

MONITORING REPORT: PERFORMANCE OF FIVE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

(1 october 2022 – 1 october 2023)



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Introduction

The observed period of the work of the Parliament was marked by a series of political crises that have had an impact on the performance of the Parliament's working bodies. Following the vote of no confidence in the government of Dritan Abazović, the then President of Montenegro, Milo Đukanović, refused to propose Miodrag Lekić as the new prime minister designate, with the rationale that no signatures in support of that request had been submitted within the legally defined deadline. MPs then proposed amendments to the Law on President, which provided that if the President failed to fulfil his or her duties regarding the procedure for appointing the prime minister designate in accordance with the Law, with the aim of protecting the public interest, the candidate who enjoyed the majority support of the total number of MPs in the Parliament would be considered prime minister designate. The then parliamentary majority adopted these changes in December 2023. Despite the adopted changes, Miodrag Lekić failed to form the Government of Montenegro, so the President of the country, Milo Đukanović, issued a decree on 16 March 2023, dissolving the 27th convocation of the Parliament of Montenegro and calling early parliamentary elections scheduled for June 11 of the same year.

Despite the dissolution of the Parliament and the vote of no-confidence in the Government, the practice of discussing legal proposals that do not meet fundamental public criteria continued. In the period between the dissolution of the Parliament and the formation of its new, 28th convocation, as many as 27 legislative proposals were submitted to the parliamentary procedure, 18 of which were proposed by the Government, while nine were submitted by MPs. Among those legislative proposals, MPs adopted changes such as amendments to the Law on Local Self-Government, which Institute Alternative has previously analysed and found that it degraded the employment system at the local level, and interfered in the competences of local election commissions. However, these amendments to the Law did not enter into force because the President refused to sign this, and other legal acts voted upon in the period that followed the dissolution of the 27th convocation of the Parliament of Montenegro.

Following the parliamentary elections held on 11 June 2023, the first (constitutive) session of the Parliament was held on 27 July 2023, which resulted in the adoption of the Report of the State Election Commission on early parliamentary elections, after which the session was interrupted, only to resume on 30 October, resulting in election of the leadership structures of the Parliament of Montenegro, and then the 44th Government of Montenegro, led by Miloško Spajić.



The disputed amendments to the Law on President were adopted in December 2022. However, in June 2023, the Constitutional Court of Montenegro unanimously abolished the disputed Articles of this Law, including the provisions related to nomination of the prime minister designate of the Government of Montenegro.

This analysis provides an overview of the work of five parliamentary committees (Committee on the Political System, Judiciary and Administration; Security and Defence Committee; Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms; Anticorruption Committee; and Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget) for a period of one year, October 2022 - October 2023. This dynamic period affected the work of the Parliament of Montenegro and its working bodies, resulting in committees operating without work plans, which makes it difficult to assess implementation of their activities. Numerous problems that were observed in earlier periods of the committees' work continued to burden their activities, such as the holding of hearings that are not accompanied by appropriate reports with conclusions and recommendations, failure to adopt reports on the work of institutions, lack of recommendations for their improvement, and adoption of legal amendments without discussion.

Considering the lack of significant qualitative steps in improving the work of the parliamentary committees, all the previous recommendations provided by the Institute Alternative through earlier reports on the work of the committees remain relevant.¹

1 Milena Muk and Bojana Pravić, "Are Parliamentary Committees up to the Task" Analysis of the Performance of Five Parliamentary Committees (October 1, 2021 - October 1, 2022)", October 2022, available at: <https://institut-alternativa.org/en/are-parliamentary-committees-up-to-the-task/>

Committee on the Political System, Judiciary and Administration

In the period October 2022 - October 2023, the Committee on the Political System, Judiciary and Administration was the most active committee in terms of the number of sessions, with as many as 27 sessions held. However, this Committee did not adopt its Work Plan for the current year until October 2023.

In the observed period, the Committee held **three control and three consultative hearings**. In November 2022, the Committee held a control hearing on the topic "Inhumane and abusive detention of the Metropolitan of Montenegro and the Littoral, Amfilohije Radović, in the premises of the Podgorica Security Centre on 22 June 2020" followed by a report with seven views and opinions and five conclusions. The report underlined the importance of this control hearing for collecting data and informing the public, as well as the importance of the guiding recommendation of the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms to the Police Directorate, which is obliged to respond reactively and proactively in such cases.²

A control hearing was also held on the topic of "Implementation of the agreement of the state prosecutors' offices of Montenegro and the Republic of Croatia on cooperation and prosecution of perpetrators of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, with special emphasis on the investigation of the 'Lora 3' case", followed by a **report that included six views and opinions and four conclusions**. On this occasion, the Committee formed an additional Subcommittee³ for analysis of the actions of state authorities in cases of war crimes, which consisted of one representative of each parliamentary club, and was tasked with preparing a Report on the activities undertaken and all available information that could contribute to the resolution and clarification of disputed issues. According to the Decision on the formation of the said Subcommittee, the report was to be submitted to the Committee for adoption and further action. Through a request for free access to information, we asked for the said Report on the activities undertaken, as well as the Committee's conclusions regarding the submitted Report, in line with Articles 5 and 6 of the Decision on the Formation of the Subcommittee for the Analysis

