis of good practice in several EU countries (Austria, Estonia and Italy) where the legal framework for holding remote hearings has already been implemented or is in the process of being implemented in practice.

CeMI will also develop a story-telling video on the subject of remote hearings.

The project was initiated in 2021, but most activities won't be finalized before 2022, when the policy study and story-telling video will be made available to the public.

The project is financially supported by The Balkan Trust for Democracy (BTD), a project of the German Marshall Fund of the United States and the United States Agency for International Development USAID.

PROJECT: The Reform of Electoral Legislation in Montenegro



Centre for Monitoring and Research CeMI has been continuously implementing civic election monitoring missions since 2000. CeMI has monitored all national elections since 2001 except the 2013 presidential election. During whole this period, CeMI has made an extensive experience in election monitoring and policy advocacy and has worked on raising the overall public trust in the integrity of electoral processes in Montenegro.

CeMI recognized the numerous problems that exist in Montenegro, especially with regards to political crisis and lack of electoral integrity and citizens' trust in elections, their results, and the elected representatives, partially caused by non-compliance of domestic electoral legislation with international standards and recommendations, as evidenced by reports made by OSCE – ODIHR and Venice Commission, as well as domestic election observation non-governmental organizations, especially CeMI.

This project consists of research and development of a policy study that summarizes CeMI's policy recommendations from 2016 – 2020, with the goal to influence the decision-makers to adopt policy recommendations and to contribute to a higher level of consolidation of democracy and rule of law in Montenegro.

The project was financially supported by the National Democratic Institute (NDI).

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Research

Policy researchers were in charge of conducting all the preparatory activities such as carrying out the research, analyzing current policies and shortcomings in Montenegrin election system. The research was conducted by Research Team. As a part of process of conducting the research, policy researcher team conducted interviews with relevant stakeholders such as party representatives, CSO representatives, representatives of the election administration, representatives of domestic and international election monitoring organizations etc. The aim of the interviews was to collect data that would be useful in methodological approaches and may therefore be applied to address a number of research questions.

Developing the policy study

The aim of the policy study was to summarize electoral reform recommendations on specific topics produced by international organizations (such as ENEMO, OSCE/ODIHR) and domestic election monitoring organizations.

The methodology that used in this study also revolves around a comparative analysis of similar electoral administration models to Montenegrin model. The study offers electoral reform case studies from the Western Balkans countries and others, that identify relevant challenges, successes and lessons learned to consider for Montenegrin own reform process, as well as a review of different models of election administration bodies in EU countries and Western Balkan countries. The study also analyzes the development of election administration in Montenegro, and how the changes to election administration impacted the overall quality of the election processes and the trust of citizens in the electoral process in Montenegro. The study further analyzes recommendations given by ENEMO and OSCE for the similar problems and shortcomings in the countries of regions.

This study contributes significantly to the further process of electoral reform. The structure of the study is similar to the structure of the CeMI election monitoring reports that CeMI publishes once the monitoring has been carried out. The structure is as follows: I Introduction and acknowledgments, II Legal Framework; III Electoral Administration; IV Registration of Electoral Lists; V Registration of Voters; VI Election Campaign; VII Representation of Women; VIII Representation of Minorities; IX Protection of the Right to Vote; X Recommendations and Proposals for Amendments to Legal Documents.

THE REFORM OF ELECTORAL LEGISLATION IN MONTENEGRO

Challenges in the work of election
administration bodies and suggestions
for amendments to the election legislation



The policy study is available at: <https://cemi.org.me/storage/uploads/CLMTkbOHVpZeE55b7HegufUX-tX6FqCEXQ2IsuGLw.pdf>

PROJECT: Combating Gendered Disinformation and Online Violence Against Women in Politics in Montenegro by Educating Women and Advocacy Campaign



The emergence of the Internet and the dynamic development of information technology significantly influenced the emergence of new forms of communication. Traditional media are losing importance every day and new media, especially social networks, are gaining relevance. In addition to positive changes, social networks have opened space for the spread of narratives that aim to discredit and discourage individuals of public discourse in their political activities, especially targeting women.

CeMI strives for gender equality in all spheres of life, including politics. That is why the main goal that CeMI seeks to address with this project is to contribute to the advancement of gender equality and women empowerment in Montenegro, by strengthening female participation in political and public life in Montenegro.

Through this project, CeMI will raise public awareness about the phenomenon of gendered misinformation and online harmful content against women in politics in Montenegro. Other than raising the awareness of the general public, CeMI will directly raise awareness of women in politics about their digital rights and methods of responding to online violations, in particular during elections. CeMI will also monitor social media for cases of online violence and gendered misinformation, and create a specialized online app for reporting online violence against women and gendered misinformation.

This project is implemented with the support of the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI). The project started in 2021 and it will be finalized in 2022. In this report we will present only those activities that have been implemented in 2021.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Creation of online application for reporting online violence against women and gendered disinformation

In 2021, CeMI has established a system of monitoring social networks from the aspect of gender-based disinformation and online violence against women. The system enables the collection and processing of data indicating elements of digital gender-based violence and discrimination, i.e., hate speech and organized negative campaigns conducted to discredit women present in political and public life in Montenegro.

CeMI is the first non-governmental organization in Montenegro to establish a system of gender-responsive monitoring of social networks through the CrowdTangle platform, with the support of the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI). By creating a Live Display, i.e., citizens are enabled to follow publicly available content on Facebook concerning women in politics and public life in Montenegro.

