



PARLIAMENT OF MONTENEGRO

Action Plan for Strengthening of the Legislative and Oversight Role of

The Parliament of Montenegro

December 2010 - November 2011

December, 2010

Introduction

Full integration of Montenegro into the European Union is a strategic goal of Montenegro for which there is full consensus in the Parliament of Montenegro. Integration into the EU, as a synthetic expression of the activities of the Parliament within its legislative and oversight functions, as well as on the regional and international level, poses a number of tasks before the Parliament of Montenegro. Some of them are concentrated on the current and the following year, representing essentially new stages in the process of integration of Montenegro into the EU which require an extensive and timely preparation.

The Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States and Montenegro, which represents the first contractual relationship with the European Union, came into force on 1 May of the current year, whereby the deadlines established by this Agreement started to run, regarding the responsibilities of both parties. In accordance with Article 125 of the Agreement, the Parliamentary Committee for Stabilization and Association was established, as the first joint body of the Parliament of Montenegro and the European Parliament. The first meeting of the Joint Parliamentary Committee was held on 27 and 28 September in Brussels, and two meetings will be held next year, the first one of which will be held in Montenegro.

Its application for membership in the European Union of 15 December 2008 means for Montenegro the key step in the process of European integration. The Council of the European Union, within a relatively short period of time, on 23 April 2009, requested the European Commission to prepare an Opinion on the membership of Montenegro, which was published on 9 November of the current year. The European Commission positively assessed the capacity of Montenegro to become a full member of the European Union, meaning gave a positive opinion and recommended to the Council of the European Union to grant Montenegro a candidate status.

The Commission's Opinion also stated the belief that negotiations with Montenegro should be opened regarding its accession to the European Union when the country reached the required level of compliance with membership criteria, and in particular the Copenhagen political criteria, which required the stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy and in particular, the rule of law. In this regard, Montenegro has to specifically meet the following key priorities:

- Improve the legislative framework for elections in line with the recommendations of the OSCE - ODIHR and Venice Commission; strengthen the Parliament's legislative and oversight role;
- Complete essential steps in public administration reform including amendments to the law on general administrative procedure and the law on civil servants and state employees and the strengthening of the Human Resources Management Authority and the State Audit Institution, with a view to enhancing professionalism and de-politicization of public administration and to strengthening a transparent, merit-based approach to appointments and promotions.
- Strengthen the rule of law, particularly through the depoliticized and merit-based appointments of members of the Judicial and Prosecutorial Council and State prosecutors, as well as through

reinforcement the independence, autonomy, efficiency and accountability of judges and prosecutors.

- Improve the anti-corruption legal framework and implement the Government's Anticorruption Strategy and Action Plan; establish a solid track record of proactive investigations, prosecutions and convictions in corruption cases at all levels.
- Strengthen the fight against organized crime, based on an assessment of threats and proactive investigations, increased cooperation with regional and EU partners, efficient processing of criminal intelligence, and enhanced law enforcement capacities and coordination. Development of a solid track-record in this area.
- Enhance media freedom notably by aligning with the case-law of the European Court for Human Rights on defamation and strengthen cooperation with civil society.
- Implement both legal and policy framework on anti-discrimination in line with European and international standards; guaranteeing the legal status of displaced persons, in particular Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in order to ensure the respect of their rights. This includes the adoption and implementation of sustainable strategy for the closure of the Konik camp.

Explaining the Opinion of the European Commission in the Parliament of Montenegro, two days after the publication of the Opinion, Štefan Füle, European Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighborhood Policy, said that the Commission had "*recognized the key challenges for the future, in order to guide the country on its further efforts. The Parliament has a key role in steering these efforts in order to address the identified challenges and allow the country to move towards the opening of accession negotiations. in order to refer the country to further its activities.*"

Bearing in mind that the first of the defined priorities relates directly to the Parliament of Montenegro, as well as an increasingly important role that the Parliament will have in further stages of integration, the Parliament prepared an Action Plan to strengthen its legislative and oversight roles for the period of December 2010 - November 2011.

As pointed out in the Analytical Report of the European Commission, "*Since the country's independence in 2006 there have been significant improvements in the functioning of parliament. The overall commitment of parliamentary parties to respect parliamentary rules and to hold constructive policy dialogue, in particular on EU integration, remains a solid basis for further democratic development. However, further efforts are needed to make parliament more effective as a legislative and oversight body and to strengthen its administrative capacity. Parliament's capacity to scrutinize draft legislation against the EU acquis and the means available to implement it need to be further developed.*" Recognizing the need for additional progress in this field, this Action Plan schedules a series of measures and activities, including explanation, carriers and conditions, which are aimed at the strengthening of legislative and oversight role of the Parliament, relating to the adoption of laws and regulations, improvement of the efficiency of functioning of the Parliament and its working bodies, strengthening the administrative capacity and continuing to increase openness and transparency in the work.

Strengthening the capacity of the Parliament to control and monitor the harmonization of national legislation with the European Union *acquis* is one of the key priorities, towards which, directly or indirectly, a substantial part of activities and measures envisaged in the Action Plan is directed.

Certainly, further promotion of international and regional cooperation, although not specifically provided under this Action Plan, remains the top priority of the Parliament of Montenegro.