2 Report from the control hearing with proposed conclusions on the topic: "Inhumane and abusive detention of the Metropolitan of Montenegro and the Littoral, Amfilohije Radović, in the premises of the Podgorica Security Centre on 22 June 2020", available at: <https://zakoni.skupstina.me/zakoni/web/dokumenta/sjednice-radnih-tijela/3253/8615-00-63-3-.pdf>

3 Decision on the formation of a Subcommittee for the analysis of the actions of state authorities in cases of war crimes, available at: <https://zakoni.skupstina.me/zakoni/web/dokumenta/sjednice-radnih-tijela/3313/8967-00-63-3.pdf>



of Proceedings in War Crimes Cases. The Parliament of Montenegro informed us⁴ that it did not have the requested information, i.e. that the Subcommittee was not operating in line with the planned dynamics, for objective reasons, and that it failed to submit the said Report to the Committee on the Political System, Judiciary and Administration, as stated in the rationale of the Decision.

Following a lengthy control hearing on the topic of “Proceedings of the judicial authorities in the case of the lifting of the entry ban into Montenegro for Veljko Belivuk and Marko Miljković”, the Committee adopted a Report with 5 views and opinions and 4 conclusions. In its conclusions, the Committee also made certain recommendations on improving inter-institutional cooperation, both in terms of collection and exchange of information, and in terms of providing the necessary support to key institutions. It also provided views on the implementation of the institute of security disturbances of the work of the Police Administration, which exist if an individual maintains ties with members of organised criminal groups, terrorists and persons who collect data without authorisation, or are suspected of belonging to such groups, or if the person is registered as a user of narcotic drugs.⁵

Consultative hearings were held on the occasion of the election of the Supreme State Prosecutor, the election of a member of the Judicial Council from among distinguished lawyers, and on the occasion of the consideration of the Draft Law on Amendments to the Law on Confiscation of Assets Acquired through Criminal Activity. Following the hearing, the Committee did not provide its opinion on the Draft Law on Amendments to the Law on Confiscation of Assets Acquired through Criminal Activity, which would have enabled the members of the Committee and other MPs to familiarise themselves with the legislative proposal. In addition, this Committee formed a Working Group for improvement of the draft Law. In the end, the Government, which proposed the draft Law, withdrew it from the parliamentary procedure.⁶

Additionally, although initiatives to hold certain hearings were adopted, they were not implemented before October 2023, i.e. the period covered by this analysis. For example, the control hearing on the topic of “Public Administration Reform” that was scheduled for the 63rd session of the Committee was delayed and was not held in the 27th convocation of the Parliament of Montenegro. The Committee

4 Decision number: 00-41/24-11/3 dated 22 March 2024.

5 Report from the control hearing with proposed conclusions on the subject: Proceedings of the judicial authorities in the case of the lifting of the entry ban into Montenegro for Veljko Belivuk and Marko Miljković”, available at:
<https://zakoni.skupstina.me/zakoni/web/dokumenta/sjednice-radnih-tijela/3422/9102-00-63-3-.pdf>

6 Draft Law on Amendments to the Law on Confiscation of Assets Acquired through Criminal Activity, available at: <https://zakoni.skupstina.me/zakoni/web/app.php/akt/3020>



also started a control hearing of the Acting Supreme State Prosecutor and the Chief Special Prosecutor, deliberating on the Special Report on activities in the field of the fight against high-level corruption and organised crime, submitted on the basis of Article 147 paragraph 5 of the Law on the State Prosecutor's Office. However, at the start of the session, it was observed that both entities submitted periodic reports on their work, but that the session would continue on another day because there was an overlap with a session of the Parliament. Consequently, the Committee session was discontinued, and the control hearing was not held. At its 81st session, the Committee also discussed an initiative launched by Dragan Bojović, as a member of the Anticorruption Committee, in relation to organising a joint hearing of the head of the Anticorruption Unit within the Police Directorate, dedicated to discussion of alleged torture of certain detainees. However, the Committee did not vote on this initiative and the hearing was not held.

The session in which the Committee was supposed to discuss the draft Law on Amendments to the Law on the State Prosecutor's Office was scheduled for 3 February 2023, but the session was postponed, and a new session with this item on the agenda was not scheduled. The session was subsequently not held because the Government of Montenegro withdrew the draft Law, which was supposed to extend the mandate of the acting Supreme State Prosecutor until the election of a Supreme State Prosecutor who would serve in a full capacity. In addition, draft laws that reach the parliamentary procedure are often not discussed in a timely manner, so the draft Law on the Prohibition of Fascist, Neo-fascist and Military Nationalist Organisations and their Symbols was the subject of discussion only at a session held in November 2022, i.e. more than two years after this Law was submitted to parliamentary procedure. The Law was discussed by MPs without the accompanying opinion of the Government of Montenegro, which was not submitted even two years since the draft Law reached the parliamentary procedure, although the stipulated legal obligation to do so is 15 days from the day of submission of the Law to the parliamentary procedure.

