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POTENTIALS OF EARLY INTEGRATION OF MONTENEGRO INTO THE EU GENDER EQUALITY FRAMEWORK



institut alternativa

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

| | |
|---------|---|
| CEPS | Centre for European Political Studies |
| CERV | Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme |
| DEVCO | Directorate-General for International Partnerships |
| EEAS | European External Action Service |
| EIDU | Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Unit in the European Parliament |
| EIGE | European Institute for Gender Equality |
| EJTN | European Judicial Training Network |
| EPC | European Policy Centre |
| ERAC | European Research Area and Innovation Committee |
| EU | European Union |
| EQUINET | European Network of Equality Bodies |
| FRA | EU Agency for Fundamental Rights |
| GAP | EU Gender Action Plan |
| IA | Institute Alternative |
| IPA | Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance |
| NGO | Non-governmental organisation |
| SAAGE | Scientific Analysis and Advice on Gender Equality in the EU |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Program |
| WES | European Network to Promote Women's Entrepreneurship |
| WRC | Women's Rights Centre |

“The process of accession to the European Union has driven legislative reform that promotes gender equality in candidate and potential candidate countries, as they are expected to gradually harmonise with the European Union’s legal acquis on gender equality, and to have in place an institutional framework for its implementation.”

EU Gender Action Plan (GAP III)

INTRODUCTION

Gender equality is a fundamental value of the European Union (EU), and promotion of equality between women and men is stipulated in Article 3 of the Maastricht Treaty on the European Union,¹ as well as Article 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.² Consequently, it is important that gender equality be recognised as an integral part of the accession process of the Western Balkans countries.

Montenegro is a candidate country for EU membership, with a negotiation process that has been ongoing for more than ten years.³ By opening Chapter 8 (Competition) in 2020, Montenegro opened all 33 negotiation chapters. However, in more than ten years of negotiations, it temporarily closed only three out of a total of 33 negotiation chapters. A revised negotiation methodology was introduced in 2020, which the European Commission introduced with the aim of encouraging a more dynamic enlargement process.⁴

However, Montenegro's accession to the EU is still not in sight. The latest report of the European Commission confirmed the above - none of the 33 chapters was rated as having achieved "significant progress", while changes in degrees of readiness and progress in relation to previous year is measured in decimals.⁵ Chapters 23 (judiciary and fundamental rights) and 24 (justice, freedom and security), remain key challenges in the negotiation process, and the European Commission continues to underline that fulfilment of temporary benchmarks in these chapters will be critical for Montenegro's further progress in negotiations.⁶

Within the framework of Chapter 23 (fundamental rights), the European Commission monitors and reports on the situation in the field of **gender equality**, and provides the state with recommendations on how to improve the situation. However, in order to improve the position of women in Montenegrin society, the gender perspective must be integrated into all negotiation chapters and the integration process as a whole. It is precisely with the aim of reducing the gender gap that the EU's latest Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in External Relations (GAP III)⁷ outlined that 85% of all new actions through external support will contribute to gender equality, that they will strengthen a common strategic vision and close cooperation with member states and other partners at the regional and national level, and that they will contribute to accelerated progress, with a focus on thematic priorities, including fight against gender-based violence, and promotion of economic, social and political empowerment of women and girls.

1 Consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union, *Official Journal of the European Union*, 2012, available at: <https://bit.ly/3H9FOYu>

2 Consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union, *Official Journal of the European Union*, 2012, available at: <https://bit.ly/3khQRWo>

3 Negotiations between Montenegro and the EU started on 29 June 2012.

4 *Enhancing the accession process - A credible EU perspective for the Western Balkans*, European Commission, 2020, available at: <https://bit.ly/3ji0vHS>

5 *"The European Commission Report: Political instability and tensions halt reforms"*, Institute Alternative, 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/3WmJgU4>

6 *European Commission Montenegro Report 2022*, European Commission, 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/3FzZSBf>

7 *"Together Towards a Gender Equal World - EU Gender Action Plan III - An Ambitious Agenda for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in EU External Action"*, European Commission, 2020, available at: <https://bit.ly/3w72tyk>

In the 2022 report for Montenegro, the European Commission reiterated its recommendations from the previous year in relation to gender equality. The fact that Montenegro showed “limited progress” reflects the poor momentum of implementing recommendations in this area.⁸ The European Commission particularly urges amendments to the legislation in order to effectively tackle domestic violence and discrimination, improvements in institutional cooperation in order to achieve better access to justice and legal protection for women, as well as to ensure gender-responsive budgeting and integration of a gender perspective at all levels of decision-making. The stagnation in the accession process, visible not only in Montenegro but also in other Western Balkans countries that are in various stages of EU accession, has inspired various proposals aiming to overcome the binary division in which states either are or are not members of the European Union, and refer to gradual membership that would result in full and conventional membership within the Union, once all the conditions for membership have been met.⁹

This appeal and similar initiatives by civil society and other actors are complementary to the efforts of the European Commission, which created a revised methodology that provides Montenegro with a window for early or accelerated integration that implies gradual introduction to individual policies of the European Union, European Union markets, and its programmes. This model is accompanied with the provision of increased funding through the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance, in order to provide more intensive support in the accession process. Early integration into the structures of the European Union is currently most visible in areas where we share common challenges, such as the fight against organised crime or border management. However, it is important for citizens that not only problems, but also benefits are the subject of early integration of Montenegro into the EU.¹⁰

Bearing the above in mind, this analysis focuses on the **potential of early integration of Montenegro into the institutional framework for gender equality and gender mainstreaming of the European Union**, with the aim of mapping institutions and programmes that Montenegro could take part in during the accession process. For the purposes of this paper, we define early integration as the country’s potential to access the institutions, networks and working groups of the European Union for gender equality in the capacity of an observer or a full member, and to use the existing programmes to the full extent possible, even in the pre-accession period, i.e. before conventional membership. Simultaneously, methods of early integration at the institutional level may include dialogue on specific sector policies (e.g. meetings between candidate countries and the European Commission, the European Parliament, and/or the leaders of the EU Council and member states, including meetings at the European Council level), observer status, i.e. attendance at meetings of certain institutions, networks, working groups and the like without the right to vote, and the right to speak at certain meetings.¹¹