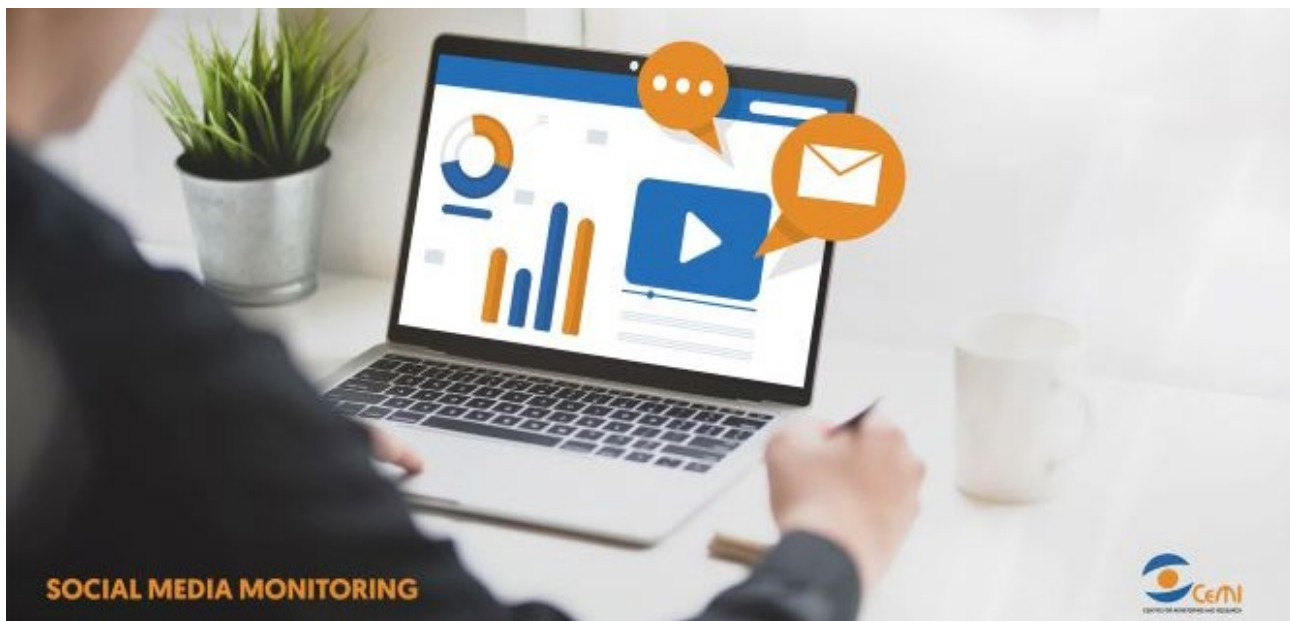
Live Display is available on the following link: <https://apps.crowdtangle.com/womencfli/boards/womeninpoliticsinmontenegro>

We are especially pleased with the fact that the participation of citizens is enabled within the project. Through the mobile and web application “Fair Elections” (<https://www.ferizbori.me/>), citizens can report disinformation and online harmful content directed against women, by clicking on the option “report irregularity or violation of rights”, and by filling out online forms. In order to inform the citizens of Montenegro, CeMI will publish a report on the collected data, reports and identified violations of rights in the online space, with an analysis of the current situation in this area in Montenegro.



Banner advertising the launch of Live Display and upgraded “Fair Elections” app

PROJECT: Facebook/Global/Election Integrity Strategy in Montenegro Project



Under the 2020 Facebook Pilot Award, CeMI and IFES collaborated to strengthen CeMI's capacity to monitor social media in the lead up to Montenegro's August 2020 elections for evidence of abuse of state resources, campaign violations and coordinated inauthentic behavior.

After successful implementation of last year's Social Media Monitoring Pilot Project, CeMI began implementing the Facebook/Global/Election Integrity Strategy in Montenegro Project.

Within this project CeMI will focus on documenting and expanding their processes for identifying online evidence of (1) Abuse of State Resources (2) Campaign Violations and (3) Coordinated Inauthentic Behavior, including the development of narrative guidance and tools that can assist knowledge exchange with other CSO's working on similar issues in other countries.

To effectively implement the scope of work and deliver on the project, CeMI will, based on our experience in monitoring social media ahead of August 2020 elections and subsequent lessons learned, create resources that share key considerations and steps for creating and implementing a social media monitoring approach that focuses on 1) Abuse of State Resources (ASR) 2) Campaign Violations and 3) Coordinated Inauthentic Behavior (CIB).

During the project, CeMI will consult with IFES at key phases in the design and development of the deliverables and incorporate IFES feedback into the final products.

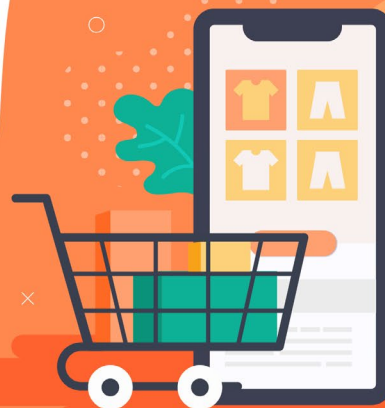
Together with other IFES partner organizations and/or networks, CeMI will participate and lead up to five training, working sessions or meetings focused on knowledge exchange, lessons learned, and tool development, and convene and facilitate a workshop with the ENEMO network to strengthen its technical capacity in the areas of abuse of state resources, campaign violations and coordinated inauthentic behavior.

PROJECT: Improving Capacities of CSOs and the System of Consumer Protection in Albania to Reach European Standards – PROTECT ME



ZAŠTITI ME

Unaprjeđenje kapaciteta organizacija civilnog društva i sistema zaštite potrošača u Albaniji u cilju dostizanja evropskih standarda



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Centre for Monitoring and Research (CeMI) is implementing a project entitled “Improving capacities of CSOs and the system of consumer protection in Albania to reach European Standards – PROTECT ME” in a cooperation with Qendra „Konsumatori Shqiptar“.

CeMI has had a significant role in raising public awareness about consumer rights and consumer protection in Montenegro, by implementing several projects in this field. Using our prior experience in this area, CeMI’s experts will work with Qendra „Konsumatori Shqiptar“ in order to directly impact the citizens, CSOs and policy makers in demonstrating that CSOs and citizens’ consultation and involvement is a relevant process for Albania, in order to raise awareness of the citizens of Albania about their rights and their role as consumers.

This will be achieved through preparation of a study on the system of consumer rights protection in Albania and how to reach the European level of consumer rights protection, organization of four workshops/trainings and organization of the final conference.

The project is financially supported the European Union.

