

NEWSLETTER OPEN PARLIAMENT



Parliament of Montenegro

Newsletter on the Parliament of Montenegro Performance ♦ No. 103 ♦ April 2020

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OPEN PARLIAMENT



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Newsletter on the Parliament of Montenegro Performance ♦ Electronic format ♦ Release: monthly ♦ Year X ♦ No. 103 ♦ April 2020

FOREWORD

Dear readers,

We present to you the key information on activities of the Parliament of Montenegro in the period from 1 to 30 April, which is, in the form of monthly newsletter "Open Parliament", prepared by Parliamentary Service.

During April, the Second Sitting of the First Ordinary (Spring) Session in 2020 took place, during which two laws were adopted.

In April, Committees considered twelve proposals for a law, one proposal for a decision and performed other activities within their oversight role.

In focus of this month's newsletter is the letter of the President of the European Parliament addressed to the heads of parliaments of Western Balkans countries.

The newsletter is published monthly through which the Parliament endeavours to bring its work closer to Montenegrin citizens.

We consider this publication to be very significant as a reliable source of information regarding the work of the Parliament and we hope that you will find it useful.

We remain open to your comments and suggestions, as well as criticism, which can help us bring more quality to our work.

**Respectfully,
Parliamentary Service**



LEGISLATIVE AND OVERSIGHT ACTIVITY

At the Second Sitting of the First Ordinary (Spring) Session of the Parliament of Montenegro in 2020, the MPs adopted the Law on Amendments to the Law on Financing of Political Entities and Election Campaigns and the Law on Amendments to the Law on Local Self-Government.

At the Third Special Sitting of the First Ordinary Session of the Parliament of Montenegro in 2020, within the item Prime Minister's Questions, MPs' questions were answered by the Prime Minister of Montenegro Duško Marković. MPs posed seven questions to the Prime Minister.

Proposals for law deliberated in committees

- **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Financing of Political Entities and Election Campaigns** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget and the Legislative Committee.
- **Proposal for a Law on Supplements to the Law on Personal Income Tax** was considered by the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget; however, the proposal did not obtain the required majority. The same proposal was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Legislative Committee.
- **Proposal for a Law on Supplements to the Law on Mandatory Social Security Contributions** was considered by the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget; however, the proposal did not obtain the required majority. The same proposal was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Legislative Committee.
- **Proposal for a Law on delay in payment of credit**

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obligations of loan beneficiaries was considered by the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget; however, the proposal did not obtain the required majority.

- **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Old Royal Capital** was considered by the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget; which decided to submit an opinion to the lead committee - Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration.
- **Proposal for a Law on Amendments the Law on Inspection Control** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration and the Legislative Committee.
- **Proposal for a Law on amendments to the Law on Central Population Register** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration and the Legislative Committee.
- **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Local Self-Government** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration and the Legislative Committee.
- **Proposal for a Law on Emergency Measures to Support the Citizens of Montenegro as a result of the Communicable Disease COVID-19 Epidemic** was considered by the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget; however, the proposal did not obtain the required majority. The same proposal was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Legislative Committee.
- **Proposal for a Law on Amnesty of Persons Sentenced for Criminal Offences Prescribed by the Laws of Montenegro and Persons Sentenced by Foreign Criminal Verdict which is Served in Montenegro** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration and the Legislative Committee.
- **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Budget and Fiscal Responsibility** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Legislative Committee. The same proposal was considered by the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget; however, the proposal did not obtain the required majority.
- **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to Law on Energy** was considered by the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget; however, the proposal did not obtain the required majority.

Proposals for other acts deliberated in committees

- **Proposal for a Decision on appointment of the president and six members of the Jury for presenting the 13th July Award** was determined by the Administrative Committee, which decided to propose to the Parliament that Rajko Todorović be appointed as the Jury President, and Ranko Milović, Mimo Drašković, Jadranka Selhanović, Goran Barović, Marko Camaj and Bećir Vuković, as Jury members.