The work of the Committee on the Political System, Judiciary and Administration also illustrates that important laws are often adopted without prior quality discussions. **In a single session, which lasted a little more than 18 minutes, this Committee adopted as many as four amendments to legislative proposals without prior discussion - the Law on State and Other Holidays, the Law on Registers of Temporary and Permanent Residence, the Law on Internal Affairs and the Law on Local Self-Government, while at the 57th session, five amendments to legal proposals were adopted in only 37 minutes, four of which were not accompanied by any kind of discussion.**



Security and Defence Committee

In the period October 2022 - October 2023, the Security and Defence Committee held seven sessions. In addition to the Rules of Procedure, the work of this Committee is regulated by the Law on Parliamentary Oversight of the Defence and Security Sector, and the sessions can be open or closed to the public. Only two sessions were partially closed to the public, one of which was the 39th session, which considered the Report of the National Security Council in the period 13 June - 13 December 2022. The members of the Committee did not accept this Report, but they did not propose any conclusions that would improve the work of this Council, stating that the discussion pertained to information marked as confidential.⁷

According to the Law on Parliamentary Oversight of the Security and Defence Sector, the Security and Defence Committee is also obliged to adopt an annual parliamentary oversight plan for the following year by the end of the current calendar year. However, the Parliamentary Oversight Plan for 2023⁸ was adopted by this Committee only in April 2023, without a discussion that would accompany the adoption of such an important document for the work of the Committee.

The Parliamentary Oversight Plan, adopted past the deadline stipulated by the Law also had a poor rate of implementation. Therefore, the Committee neglected an important control mechanism at its disposal, i.e. the review of annual reports for 2022, including reports on the work of the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces of Montenegro, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the National Security Agency. The deadline for reviewing these reports according to the Plan was April and May.

In addition, this Committee continued to ignore the legal possibility to consider the half-yearly reports submitted by the Police Director on results in the fight against organised crime and corruption. With adoption of the amended Law on Internal Affairs in 2018, and as stipulated in Article 16 of this Law from 2021, the head of the Police Directorate has the obligation to prepare this special report and submit it to the Parliament. According to Article 16, the director has the obligation to send reports to MPs twice a year - on 1 June and 1 December at the latest. Institute Alternative previously drew attention to the passive approach of the Committee, since it considered this report only once, immediately upon the introduction of the relevant legal provision in 2018. This control mechanism has

7 Report on the consideration of the Report of the National Security Council on issues within the scope of its work for the period June 13 - December 13, 2022, available at:

<https://zakoni.skupstina.me/zakoni/web/dokumenta/sjednice-radnih-tijela/3387/9076-.pdf>

8 Parliamentary Oversight Plan for 2023, Security and Defence Committee, available at:

<https://zakoni.skupstina.me/zakoni/web/dokumenta/sjednice-radnih-tijela/3387/9035-00-63-4-23-.pdf>



additional weight, considering that this report is marked with a level of secrecy, i.e. that the public does not know what the report looks like and what information it contains. Therefore, it is the responsibility of members of the Committee to analyse the report and determine whether the results in the previous period were satisfactory or not.⁹

In the observed period, the Committee held **two control and two consultative hearings**. One control hearing was of Prime Minister Dritan Abazović, Minister of Internal Affairs Filip Adžić, Minister of Foreign Affairs Ranko Krivokapić, director of the Police Directorate Zoran Brđanin, acting director of the National Security Agency Savo Kentera, acting Supreme State Prosecutor Maja Jovanović and Chief Special Prosecutor Vladimir Novović. The topic of the hearing was current events in the security sector with special reference to the question of cigarette smuggling and international diplomacy. The second control hearing was of the then Prime Minister Dritan Abazović, Minister of Internal Affairs Filip Adžić, Chief Special Prosecutor Vladimir Novović, head of the Special Police Department Predrag Šuković, former director of the Police Directorate Zoran Brđanin, acting director of the National Security Agency Boris Milić, and the coordinator of the Bureau for Operational Coordination of Intelligence and Security Sector Authorities, Marko Kovač, on the occasion of events in the security sector. Nevertheless, the Committee continued the practice of adopting reports that were not accompanied by appropriate conclusions, with the explanation that it was due to information secrecy and information presented in this regard, and that the relevant procedure before the competent state authority was ongoing.

Although it is legally mandatory for the Government to submit an opinion on a draft law within fifteen days, that opinion is often not provided within the prescribed deadline or is not provided at all, which was the case with the Draft Law on Amendments to the Law on Protection and Rescue, adopted in the Parliament and the session of the Committee, without the submission of the Government's opinion.¹⁰ Aside from the introductory explanation provided by the representative of the proposer, who explained that the amendments to this law are aimed at improving the conditions for retirement, i.e. earlier retirement of employees of the Protection and Rescue Service, as well as increased pensions by 30%, this Law was adopted without any approval deliberations at the Committee session.

When it comes to consideration of candidates' proposals for appointment to leadership positions in the defence and security sector, the Committee considered

9 MPs do not care about reports on crime, Institute Alternative, September 2022, available at: <https://institut-alternativa.org/en/mps-do-not-care-about-the-reports-on-crime/>

10 Draft Law on Amendments to the Law on Protection and Rescue, available at: <https://zakoni.skupstina.me/zakoni/web/app.php/akt/3025>



the appointment of the military-diplomatic representative of Montenegro, Brigadier General Milutin Đurović. However, this Committee did not consider the appointment of military-diplomatic representatives, Colonel Željko Radulović and Lieutenant Nevena Nikolić, due to a lack of quorum for the 41st session of the Committee, as well as the appointment of the Director of the National Security Agency, Boris Milić, although the Government submitted this proposal to the Committee for its opinion.