Summary

In accordance with the constitutional principle of separation of powers, the Parliament exercises legislative power, while it is also stipulated under the same Article of the Constitution, paragraph 4, that the relationship between the branches of power are based on balance and mutual control. This provision of the Constitution clearly states the legislative and oversight functions of Parliament. In addition to numerous innovations in the normative framework, which enables better functioning of the Parliament as the legislative branch of government and highlights its supervisory role, with the Constitution of Montenegro (Official Gazette of Montenegro 01/07), through the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament (Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro 51/06 and 66/06, and Official Gazette of Montenegro 88/09), as well as laws governing the work of individual institutions and authorities which are supervised by the Parliament, some movement in this field has taken place in practice as well. The activities of the working bodies became more intense due to the fact that the focus of the work of the Parliament moved from the plenum to the working bodies and is more open in the sense that it allows greater participation by representatives of other bodies, institutions and interested public in the activities of the working bodies. At the same time, efforts are made towards the application of new and refined controls to a greater extent. However, as there is still room for improvement, the Parliament will make further efforts to further **strengthen its legislative and oversight functions** through a series of measures planned to be implemented in the future. This primarily refers to improving the electoral legal framework, legislation on parliamentary oversight in the field of security and defense, making a decision on amendments to the Rules of Procedure, introduction of the practice of monitoring and controlling the implementation of recommendations from the Opinion of the European Commission regarding the application for membership and analytical reports and other measures. Special attention will also be devoted to defining the roles and responsibilities of the Parliament in the later stages of the process of integration into the European Union and the strengthening of professional support in the legislative process.

The Parliament also plans to conduct a series of measures aimed at **increasing the efficiency of its performance**, which will in turn contribute to the strengthening of its legislative and oversight role. In this regard, greater attention will be devoted to planning activities through the adoption of the annual calendar and schedule of the sessions of the Parliament and its working bodies, also providing a series of measures aimed at modern and effective management of documents, in accordance with the recommendations provided through the twinning project "Legal Harmonization", including the classification of documents submitted to the Parliament, as well as those that result from its work, in order to facilitate their use and storage.

The Parliament will continue to **strengthen both its administrative and financial capacities**, taking into account the ratings given in the Analytical Report of the European Commission: "*Efforts have recently been made to strengthen parliament's administrative and expert capacity. There is strong commitment, notably by the Speaker and parliament's Secretary-General, to upgrade parliament's administration. A Rulebook on Internal Organization and Systematization of the Parliament Administration was adopted in July 2010 with the aim to reduce overlapping and streamline parliament's work, notably on EU-related matters. Parliament's research centre has already started to offer information and analysis to MPs. However, financial and other constraints need to be addressed. Training of existing staff and recruitment of competent new staff needs to be given priority*". Although some steps have already been taken relating to the strengthening and reorganization of the Administration, as well as a clearer definition of activities and tasks of organizational units through the adoption of a new Rulebook on internal organization and job description of the Parliament Administration, in accordance with the recommendations of the European Commission, the activities in this field will continue primarily through the definition of strategic documents that address the outstanding issues. The Parliament will continue with staff training, paying special attention to the training on EU *acquis* in particular areas, including its transposition into national legislation.

In recent years, there has been some significant progress in the field of **transparency and openness**, notably through the launching of the new website of the Parliament, with more complete contents and regular updates, and direct broadcasting of sessions of the Parliament and meetings of working bodies, organized visits to the Parliament, the Children's Parliament, and through publication of annual and, starting this year, semi-annual reports, and reports on funds spent.

The Parliament also regularly responds to requests that are submitted in accordance with the Law on Free Access to Information and such practice will continue in the future. At the same time, the cooperation with the NGO sector was significantly improved, through various projects of cooperation with NGOs. In this section, the Parliament will for the first time with its own resources prepare an Annual Report for 2010, while the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Parliament of Montenegro and the NGOs was anticipated as well. The Parliament will continue to work on improving the transparency of work and communication with the public, also paying due attention to the improvement of internal communication within the Parliament.

A tabular overview of planned activities by segments, including implementation deadlines and bearer, is an integral part of this Action Plan.

During the implementation period, the Action Plan will be updated quarterly in order to provide the overview of implemented activities and, if necessary, to be adjusted to newly arisen development.

I Legislative and Oversight Role

1. Improvement of the electoral legal framework, in accordance with the recommendations of the OSCE - ODIHR and Venice Commission

1a. Passing the Law on Election of Members of Parliament and Councillors, in accordance with the recommendations of the OSCE - ODIHR and Venice Commission

The conclusions and recommendations of the Opinion of the European Commission on the application of Montenegro for membership in the European Union, the first on the list of key priorities for Montenegro to meet before the opening of accession negotiations is to *"Improve the legislative framework for elections in line with the recommendations of the OSCE-ODIHR and the Venice Commission; strengthen the Parliament's legislative and oversight role"*. In the Analytical Report, as a working document enclosed with the Opinion, it was concluded that the *"Amendments and supplements to the law on election of municipal councillors and members of parliament have been drafted but they have not been adopted yet"*. In the same document, the EC also recommended that *"Outstanding OSCE/ODIHR recommendations on how to improve the electoral framework and its implementation need to be followed up. These include harmonizing the electoral framework with the Constitution and improving it by means of codification and addressing the existing gaps and ambiguities, clarifying the powers of the State Election Commission and strengthening its professionalism by establishing a secretariat and a legal department"*.