PROJECT: Access to Justice and Human Rights in Montenegro - Trial Monitoring Project 2021-2023



Centre for Monitoring and Research (CeMI) in cooperation with Human Rights Action (HRA) is implementing the project „Access to justice and human rights in Montenegro - trial monitoring project 2021-2023“. The project officially started in December of 2021 and it will last until December 2023.

CeMI has been monitoring human rights and the reform of the judiciary for almost two decades, and this project represents the latest contribution to Montenegro's judicial reform efforts. The project will contribute to the democratization and increase of the level of the rule of law enforcement and respect of human rights in Montenegro.

The most important aspect of the project is trial monitoring and analysis of respect for human rights, with a focus on respect of the procedural rights of suspects/accused and victims, as well as monitoring access to justice of vulnerable groups and those prosecuted due to measures imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

CeMI plans to develop several studies and thematic reports based on the monitoring, including the thematic report on plea agreements, mutual legal assistance and a policy brief on electronic evidence, and HRA will focus on right to a trial within reasonable time and COVID-19 related cases. CeMI and HRA will also implement advocacy campaign towards key decision-makers for adequate legislative, policy and/or institutional changes in relation to administration of criminal justice system in Montenegro, and raising public awareness on the most important aspects of equal access to justice, including the new legal mechanisms and human rights.

The project will also contribute to strengthening of the role of civil society organizations in promoting human rights and good governance, especially in the area of access to justice and the rule of law. By creating a joint committee with civil society organizations and judicial institutions CeMI and HRA will establish regular communication between civil society organizations and representatives of the judiciary.

The project is supported by the European Commission (EIDHR).

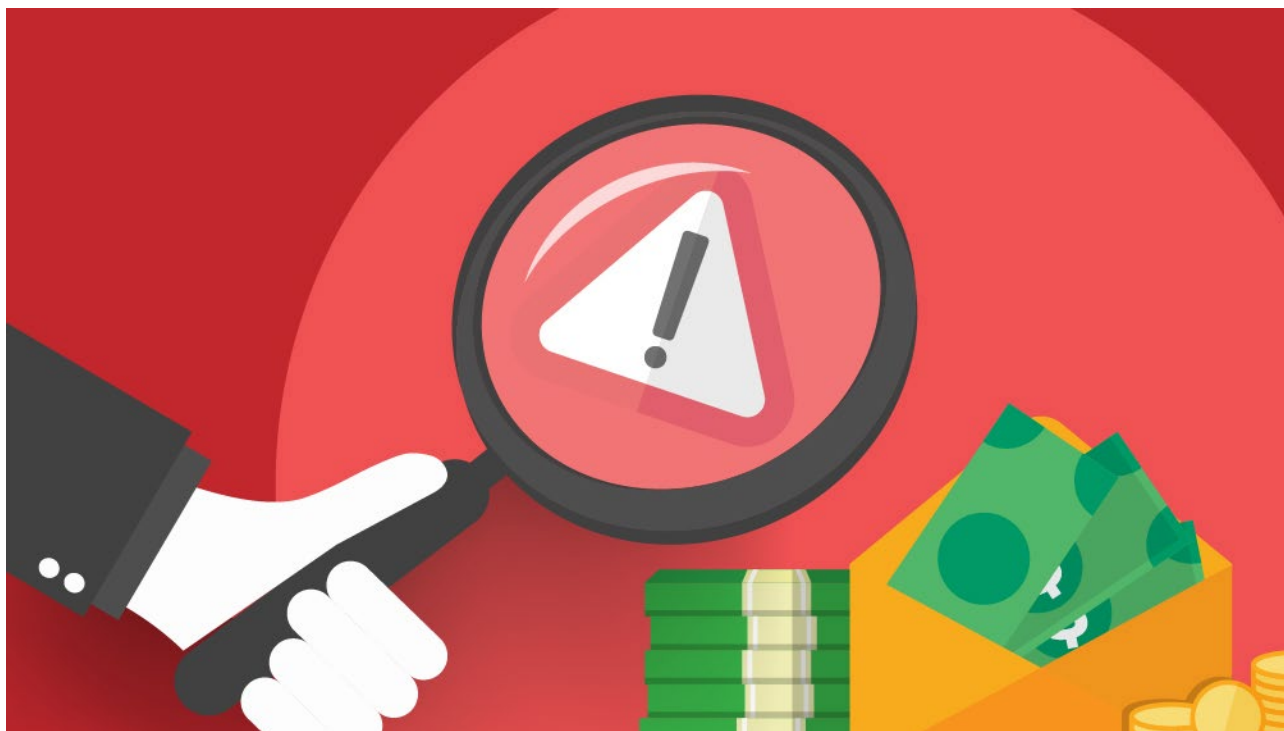
PROJECT: Improving Citizens' Knowledge of Democratic Processes Through Modern Media Forms



The citizens are getting saturated with information they receive daily. We are facing the information overload phenomenon defined as the difficulty in understanding an issue and effectively making decisions associated with the excessive quantity of daily information. In light of that, CeMI and MINA - Montenegrin News Agency, are implementing a project that seeks to educate journalists and citizens and improve their understanding and knowledge of current topics in the rule of law, electoral reform, corruption and human and minority rights, through modern communication channels, by organizing podcasts and panel discussions and creating a set of educational videos.

The project is implemented with the support of the Embassy of the United States of America in Montenegro and it will last until December 2022.

PROJECT: Supporting Stakeholders in Implementing Anti-Corruption Standards



Centre for Monitoring and Research (CeMI) in cooperation with International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), the Central and Eastern European Law Initiative (CEELI Institute), Bulgarian Institute for Legal Initiatives (BILI) and Expert Forum in Romania is implementing the ECAC project entitled “Supporting Stakeholders in Implementing Anti-Corruption Standards”.

The project aims to identify priority anti-corruption reforms, develop action plans for implementation of priority reforms and provide support to approval and adoption of action plans.

Through this project, the Centre for Monitoring and Research partnered with domestic stakeholders and influencers in order to identify, prioritize, and create action plans to tackle and effectively implement anti-corruption reform recommendations in accordance with international and regional commitments, and to bring transparency and integrity to the forefront of public discourse.