Anticorruption Committee

In the reporting period, the Anticorruption Committee was the most passive committee in terms of the number of sessions held, with only five sessions. The boycott by opposition MPs, which marked the work of the Parliament of Montenegro in this period, also affected the work of this Committee, especially considering the fact that the function of the Committee's chair is performed by a member of the parliamentary opposition. Due to the boycott, sessions in this period were led by the deputy chair of the Committee, MP Dragan Bojović, and they were scheduled by the president (speaker) of the Parliament, in accordance with Article 63 of the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Montenegro.

As the Committee did not adopt the Report of the Agency for Prevention of Corruption for the third year in a row (2019, 2020 and 2021), a conclusion of the 8th session of the Committee established that it was necessary to draft amendments to the Law on Prevention of Corruption. To that end, the Parliament formed a Working Group, which, in addition to MPs, consisted of representatives of the Ministry of Justice, as well as representatives of the civil sector, with the aim of preparing draft amendments to the Law. Representatives of the Agency for Prevention of Corruption refused to participate in the work of this Working Group, but submitted comments on changes to the Law. The working group for drafting the Draft Law on Amendments to the Law on Prevention of Corruption held 13 sessions, ending in April 2023. At the 10th session of the Committee, held on 26 April 2023, the members of the Committee adopted the Draft Law. Amendments to the Law on Prevention of Corruption were not submitted to the parliamentary procedure until the end of the 27th convocation of the Parliament of Montenegro. At its last, 11th session, the Committee considered the Report on the work of the Agency for Prevention of Corruption for the year 2022, which was also evaluated negatively. Furthermore, representatives of the Agency did not even appear at the session that was deliberating on the Report.

This Committee considered and adopted a Draft Decision on the Amendment of the Decision on the Opening of a Parliamentary Investigation and the Formation



of an Inquiry Committee for Collection of Information and Facts on the Actions of the Competent State Authorities and Other Entities in Relation to the Možura Wind Power Plant Project. The Administrative Committee considered this Decision in February 2023.¹¹ However, it was not possible to form an inquiry committee, because the Committee could not determine who was sitting in the parliamentary majority vs. the parliamentary opposition. The Law on Parliamentary Investigation provides that the chair of the inquiry committee must be from the parliamentary opposition, and the deputy chair from among the parliamentary majority.

Additionally, in October 2021, the Anticorruption Committee adopted two decisions – one to conduct a control hearing of representatives of the Agency for Prevention of Corruption regarding the rulings of the Administrative Court for agency officials linked to the former political regime, and the second to hold a consultative hearing regarding the relationship between the Agency and the State Prosecutor's Office in implementation of the European Agenda in Chapters 23 and 24. During the 27th convocation of the Parliament, there were several remarks on poor communication with the Agency, underlining that it was not possible to schedule hearings, even though an urgent request was sent to the Agency several times to provide information on the basis of which a hearing would be held. As of October 2023, these hearings have still not been held.

Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms

In the period October 2022 - October 2023, the Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms held eight sessions, but even this Committee worked without an adopted Work Plan for the year covered by the observed period.

In the reporting period, this parliamentary working body adopted 96 recommendations and conclusions on the basis of analysed reports, and held thematic sessions, which were mostly precisely formulated and enabled clear addressing of responsibilities. Given that this Committee has produced the largest number of conclusions and recommendations, we sent a request for free access to information in which we requested "Reports on the implementation of the adopted conclusions of the Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms in the period 1 October 2022 – 1 October 2023, in accordance with Article 77 of the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Montenegro". However, the answer that we received from the Committee stated that the late adoption of the Work Plan for 2023 (after

¹¹ Records of the 42nd Session of the Administrative Committee of the 27th convocation of the Parliament of Montenegro, available at:
<https://zakoni.skupstina.me/zakoni/web/dokumenta/sjednice-radnih-tijela/3334/8944-.pdf>



October 2023) was caused by certain hindrances in the work of the Parliament and its working bodies, and that the Committee would try to implement all activities that it could not implement by the end of the year in the first quarter of 2024, before adopting the Work Plan for the following year.¹²

Although it was foreseen in the 2022 Work Plan, a control hearing of the Minister for Human and Minority Rights on the topic “Implementation of the Strategy for Protection of Persons with Disabilities from Discrimination and Promotion of Equality 2017-2021 and Recommendations contained in the Analysis of the Compliance of Legislation in Montenegro with the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, with particular emphasis on monitoring the implementation of the Conclusion adopted on the occasion of the adoption of the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities”, was held only in April 2023 and on that occasion, a Report with 18 conclusions was adopted, underlining certain challenges, such as the lack of institutional mechanisms, e.g. a Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which held its last session in 2018, and the abolition of the Directorate for Protection and Equality of Persons with Disabilities, numerous laws that are not aligned with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as well as problems related to the level of accessibility of facilities in public use.¹³