Addressing the members of the Parliament of Montenegro, two days after the publication of the Opinion about the application of Montenegro for EU membership, Štefan Füle said that he believes *"that everyone is aware of the request that the electoral legislation and administration has to be improved and the recommendations of the OSCE-ODIHR Office and the Venice Commission accepted"*. Taking into account the recommendation of the EC, the Parliament, as a first measure in this Action Plan, anticipated improvement of electoral legislation.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
1a.	Passing the Law on Election of Members of Parliament and Councillors, in accordance with the recommendations of the OSCE - ODIHR and Venice Commission	Parliament of Montenegro	31 December 2010

1b. Work of multi-party working group for harmonization of the Draft Law on Election of Members of Parliament and Councillors

In order to prepare Draft Law on Election of Members of Parliament and Councillors, which will be in accordance with the recommendations of relevant international institutions, the multiparty working group will, on the grounds of the Conclusions of the Collegium of the Parliament, work on the text of this Law

based on equal consideration of the Draft Law submitted by the MPs from the parliamentary majority and the Draft Law submitted by MPs from the parliamentary opposition.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
1b.	Work of multi-party working group for harmonization of the Draft Law on Election of Members of Parliament and Councillors	Multi-party Working group	December 2010

2. Defining roles and responsibilities of the Parliament in the following stages of the process of integration into the European Union

The Parliament has a key role in the process of European integration in each candidate or potential candidate country for membership in the European Union, which is also confirmed by the experiences of countries that became EU members. When it comes to accession negotiations, which is the next stage of integration process for Montenegro, there is no single model, but in most countries a strong oversight role is taken by the Parliament at this stage.

Division for research of the Parliament is preparing a comparative study of experiences in 12 countries from the two previous waves of EU enlargement, as well as experiences of two candidate countries, based on information collected through the network ECPRD (European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation). This research, which will be completed by the end of the current year, should contribute and help decision makers in the process of defining roles and responsibilities of the Parliament of Montenegro in the next stages of integration into the EU, in accordance with the Constitution of Montenegro and the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Montenegro.

Making decision in an earlier phase would ensure more time and better quality of preparation of both Members of Parliament and Parliament Administration for the upcoming commitments and responsibilities.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
2.	Defining roles and responsibilities of the Parliament in the following stages of the process of integration into the European Union	The Collegium of the President of the Parliament of Montenegro	Spring Session

3. Drafting and adoption of the Law on Parliamentary Oversight in the Field of Security and Defense

Adoption and implementation of the Law on Parliamentary Oversight in the Field of Security and Defense will significantly contribute to the strengthening of the oversight role of the Parliament of Montenegro in this important area. The main objective of the Law is to enable the Parliament and the Security and Defense Committee, through the supervision of the authorities responsible for security and

defense, to implement the protection of rights and freedoms of citizens against potential abuse, and to contribute to building an integrated and modern security system in Montenegro. Also, this Law will cover all entities involved in security affairs and defense, and the responsibilities of the Committee to the Parliament of Montenegro and the relations to state administration bodies.

Montenegro, as a country taking the road to the European and Euro-Atlantic integration, requires such a law. Until now, the Parliament of Montenegro and the Security and Defense Committee have supervised the work of the security and defense bodies on the basis of individual laws governing the work of such bodies, which is not sufficient to determine the competences of the Parliament and the Committee in this area.

A draft version of this Law was prepared by the Security and Defense Committee, using the experiences of a number of European countries and the expertise of the Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) in Geneva. These and similar laws exist in the countries of developed democracy and tradition in the activities of supervision and oversight of security services and defense.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
3.	Drafting and adoption of the Law on Parliamentary Oversight in the Field of Security and Defense	Security and Defense Committee / Parliament of Montenegro	December 2010

4. Introduction of the practice for the Secretary of each Committee to prepare an opinion for each proposed law in the corresponding field

The practice that was initiated in 2010 for the Secretary of each Committee to prepare an opinion (*briefing*) for each item on the agenda, including any proposed legislation from the relevant fields, will additionally contribute to the effectiveness of Committees work and debates on draft laws, and thus the legislative process. Secretaries of the Committees shall point to possible deficiencies in the text and provide information that may be useful when considering the proposed legislation, including compatibility with the strategic documents. This practice will contribute to achieving one of the recommendations of the European Commission that "*impact assessments of new legislation and of the means available to the Government to implement and enforce it should be examined more systematically when passing laws.*"

More detailed guidance for the Secretaries of the Committees concerning the preparation of opinion will be issued in January 2011, followed by relevant training.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
4.	Introduction of the practice for the Secretary of each Committee to prepare an opinion for each proposed law in the corresponding field	Parliament Administration / Secretaries of working bodies	January 2011

5. Preparation of a time table and schedule for the activities of the Parliament and working bodies

The Parliament Administration shall prepare, and the Collegium of the Parliament shall consider and adopt, a parliamentary time table specifying the days of a month intended for plenum sessions, sessions of working bodies, the work of Members of Parliament in the clubs and field work of Members of Parliament with voters, and the schedule of sessions of the Parliament and working bodies including the date, schedule and venue. The schedule will specify the time period for monitoring the implementation of policy and law enforcement through the use of control mechanisms, aiming to further underline the oversight role of the Parliament and its working bodies (further explained in "Performance Efficiency").

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
5.	Preparation of a time table and schedule for the activities of the Parliament and working bodies, including schedules for the monitoring of implementation of policies and law	Collegium of the President of the Parliament of Montenegro / Parliament Administration	Quarter I 2011

6. Monitoring and control of implementation of recommendations from the Opinion of the European Commission on the application for membership of the EU and the Analytical Report

The Committee on International Relations and European Integration will prepare, in December 2010, a Report on the findings and recommendations from the Opinion of the European Commission on Montenegro's application for membership of the European Union and Analytical Report.

