



Montenegro Research

Executive Summary

1.1. General information

Montenegro, formally known as: The People's Republic of Montenegro, Socialist Republic of Montenegro, and the Republic of Montenegro; is a Parliamentary Republic located within the Balkan region of South-eastern Europe (co-ordinates: 42 30 N, 19 18 E). It achieved independence from the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro on the 3rd of June 2006 and its political structure is divided between 23 municipalities with Podgorica as its capital and Cetinje retaining the status of "Old Royal Capital". Its current constitution was adopted on the 22nd October 2007 and is supported through its civil law system.

1.2. Demography

Demographically, Montenegro's current population stands at around 642,550 with its largest ethnic populations identifying as Montenegrin (45%), Serbian (28.7%) and Bosniak (8.7%). However, according to 2002 estimates, the most ubiquitous spoken language in Montenegro is Serbian which accounts for approximately 42.9% of the population, with Montenegrin, the official language, coming second at 37% and Bosnian third at 5.3%. According to the same statistics, the most pervasive religion in Montenegro is Orthodox Christianity which accounts for approximately 72.1% of the population with Islam second at 19.1%, and Catholic third at 3.4%.

According to 2015 estimates, approximately 98.7% of the population is literate, whilst unemployment figures for those aged between 15-24 stands at 37.7%.

1.3. International Relations, Law and Situation on Human Rights

As of 2018, Montenegro has ratified all major international Human Rights conventions and treaties stipulated by the United Nations. However, authorities are still to act on establishing disappearance as a separate criminal offence in the criminal code and enabling access to justice and reparations for victims. Additionally, Montenegro has failed to ensure that the continuous nature of enforced disappearance was recognised in the system of criminal law.

Examples of domestic NGO's working within Montenegro include: [Centre for Civic Education](#), [Centre for Democracy and Human Rights CEDEM](#), [Centre for Democratic Transition](#), [Centre for Development of NGO's](#), [Centre for Development of Non-Governmental Organizations](#), [Expedition](#), [Foundation Open Society Institute](#), [Foundation for Culture and Tradition of Boka Kotorska "Project Rastko-Boka"](#), [Network for Affirmation of NGO sector and NVO PULS](#).

1.4. Human Rights Issues

To date, the human rights situation in Montenegro remains much in the same as other countries within the Balkan region. Whilst the government officially supports human rights defenders and does not officially discriminate against any such group, the presence of deformation campaigns through media channels and threats from extreme-right wing and religious groups on journalists continue to pose a threat to both activists, vulnerable groups and notions surrounding freedom of speech.

1.5. Minority Rights

There remain several reported cases of police brutality made by those whilst in police detention. According to one of the latest judgements of the European Court on Human Rights (ECtHR), Montenegro failed to conduct a comprehensive independent assessment after a video surfaced showing a Civil Rights defender being tortured whilst in police custody. To date, the speed at which such cases are prosecuted remains slow and often without explanatory verdicts given. There is also further concern levied towards Montenegro's prison system as the prisons remain overpopulated and prisoners experience poor living and health standards.

Furthermore, Amnesty International's statistics suggest that as of 2017, an estimated 1,600 refugees and internally displaced people remain in Montenegro who fled there following the former Yugoslavian conflict. The majority of which identifying as Roma from Serbia/Kosovo, remain in substandard living conditions within camps which lack formal integration programmes. Their lack of formally recognised status, further prevents them from accessing adequate support to acquire formal international protection, citizenship or residency and excludes them from access to essential services such as healthcare and employment opportunities.

RESEARCH ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

2.1 Sources of educational funding in Montenegro

The primary source of educational funding in Montenegro is provided either by the government, private agencies or through personal methods such as paid employment.

The government currently provides funding for pre-primary, primary, secondary and higher educational institutions such as the University of Montenegro.

Examples of private agencies who supplement educational funding opportunities include Mladiinfo Montenegro, and have been accredited with donating 37,000 euros in 2017 alone.

2.2 Financial literacy Courses

Examples of financial literacy programmes currently in action within Montenegro can be drawn from the programmes run by the central bank of Montenegro's Global Money Week. In total, the programme reached 600 children directly and a further 20,000 indirectly in 2017.

2.3 Public Education Programmes

At present, the Montenegrin government in association with UNICEF is running a campaign aimed at raising awareness against violence and abuse of children which started in 2017. The “End Violence” campaign seeks to spark a public debate surrounding violence against Children in Montenegro.

2.4 Capacity Building Programmes

The Montenegrin government is currently undertaking a project aimed at Fighting Ill-treatment and Impunity and Enhancing the Application of the ECtHR Case-law on National Level (FILL). Its primary objective is to strengthen the capacities to more effectively combat ill-treatment and impunity which is recognised as one of the foremost priorities for the country.

At present, the programme is aiming to raise the capacity of judges, prosecutor and lawyers to better apply human rights standards to their daily work and overcome some of the concerns surrounding its judicial system to bring it more in line with EU regulations.

2.5 Financial and Capital Markets Legislation Reform Programs

First adopted between 2015-2017, the Montenegrin Economic Reform Programme consists of two parts. First, an enhanced version of the existing Pre-Accession Economic Programmes (PEP). This seeks to establish a medium-term macro-economic and fiscal policy framework, with increased focus on assessing external sustainability and the main structural obstacles to growth, as well as concrete reform measures to directly support the policy framework.

Part II covers structural reforms which are societal in nature and which are most important for improved competitiveness and growth.

2.6 Financial Court Reform Program

The Republic of [Montenegro](#) has continued to improve its legal framework in recent years, with the view of harmonising it with the EU legislation. The Legal Transition Team will continue to support the work of the bank in strengthening companies through corporate governance initiatives and through promoting energy efficiency.

2.7 Stock Exchange Reform Program

Whilst there are no current aims to reform Montenegrin financial markets, USAID is working towards integrating stock exchanges from Eastern and Southern Europe in order to increase their attractiveness to investors and issuers. USAID's plan, is to implement a special IT system that would allow for more efficient execution of cross-border trades. The involved exchanges, including the MSE, established various working groups, including a legal and regulatory group which is tasked to identify whether any legal or regulatory changes would need to be introduced for the implementation of this project. USAID is discussing possible cooperation on this project with the EBRD

2.8 Corporate Governance Reform Program

According to the EBRD's 2007 corporate governance sector assessment Montenegro was deemed to be in "very low compliance" with OECD principles of corporate governance, underling an urgent need for reform in all sectors under consideration. The assessment was primarily aimed at the quality of corporate governance currently provided at the time. Since then, there have been corporate governance legal framework has been amended several times in line with the 2011 and 2012 EU progress reports. However, there remain serious areas for improvement, especially in areas such as independent public oversight and quality control systems which need to be clearly planned and established.

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