12 Decision No. 00-63-8/23 dated 20 December 2023.

13 Report from the control hearing of the Minister of Human and Minority Rights, Fatmir Gjeka, on the topic: Implementation of the Strategy for Protection of Persons with Disabilities from Discrimination and Promotion of Equality 2017-2021 and Recommendations contained in the Analysis of the Compliance of Legislation in Montenegro with the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, with particular emphasis on monitoring the implementation of the Conclusion adopted on the occasion of the adoption of the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities, published in the “Official Gazette Montenegro”, number 35/15, available at:

<https://zakoni.skupstina.me/zakoni/web/dokumenta/sjednice-radnih-tijela/3356/9129-00-63-8-23-.pdf>



Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget

In the reporting period, this Committee held 23 sessions and two meetings, i.e. thematic sessions. The Committee failed to hold the 38th session due to lack of quorum on two occasions, where it was supposed to discuss the 2023 draft budget of the State Audit Institution and the Agency for Prevention of Corruption, as well as the 39th and 40th sessions on “Economic situation, challenges and perspectives” and “Energy - situation, challenges and perspectives”, so meetings, or thematic sessions, were organised instead. Meetings in this format are not regulated by the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Montenegro, but were held with the aim of gathering information. As the deputy chair was not present, and the chairman of the Committee had not yet been voted in, the Committee sessions could not be held.

Despite the obligation to do so, by October 2023, the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget did not adopt a work plan for the current year. Therefore, it is impossible to estimate the degree of implementation of the Committee’s activities for 2023.

During one of the Committee sessions, a member of the Committee, Dejan Đurović, recalled the initiative that was adopted back in July 2022 for a consultative hearing on the topic: “The impact of amendments to the Rulebook on special measures of customs supervision and customs procedure for goods used for the supply of means of transport in international traffic, nautical tourism, the maritime economy and the tourist season”, which the Committee had previously supported, but the hearing was not held in the observed period. The members of the Committee unanimously adopted initiatives by the MP Branko Radulović to hold two thematic sessions on the topic “The situation in the industry sector and the need for reindustrialisation with particular reference to the production and processing of steel and aluminium” and “Sustainable modern traffic”, the initiative by MPs Dejan Đurović and Adnan Striković for organising a control hearing of Milutin Đukanović and Nikola Rovčanin, president of the Board of Directors and executive director of Elektropivreda Crne Gore a.d. Nikšić, Rajko Radošević and Vladimir Čađenović, President of the Board of Directors and Executive Director of Montenegro Electricity Distribution System, Podgorica (CEDIS); and Dušan Janjušević and Milan Lekić, president of the Board of Directors and executive director of Rudnik Uglja a.d. (Coal Mine) Pljevlja, on the topic: “The situation in the energy sector of Montenegro, with reference to the operations of key energy companies in Montenegro”.

At one of the sessions, the case of the employees of Telekom Montenegro, who were on strike at the time, was opened, and MP Dejan Đurović sent an urgent request



to the Basic State Prosecutor's Office and called on the Labour Inspectorate to do its job. MP Radulović pointed out that a thematic session related to this case should be held. With confirmation of the then Minister of Finance, Aleksandar Damjanović, a meeting was proposed, aiming to gather members of the Committee on Health, Labour and Social Welfare and the Commission for Monitoring and Control of the Process of Privatisation, but this session did not take place.

The Committee also held **three consultative hearings**. A consultative hearing of registered candidates for the public call for appointment of one member of the Senate of the State Audit Institution was held. Another consultative hearing was held at the initiative of Dejan Đurović on the topic "Work, challenges and perspectives of the company for production, trade of goods and services, Montenegro Bonus Cetinje LLC", as well as a consultative hearing on the topic "Implementation of the Law on the Conversion of Loans in Swiss Francs CHF to Euros EUR". These consultative hearings were not accompanied by specific reports containing assessments and views on the topics for which the hearings were held.

In the reporting period, the Committee considered 44 legal changes and additions, as well as 48 amendments. Nevertheless, the practice of adopting legal proposals in committees without appropriate discussions was evident in the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget. For example, during the 47th session, this Committee discussed ten agenda items in just 38 minutes, among which there were nine legislative proposals, most of which were adopted without discussion.

One of the important control mechanisms available to members of the Parliament of Montenegro is the consideration of reports on the work of institutions. The Committee did not adopt a significant number of work reports, such as the Work Report of the Agency for Protection of Competition for 2020 and 2021, the Work Report of the Electronic Communications Agency for 2021, the Annual Work Reports of the Central Bank for 2019, 2020 and 2021. However, non-adoption of these reports was not accompanied by appropriate recommendations that would improve the work of the institutions whose reports were not adopted.