8 “The European Commission Report: Political instability and tensions halt reforms”, Institute Alternative, 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/3WmjgU4>

9 “The Enlargement Impasse and the Necessity for its Transformation”, Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS) in Brussels and European Policy Centre (EPC) in Belgrade, 2021, available at: <http://bit.ly/3khxcWu>

10 Milena Muk, “Transform EU expansion into a mutually beneficial process, and a response to common issues”, Institute Alternative, 2022, available at: <http://bit.ly/3GZqU5u>

11 The levels of institutional participation of EU membership candidate countries depending on their accession progression are formulated in detail in the model of so-called staged accession to the EU, defined by the Centre for European Political Studies (CEPS) in Brussels and European Policy Centre (EPC) in Belgrade: *A Template for Staged Accession to the EU*, EPC and CEPS, 2021, available at: <https://bit.ly/3WBwf8U>

The first part of the analysis provides an overview of the meaning of early EU integration in the context of the revised enlargement methodology, while the second part contains an overview of the state's capacity to participate in the framework for gender equality at the EU level. The third part maps out various EU institutions and programmes that Montenegro could express interest in participating. At the time of writing this analysis, publicly available data were used and additional requests for free access to information were sent. The draft analysis "Potentials of early integration of Montenegro into the EU framework for gender equality" was presented at a conference organised by Institute Alternative on 27 January 2023, and sent to the participants for comments, which were subsequently integrated into the analysis.¹² Additionally, with the aim of verifying the data and updating the list of institutions and programmes in which Montenegro can participate within the framework of early integration, we held an interview with a representative of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)¹³, as well as with Bojan Vujović, Acting Director General for European Funds at Ministry of European Affairs.¹⁴

12 "We should use benefits of EU accession to promote gender equality more proactively", Institute Alternative, 27/01/2023, available at: <http://bit.ly/3KetlEy>

13 An interview with Milana Lazić, project manager for the Western Balkans and Turkey at the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), held on 17 February 2022 via Zoom.

14 An interview with Bojan Vujović, Acting Director General for European Funds at Ministry of European Affairs, held on 27 February at Ministry of European Affairs.

REVISED METHODOLOGY AND MONTENEGRO'S EARLY INTEGRATION

Montenegro accepted the revised EU enlargement methodology, which involves a stronger focus on fundamental reforms; a stronger political steer; an increased dynamism; and predictability of the process, based on objective criteria and rigorous positive and negative conditionality.¹⁵ The revised methodology foresees that, in the negotiation process with Montenegro, chapters would be grouped into six thematic groups or clusters: fundamentals, internal market, competitiveness and inclusive growth, green agenda and sustainable connectivity, resources, agriculture and cohesion, and external relations. The aforementioned clusters should enable the definition of “accelerated” integration measures.

In line with the revised methodology, if Montenegro were to achieve significant progress in terms of reforms contained within the negotiation process, it would gain access to accelerated integration and gradual introduction to individual EU policies, markets and programmes, while ensuring equal conditions, as well as increased financing and investment through IPA support, and closer cooperation with relevant international financial institutions, which would support Montenegro in the accession process.

The European Commission underlines that potential measures of early integration, and the conditions associated with them, need to be discussed within the relevant sectoral subcommittees of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement, and follow the applicable decision-making procedures. These measures should enable Montenegro to accelerate progress in the implementation of EU acquis within the relevant clusters of chapters, and on the basis of results that it achieves.

The Ministry of the European Affairs points out that before the adoption of the new methodology, Montenegro only gradually adopted the *acquis communautaire*, while the early integration offers an insight into the process of creation of *acquis* and creating policies at the EU level. However, they state that the revised methodology and some of the final drafts offered significantly more, including access to structural funds for states that meet certain conditions, but that from the legal side it was difficult to include non-member states in such funds. However, the Ministry of European Affairs believes that early integration is still a positive innovation, given that previously Montenegro had access to only a limited number of programs.¹⁶

However, although the early integration model is, in theory, more dynamic and beneficial for the candidate countries in the negotiation process, it has not been operationalised in detail, in terms of conditions that the state must fulfil in order to take part in select institutions, programmes and policies. This is confirmed by a document issued by the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, which states that the European Commission must continue to apply the revised methodology and provide clearer steer in order to enable Montenegro and Serbia to focus on the most relevant reforms and achieve real and sustainable progress on the path of accession.¹⁷ Bearing in mind the aforementioned

¹⁵ *Application of the revised enlargement methodology to the accession negotiations with Montenegro and Serbia*, Council of the European Union, 2021, available at: <https://bit.ly/3CYSZZt>

¹⁶ An interview with Bojan Vujović, Acting Director General for European Funds at Ministry of European Affairs, held on 27 February at Ministry of European Affairs.

¹⁷ *Application of the revised enlargement methodology to the accession negotiations with Montenegro and Serbia*, Council of the European Union, 2021, available at: <https://bit.ly/3CYSZZt>

constraints of early integration, alternative proposals for operationalisation of the revised expansion methodology have been offered, in order to apply the potential measures of early integration more systematically.

Upon accepting the revised enlargement methodology with the European Union, the Government of Montenegro identified potential measures of early integration into the EU institutional framework, programmes and initiatives, through the attainment of observer or fully participative status, even before achieving membership. In this regard, in July 2021,¹⁸ the European Integration Office prepared a document entitled Information on progress in the negotiation process under the cluster approach.¹⁹ Although it is commendable that the then Office proactively produced this piece of analysis, there were no subsequent reports indicating whether Montenegro joined any of the mapped institutions, or used any of the programmes that had been identified.

The aforementioned Information on progress in the negotiation process according to the cluster approach underlined that, since clusters are not applicable to Montenegro in the sense of opening chapters, Montenegro is particularly interested in valorising the political dimension of the revised methodology, primarily through two aspects: stronger political governance, and identifying measures of early integration before full membership. Following the example of observer status that it holds in the European Research Area and Innovation Committee of the Council of the EU - ERAC, Montenegro advocates for participation in other EU programmes, initiatives and policies, and the Information aims to provide a foundation for further work of the negotiation structure and identifying the broadest possible scope of early integration measures.