Aligning with INL priorities and IFES/CEELI core expertise the project will primarily focus on judicial integrity and independence, criminalizing and sanctioning bribery as well as on enhancing transparency of political party funding and election campaigns.

This is a project that CeMI has been implementing in continuity since 2018, and so far CeMI has made significant progress in the fight against corruption, with numerous policy documents created and various educational events organized to increase the capacities of judges, anti-corruption agencies, and NGOs in areas such as judicial integrity, conflict of interest, whistleblower protection and abuse of state resources.

The project is financially supported by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES).

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Monitoring the abuse of state resources

As part of the project, CeMI monitored the abuse of state resources during Parliamentary elections of 2020, as well as Local elections in Niksic and Herceg Novi in 2021. Based on this monitoring, and in accordance with the previously established methodology, CeMI developed a policy study “Abuse of State Resources in Montenegro”.



The policy study is available at: <https://cemi.org.me/storage/uploads/Tyx0R9YRseUVPc-JAvpdeWzteIkrDxpHvh2B3cAyH.pdf>

Conflict of interest and whistleblower protection

CeMI also developed two documents on subjects related to conflict of interest and whistleblower protection and organized a panel discussion to present these analyses to the expert and general public. Panel discussion was held on 30 September 2021.



During the panel discussion, the **President of the Governing Board of CeMI, Zlatko Vujovic**, said that the work of the Agency for Prevention of Corruption has improved since the change in its leadership, and that the lack of results in the Agency's fight against corruption were key reasons for Montenegro's slow progress in the process of European integration.

The Director of the Agency for Prevention of Corruption, Jelena Perovic, stated that the conflict of interest is important for the Agency, and she noted that all of the reports related to the conflict of interest and whistleblowers demonstrate that the rule of law is at the heart of the Agency's priorities, and it should be a priority for all Montenegro citizens to whom it applies. She assessed that the Agency's results in the field of whistleblower protection are impressive, and that this year they had the record number of whistleblower reports. She noted that the strength of the Agency's work, as well as faith that the citizens trust the Agency, gives the Agency an incentive to continue working.



State Secretary in the Ministry of Justice, Human and Minority Rights, Bojan Bozovic, believes that comparative analysis, conclusions, and recommendations based on other countries are especially valuable aspects of policy studies that CeMI presented at the panel discussion. He noted that it is important that good solutions and conclusions are implemented in the legislative framework in the shortest possible period. He called on everyone who is not a formal member of the Working Group for the Chapter 23 to attend thematic sessions when this topic is on the agenda. According to Bozovic, the goal is that the society achieves zero tolerance for corruption through anticorruption laws and measures.

The author of the study, Mariana Lakovic-Draskovic, said that within the general and democratic processes in Montenegro, which include changes in the political, economic, and legislative system, the fight against corruption is an important part of Chapter 23 - Justice and Human Rights. She pointed out that despite the European Commission's expectations that Montenegro amends the Law on Prevention of Corruption, in order to ensure greater protection for people to report irregularities and thus encourage citizens to report, the Law was not in the Government's work program for this year, and it is concerning is that it is not in the Montenegro's accession program for the next three years.





The policy study is available at: <https://cemi.org.me/storage/uploads/ihgMc1409Ijy2oHbVuBtcoxkfSH-fXDFPGLdnvMmq.pdf>



The policy study is available at: <https://cemi.org.me/storage/uploads/4f1b4QkDylj7T31fDqXVVKJhnrIp-Wf3cksrZRIQh.pdf>

CeMI's Initiatives

Double voters in Herceg Novi

After CeMI was able to confirm that 961 voters in Niksic were also registered as voters in Serbia, i.e., that almost 1,000 Montenegrin citizen illegally have dual place of residence, CeMI decided to conduct an investigation and analysis of potential double voters in the entire municipality of Herceg Novi, prior to local election in that municipality that were scheduled for 9 May 2021.

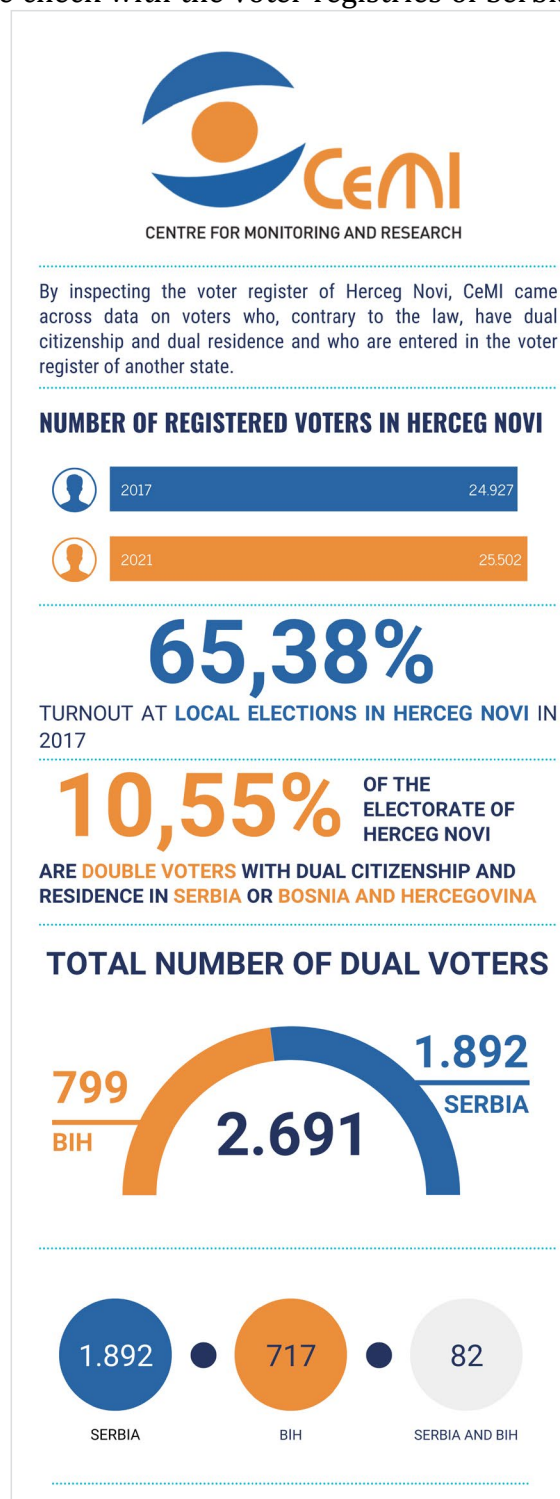
On 18 March 2021, CeMI filed a request to the Ministry of Interior to be granted access to the Central Voter Register and carried out a comparative check with the voter registries of Serbia and Bosnia and Hercegovina, which are both available online. The investigation uncovered that a total of 2,691 voters with residence in those two countries have been registered in the voter register of Herceg Novi, which represents more than 10% of the electorate of this municipality. Namely, there are 1,892 voters with dual residence in Serbia, 717 voters also had residence in BiH, while 82 voters had residence in both of these countries.