The Committee on International Relations and European Integration, as the coordinator, at the end of the third quarter of 2011, will report to the Collegium on the accomplishment of plans by the working bodies, i.e. implementation of the EC recommendations.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
6.	Monitoring and control of implementation of recommendations from the Opinion of the European Commission on the application for membership of the EU and the Analytical Report	Committee on International Relations and European Integration	continuously

7. Adoption of the Decisions on amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Montenegro

Some of the measures and activities envisaged under this Action Plan require certain amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament, and the corresponding Decision of the Parliament will be adopted in December 2010.

By the Decision Article 32 of the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament will be amended, which sets the number of employees in the parliamentary clubs. The amendments will enable increasing the number of staff members in the parliamentary clubs. The amendments are aimed to provide greater direct support to Members of Parliament in parliamentary clubs. The Parliament Administration will prepare a draft Decision until the end of November 2010.

Consideration of the request of the Parliamentary opposition for representation of their initiatives on the Plenary session, which would also require amendments to the Rules of Procedure.

The Rules of Procedure of the Parliament should be also amended to enable the introduction of RPA marks for parliamentary acts (activity number 14) and abbreviations for parliamentary documents (activity number 13).

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
7.	Adoption of the Decisions on amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Montenegro	The Parliament of Montenegro	December 2010
	Consideration of the request of the Parliamentary opposition for representation of their initiatives on the Plenary session	The Parliament of Montenegro	II Quarter 2011

8. Analysis of the requirement for separation of responsibilities of individual Committees and Subcommittees

Needs and opportunities for the separation of responsibilities of each Committee with a wide range of areas covered, i.e. the establishment of two committees instead of one, will be carefully analyzed, after which the Collegium of the President of the Parliament will make an appropriate decision. Also, the possibility of establishing subcommittees shall be considered.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
8.	Analysis of the requirement for separation of responsibilities of individual Committees and Subcommittees	The Collegium of the President of the Parliament of Montenegro	Quarter II 2011

I LEGISLATIVE AND OVERSIGHT ROLE: Chronological Overview of Activities

Activity	Deadline
Drafting and adoption of the Law on Parliamentary Oversight in the Field of Security and Defense	December 2010
Work of multi-party working group for harmonization of the Draft Law on Election of Members of Parliament and Councillors	December 2010
Improvement of the electoral legal framework, in accordance with the recommendations of the OSCE - ODIHR and the Venice Commission	31 December 2010
Adoption of the Decision amending the Rules of Procedure the Parliament of Montenegro	December 2010
Introduction of the practice for the Secretary of each Committee to prepare an opinion for each proposed law from the corresponding field	January 2011
Preparation of a time table and schedule for the activities of the Parliament and working bodies, including schedules for the monitoring of implementation of policies and law.	Quarter I 2011
Defining roles and responsibilities of the Parliament in the following stages of the process of integration into the European Union	Spring Session
Analysis of the requirement for separation of responsibilities of individual Committees and Subcommittees	Quarter II 2011
Monitoring and oversight of implementation of recommendations from the Opinion of the European Commission on the application for membership of the EU and the Analytical Report	continuously

II PERFORMANCE EFFICIENCY

9. Adoption of Annual Plan for the harmonization of legislation

Bearing in mind that the Parliament is tasked to ensure compliance of new laws with EU legislation, which is also stated in the Analytical Report of the European Commission, the Collegium of the President of Montenegro's Parliament will enact annual plans for the harmonization with *acquis communautaire*. Based on the National Programme for Integration in 2011, the Collegium of the President of the Parliament will consider and adopt the Plan of harmonization of legislation with the *acquis* of the European Union in 2011, which will contain a list of laws that the Parliament intends to adopt in the coming year. The plan will be updated quarterly in line with the pace of its implementation and the Agenda of the Government of Montenegro for the given year.

The Parliament Administration shall monitor the implementation of Annual Plan for harmonization, and submit quarterly reports to the Collegium of the President of the Parliament.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
9.	Adoption of Annual Plan for the harmonization of legislation, including monitoring of its implementation	Collegium of the President of the Parliament of Montenegro / Parliament Administration	Quarter I 2011

10. Preparing and reviewing annual reports on the performance of working bodies

Bearing in mind that the Parliament of Montenegro will adopt an Annual Plan of harmonization of legislation, as well as that it prepares and publishes annual reports, working bodies should also prepare annual reports on their respective work, which will be available on the website of the Parliament of Montenegro.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
10.	Preparing and reviewing annual reports on the performance of working bodies	Working Bodies	Quarter I 2011

11. Adoption of the Rules on document management procedures in the Parliament Administration

Despite the fact that the Registry office of the Parliament functions well in practice, some steps will be taken towards further improvement and systematization of activities in this area. In this regard, it is planned to promulgate rules governing Registry office operations of the Parliament, which refers to the receipt of mail, form of mail, filing, scheduling and distribution of items and documents, their records, forwarding, archiving and preserving until the delivery to the archive of the Parliament. Included with the Rules on document management, a Classification Plan will be passed which will allow a clear classification of objects and documents by content, for the purpose of their efficient storage and use (Plan of classification symbols - discussed under number 12).