Recommendations

01

In the reporting period, there were no major qualitative improvements in the work of the observed Committees, so all the recommendations and proposals previously provided by Institute Alternative remain relevant, and are summarised in a report available at the following link:

<https://institut-alternativa.org/en/are-parliamentary-committees-up-to-the-task/>

02

All parliamentary committees should plan their activities in a timely manner in accordance with legal obligations, and adopt work plans for the current year;

03

Control mechanisms should be improved so that parliamentary hearings are followed by appropriate adoption of conclusions and recommendations that would lead to improvement of the work of the institutions and the situation in the relevant areas. The hearings should also be followed by publication of reports on implementation of the said conclusions;

04

In order to proactively respond to challenges in society, it is necessary to hold parliamentary hearings as soon as possible following the adoption of initiatives for hearings;

05

The legislative role of committees should be improved through implementation of appropriate discussions followed by the Government's opinion on the proposed laws before they are adopted in committees;

06

In line with the Law on Parliamentary Investigation, inquiry committees should be formed and parliamentary investigations should be launched.



ANNEX 1 – OVERVIEW OF THE WORK OF THE FIVE COMMITTEES: THE NUMBER OF SESSIONS HELD IN THE PERIOD OCTOBER 2022 – OCTOBER 2023

	Committee on the Political System, Judiciary and Administration	Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget	Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms	Security and Defence Committee	Anti- corruption Committee
October 2022	1	3	1	3	0
November 2022	6	2	0	0	2
December 2022	9	8	2	2	1
January 2023	2	0	0	0	0
February 2023	4	4	1	0	0
March 2023	1	3	0	0	0
April 2023	3	3	1	2	1
May 2023	1	1	3	0	1
Total	27	24	8	7	5

ANNEX 2 – IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2023 PLAN OF PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT OF THE SECURITY AND DEFENCE COMMITTEE

Activity	Timeline / Period	Implementation
Monitoring the activities of authorities and institutions in the field of security and defence in Montenegro, in order to gain insight into the implementation of policies in these areas and submit requests for information on activities and measures taken on any issue within the scope of their work	Continuous	IMPLEMENTED
Oversight over adherence to political, ideological and interest-related neutrality in the work of authorities and institutions referred to in Article 3 paragraph 1 of the Law on Parliamentary Oversight of Security and Defence Sector	Continuous	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED Two control hearings were organised on the situation in the defence sector, but no conclusions were adopted
Consideration of annual reports for 2022	Apr/May 2023	NOT IMPLEMENTED
Report on the work of the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces of Montenegro, 2022	Apr/May 2023	NOT IMPLEMENTED
Report on the work of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, 2022	Apr/May 2023	NOT IMPLEMENTED
Report on the work of the National Security Agency, 2022	Apr/May 2023	NOT IMPLEMENTED
Report on the field of protection and rescue, 2022	Apr/May 2023	NOT IMPLEMENTED
Report on the field of road traffic safety in Montenegro, 2022	Apr/May 2023	NOT IMPLEMENTED
Report on results in the fight against organised crime and corruption	Jun/Dec 2023	NOT IMPLEMENTED
Consideration of the report on deployment of members of the Armed Forces of Montenegro to international forces, and the participation of members of civil protection, police and employees of state administration bodies in peacekeeping missions and other activities abroad	Continuous	NOT IMPLEMENTED



Activity	Timeline / Period	Implementation
Consideration of information on budget execution for 2022 in relation to funding intended for the work of authorities and institutions from Article 3 paragraph 1 of the Law on Parliamentary Oversight in the Defence and Security Sector	IV quarter	NOT IMPLEMENTED (before October 2023)
Consideration of the Report of the State Audit Institution for 2022 in relation to funding intended for the work of authorities and institutions from Article 3 paragraph 1 of the Law on Parliamentary Oversight in the Security and Defence Sector	IV quarter	NOT IMPLEMENTED (before October 2023)
Consideration of the Law on the Budget of Montenegro for 2024 in the capacity of an interested working body	IV quarter	NOT IMPLEMENTED (before October 2023)
Consideration of the report on the use of covert surveillance measures by authorities and institutions from Article 3 paragraph 1 of the Law on Parliamentary Oversight in the Security and Defence Sector, which temporarily limit the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution	Continuous	NOT IMPLEMENTED
Organising and conducting consultative and control hearings and initiating parliamentary investigations	Continuous	IMPLEMENTED Two control and two consultative hearings were held.
Holding a Committee session at the request of one third of the Committee members, with one topic on the agenda	Once during a regular session of the Parliament	NOT IMPLEMENTED

Activity	Timeline / Period	Implementation
<p>Consideration of candidates' proposals for appointment to leadership positions in the security and defence sector, for which the Law stipulates that the Parliament must issue an opinion</p>	<p>Upon reception of proposal</p>	<p>PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED</p> <p>The Committee considered the appointment of the military-diplomatic representative of Montenegro, Brigadier General Milutin Đurović, before he took office, and the military-diplomatic representative of Montenegro, Lieutenant Colonel Veljko Mališić.</p> <p>Due to a lack of quorum, the 41st session where the appointment of military-diplomatic representatives, Colonel Željko Radulović and Lieutenant Nevena Nikolić, was supposed to be discussed was not held.</p> <p>The Committee also did not consider the appointment of the director of the National Security Agency.</p>
<p>Regional cooperation and international activities</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	<p>IMPLEMENTED</p> <p>Visit to the Senate in France – November 2 and 3, 2022.</p> <p>A meeting was held with the delegation of the NATO Defence College from Rome.</p>