Considering the fact that the law envisages that persons with residence in one country has the nationality of that country, this opens up the issue of how these persons acquired Montenegrin citizenship, considering that, unlike Serbia, Montenegro has not signed the agreement on dual citizenship with BiH.

Although there is possibility that some of the Montenegrin nationals have legal dual nationality of Serbia, such an extremely high number of citizens with dual nationality in only one Montenegrin municipality raises suspicions of legality in acquiring Montenegrin nationality. The high percentage of persons with dual residence in Herceg Novi indicates that this is a widespread problem, and that there certainly voters with dual residence in other countries of the region.

It's important to note that the law does not allow for dual residence, and therefore the persons with residence in foreign countries cannot have legal residence in Montenegro, and must therefore be removed from the residence registry, which consequently, entails removal from the voter register.

CeMI submitted the list of all the voters with dual residence to Ministry of Interior, as a competent authority for maintaining the Voter Register and for matters of citizenship, residence and domicile.



Response to Parliament's proposal to amend the Law on Local Self-Government

On 8 November 2021, the Centre for Monitoring and Research called on the deputies of the Parliament of Montenegro to withdraw the proposed amendments to the Law on Local Self-Government that would postpone the election in three municipalities (Cetinje, Mojkovac and Petnjica) for which the election has already been called. The idea behind the amendments was to hold local elections in all municipalities on the same day.

While CeMI strongly supports the idea of uniting the holding of local elections in all municipalities in one day, we also believe that the announced elections must be held within the constitutional and legal deadline. The EU's recommendation is to consider holding local elections on the same day through the work of the parliamentary committee on electoral reform. The problem is not in the justification of the idea, but in the way it tried to be realized.

CeMI suggested that the proposers withdraw the proposal from the procedure and that within the parliamentary committee, the government and the opposition agree to hold local elections in one day in each of the 24 municipalities of Montenegro, without exception, but in a constitutional and legal manner. The agreement should include holding early parliamentary and presidential elections in late 2022 or early 2023 following electoral reform.

Request to the Ministry of Interior to investigate cases of double-registered voters in one or more neighboring countries

On 6 December 2021, the Centre for Monitoring and Research CeMI called on the Ministry of Interior to consistently respect political and legal obligations on effective control of the voters' register, and to immediately conduct procedures to verify and possibly revoke citizenship and delete all illegally registered voters from the Montenegrin voters' register.

According to CeMI, determining that they cannot continue the procedure in deleting double-registered voters, the Ministry of the Interior failed not fulfill the clear request of the European Commission from the 2021 Report for Montenegro, which explicitly requires the competent institutions to thoroughly investigate allegations of double-registered voters in one or more countries. This behavior of the Ministry of the Interior and open confrontation with the requirements of the EC contributes to further slowing down the negotiation process of Montenegro in terms of political criteria for Montenegro's EU membership and will almost certainly be the basis for new criticism of Brussels.

Referring to the opinion of the Agency for Personal Data Protection and Free Access to Information, according to whom "the processing of data submitted to them would be illegal", CeMI estimates that the Ministry of the Interior only found an excuse not to exercise the legally entrusted competencies to control the voters' register. The questioning opinion of the director of the Agency for Personal Data Protection and Free Access to Information cannot abolish the legal competence and the obligation of the Ministry of the Interior to act. This attitude of the Ministry of the Interior calls into question the existence of the political will of the current government and is carrying out activities aimed at improving citizens' trust in the election process.

Advocacy Campaign – how to get to the up-to-date Central Voter Register

On 15 December 2021 CeMI held a press conference to present an policy study titled “Montenegrin Citizenship and Domicile – How to get to an up-to-date Central Voter Register”. The study focuses on the government’s initiative to amend the Law on Registers of Domicile and Residence and the Decision on the Criteria for Determining Conditions for Acquiring Montenegrin Citizenship, posing the question: Is the goal really harmonization with the laws of the European Union or do these initiatives have the ultimate goal of arranging the Voter Register?

The goal of the study is to simplify and bring closer to the general public the issues related to the current application of the aforementioned Law and Decision. The study aims to answer several questions: Why are these topics being promoted now? What are the government’s motives and goals? Why are these activities not coordinated with the activities on determining the number of Montenegrin citizens who have acquired the citizenship of another state contrary to the Law on Montenegrin Citizenship, as well as with the process of initiating a comprehensive parliamentary dialogue on electoral legislation reform?

The panelists at the conference were the Minister of Interior and the President of the Transparency Council, Sergej Sekulovic, the author of the policy study, Bojan Bugarin and the President of the Governing Board of CeMI, Zlatko Vujovic.

Zlatko Vujovic reminded that Montenegro has restrictive rules and does not allow dual citizenship, except in rare cases, stating that efforts existed to resolve this issue. He noted that a significant number of Montenegrin citizens have an illegal citizenship of another country, which means that they are foreign citizens with the ability to influence the election process.