However, the document is gender insensitive, i.e. Montenegro's potential for participation in the European Union framework for gender equality is not recognised. Even the analysis of the current situation in each of the six clusters does not contain a gender perspective, which should be integrated, especially with regards to cluster 1, within which Montenegro is negotiating fundamental rights, as well as reform of public administration and statistics, which Montenegro must improve in order to collect gender-disaggregated data and monitor changes in degrees of the gender gap. Additionally, among the mapped institutions and programmes in the six clusters, none were identified that refer to gender equality and that Montenegro could participate in as an observer or a full member.

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) underlines that candidate countries can realistically obtain observer status, bearing in mind that the Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers (DG JUST), which is also in charge of gender equality, is advocating for greater integration of candidate countries in bodies that work on gender equality. However, what they see as a limitation are the founding acts of the European Union, which limit the degree of identification with conventional members of the European Union, especially in budgetary terms. However, as countries make progress with the accession process, they believe that the EU will have to find ways to modify cooperation and intensify integration, and that the observer status they hold in certain bodies should gradually transition to the status of permanent membership.²⁰

18 The office operated under the previous, 42nd Government of Montenegro. In the meantime, it has been replaced by the newly established Ministry of European Affairs.

19 Information on progress in the negotiation process according to the cluster approach, Government of Montenegro, Cabinet of the Prime Minister, Office for European Integration, 2021, available at: <http://bit.ly/3R4Y3Sd>

20 An interview with Milana Lazić, project manager for the Western Balkans and Turkey at the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), held on 17 February 2022 via Zoom.

MONTENEGRO'S INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE EU GENDER EQUALITY FRAMEWORK

Gender mainstreaming of public policies is a legally prescribed obligation for all decision-makers in Montenegro, since Article 3 of the Law on Gender Equality stipulates the obligation of state bodies, state administration bodies, local self-governments, public institutions and public companies to evaluate and review the impact of decisions and activities on the position of women and men in all stages of planning, making and implementing decisions. Therefore, in the process of Montenegro's accession to the European Union, and the context of measures of early integration, decision-makers have the obligation to include a gender perspective.

However, Montenegro's institutional capacities in the field of gender equality are currently not sufficiently developed. Despite announcements of establishment of the Office for Gender Equality, which would function under the Cabinet of the Prime Minister, it has still not been formed. Instead, the national body mandated with protection and promotion of gender equality is the Department for Gender Equality Affairs, which functions with only four systematised posts. This body is responsible for drafting proposals; coordinated monitoring of implementation of the Law on Gender Equality, and the national gender equality strategy; coordination of activities aimed at gender equality; professional support for drafting local gender equality action plans; monitoring implementation of international documents, conventions, and adopted international standards in the field of gender equality; and encouraging activities on education about gender equality.²¹ Additionally, performance of the Council for Gender Equality, established in 2016 as an advisory body within the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, has been subpar. The lack of a quorum for standard operations and an excessive number of members, who have proved difficult to gather, result in the Council failing to hold sessions at least once a quarter, as stipulated in the Rules of Procedure of the Council.²²

The Committee for Gender Equality in the Parliament of Montenegro is another important body, which, in line with the Parliamentary Rules of Procedure, considers legislative proposals, other regulations and general acts referring to the implementation of the principle of gender equality. However, although the Parliamentary Rules of Procedure (Article 66) define the possibility of committee cooperation on matters of common interest or common jurisdiction, and the possibility of holding a joint session, as agreed by the president of the committee, there has not yet been a single joint session of the Committee for Gender Equality and the Committee for European Integration, which would consider integration of the gender perspective in the process of Montenegro's accession to the European Union.

In addition to the fact that laws initiated by MPs are largely adopted without an assessment of their fiscal effect, and no public consultation, their alignment with the legal acquis of the European Union is not reviewed in the same manner that is applied to

21 This body is responsible for preparing proposals and coordinating monitoring of the implementation of the Law on Gender Equality, the national gender equality strategy; coordinating activities aimed at furthering gender equality, professional support for drafting local action plans for furthering gender equality, monitoring the implementation of international documents and conventions, adopted international standards in the area of gender equality, encouraging activities on education about gender equality. See: *Rulebook on internal organisation and systematisation of the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights* (Official Gazette of Montenegro, No. 49/22, 52/22 and 56/22), Government of Montenegro, Podgorica, July 2022.

22 Rules of Procedure, Council for Gender Equality.

legislative proposals drafted and submitted by the Government. For example, draft laws are not sent to the European Commission for comments prior to adoption, as is the case with laws drafted by the Government of Montenegro, while the Committee on European Integration is completely excluded from the legislative process. The chair of the Committee for Gender Equality pointed out that this body was not engaged in detailed monitoring of the EU accession process. She added that “the Committee does not conduct internal checks on the compliance of documents that it receives from the Government with EU legislation. If the Government has self-assessed the compliance positively, we should trust it. However, we often see that in the process of passing legislation, this is not the case. One of the examples is the Law on Artificially Assisted Fertilisation from 2019 - in the midst of discussion and on route to adoption, it became clear that it was not harmonised with European legislation”.²³

On the other hand, from the perspective of empowering employees in the public sector to participate in the institutions and programmes of the European Union in the field of gender equality, it should be noted that research has shown that the majority of civil servants do not understand the concept of integration of a gender perspective, and that they consider it irrelevant because “the law guarantees equality for all”. According to a UNDP analysis from 2021, the majority of public sector employees (about three fifths) cannot say with certainty whether in the last twelve months an analysis of the effects of the relevant public policies on the life and position of women and men in Montenegro has been carried out in their institution.²⁴

Montenegro’s negotiating structure with the European Union consists of a negotiating group, a state delegation, the Rule of Law Council, the College for Negotiations, and a Working Group for the Preparation and Conduct of Negotiations. Following the ratification of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement, joint bodies with the European Union were established,²⁵ including as follows: the Council for Stabilisation and Association, the Parliamentary Committee for Stabilisation and Association, and the Committee for Stabilisation and Association that includes seven sectoral subcommittees.²⁶ The revised methodology stipulates that the seven subcommittees also undertake specific measures of early integration, implement targeted dialogues and identify policies and institutions.²⁷