SOURCES

- Milena Muk and Bojana Pravilović, "Are Parliamentary Committees up to the Task" Analysis of the Performance of Five Parliamentary Committees (October 1, 2021 - October 1, 2022)", Institute Alternative, October 2022, available at:
<https://institut-alternativa.org/en/are-parliamentary-committees-up-to-the-task/>
- Report from the control hearing with proposed conclusions on the topic: "Inhumane and abusive detention of the Metropolitan of Montenegro and the Littoral, Amfilohije Radović, in the premises of the Podgorica Security Centre on 22 June 2020", Parliament of Montenegro, December 2022, available at:
<https://zakoni.skupstina.me/zakoni/web/dokumenta/sjednice-radnih-tijela/3253/8615-00-63-3-.pdf>
- Decision on the formation of a Subcommittee for the analysis of the actions of state authorities in cases of war crimes, Parliament of Montenegro, December 2022, available at:
<https://zakoni.skupstina.me/zakoni/web/dokumenta/sjednice-radnih-tijela/3313/8967-00-63-3.pdf>
- Report from the control hearing with proposed conclusions on the subject: Proceedings of the judicial authorities in the case of the lifting of the entry ban into Montenegro for Veljko Belivuk and Marko Miljković", Parliament of Montenegro, May 2023, available at:
<https://zakoni.skupstina.me/zakoni/web/dokumenta/sjednice-radnih-tijela/3422/9102-00-63-3-.pdf>
- Draft Law on Amendments to the Law on Confiscation of Assets Acquired through Criminal Activity, Parliament of Montenegro, December 2022, available at: <https://zakoni.skupstina.me/zakoni/web/app.php/akt/3020>
- Report on the consideration of the Report of the National Security Council on issues within the scope of its work for the period June 13 - December 13, Parliament of Montenegro, 2022, available at:
<https://zakoni.skupstina.me/zakoni/web/dokumenta/sjednice-radnih-tijela/3387/9076-.pdf>



- Parliamentary Oversight Plan for 2023, Security and Defence Committee, Parliament of Montenegro, April 2023, available at: <https://zakoni.skupstina.me/zakoni/web/dokumenta/sjednice-radnih-tijela/3387/9035-00-63-4-23-.pdf>
- MPs do not care about reports on crime, Institut Alternative, September 2022, available at: <https://institut-alternativa.org/en/mps-do-not-care-about-the-reports-on-crime/>
- Draft Law on Amendments to the Law on Protection and Rescue, Parliament of Montenegro, December 2022, available at: <https://zakoni.skupstina.me/zakoni/web/app.php/akt/3025>
- Records of the 42nd Session of the Administrative Committee of the 27th convocation of the Parliament of Montenegro, available at: <https://zakoni.skupstina.me/zakoni/web/dokumenta/sjednice-radnih-tijela/3334/8944-.pdf>
- Report from the control hearing of the Minister of Human and Minority Rights, Fatmir Gjeka, on the topic: Implementation of the Strategy for Protection of Persons with Disabilities from Discrimination and Promotion of Equality 2017-2021 and Recommendations contained in the Analysis of the Compliance of Legislation in Montenegro with the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, with particular emphasis on monitoring the implementation of the Conclusion adopted on the occasion of the adoption of the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities, published in the "Official Gazette Montenegro", number 35/15, available at: <https://zakoni.skupstina.me/zakoni/web/dokumenta/sjednice-radnih-tijela/3356/9129-00-63-8-23-.pdf>

WEB

Video recordings of the sessions of the Committee for Human Rights and Freedoms (YouTube Channel of Parliament of Montenegro):

- 30th session: <https://tinyurl.com/7946x7xx>
- 31st session: <https://tinyurl.com/yuurcdvj>
- 32nd session: <https://tinyurl.com/yenxe829>
- 33rd session: <https://tinyurl.com/yuwz2zm6>
- 34th session: <https://tinyurl.com/5b2v6aaj>
- 35th session: <https://tinyurl.com/2p9a4c6d>
- 36th session: <https://tinyurl.com/y9wauw92>
- 37th session: <https://tinyurl.com/hzzbzxay>

Video recordings of the sessions of the Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration (YouTube Channel of Parliament of Montenegro):

- 57th session: <https://tinyurl.com/4fs3662c>
- 58th session: <https://tinyurl.com/4ywn78dp>
- 59th session: <https://tinyurl.com/axajc6sp>
- 60th session: <https://tinyurl.com/ye239fd8>
- 61st session: <https://tinyurl.com/ms78vy4r>
- 62nd session: <https://tinyurl.com/3btwtz3u>
- Continuation of the 62nd session: <https://tinyurl.com/4xezmez7>
- Second continuation of the 62nd session: <https://tinyurl.com/6zub3r22>
- 64th session: <https://tinyurl.com/3v58npwk>
- 65th session: <https://tinyurl.com/mwtudrz5>
- 66th session: <https://tinyurl.com/5aa63vnn>
- Continuation of the 66th session: <https://tinyurl.com/y2hwdzse>
- 67th session: <https://tinyurl.com/27thv5vn>
- 68th session: <https://tinyurl.com/2jj2w7jy>
- 69th session: <https://tinyurl.com/5ykfjnn5>
- Continuation of the 69th session: <https://tinyurl.com/2weccrrj>
- 70th session: <https://tinyurl.com/mr2mk33m>
- 71st session: <https://tinyurl.com/murxthvh>
- 72nd session: <https://tinyurl.com/yzwanc78>
- 73rd session: <https://tinyurl.com/4yappjp3>
- 74th session: <https://tinyurl.com/3xnx6tba>
- 75th session: <https://tinyurl.com/2nk3uebu>
- 77th session: <https://tinyurl.com/mrxc5jnu>
- 78th session: <https://tinyurl.com/ycyxwvff>