He stated that CeMI’s position is clear, and that every person for whom the legal conditions for deletion from the voter register have been met, should be deleted. One of CeMI’s recommendations, he added, was that a regional solution to this problem should be sought, as well as the support of Western partners for the countries of the Western Balkans or the EU, in order to exchange data on citizens.



Sergej Sekulovic said that the Ministry of Interior has approached this issue fairly, without bad intentions and hidden agendas, or a desire for any ethnic, national or political engineering. He stated that for the project of getting to an up-to-date Central Voter Register to be successful, there must exist a broader social response or the state as a whole, and that the Ministry of Interior cannot solve this issue alone.

He also pointed out that the citizenship policy has been politically manipulated, and that there is currently no desire of other countries in the region to submit the data on their citizens. He said that Serbia treats this issue as protection of personal data and is not ready to provide the Ministry of Interior with the data, and that Bosnia and Hercegovina did not provide the Ministry with any response.

Bojan Bugarin assessed that when the Government started the initiatives related to the change of the Decision on the Criteria for Conditions for Acquiring Montenegrin Citizenship by Admission, there was no professional approach, without which one should not enter into such a politically sensitive issue. He believes that the Voter Register can never and will never be sorted out unless it is observed exclusively from the aspect of the register of residence.



According to Bugarin, the only result and the only certainty that the Voter Register will one day be sorted out is if, at the same time, the register of residence and the register of citizens are also sorted out, as the original registers that make up and create the Voter Register. He noted that a significant number of Montenegrin citizens living abroad could be left without Montenegrin citizenship, if the regulations are applied as written.



Boris Mugosa, MP from the Socialdemocrats party who also participated in the discussion, stated that the Government has known, since taking office, the task of the Committee for the Comprehensive Electoral Reform, including the preparation of amendments to the Law on Voter Register, the Law on Registers of Residence and Domicile and the analysis of the Implementation of the Law on Montenegrin citizenship. He said that it is important to know whether a minister in the government or an MP in the Parliament have dual citizenship and residence in two countries, stating that in that case the minister could not stay on that position.

Nikola Dedeic, the secretary of the State Election Commission, assessed that a common goal is an organized voter register and that the citizens trust the electoral process.



*Press Conference "How to get to an up-to-date Voter Register in Montenegro",
15 December 2021.*

CeMI as Secretary General of ENEMO



As Secretary General of ENEMO, CeMI was responsible for complete administrative management and the implementation of international election observation mission to Moldova Early Parliamentary Elections 2021.

Due to the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the mission was limited in scale and therefore great challenge for all participants in the election process. In order to ensure proper COVID-19 protective measures, ENEMO operated partially remotely, with only a part of the Core Team deployed in the country of the elections.

ENEMO IEOM TO MOLDOVA: EARLY PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS 2021

Composition of the IEOM:

- » 7 CT members
- » 10 LTOs
- » LTOs acting as STOs on Election Day

Early June 2021, ENEMO deployed and International Election Observation Mission to Moldova to observe the 11 July Early Parliamentary Elections.

The presence of ENEMO in Moldova provided timely and objective information among the domestic and international community regarding the quality of the Early Parliamentary Elections. Furthermore, the mission ensured constructive cooperation with domestic and international electoral stakeholders and civil society organizations, as well as the election administration through its published reports. The reports and statements of ENEMO's mission contributed to the process of trust-building regarding the results of the Early Parliamentary Elections among the local and international community.

ENEMO observed the 2021 Early Parliamentary Elections in Moldova, with a mid-scale IEOM (International Election Observation Mission). In addition to the 7 Core Team members, ENEMO accredited 10 Long Term Observers (LTOs) who were working in teams of two covering all the regions (Orhei, Comrat, Balti, and Chisinau). LTOs observed the pre-election period and on Election Day performed as Short-Term Observers (STOs) monitoring the processes of opening, voting, closing and counting, and transfer of materials to District Electoral Commissions (DECs). As ENEMO's mission to Moldova was limited in funding and did not deploy STOs, LTOs were deployed to perform as Short-Term Observers (STOs) on Election Day by visiting polling stations to observe the conduct of the election.

ENEMO engaged ten long term observers, in multinational teams of two, from 10 countries to conduct observations and meet with relevant regional/local stakeholders from their AoRs during the election period. LTOs started their observation on 7 June. Due to the pandemic, all LTOs were working remotely conducting online meetings with relevant stakeholders with the help of their assistants.

LTOs observed the general political environment in their AoR, activity of election management bodies at the second level, candidate registration and election campaigns, pre-election campaign and meetings/rallies of electoral contestants, media coverage of the elections, the work of local authorities and performed other tasks related to the observation of elections. They also held meetings with the representatives of election contestants, local media, domestic organizations and other relevant stakeholders.



*ENEMO's IEOM to Moldova publishes its Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions, 12 July, 2021.
From left to right: Elidon Lamani, CC Observer, Elene Nizharadze, DHoM, Zlatko Vujovic, HoM and Maja Milikic, Media Analyst*



Zlatko Vujovic, Head of Mission and Elene Nizharadze, Deputy Head of Mission of ENEMO's mission to Moldova met with the President of the Republic of Moldova, Maia Sandu, 15 July, 2021.

CeMI on Social Networks

Since CeMI appeared on social networks, the number of people that follow our work has been constantly growing. This positive trend continued in 2021, too.