Other activities of working bodies

- At the 104th meeting, held on 21 April, **Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration** considered the 2019 Annual Report on performance of the Judicial Council and general state of the judiciary, submitted to the Parliament of Montenegro by the Judicial Council of Montenegro.
- **Security and Defence Committee** held its 53rd meeting on 23 April, where two consultative hearings of military and diplomatic representatives of Montenegro were conducted before their assuming of the office. The Committee conducted a consultative hearing of Admiral Dragan Samardžić, who was appointed to the post of the Military Representative of Montenegro to NATO and the EU, in accordance with the Decision of the Defence and Security Council, posted to do his service in Brussels, the Kingdom of Belgium. The Committee also voiced its support for the appointment of Frigate Captain Vučić Bošković to the post of Military-Diplomatic Representative to the Republic of Austria, in Vienna, as well as a military advisor to the Permanent Mission of Montenegro to the United Nations, the OSCE and other international organisations in Vienna on a residential basis and a defence envoy in the Republic of Slovakia, the Czech Republic and the Republic of Hungary on a non-residential basis, pointing to the importance of continuously improving international military cooperation and promoting our country's priorities at bilateral and multilateral levels.
- At the 38th meeting of the **Committee on European Integration**, held on 28 April, attended by Chief Negotiator with the European Union Aleksandar Drljević and Deputy Chief Negotiator Marko Mrdak, members of the Committee considered the 12th, 23rd and 24th Semi-annual Report on the Overall Activities within Montenegro's Integration Process to the European Union, for the period July – December 2019. Semi-annual Report on the Overall Activities within Montenegro's Integration Process to the European Union were adopted by the majority of the Committee's members.
- At the 39th meeting, held the same day, attended by Chief Negotiator with the European Union Aleksandar Drljević and Deputy Chief Negotiator Marko Mrdak, Committee members considered the quarterly and yearly reports on implementing obligations under the 2019-2020 Montenegro's Programme of Accession to the European Union during 2019, and the 2020-2022 Montenegro's Programme of Accession to the European Union for the first quarter of 2020.
- At the First Joint Meeting of the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget and the Committee on Health, Labour and Social Welfare, on 27 April, information on the activities undertaken to date with regard to tackling the COVID-19 epidemic at the sitting of the Parliament were discussed.

NEWS FROM PARLIAMENT



Vice President Gvozdenović takes part in the OSCE PA webinar

Vice President of the Parliament of Montenegro Branimir Gvozdenović took part on 23 April in the OSCE PA webinar titled "The Economic Security Fallout of the COVID-19 Pandemic". The parliamentarians, together with experts who participated in the webinar, discussed the socio-economic challenges that the member states have been facing due to the situation caused by the COVID - 19 pandemic, as well as the measures they have taken and their impact on

mitigating national crises. On this occasion, Montenegro and partners shared ideas and lessons learned regarding the parliaments' role in the extraordinary context, and addressed the importance of strategic prevention and good governance to hinder the spread of contagion in the future. Montenegro is trying, in this situation as well, to prove its devotion to the improvement of cooperation with its partners and European parliaments.

Five Meetings of the Collegium of President of the Parliament held

Five Meetings of the Collegium of the President of the Parliament took place under the chairmanship of the President of the Parliament Ivan Brajović. The Meetings of the Collegium endeavoured to discuss among other things, organisation of work of the Parliament and working bodies of the Parliament due to the situation caused by the COVID - 19 pandemic, as well as the need for mitigating the social and economic consequences brought forth by the COVID-19 pandemic. The sittings dealt with economic issues and the status of the financial sector as well as taking timely necessary measures to preserve economic stability. The harmonisation of mechanisms and further financing in the conditions of health crisis was discussed, that has affected all segments of society. The participants in the Collegium agreed that it was necessary to regularly monitor and assess the scope of the economic crisis, in order to further improve measures for the

purpose of maintaining economic sustainability. In addition, representatives of the Government presented a package of socio-economic sustainability measures under the conditions of health crisis caused by coronavirus outbreak.