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
11.	Adoption of the Rules on document management procedures in the Parliament Administration	Secretary General	December 2010

12. Adoption of the Classification Plan

The proposed plan of classification by content should enable a clear classification of all documents received by the Registry office, for the purpose of their further use and efficient archiving. Classification marks are divided into classes and subclasses, including several levels of depth. The first class shall contain all documents relating to the functioning of the Parliament, its bodies and Administration, while all parliamentary acts passed by the Parliament, including any accompanying document, will be classified by content into further 35 classes that correspond to the negotiating chapters. In this way, documentation and monitoring of legislation will be facilitated, by content and not by the session at which those were adopted, as it was the case by now. Also, this will enable significantly more efficient preparation of the Parliament for the forthcoming negotiations on accession.

The new classification plan will be much more effective and efficient compared to the previous system of records, by introducing a book of records.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
12.	Adoption of the Classification Plan	Secretary General	December 2010

13. Introduction of abbreviations for parliamentary documents

The abbreviation of each document of the Parliament shall be added after the name of the document, in parentheses, thus becoming an integral part of the official name of the document, which is published in the Official Gazette of Montenegro. Introducing acronyms, made up of a combination of letters and numbers, is important from the standpoint of document management and tracking, and also allows seeing

already from the name of a law or another document whether it is a completely new document, an act by whose enactment a previous act shall be terminated or if it is an amendment to a document. An abbreviation for each document is established by the Parliament Administration, i.e. Secretary of the Constitutional Issues and Legislative Committee, which will be defined by relevant act. Thereafter, the Secretary General shall issue Instructions on the manner of definition of abbreviations.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
13.	Introduction of abbreviations for parliamentary documents	Collegium of the President of the Parliament of Montenegro / Secretary General	Quarter I 2011

14. Introduction of the Record of Parliamentary Acts (RPA)

RPA mark - record of parliamentary acts, is made up of a combination of Arabic and Roman numerals. Arabic number represents the number of the parliamentary act that was received in the Registry Office of the Parliament during one parliamentary session and the Roman numerals indicate the number of convene. RPA mark becomes a part of each parliamentary document, which is published in the Official Gazette of Montenegro.

RPA mark is entered in the admission stamp, and separate books of RPA Records are kept for all parliamentary documents, providing that the exact number and list of all parliamentary documents in each parliamentary session is available at any moment.

The Parliament Administration already established and continues to keep a pilot RPA Record for all parliamentary acts that have been submitted to the Parliament since the beginning of its 24th convocation, and the analysis of initial results are positive.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
14.	Introduction of the Record of Parliamentary Acts (RPA)	Collegium of the President of the Parliament of Montenegro / Secretary General	Quarter I 2011

15. Introduction of Eurovoc Descriptors

In September, the Parliament of Montenegro addressed the competent EU Publications Office to obtain licenses for translation and use of Eurovoc, and received a positive response. By signing an agreement, Parliament of Montenegro becomes a licensee for the translation and use of the Eurovoc thesaurus. Eurovoc would ensure that the same descriptors are used by the Government of Montenegro and the Official Gazette of Montenegro, fully covering the legislation of Montenegro, which would represent a significant quality shift for all users in Montenegro and abroad.

Eurovoc is a multidisciplinary, multilingual glossary covering all activities of the EU, in particular of the European Parliament. It is composed of 21 areas and 127 sub-areas, with more than 6600 structured and

controlled terms that are used for object identification and search of official documents of the European Union. It contains terms in 22 languages of EU member states, as well as in the Croatian and Serbian language. Eurovoc is used by the European Parliament, the EU Office for Official Publications, European national and regional parliaments, as well as national governments and individual users worldwide.

All languages in which the Eurovoc was translated have the same status, so that each descriptor in any language always corresponds to the descriptor in any other language. Given that the legislation of the European Parliament and parliamentary acts of all EU countries are indexed using Eurovoc descriptors, using of the same descriptors for the laws and acts passed by the Parliament of Montenegro would provide the possibility of easy comparison with the relevant regulations of the EU and other countries, which can be especially important in the process of harmonization of legislation in the EU accession negotiations. Introduction of unambiguous Eurovoc descriptors will facilitate and accelerate the search of documents by users of documentation of the Parliament of Montenegro, mostly Members of Parliament and Administration, but also other users outside the Parliament.

The Parliament of Montenegro proposed to have Eurovoc descriptors determined by the drafting Ministry, already in the stage of law proposal, before reaching the Government for consideration and determination. In this way, the party which is drafting a law, and which is the most familiar with the subject matter, can best determine the appropriate descriptors, relatively easily and quickly, using Eurovoc descriptors in the Montenegrin language, which will enable the Parliament, bearing in mind the descriptors already set out in the EU regulations with which the national law is harmonized.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
15.	Introduction of Eurovoc Descriptors	The Collegium of the President of the Parliament of Montenegro	Quarter I 2011

16. Adoption of the Rules of Procedure for the Division for research, analysis, library, documentation and archive, with supporting documents

New Rulebook on internal organization and job description of the Parliament Administration of July 2010 provided for the functioning of the Division for research, analysis, library, documentation and archive within the Sector for Research, Documentation and IT Network. The same document provides for the Division, *inter alia*, to perform library and documentation duties, but also activities related to research and analysis in order to support the work of Members of Parliament, working bodies and the Administration of the Parliament. Given the scope and importance of the tasks of within the competence of this service, in addition to staffing, there is a need for more precise definition of the rules of its operation. In this regard, rules shall be adopted regarding the activities of the Division, which will define its operation and the types of services provided, user groups and types of requests, the terms and conditions under which the documents are lent, as well as other issues of importance to the work of the Division. At the same time, the rules for ordering and preparation of research papers shall be determined as well, also specifying by this document the type and form of research papers, users, ways and forms of application, availability and storage requirements and other relevant issues.