Instagram

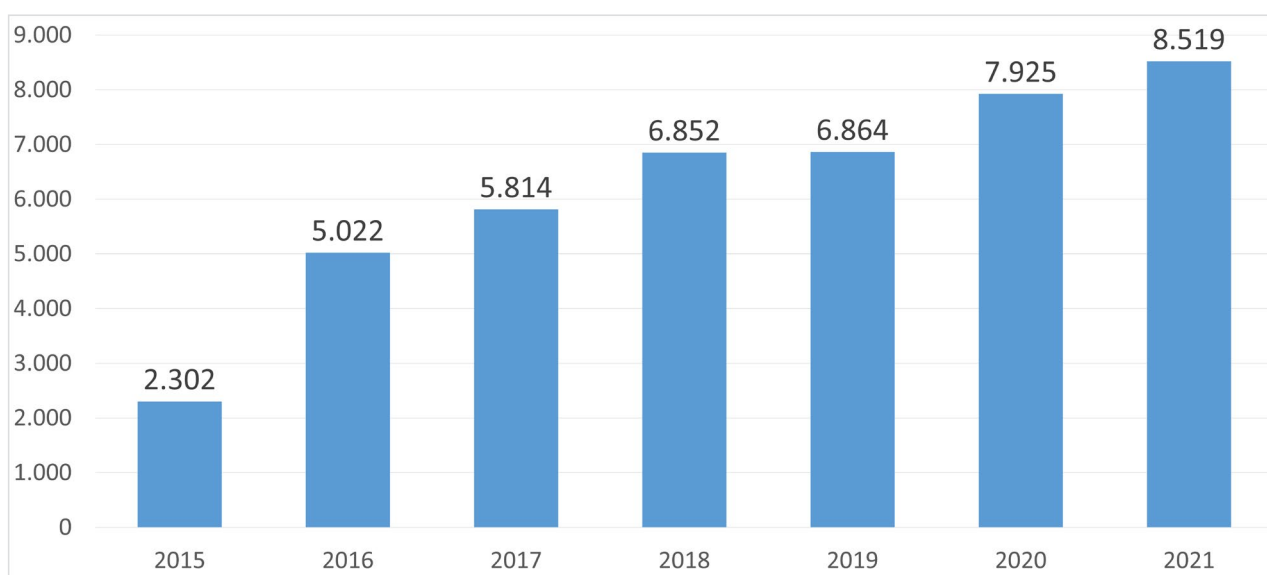
In 2020, CeMI shared 79 posts. Number of likes of all posts from 2021 is 2.006, while the current number of followers is 1.224. The most liked post, with 95 likes, was about the meeting between the former German Chancellor Angela Merkel and the President of the Governing Board of CeMI, Zlatko Vujovic: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CTzPyXoIVAm>

YouTube

In 2021, 9 videos were uploaded on CeMI's YouTube channel. Number of views of all videos is 2.146.

Facebook

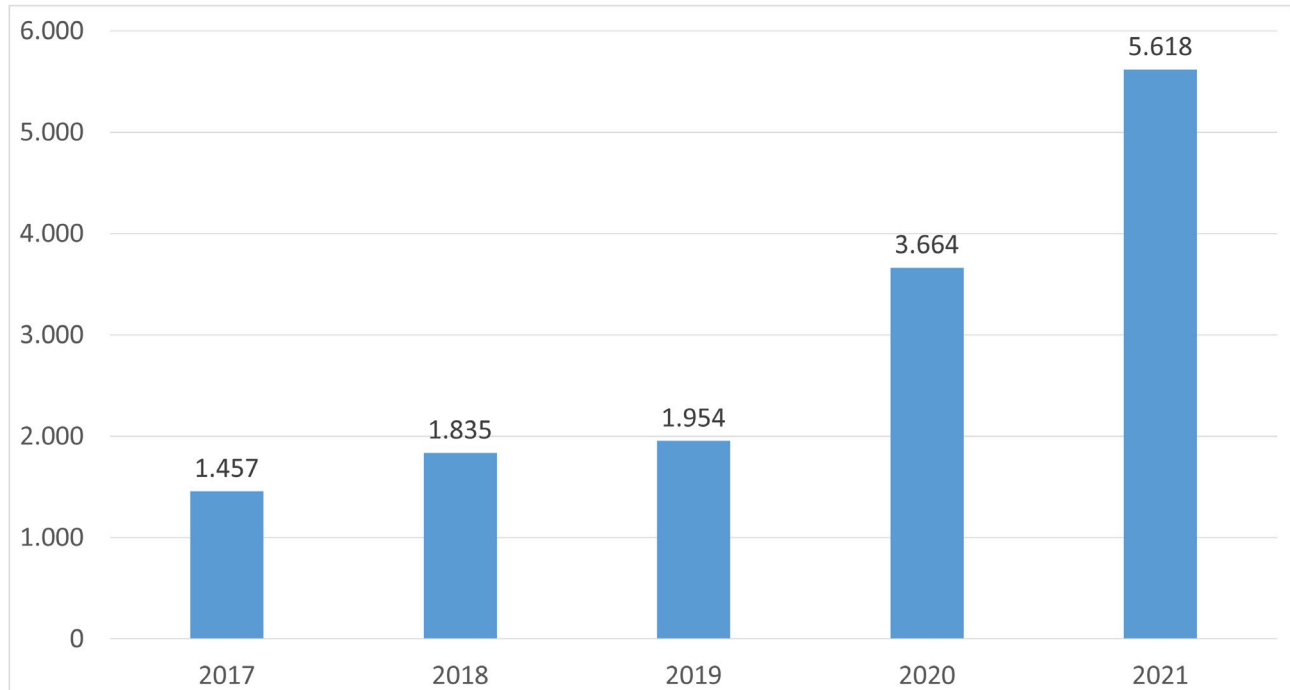
CeMI's Facebook page shared 72 photos, 9 links and 3 videos. Facebook videos in total got 18.1k views. Altogether, there were 1.6k interactions. 1.3k of interactions were related to photos, while the others were links, Facebook videos, Facebook lives and YouTube videos. Our Facebook page, it records a constant growth. Number of followers in 2021 has increased by 6,84%, which is 542 new followers.



Facebook page likes

Twitter

During 2021, on Twitter CeMI posted 179 tweets which had 919.029 impressions. Number of followers increased by 489 new followers, from the 3.664 in 2020. Our Twitter page were mentioned 292 times and had 89.001 visits.