PARLIAMENTARY GLOSSARY

Parliamentary Act Identifiers (EPA). The EPA is a system of parliamentary act identifiers of the parliamentary act used in a number of parliaments for the better record keeping of the acts of the parliament within one convocation. In practice, it is the ordinal number of the acts in one parliamentary period, which means that EPA starts with number one in each convocation, while the convocations are marked by roman numerals. In the Parliament of Montenegro, every parliamentary act that comes to the registry office (law proposals and all acts that go into the parliamentary procedure) gets an EPA number. This number facilitates subsequent searches for the act (both in the printed and the electronic form).¹

¹ Doc. dr Komar, Olivera, Prof. dr Ivana Jelić, Nataša Komnenić, Irena Mijanović, Jelena Radonjić, Vlatko Šćepanović, Parlamentarni leksikon, Podgorica, Skupština Crne Gore 2016, p 255

IN FOCUS



President of the European Parliament addressed a letter to President Brajović and heads of parliaments of Western Balkans countries

President of the European Parliament David Sassoli addressed a letter on 2 April to the President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović and presidents and speakers of the parliaments in the region, with regard to their Appeal for assistance to the Western Balkans region in combating the coronavirus pandemic.

Pointing out that the Western Balkans “are part of our European family and their European vocation is beyond any doubt”, the President of the European Parliament agrees that any measures taken at the European level should also include the Western Balkans countries in their efforts to deal with the COVID pandemic. “The EU institutions did well and presented a unitary front in proposing European solutions - solutions based on solidarity and that strive to not leave behind the most vulnerable countries. You can rest reassured that the EU is already exploring ways in which to include your region in its response mechanisms. In many ways, this Coronavirus outbreak is a test to our European solidarity. This is the time for solidarity and your region should be included. If we stay united, we can emerge stronger from this crisis.” - it is said among other things in the letter by President of the European Parliament David Sassoli.

* President Brajović became a signatory to the regional initiative on 25 April – Appeal for Assistance to the Region of the Western Balkans in Combating the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19). Speakers and presidents of parliaments of Montenegro, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia and Serbia at the end of the previous week addressed an Appeal to the European Parliament President David Sassoli and the European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, proposing a series of measures with regard to procurement of medical equipment, as well as diverting unspent funds from the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II) to combat the coronavirus pandemic.



PARLIAMENT OF MONTENEGRO-FROM CATALOGUE OF RECEIVED PRESENTS

Title: Ceramic Vase
Country of origin: CHINA
Extended by: PRESIDENT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
Recipient: PRESIDENT OF THE PARLIAMENT OF MONTENEGRO
Date of receipt: 3. 11. 2014



Title: Gold Chinese Vase
Country of origin: CHINA
Extended by:
Recipient: PRESIDENT OF THE PARLIAMENT OF MONTENEGRO
Date of receipt:



CALENDAR



1 April

- The Collegium of the President of the Parliament of Montenegro considered the current situation in the country after a new set of measures, as well as an extension of the existing ones by the responsible state authorities. Members of the Collegium of the President have concluded that the work of the Parliament of Montenegro and its working bodies in a crisis situation of the emergence of the coronavirus must be organised in such a manner that it enables the exercise of legislative, control and oversight role, while adhering to the prescribed health care measures. The heads of the MP Groups considered the possibility of conducting meetings of the working bodies and plenary sittings via a video-conferencing system. Members of the Collegium pointed to the need for the responsible state institutions, while working to overcome the anticipated consequences of the epidemic, already need to undertake activities to mitigate the social and economic consequences caused by the coronavirus epidemic and to prepare Montenegro for further developments.

2 April

- President of the European Parliament David Sassoli addressed a letter to the President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović and presidents and speakers of the parliaments in the region, with regard to their Appeal for assistance to the Western Balkans region in combating the coronavirus pandemic.