Taking into account the practices of developed parliaments with strong research services and the tasks anticipated for this Division of the Parliament Administration, it can be concluded that it's functioning at

full capacity and following the established rules should substantially contribute to the quality of performance of this institution.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
16.	Adoption of the Rules of Procedure for the Division for research, analysis, library, documentation and archive, with supporting documents	Secretary General	December 2010

17. Preparation of preliminary design for an information system that would enable IT tracking of the entire legislative process

Raising the efficiency of performance of the Parliament understands an appropriate support information system. Documents received by the Parliament and which arise in its work, should be stored in electronic form in the appropriate databases, to allow it to be easily accessible to users (MPs and Staff). In this sense, it is necessary to digitize office management, documentation, and then make the legislative process digital as well. At the outset it is necessary to develop a preliminary design for an information system that would allow the above. Following the selection of preliminary design, which must be given special attention, its implementation would be initiated, led by the Information Technology Service, and also including other organizational units in the process to some extent.

Given the importance of this project for the efficiency of the Parliament and its financial dimension, the Parliament will consider the possibility of obtaining external support in the preparation of the Project and its implementation.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
17.	Preparation of preliminary design for an information system that would enable IT tracking of the entire legislative process	Parliament Administration	Quarter III 2011

II PERFORMANCE EFFICIENCY: Chronological Overview of Activities

Activity	Deadline
Adoption of the Rules on document management procedures in the Parliament Administration	December 2010
Adoption of the Rules of Procedure for the Division for research, analysis, library, documentation and archive, with supporting documents	December 2010
Adoption of a Classification Plan	December 2010
Introduction of abbreviations for parliamentary documents	Quarter I 2011
Introduction of the Record of Parliamentary Acts (RPA)	Quarter I 2011
Introduction of Eurovoc Descriptor	Quarter I 2011
Adoption of Annual Plan for the harmonization of legislation and implementation monitoring	Quarter I 2011
Preparation and review of annual report of the working bodies	Quarter I 2011
Preparation of preliminary design for an information system that would enable IT tracking of the entire legislative process	Quarter III 2010

III ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL CAPACITY

18. Adoption of the Human resources strategy in the Parliament of Montenegro for the period from January 2011 until December 2013, including a Training Plan

After establishing the Human Resource Management Bureau and its duties, powers and responsibilities, the next step is to prepare a Human resources strategy, as an expression of the need for strategic planning of activities of the Parliament Administration. The strategy will define the vision and mission of the Parliament Administration, and enable the Human Resource Management Bureau, as well as the Administration as a whole, to have a planned and systematic approach to strengthening the capacity and skills of Staff of the Parliament. This document will represent a guideline for assessing the need for training and education for the Administration. The Strategy will be adopted in early 2011, prepared in cooperation with the Westminster Foundation for Democracy.

The Training Plan aims to recognize and define the segments in which some additional training and education is required, so that the Parliament Administration can achieve the objectives defined in the Human resources strategy. This plan will form the basis for planning and finding opportunities to improve knowledge and skills of staff members of the Parliament Administration.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
18.	Adoption of a Human resources strategy in the Parliament of Montenegro for the period from January 2011 until December 2013, including a Training Plan	Parliament Administration	January 2011

19. Providing intensive training for staff members of parliamentary committees and clubs on the EU *acquis* in particular areas

As part of its legislative and oversight role, the Parliament of Montenegro, as outlined in the Analytical Report of the European Commission, "*is assigned with ensuring the compatibility of new legislation with the EU acquis.*" To be able to provide high quality professional support to the Members of Parliament while supervising the harmonization of national legislation with the European Union *acquis*, members of the Parliament Administration, especially the Secretaries of the Committees, their associates and employees in the research department, require intensive training for acquiring and improving knowledge of EU regulations.

Aware of the need of this type of training, the Parliament Administration has already initiated specific projects of cooperation with domestic and international institutions and organizations, where some projects are already implemented, for others such decision is expected in the first quarter of following year, while some are in the planning stage:

- Through bilateral cooperation with the Parliament of Slovakia, in November 2010, two employees of the Division for Research will stay and work in a research center of the Slovak Parliament for two weeks, for the purpose of direct acquisition of knowledge and experience in parliamentary research; intensive cooperation with the Department for control of harmonization of legislation in the Slovak Parliament is also planned for the next year.
- Through the Italian Embassy in Montenegro, it was initiated to consider the possibility of cooperation with the Parliament of Italy, which would involve training in the field of harmonization of legislation.
- With the Center for control of small arms in Southeast and Eastern Europe (SEESAC), a two-year project was initiated to support the Parliament of Montenegro, focusing primarily on the training in harmonization of legislation on specific negotiating chapters and subchapters, directly or indirectly related to arms control and issues of security in the region, especially in Chapter 31 - Foreign, security and defense policy.
- For the following year, a larger application of TAIEX is planned, the EU support program for the provision of training in several fields of EU *acquis*, based on the results of needs analysis by chapters and subchapters, which is in progress.
- Implementation of the project "Parliament for Europe", with the NGO European Movement in Montenegro, is currently in progress, whose focus is on introducing new experiences of EU member and candidate countries in the process of harmonization and negotiations.
- Opportunities will be considered for cooperation through study visits by members of the Parliament Administration to the respective services of the Parliaments which used to have a strong supervisory role before joining the European Union, in the process of harmonization of national legislation with European standards.
- In cooperation with the Embassies of France and Germany in Podgorica, the Montenegrin Parliament has already organized courses of French and German language, in groups having different levels of knowledge, which are attended by a large number of staff members, which is also indirectly related to the acquisition of skills necessary for professional support to Members of Parliament in monitoring the harmonization.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
19.	Providing intensive training for staff members of parliamentary committees and clubs on the EU <i>acquis</i> in particular areas	Parliament Administration	continuously