However, analysis developed by the Women’s Rights Centre (WRC)²⁸ indicates that it is not possible to determine how often gender equality issues were on the agenda of the Stabilisation and Association Committee and subcommittee meetings, while according to the information provided by the Delegation of the European Union to the WRC in 2021, the

23 “We should use benefits of EU accession to promote gender equality more proactively”, Institute Alternative, 27/01/2023, available at: <http://bit.ly/3KetIEy>

24 “Gender Mainstreaming: Views and perceptions of public administration employees, and a review of the implementation of principles of gender equality in public sector institutions”, UNDP Montenegro Office, 2021, available at: <https://bit.ly/3WB94vn>

25 ME4EU EU4ME website, available at: <http://bit.ly/3H35yo5>

26 Subcommittee for Trade, Industry, Customs and Taxes; Subcommittee for Agriculture and Fisheries; Subcommittee for Internal Market and Competition; Subcommittee on Economic and Financial Issues and Statistics; Subcommittee on Justice, Freedom and Security; Subcommittee on Innovation, Human Resources, Information Society and Social Policy; Subcommittee on Transport, Environment, Energy, and Regional Development.

27 *Enhancing the Accession Process – A credible EU perspective for the Western Balkans*, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, European Commission, 2020, available at: <https://bit.ly/3JajPC5>

28 “Representing the gender perspective in the EU accession process: Country assessment report”, Women’s Rights Centre, 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/3QVU6iF>

Subcommittee for Justice, Freedom and Security²⁹ and the Subcommittee for Innovation, Human Resources, Information, Society, and Social Policy³⁰ had gender equality issues clearly highlighted on the agenda, but the minutes are not available.

In its analysis of Montenegro's progress with the EU accession process, the WRC notes that, although there are professional staff in key institutions responsible for the EU integration processes in Montenegro, without a comprehensive and systematic approach, sufficient human and financial resources, and an active network of gender focal points (GFP), the ambitious goals of alignment with EU legal processes on gender equality will be difficult to achieve.³¹ The Ministry of European Affairs has confirmed allegations regarding the lack of capacity to integrate the gender perspective in the process of Montenegro's accession to the European Union, especially in terms of the implementation of IPA projects. "The team at the Ministry of European Affairs ought to be a resource centre that will help other institutions with preparation of project proposals," said the Acting Director General of the Directorate for European Funds at the Ministry of European Affairs.³²

Negotiating structures and bodies with a mandate on gender equality within the process of Montenegro's accession to the European Union can express interest in obtaining observer or participant status in a number of EU institutions or programmes, depending on progress with the negotiation process.

The Ministry of European Affairs notes that their key role is to inform ministries about new generations of programs and to indicate the possibility of participation in certain structures at the EU level, after which the departments consider the potential for participation and directly lead negotiations.³³

The following sections map out all the institutions and expert and advisory bodies at the level of the European Union, as well as programmes in the area of gender equality, as resources and opportunities for cooperation that can be used by Montenegrin institutions and decision-makers to strengthen their own capacities. It should be noted that this overview of institutions and programmes is not exhaustive; rather, it focuses on institutions and programmes with an explicit mandate of gender equality or integration of the gender perspective, and in this sense, they are the first contact point for exchanging experiences with countries striving for full membership.

29 10th meeting of the Subcommittee on Justice, Freedom and Security - online meeting, 17-18 March 2021; Gender equality issues are clearly highlighted on the agenda in item 3.6: Non-discrimination and gender equality.

30 1st meeting of the Subcommittee of the EU and Montenegro on Innovation, Human Resources, Information Society and Social Policy - video conference, 8 October 2021; - Gender equality issues are clearly highlighted on the agenda in point 4.7: "Steps taken to address issues of non-discrimination and equality between women and men in employment and social policy (alignment with the *acquis* and policy development).

31 "Representing the gender perspective in the EU accession process: Country assessment report", Women's Rights Centre, 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/3QVU6iF>

32 "We should use benefits of EU accession to promote gender equality more proactively", Institute Alternative, 27/01/2023, available at: <http://bit.ly/3KetIEy>

33 An interview with Bojan Vujović, Acting Director General for European Funds at Ministry of European Affairs, held on 27 February at Ministry of European Affairs.

RELEVANT INSTITUTIONS FOR ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY AT THE EU LEVEL

Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers,³⁴ European Commission

The Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers coordinates gender mainstreaming at the level of the European Commission. The 2023 work programme of the Directorate-General, under the goal “Stronger Europe in the world”, refers to strengthening cooperation with candidate countries, i.e. countries in the Western Balkans, together with Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia. This Directorate-General contains a unit for gender equality,³⁵ which deals with legal aspects (monitoring of legal acquis in the field of gender equality) and the quality of public policies, awareness-raising and financing.

Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men,³⁶ European Commission

The Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men functions as an expert group within the European Commission that meets biannually, provides support in the formulation and implementation of gender-sensitive activities, and encourages exchange of experiences, policies and practices between member states and various interested parties. According to the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), which attends the sessions of this body as an observer, representatives of interested parties may be granted observer status upon request.

High Level Group for Gender Mainstreaming,³⁷ European Commission

The High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming is an informal group comprised of representatives responsible for gender mainstreaming at the national level. It is chaired by the European Commission and holds regular meetings. The group is also the main forum for planning strategic follow-up of the Beijing platform for action, and helping the European Commission prepare the report on equality between women and men to the European Council.

³⁴ Directorate-General Justice and Consumers, European Commission, available at: <http://bit.ly/3QVDTdh>

³⁵ Directorate-General Justice and Consumers, Organisation Chart, available at: <https://bit.ly/3H2INRf>

³⁶ Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, Register of Commission Expert Groups and Other Similar Entities, available at: <https://bit.ly/3Du9jC7>

³⁷ High-level group on gender mainstreaming, European Commission, available at: <http://bit.ly/3kJ3oT9>

SAAGE - Scientific analysis and consultation on gender equality in the European Union³⁸

SAAGE, launched by the Giacomo Brodolini Foundation and coordinated by the Gender Equality Unit of the European Commission, provides scientific analysis and advice to the European Commission on gender equality, and contributes to improvement of public policy analysis on gender equality by providing reliable and independent support. Additionally, SAAGE supports the European Commission in its implementation of the Strategy for Gender Equality by writing recommendations for member states and monitoring the implementation of public policies. SAAGE brings together international experts with valuable expertise in areas such as gender-based violence, the labour market and the like. In addition to member states of the European Union, SAAGE also covers candidate countries and potential candidates for membership in the European Union. In addition to production of reports, it also holds thematic seminars with specific topics in the area of gender equality.