3 April

- The Collegium of the President of the Parliament of Montenegro was held in the extended composition, chaired by Ivan Brajović. Upon the invitation of the Collegium of the President, the meeting was attended by Minister of Finance Darko Radunović, Governor of the Central Bank of Montenegro Radoje Žugić, President of the Chamber of Economy of Montenegro Vlastimir Golubović, Director of the Investment and Development Fund Zoran Vukčević and President of the Union of Employers Predrag Mitrović. The emphasis of the Collegium that was held today has been placed on economic topics and the state of the financial sector, as well as taking timely necessary measures to preserve economic stability. The harmonisation of mechanisms and further financing in the conditions of health crisis was discussed, that has affected all segments of society. The members of the Collegium expressed their expectation that the competent state institutions would

submit a harmonised set of economic and other measures, with the aim of mitigating the expected social and economic consequences during the current epidemiological situation, as well as following its ending. Heads of MP groups concluded that it was necessary to continue discussions and consultations with other actors of social developments in order to find the best solutions in the current situation.

8 April

- At the Collegium of the President of the Parliament of Montenegro chaired by Ivan Brajović, topics of discussion included activities of the Parliament of Montenegro and



other institutions under the current circumstances. The significance of continuing talks on economic and social sustainability was highlighted, and it was agreed that the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, Director of the Administration for Inspection Affairs, as well as the Secretary General of the Federation of Trade Unions of Montenegro, would be invited to the next meeting of the Collegium of the President, which is to be held on Tuesday 14 April. It is planned for the next sitting of the Parliament to be held by the end of April, and technical arrangements have been made for the working bodies to convene via a video-conferencing system.

12 April

- Vice President of the Parliament of Montenegro Branimir Gvozdenović met with Tomo Uksanović, President of the Local Community of Crmnica. Uksanović informed the Vice President about the current situation in the local community and put forward some of the problems the residents of the area have been facing with. The constructive conversation also covered ways to help the socially vulnerable category of population, and the Vice President Gvozdenović said that in addition to the

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professional, he felt a personal obligation to provide for additional help. In this context, providing additional assistance packages to the Red Cross were also discussed



that would be distributed in accordance with the needs of the present moment. Also, meetings were arranged to be held in the future period with representatives of the boards at villages.

14 April

- Collegium of the President of the Parliament of Montenegro was dedicated to economic and social sustainability under the current conditions of the epidemic and the coping with the consequences in the upcoming period. At the extended Collegium meeting, in addition to heads of MP groups, the participants were also Minister of Labour and Social Welfare Kemal Purišić, Director of the Administration for Inspection Affairs Alija Košuta, as well as the secretaries general of the Federation of Trade Unions of Montenegro Duško Zarubica and the Union of Free Trade Unions Srđa



Keković. The Collegium members noted the significance of active participation of all segments of society, especially social partners, in the adoption of timely and

adequate measures that would be used to cope with the expected economic problems and to mitigate social consequences. They voiced the expectation that the Government's set of economic and other measures would represent an adequate basis for support to the most vulnerable sectors, companies and categories of population. It was pointed to the necessity that the proposed measures must take into account the period of their coverage, categorisation of vulnerability and the need to define different levels and types of support, in a transparent and comprehensive manner. The participants in the Collegium agreed that it was necessary to regularly monitor and assess the scope of the economic crisis, in order to further improve measures for the purpose of maintaining economic sustainability.

15 April

- At the meeting of the Collegium of the President of the Parliament of Montenegro, representatives of the Government presented a package of socio-economic sustainability measures under the conditions of health crisis caused by coronavirus outbreak. Deputy PM Milutin Simović, Minister of Finance Darko Radunović and Minister of Economy Dragica Sekulić discussed with representatives of MP groups the upcoming activities on remediating the consequences of economic vulnerability of economic entities and vulnerable population groups. Members of the Collegium of the President have noted that in the time of reduced economic activity and uncertainty, the package of measures to assist the economy, employees and socially disadvantaged population is a solid framework prepared according to objective possibilities, and that its transparent implementation is needed, whereby the Parliament will be timely informed thereof. In this regard, they proposed to the Government representatives that there is the need for further specification, elaboration and refinement of short-term and long-term measures, setting the deadlines and beneficiaries of support, categorising the level of state aid, as well as planning the changes to the current legal solutions. The importance of the need for careful monitoring of developments in local governments and the need for more active contributions from commercial banks were also discussed.

23 April

- Vice President of the Parliament of Montenegro Branimir Gvozdenović took part in the OSCE PA webinar titled "The Economic Security Fallout of the COVID-19 Pandemic".