20. Filling vacancies in the Parliament Administration, in accordance with the Rulebook on internal organization and job description of the Parliament Administration

Under the Rulebook on internal organization and job description of the Parliament Administration, which was enacted in July 2010, there are 110 job positions for 154 staff. Currently, the total number of staff is 93, of which 71 civil servants and state employees. Total number of staff includes the Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General and 7 advisors to the President and Vice-President of the Parliament. Jobs

Advisor to the President and Vice-President of the Parliament are not systematized by this Rulebook. Moreover, trainee jobs are not envisaged by the above mentioned Rulebook, currently 12 of those.

It is planned to gradually fill the vacancies, through hiring professional staff with specific experience, as well as through recruitment of trainees, for who intensive training will be provided. A public advertisement for the receipt of 17 civil servants and state employees and 10 trainees is currently announced.

Otherwise, the main reason for the enactment of new Rulebook on internal organization and job description of the Parliament Administration was the need to strengthen the Parliament Administration, to have the capacity in terms of organization and staffing to provide professional and quality support to the Members of Parliament, especially considering an increasing role of the Parliament in the process of European integration of the country.

Reorganization of most organizational unit is designed to be able to respond easier, faster and better to both current and future needs and requirements, through the merger of individual organizational units, classification of new job positions and the abolition of some which had been earlier classified. Also, the description of most jobs and job positions is defined in more detail, which should provide a better quality of work and greater responsibility. The Rulebook was also prepared with technical assistance of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy, taking into account the suggestions of NDI.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
20.	Filling vacancies in the Parliament Administration, in accordance with the Rulebook on internal organization and job description of the Parliament Administration	Parliament Administration/ Human Resources Management Bureau	continuously

21. Defining a plan of short and long-term planning of facilities for the purposes of the Parliament (Members and Administration)

As is pointed out in the EC Analytical Report, insofar as it relates to the Parliament of Montenegro, that there is a *"lack office space and other facilities, including for MPs"*, the lack of space is a significant problem and limitation for strengthening the administrative capacity of the Parliament. The Parliament shall, for the purpose of short term solution to this problem, try in the coming year to lease some office space for Administration and chair persons of working bodies, who have no offices at the moment. Regarding a long-term solution to this issue, efforts will be made, until the end of the second quarter, to perform a detailed analysis and, based on it, prepare the preliminary design that will provide the required spatial conditions for long term operation.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
21.	Defining a plan of short and long-term planning of facilities for the purposes of the Parliament (Members and Administration)	The Collegium of the President of the Parliament of Montenegro	Quarter I 2011

22. Improvement of spatial and staff conditions for the work of Members of Parliament

Within this activity, possibilities for better working conditions for MPs will be analyzed.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
22.	Improvement of spatial and staff conditions for the work of Members of Parliament	The Collegium of the President of the Parliament of Montenegro	Quarter II 2011

23. Providing access to the Parliament building for persons with disabilities

The Parliament of Montenegro is planning to undertake measures aimed at facilitating access to the building of the Parliament for persons in wheelchairs, by installing appropriate ramps. After choosing the appropriate conceptual design for the installation of ramps, implementation of the project will be initiated by the Parliament, thus enabling these persons to make a full contribution to the work of this institution.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
23.	Providing access to the Parliament building for persons with disabilities	Parliament Administration	Quarter II 2011

III ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL CAPACITY: Chronological Overview of Activities

Activity	Deadline
Adoption of a Human resources strategy in the Parliament of Montenegro for the period from January 2011 until December 2013, including a Training Plan	January 2011
Defining a plan of short and long-term planning of facilities for the purposes of the Parliament (Members and Administration)	Quarter I 2011
Improvement of spatial and staff conditions for the work of Members of Parliament	Quarter II 2011
Providing access to the Parliament building for persons with disabilities	Quarter II 2011
Providing intensive training for staff members of parliamentary committees and clubs on the EU acquis in particular areas	continuously
Filling vacancies in the Parliament Administration, in accordance with the Rulebook on internal organization and job description of the Parliament Administration	continuously

IV OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY

24. Preparation and publication of Annual Report of the Parliament of Montenegro

For the first time, the Parliament Administration will prepare its Annual Report for 2010 with its own resources, which will be printed and posted on the website of the Parliament. Also, the practice of preparation and publication of semiannual reports, which was established in July 2010, will continue. A Report on funds spent for a period of 6 months will be prepared and published every half a year, to be submitted by the Secretary General to the Committee for Economy, Finance and Budget.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
24.	Preparation and publication of Annual Report of the Parliament of Montenegro	Parliament Administration	February 2011