European Network of Legal Experts in the field of gender equality and non-discrimination³⁹

In order to effectively promote equality and fight against discrimination in the EU, the European Commission established a network of legal experts in the field of gender equality, and a non-discrimination network, with a mandate to provide independent information and advice on developments in member states. The two networks were merged in December 2014 and are now jointly managed by the Human European Consultancy, the Migration Policy Group (MPG) and the University of Utrecht, on behalf of the European Commission.

EQUINET: European network of equality bodies⁴⁰

The European Network of Equality Bodies promotes equality in Europe by supporting Equality Bodies, including the gender dimension. The network functions on the basis of membership, and organises thematic working groups with the aim of gathering experts on a regular basis and discussing issues that burden the states. Stakeholders in the thematic working groups can be national bodies for gender equality, as well as other actors, such as civil society organisations or European and other national institutions. According to information available on the website of this network, one of its members is the institution of the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro. Annual reports on the work of the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms confirm that representatives of this institution take part in the work of EQUINET through participation in annual meetings, panels, conferences and the like, including those concerning gender equality.⁴¹

³⁸ Scientific analysis and advise on gender equality in the EU (SAAGE), Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini, available at: <https://bit.ly/3kEj8Xy>

³⁹ European Equality Law Network, available at: <http://bit.ly/3iV20w5>

⁴⁰ Equinet: European Network of Equality Bodies, available at: <https://bit.ly/3WAeJ50>

⁴¹ According to the 2017 Work Report, the Deputy Protector participated in the conference "Strengthening Equality" organised by EQUINET in Brussels.

European Research and Innovation Committee (ERAC)⁴²

ERAC is the EU's strategic policy advisory board on topics related to research and innovation within the European Research Area (ERA). The European Research Area (ERA) is a unique research area, which enables free circulation of researchers, scientific knowledge, and technology. The Committee's key mission is to advise the Council of the EU (especially the Competitiveness Council), the European Commission and EU member states in six priority ERA areas, the fourth of which is gender equality and gender mainstreaming of public policies. In addition to European Union member states, **Montenegro is also listed among the states that can participate as observers**. ERAC meets four times a year in plenary sessions, and the Committee is co-chaired by the European Commission and an elected representative from an EU member state.

Directorate-General for Development and Cooperation (DEVCO)

DEVCO's mission is to design policies to reduce poverty in the world, ensure sustainable development, and promote democracy, peace and security. It is responsible for implementation of EU foreign aid instruments, and coordination of actions of EU member states and other actors in relation to common values and priorities. It consists of nine directorates, including the Unit for Gender Equality, Human Rights and Democratic Governance. This unit develops policies and provides steer on the quality of policies, coordinates annual meetings of experts on gender equality issues, including representatives of EU delegations in non-member states.

European External Action Service (EEAS) – Ambassador for Gender Equality and Diversity⁴³

The European External Action Service (EEAS) underlines the importance of promoting gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, emphasising that they are significant political objectives and priorities of the European Union and its internal and external policies. The position of ambassador for gender equality and diversity was, therefore, established within the EEAS, with the aim of implementing GAP III and promoting gender equality through external action.

⁴² European Research Area and Innovation Committee (ERAC), available at: <https://bit.ly/3J7oF2M>

⁴³ European Union External Action – The Diplomatic Service of the European Union, Gender and Diversity, available at: <http://bit.ly/3lhxtjo>

Advisory Group for Women in Rural Areas ⁴⁴

This group consists of representatives of socioeconomic organisations (women workers, women agricultural producers, women consumers) and meets once a year. The work of this advisory group is coordinated by the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development⁴⁵ in the European Commission.

European Network to Promote Women's Entrepreneurship (WES)⁴⁶

The European Network to Promote Women's Entrepreneurship (WES) promotes the interests of women in business and entrepreneurship, with members from 31 countries - 28 EU member states, Iceland, Norway and Turkey, participating at the level of representatives of national governments and institutions.⁴⁷ The network provides support, advice and information on existing support for women entrepreneurs and reports on activities that national governments have implemented to advance the position of women in this area.

FRA – Agency for Fundamental Rights of the European Union ⁴⁸

The Agency for Fundamental Rights of the European Union is an independent centre for promotion and protection of human rights in the European Union, which works with the aim of defending the fundamental rights of everyone within the community, and cooperates with subjects at the local and international level, especially with decision-makers and policy creators. As gender equality between women and men is a fundamental right of the EU, protected by the EU Charter on Fundamental Rights, it is also the focus of the Agency's work.

European Judicial Training Network – EJTN

EJTN is the lead platform for promotion of European judicial training and knowledge exchange, representing the interests of over 120,000 European judges, prosecutors, judicial trainers and court staff across Europe. EJTN develops training standards and curricula, coordinates exchanges and judicial training programmes, drives development of expertise through training, and promotes cooperation between judicial training institutions within the EU. With this mandate, EJTN promotes training programmes with a “European dimension” for members of the judiciary in Europe. Their curricula also contains training with a gender equality component, e.g. “Gender and domestic violence” and “EU and gender equality”, which offers judges and prosecutors an overview of the key concepts of direct and

44 Source: European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)

45 Directorate-General Agriculture and Rural Development, European Commission, available at: <http://bit.ly/3j1AH31>

46 European Network to Promote Women's Entrepreneurship (WES), available at: <http://bit.ly/3HnBmo0>

47 WES Reports, WEgate, available at: <http://bit.ly/3HnBmo0>

48 FRA – European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, available at: <http://bit.ly/3WzMt2h>

indirect discrimination, advancing knowledge on gender-based discrimination, maternity discrimination and the like. The Montenegrin Centre for Training in Judiciary and State Prosecution has participated in activities offered by EJTJ since 2013 as an observer, which is a positive model for implementation of early integration measures in practice. In 2021, 128 representatives of the Montenegrin judiciary participated EJTJ activities, while six judges and one advisor in the prosecution attended the “European Law on Gender Equality” training.⁴⁹