- 79th session: <https://tinyurl.com/3kjcnnxp>
- 80th session: <https://tinyurl.com/3zye29ch>
- First continuation of the 80th session: <https://tinyurl.com/5xf4c9du>
- Second continuation of the 80th session: <https://tinyurl.com/ua9kjc7j>
- 81st session: <https://tinyurl.com/ypm5mfca>
- 82nd session: <https://tinyurl.com/6ds3nfym>
- 83rd session: <https://tinyurl.com/mazmsf8h>
- 84th session: <https://tinyurl.com/537h8k4k>
- 85th session: <https://tinyurl.com/5cvzx2y8>

Video recordings of the sessions of the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget (YouTube Channel of Parliament of Montenegro):

- 35th session: <https://tinyurl.com/84jtypdm>
- 36th session: <https://tinyurl.com/2hn5mr34>
- Continuation of the 36th session: <https://tinyurl.com/3fmswh4u>
- 37th session: <https://tinyurl.com/bdhth32w>
- 38th session: <https://tinyurl.com/32cpk2vt>
- 41st session: <https://tinyurl.com/yc6vzp5h>
- Continuation of the 41st session: <https://tinyurl.com/4awvwr8r>
- Second continuation of the 41st session: <https://tinyurl.com/yjkcdrmx>
- 42nd session: <https://tinyurl.com/bddfb6yk>
- 43rd session: <https://tinyurl.com/y75mup3h>
- 44th session: <https://tinyurl.com/2ts5kj6p>
- 45th session: <https://tinyurl.com/2tzbhny9>
- Continuation of the 45th session: <https://tinyurl.com/pb86b96j>
- 46th session: <https://tinyurl.com/mtt8jef9>
- Continuation of the 46th session: <https://tinyurl.com/4xynyceb>
- 47th session: <https://tinyurl.com/s55ysrpx>
- 48th session: <https://tinyurl.com/34dxt8c8>
- 49th session: <https://tinyurl.com/2h59brj9>
- 50th session: <https://tinyurl.com/3cezdwrn>
- 51st session: <https://tinyurl.com/5n8s55nu>
- Continuation of the 51st session: <https://tinyurl.com/dm6fb4jz>
- 52nd session: <https://tinyurl.com/474ddw53>
- Continuation of the 52nd session: <https://tinyurl.com/yypesn8bd>
- 53rd session: <https://tinyurl.com/y38r6857>
- 54th session: <https://tinyurl.com/hp97jz4w>
- 56th session: <https://tinyurl.com/2s4h392r>
- 57th session: <https://tinyurl.com/5n7j4fss>
- 58th session: <https://tinyurl.com/bd4dth4k>



- 59th session: <https://tinyurl.com/yepf3zz3>
- Meeting of the Committee: <https://tinyurl.com/fkesccrz>
- Meeting of the Committee: <https://tinyurl.com/4cbr8u55>

Video recordings of the Security and Defence Committee (YouTube Channel of Parliament of Montenegro):

- 34th session: <https://tinyurl.com/yesnekrw>
- 35th session: <https://tinyurl.com/bdeyytme>
- Continuation of the 35th session: <https://tinyurl.com/22erxr45>
- Second continuation of the 35th session: <https://tinyurl.com/tnbea8ht>
- 36th session: <https://tinyurl.com/4fr8m6sf>
- 37th session: <https://tinyurl.com/mra5tb5f>
- 38th session: <https://tinyurl.com/yvpw9xhh>
- 39th session: <https://tinyurl.com/y9ryypyt>
- 40th session <https://tinyurl.com/ymcpc77y>
- First continuation of the 40th session: <https://tinyurl.com/4x6r5u25>
- Second continuation of the 40th session: <https://tinyurl.com/nhabzy4y>

Video recordings of the Anti-corruption Committee (YouTube Channel of Parliament of Montenegro):

- 7th session: <https://tinyurl.com/bdhnjhsy>
- 8th session: <https://tinyurl.com/4jtkte5x>
- 9th session: <https://tinyurl.com/yvd34fua>
- 10th session: <https://tinyurl.com/bdzcez5m>
- 11th session: <https://tinyurl.com/mr27cypu>



About Institute Alternative

Institute Alternative was founded in 2007 in Podgorica with the mission of strengthening democratic processes and good governance in Montenegro, through research and analysis of public policy options, as well as monitoring the work of public administration.

We function as a research centre (think tank) and work on good governance, transparency and accountability through three main program strands: I) public administration reform; II) accountable public finances; III) rule of law.

Find out more about our work at www.institut-alternativa.org