Twitter followers

Fair Elections App

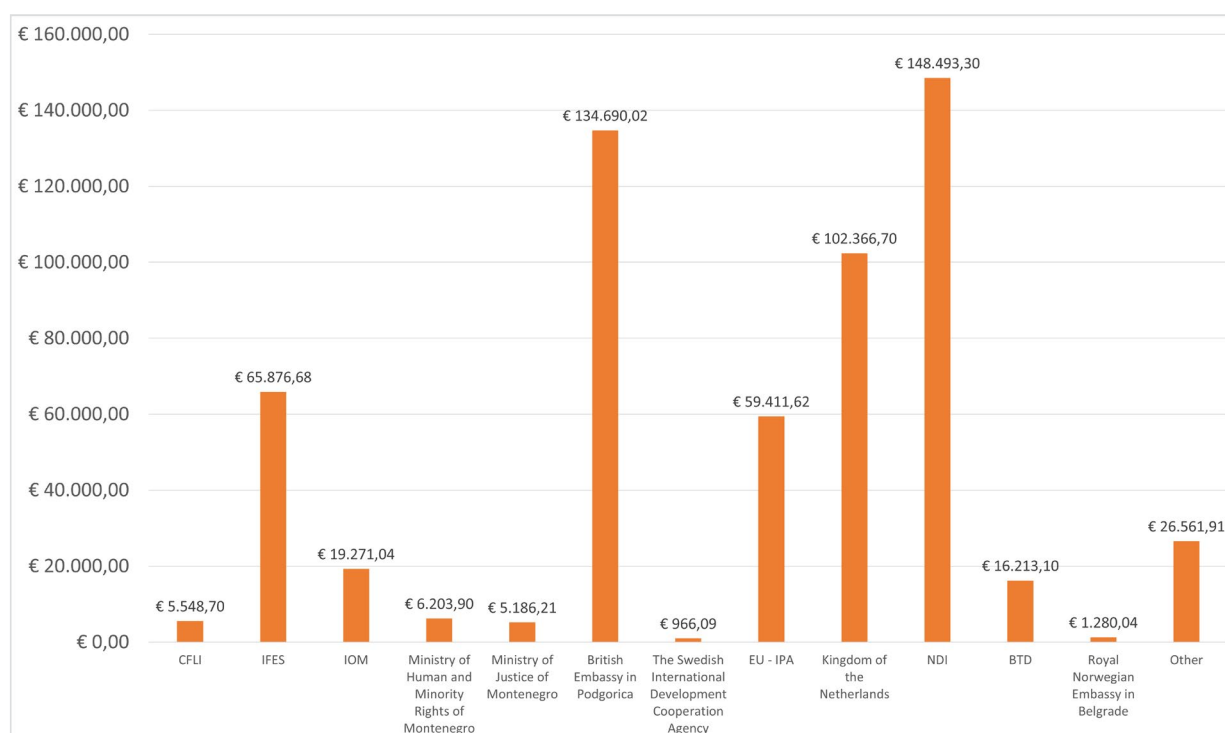
The website www.ferizbori.me recorded almost 14.000 visits during the election day, and the application "Fair Elections" was downloaded through the aforementioned website 247 times, and additional 176 times through Google Play Store. Data for the Apple Store is not yet available. The website www.izbori.cemi.org.me counted a total of 327.296 visits during the day.

Financial Report 2021

DONOR	PROJECT	AMOUNT
Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI)	Combating gendered disinformation and online violence against women in politics in Montenegro by educating women and advocating campaign	€ 5.548,70
The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)	Supporting Stakeholders in Implementing Anti-Corruption Standards	€ 63.285,55
The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)	Facebook/Global/Election Integrity Strategy in Montenegro	€ 2.591,13
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Society without Prejudices: With Solidarity to Equality and Inclusion	€ 19.271,04
Ministry of Human and Minority Rights of Montenegro	Equality of LGBTIQ persons before the law - Improving the rights of LGBTIQ persons in court proceedings	€ 6.203,90
Ministry of Justice of Montenegro	Restorative Justice - Alternative Sanctions to Resocialization	€ 5.186,21
British Embassy in Podgorica	Monitoring 2021 Local Elections in Niksic	€ 28.008,41
British Embassy in Podgorica	Monitoring 2020 Parliamentary Elections in Montenegro	€ 106.681,61
The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency	Observing the 2020 Presidential Elections in the Republic of Moldova	€ 966,09
European Union - IPA	International Observation of the 2020 Presidential Election in the Republic of Moldova	€ 11.522,28
European Union - IPA	International Observation of the 2021 Early Parliamentary Elections in the Republic of Moldova	€ 47.889,34
Kingdom of the Netherlands	Observing the 2020 Presidential Elections in the Republic of Moldova	€ 9.066,78
Kingdom of the Netherlands	Observing the 2021 Early Parliamentary Elections in the Republic of Moldova	€ 80.617,00
Kingdom of the Netherlands	Monitoring of Parliamentary Elections	€ 12.682,92
National Democratic Institute (NDI)	International Observation of the 2020 Presidential Election in the Republic of Moldova	€ 10.438,32
National Democratic Institute (NDI)	International Observation of the 2021 Early Parliamentary Elections in the Republic of Moldova	€ 102.911,23
National Democratic Institute (NDI)	Electoral Reform in Montenegro - A Step Forward	€ 342,79
National Democratic Institute (NDI)	International Election Observation Mission of the 2020 Local Elections in Ukraine	€ 34.800,96
Balkan Trust for Democracy (BTD)	Online Trials – The Pathway to Efficient Judiciary	€ 16.213,10
Royal Norwegian Embassy in Belgrade	Increasing the Electoral Integrity in Montenegro	€ 1.280,04
OTHER		€ 26.561,91
TOTAL		€ 592.069,31

Financial overview by donors 2021

DONORS	AMOUNT
Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI)	€ 5.548,70
The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)	€ 65.876,68
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	€ 19.271,04
Ministry of Human and Minority Rights of Montenegro	€ 6.203,90
Ministry of Justice of Montenegro	€ 5.186,21
British Embassy in Podgorica	€ 134.690,02
The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency	€ 966,09
European Union - IPA	€ 59.411,62
Kingdom of the Netherlands	€ 102.366,70
National Democratic Institute (NDI)	€ 148.493,30
Balkan Trust for Democracy (BTD)	€ 16.213,10
Royal Norwegian Embassy in Belgrade	€ 1.280,04
Other	€ 26.561,91
TOTAL	€ 592.069,31



Financial overview 2003-2021