European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)⁵⁰

EIGE collects, analyses, processes and distributes data and information on gender equality issues, and works towards making them comparable, reliable and relevant for users. As an autonomous body, EIGE operates within the framework of European Union policies and initiatives. The European Parliament and the Council of the EU defined the basis for the objectives and tasks of the Institute in the Founding Regulation, and assigned it a central role in facing the relevant challenges, and promoting the equality of women and men throughout the European Union. The Founding Regulation of the European Institute for Gender Equality⁵¹ defines the obligation of provision of information to EU institutions on gender equality and gender-sensitive policies in member states and **candidates for membership** in the European Union. To support better informed policy-making, EIGE contributes to the promotion of gender equality in Europe by providing high-level expert assistance to the European Commission, the European Parliament, member states, and candidates for enlargement.

As a unique aspect of its work, EIGE has developed a cooperation programme with candidates for membership in the EU, as well as potential candidates.⁵² Under the European Commission Instrument for Pre-Accession Support (IPA), EIGE’s key objective is to support the Western Balkans and Turkey to improve gender equality policies and monitor the process of achieving gender equality. The lead partners for cooperation are the national bodies in charge of gender equality, which in the case of Montenegro is the Department for Gender Equality Affairs within the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, as well as with national statistical offices, i.e. the Statistical Office of Montenegro.

EIGE underlines that cooperation with candidate countries and potential candidates is based on these countries’ own initiative. In other words, the initiative for cooperation must come from the candidate country, with strong political commitment. “EIGE, as an agency of the European Union, does not have a mandate to impose obligations on candidate countries, but we aim to share knowledge and expertise, and therefore strengthen the capacities of

49 Annual work report of the Centre for Training in Judiciary and State Prosecution for 2021, Centre for Training in Judiciary and State Prosecution, 2021, available at: <https://bit.ly/3kHqw4e>

50 European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), available at: <http://bit.ly/3j786JG>

51 Founding Regulation of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EC) no. 1922/2006 European Parliament and the Council of the EU, 20 December 2006, available at: <http://bit.ly/3kxZOLw>

52 Cooperation with EU candidate countries and potential candidates, European Institute for Gender Equality, available at: <http://bit.ly/3WuVA4x>

candidate countries to further gender equality”, said the project manager for the Western Balkans and Turkey.⁵³

According to available data, Montenegro has so far cooperated with the EU Gender Equality Institute, mainly with the aim of measuring the gender equality index and establishing a statistical database of gender equality. The Gender Equality Index, which is regularly measured by this Institute, focuses on closing the gender gap in six key domains: money, knowledge, time, power and health. It represents a comparable means of measurement and is important for monitoring levels of gender (in)equality in member states, as well as countries in the Western Balkans and Turkey. It enables regional comparison between member states and candidate countries for EU membership, as well as potential candidates. Development of the Gender Equality Index in the Western Balkans and Turkey is a project that first started in 2015, and continues to be a leading initiative in cooperation with countries in the EU accession process. So far, four countries in the region have calculated their Gender Equality Index, and their results are lower than the EU average - 27, while the EU average is 67.4 (2020). While countries in the region have more up-to-date gender index results, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, with an index calculated 2022, or Serbia, which has indices for 2016, 2018 and 2021, Montenegro currently only has the index for 2019, when it scored 55 points. The highest result was achieved in the domain of health, while the lowest was achieved in the domain of power (35.1) and time (52.7).

EIGE also maintains an extensive database of women and men in decision-making positions,⁵⁴ which includes important information from all EU member states as well as potential candidates. The objective of the database is to build a broad overview of statistics on gender, and highlight the gap and inequality between women and men in the following sectors: politics, public administration, justice, business and finance, social partners and NGOs, environment protection, media, science and sports. Thus, in the Western Balkans and Turkey, EIGE recognised the imbalance between women and men in large corporations and financial institutions as particularly worrying, and warned against lagging behind member states. According to EIGE data, women in Montenegro make up only 20 percent of the total number of chairs and board members in the largest companies.

European Parliament’s Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality⁵⁵

In line with the Rules of Procedure,⁵⁶ the European Parliament’s Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality is responsible for defining, promoting and protecting women’s rights in the European Union, promoting women’s rights in third countries, promoting policies of equal opportunities, equality of women and men, particularly in the labour market and the workplace, elimination of all forms of violence and discrimination based

53 An interview with Milana Lazić, project manager for the Western Balkans and Turkey at the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), held on 17 February 2022 via Zoom.

54 Gender Statistics Database, European Institute for Gender Equality, available at: <http://bit.ly/3GXZPQg>

55 Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality, European Parliament, available at: <http://bit.ly/3JbT1kK>

56 *Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament*, European Parliament, available at: <http://bit.ly/3HofQjM>

on gender, implementation and further development of empowerment in all sectors and policies, monitoring and implementation of international agreements and conventions related to women's rights, and raising awareness of women's rights.

Gender Mainstreaming Network of the European Parliament⁵⁷

The Gender Equality Network is chaired by the European Parliament Committee for Women's Rights and Gender Equality, and connects Members of Parliament and civil servants with a mandate of integrating the gender dimension into the committee's work. They are supported by gender mainstreaming administrators in each Parliamentary Committee secretariat.

High Level Group on Gender Equality, European Parliament

The group works in close cooperation with the European Parliament Committee for Women's Rights and Gender Equality, in order to ensure the existence of adequate administrative structures for inclusion of gender issues in the Parliament's activities. In cooperation with parliamentary committees and delegations, and under the leadership of the Committee for Women's Rights, the group promotes inclusion of the gender dimension in the work of all committees, all information and communication policies, and the budget of the Parliament.

Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Unit (EIDU), DG PERS⁵⁸

Unlike the political bodies mentioned above, the Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Unit is part of the administrative structure of the European Parliament, which provides support to bodies within the Secretariat of the European Parliament. EIDU is responsible for implementing equality and inclusion policy formulated by the Bureau of the European Parliament, designing projects to promote participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities, reporting, analysing data from a gender perspective and preventing discrimination, encouraging a safe and inclusive work environment, designing projects that promote a good work and life balance, implementing policies designed to ensure dignity in the workplace, organising awareness training, and providing assistance in equality and diversity issues.

⁵⁷ *Gender Mainstreaming in the EU: State of Play*, European Parliament, available at: <https://bit.ly/3XsEDJa>

⁵⁸ *"Gender Mainstreaming in the European Parliament: State of Play"*, European Parliamentary Research Service, 2021, available at: <https://bit.ly/3iT3eYP>

EU-LEVEL PROGRAMMES OF RELEVANCE FOR ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY⁵⁹

Horizon Europe Framework Programme (HORIZON)⁶⁰

Projects within the Horizon programme, which will be implemented from December 2023 to 12 March 2024, should contribute to achieving advanced and sustainable support for coordination of gender equality and inclusiveness policy in member states and candidates for membership, through citizen participation. The overarching objectives areas follows: improved working conditions in European research and innovation organisations, including the private sector, through improved political dialogue on inclusive plans and policies for gender equality, as well as increased research quality through integration of a gender perspective and intersectional dimensions in the content of research and innovation. The planned launch date for the programme is 6 December 2023, and according to the work plan,⁶¹ Montenegro (legal entities registered in Montenegro), is on the list of countries that can apply for financing, while the Ministry of European Affairs states that Montenegro is currently using the Horizon Europe program, i.e. that a memorandum was signed.⁶²

Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV) – Furthering equality⁶³

As part of the program, a call was issued for the promotion of equality and fight against racism, xenophobia and discrimination. The aim of the call is to support a comprehensive and intersectional approach, financing specific actions to prevent and fight intolerance based on sexual orientation, gender identity, racism and xenophobia. Projects can be national or transnational, with transnational projects being encouraged. The call is open until 20 June 2023, and legal entities (public or private) from Montenegro, as a candidate country for membership, meet the requirements for applying.

According to information from the Ministry of European Affairs, the Information on the need to initiate negotiations on Montenegro's participation in the CERV program was adopted last year by the Government, with the conclusion that the Ministry of Justice should initiate the negotiation procedure, which is ongoing.⁶⁴

59 Only programmes that are not exclusively designed to support the accession process of candidate countries for EU membership are included. Programmes intended for the region, including Montenegro, and relevant for gender equality are the Gender Equality Facility, designed with the aim of ensuring gender equality in candidate countries for EU membership, during their accession process; Coordination Mechanism between the Council of Europe, the European Union, field offices of the Council of Europe, delegations of the European Union and the so-called coordinator of users of horizontal funds (Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey (Horizontal Facility)); and support programmes for civil society organisations in the region (Civil Society Facility).

60 Horizon Europe Framework Programme (HORIZON), *Funding & Tender Opportunities*, European Commission, available at: <http://bit.ly/3WozC32>

61 *Horizon Europe Work Programme 2023-2024*, European Commission, December 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/3R5ySif>

62 An interview with Bojan Vujović, Acting Director General for European Funds at Ministry of European Affairs, held on 27 February at Ministry of European Affairs.

63 Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV) – Equality and Fight Against Racism, available at: <http://bit.ly/3HzJ5R4>

64 An interview with Bojan Vujović, Acting Director General for European Funds at Ministry of European Affairs, held on 27 February at Ministry of European Affairs.

Citizens Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV) – Gender-based violence⁶⁵

Through the call for proposals on prevention and suppression of gender-based violence and violence against children, a certain number of transnational, national and regional actors/intermediaries will be financed to build capacities and allocate (subgrant) funds to civil society organisations active at the local, regional and national level. The EU will use this mechanism to help strengthen and build the capacity of independent civil society organisations working on prevention of all forms of gender-based violence against women and girls, as well as violence against LGBTIQ persons. Legal entities (public or private) from Montenegro, as a candidate country for membership, meet the requirements for applying.

Citizens Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV) – eJustice and rights of victims⁶⁶

The call aims to facilitate effective and non-discriminatory access to justice for all, as well as effective legal protection, including access to electronic tools (e-Justice). It will facilitate improvement of support services for victims through provision of targeted and integrated support services for victims of domestic violence, gender-based violence, victims of hate crimes, victims of war crimes, in a targeted, gender-sensitive and integrated manner, through psychological and social support, and in cooperation with police and judicial authorities. Legal entities (public or private) from Montenegro, as a candidate country for membership, meet the requirements for applying.

Simone Veil Programme⁶⁷

The Simone Veil programme is implemented by the European Parliament with the aim of promoting women's participation in politics and ensuring inclusion of gender-related matters in legislation and political practice. The parliamentary programme helps to empower women in parliaments to make laws gender-sensitive, and to improve gender-sensitive budgeting. The main beneficiaries of the programme are women from EU member states, and states in the regions that the European Parliament identified as priorities in its annual programme. The programme offered an opportunity to the Parliament to respond to specific requests from other states. Within the framework of the programme, members of the Parliament of Montenegro have already been on a study visit to the European Parliament on two occasions, and had a series of meetings with colleagues, with whom they discussed the EU legal acquis in the area of gender equality, EU enlargement from a gender perspective, and empowerment of women political leaders.

⁶⁵ Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV) – Gender-Based Violence, European Commission, available at: <http://bit.ly/3D7kQH1>

⁶⁶ Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV) – eJustice, Victims' Rights and Procedural Rights, European Commission, available at: <http://bit.ly/3XqyxJk>

⁶⁷ Simone Veil Programme, European Parliament, available at: <http://bit.ly/3XN7qrB>

CONCLUSION

Efforts to improve gender equality through Montenegro's accession to the EU are still mainly focused on priorities from Chapter 23 (judiciary and fundamental rights), although work is ongoing at the EU level to integrate the gender perspective into the negotiation process as a whole, and into financial support mechanisms for candidate countries. Additionally, an entire network of institutions, expert support and programmes has been developed at the EU level, which directly target promotion of gender equality, and some of these institutions and programmes include Montenegro and other Western Balkans countries. Therefore, there is great potential for using early integration into these structures at the EU level, which can lead to significant improvements in terms of adoption of good standards in the area of gender equality.