25. Signature of Memorandum of Understanding between the Parliament of Montenegro and NGOs

As a part of the Project to strengthen the cooperation between civil society and the Parliament of Montenegro, which is co-financed by the European Union through the Delegation of the European Union in Montenegro, and which is coordinated by the Centre for Development of NGOs in Montenegro, in 2010 a Working Group was established, composed of Members of Parliament and NGO representatives, tasked to prepare a draft Memorandum of Understanding between the Parliament of Montenegro and NGOs. The first, working version of the draft has been prepared, so that the signing of the Memorandum can be expected by the beginning of 2011, which should contribute to even better cooperation between the Parliament of Montenegro and the civil sector.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
25.	Signature of Memorandum of Understanding between the Parliament of Montenegro and NGOs	President of the Parliament of Montenegro	Quarter I 2011

26. Roundtable discussion of Members of Parliament and representatives of the media

Within the framework of cooperation with the Westminster Foundation for Democracy, which includes Thompson Reuters, Parliament of Montenegro will organize a roundtable which will be attended by Members of Parliament and representatives of media outlets in Montenegro. Theme of the roundtable will be media coverage of Parliament, and the aim is to achieve a greater degree of mutual understanding and cooperation for mutual benefit. Through this project seminars for journalists will be organized for the purpose of familiarization with the reporting practices of the Parliament OF THE United Kingdom.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
26.	Roundtable discussion of Members of Parliament and representatives of the media	Parliament Administration	Quarter II 2011

27. Roundtable discussion on issues of conflict of interest of Members of the Parliament

Parliament of Montenegro, in cooperation with the Directorate for Anti-Corruption Initiative, with the participation of representatives of relevant international organizations, will organize a round table to consider the issue of conflict of interest of Members of Parliament.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
27.	Roundtable discussion on issues of conflict of interest of Members of the Parliament	Parliament of Montenegro	Quarter II 2011

28. Improvement of internal communications within the Parliament Administration, including the preparation of rules of internal communications

In order to facilitate the exchange of data and information, internal communication needs to be improved within the Administration and at all levels, both horizontally and vertically, with the aim of raising the level of effectiveness and efficiency in information exchange and the work of the Administration. This will be achieved by defining the rules of internal communication in order to achieve unification of all internal and external documents, ways of providing information, with the aim of achieving better and more professional presentation of the institution by the Administration. Clearly set the rules of internal communication within the Administration will also increase the security level of data exchange and improve internal information up to date.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
28.	Improvement of internal communications within the Parliament Administration, including the preparation of rules of internal communications	Parliament Administration / Human Resources Management Bureau	Quarter III 2011

29. Further promotion of transparency in the work of the Parliament and communication with the public

Bearing in mind that the transparent operation of each parliament is the foundation of its work as a direct representative body, Parliament of Montenegro will continue to strive to improve transparency and communication with the overall public and with specific groups of the public. The progress already achieved constitutes a solid basis for that, primarily the broadcasting of sessions of the Parliament and

meetings of working bodies via Internet and timely disclosure of all relevant information on the website of the Parliament.

In the first quarter of 2011 the conditions for direct transmission over the Internet of all press conferences that are held in the press position of the Parliament of Montenegro will be provided. During the same period, reorganization and further promotion of the website of the Parliament is planned, in order to make easier its use, and to provide more information.

Also, aware of its role in informing the public about the process of European integration, especially in the period after the opening of accession negotiations, the Parliament plans, until the end of the third quarter of 2011, to develop a Strategy of communication with the public.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
29.	Further promotion of transparency in the work of the Parliament and communication with the public	Parliament Administration / Department for Public Relations	continuously

30. Program "Open Parliament"

The plan for next year also includes continuation and enrichment of the program "Open Parliament" with a focus on strengthening the relations between the Parliament and citizens and familiarization of as many people as possible with the work of the Parliament, especially of the younger population. In addition to the existing activities which are implemented by the Parliament in this regard, the program will be enriched by a new project that includes interactive activities for young people in order to bring the work of the Parliament closer to this population and thereby deepen their understanding of democratic processes and interest in working for the state bodies. It is planned for the project to be supported by ERSTE Foundation, in cooperation with the Austrian Parliament, since the "democratic workshop" to be conducted in the Austrian Parliament will serve as a model for the organization of similar content in Parliament.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
30.	Program "Open Parliament"	Parliament Administration / Department for Public Relations	continuously

31. Reporting on the Action Plan implementation

Parliament Administration shall prepare quarterly Reports on implementation of the Action Plan for the strengthening of legislative and oversight role of the Parliament of Montenegro and submit them to the Collegium of the President of the Parliament for consideration.

No	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
31.	Reporting on the Action Plan implementation	Collegium of the President of the Parliament of Montenegro / Parliament Administration	quarterly

IV OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY: Chronological Overview of Activities

Activity	Deadline
Preparation and publication of an Annual Report of the Parliament of Montenegro	February 2011
Signature of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Parliament of Montenegro and the NGOs	Quarter I 2011
Roundtable discussion of Members of the Parliament and representatives of the media	Quarter II 2011
Roundtable discussion on issues of conflict of interest of Members of the Parliament	Quarter II 2011
Improvement of internal communications within the Parliament Administration, including the preparation of rules of internal communications	Quarter III 2011
Program "Open Parliament"	continuously
Reporting on the Action Plan implementation	quarterly
Further promotion of transparency in the work of the Parliament and communication with the public	continuously