The revised methodology for EU enlargement has the potential to stimulate transformation of the accession process and introduce more dynamic progress in fulfilling obligations, especially bearing in mind the current stagnation on the way to full membership. Nevertheless, although the fundamentally revised methodology potentially offers greater access to IPA funds and the possibility of early integration into the work of various EU institutions and initiatives, these mechanisms have not been fully operationalised in terms of defining how they will be applied in practice.

The methodology defines that sectoral sub-committees of the Stabilization and Association Agreement will hold a dialogue on identification of opportunities for early integration, but there are no predictable and clear guidelines for the state regarding which institutions, programmes and initiatives offer membership, in which capacity (observer, with the right to vote, or without the right to vote), at which stage and after fulfilling which conditions, i.e. after receiving which grades in the annual reports of the European Union on the country's readiness and progress towards full membership.

While, on the positive side, the Government considered the Information on progress in the process of negotiations on a cluster approach, which identifies potential institutions and programmes at the EU level, there is no unified and comprehensive information on the possible progress of Montenegro in using the benefits of early integration. Bearing the above in mind, it is not possible to assess the extent to which the state has so far taken advantage of the revised methodology in terms of early integration and increased access to funds.

Nevertheless, certain positive examples of Montenegro's participation in EU networks, programmes and institutions should be more actively promoted and analysed with the aim of further improvement, particularly regarding the effects they have on strengthening the capacities of our administration and decision-makers, and on improving dialogue on sectoral policies. Such examples include participation of the Centre for Training in Judiciary and State Prosecution in activities offered by the European Judicial Training Network (ETJN), participation of the institution of the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms in the work of the annual meetings of the European Network of Equality Bodies, participation of Montenegro in the EU Gender Equality Index, and participation of MPs of the Parliament of Montenegro in the "Simon Veil" programme of the European Parliament.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.** The Government of Montenegro should prepare a new overview of implementation of early integration into EU institutions and programmes, and propose a road map for using the potential of early integration in the coming period with a special focus on gender equality;
- 2.** The Committee for Gender Equality and the Committee for European Integration should provide support in this process, in terms of identifying early integration measures through consultative hearings and consideration of relevant reports from ministries, the Government and other institutions;
- 3.** The Government, relevant ministries and other institutions should use the model of existing practices and examples of participation in the activities of certain institutions, networks and programmes at the EU level to proactively express interest in participation, or in attaining observer status in advisory and expert bodies for gender equality, e.g. the lead bodies presented in this analysis (Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men of the European Commission, High-Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming, SAAGE, European Network of Legal Experts in Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination, ERAC, DEVCO, Advisory Group for Women in Rural Areas, European Network to Promote Women's Entrepreneurship, and others);
- 4.** Montenegro's Department for Gender Equality Affairs, should closely cooperate with the Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) and regularly provide data on all the indicators that EIGE uses to measure progress of candidate countries for membership, in order to monitor the gap between Montenegro and EU member states;
- 5.** The European Commission should operationalise the revised methodology for Montenegro, in such a way that it provides detailed guidelines to the sectoral subcommittees for negotiations on early integration into the structures of the European Union. In terms of predictability of the process, it is particularly important to identify the structures within the European Parliament, the European Commission and the Council of the European Union for which early membership is possible, and to define the degree of possible integration in the aforementioned structures in communication with the Ministry of European Affairs of Montenegro and other institutions;
- 6.** The European Commission should operationalise the revised methodology for Montenegro by defining the various levels of membership for all individual institutional structures in relation to the country's level of readiness, before its full membership in the EU; those levels may include dialogue on specific sectoral policies, observer status, the right to speak without the right to vote, participation

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ABOUT INSTITUTE ALTERNATIVE

Institute Alternative (IA) is a non-governmental organisation, established in September 2007 by a group of citizens with experience in civil society, public administration and business sector.

Our mission is to contribute to strengthening of democracy and good governance through and policy analysis as well as monitoring of public institutions performance.

Our objectives are to increase the quality of work, accountability and transparency, efficiency of public institutions and public officials; to encourage open, public, constructive and well-argument discussions on important policy issues; raising public awareness about important policy issues, strengthening the capacity of all sectors in the state and society for the development of public policies.

The values we follow in our work are dedication to our mission, independence, constant learning, networking, cooperation and teamwork.

We function as a think tank or a research centre, focusing on the overarching areas of good governance, transparency and accountability. The areas of our work and influence are structured around the following five main programmes: public administration; accountable public finance; parliamentary programme; security and defence, and social policy.

On the basis of our five programmes, we monitor the process of accession negotiations with the EU, actively participating in working groups Public procurement (5), Judiciary and Fundamental rights (23) and Financial control (32). Our flagship project is the Public Policy School, which is organized since 2012, and in 2018 we organized the first Open Budget School.

So far we cooperated with over 40 organisations within regional networks in the Western Balkans and with over 100 organisations in Montenegro. Institute is actively engaged in regional networks: Think for Europe (TEN), Pointpulse, SELDI, WeBER, UNCAC Coalition, Global BTAP, PASOS and The Southeast Europe Coalition on Whistleblower Protection.

The results of our research are summarised in 129 studies, reports and analyses, and the decisionmakers were addressed 1036 recommendations. Over four thousand times we communicated our proposals and recommendation to the media for better quality public policies.

We started three internet pages. My town is a pioneer endeavour of visualisation of budgetary data of local self-administrations. My Administration followed, which serves as an address for all those citizens that have encountered a problem when interacting with public administration and its service delivery system. The newest internet portal, My Money, provided national budget data visualisation.

Institute Alternative regularly publishes information about finances, projects and donors that support the work of the organisation. For this reason, the Institute have five-stars rating third year in a row, according to a survey conducted by the international non-profit organisation Transparify, which evaluates transparency for over 200 research centers.

President of the Managing Board is Stevo Muk, and our organisation currently has ten members.

www.mojauprava.me

www.mojnovac.me

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