



Parliament of Montenegro

NEWSLETTER OPEN PARLIAMENT

Newsletter on the Parliament of Montenegro Performance ♦ No. 91 ♦ March 2019

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OPEN PARLIAMENT



Parliament of Montenegro

Newsletter on the Parliament of Montenegro Performance ♦ Electronic format ♦ Release: monthly ♦ Year IX ♦ No. 91 ♦ March 2019

FOREWORD

Dear readers,

We present to you the key information on activities of the Parliament of Montenegro in the period from 1 to 31 March, which is, in the form of monthly newsletter "Open Parliament", prepared by Parliamentary Service.

In March, the First and the Second Sitting of the First Ordinary Session of the Parliament of Montenegro in 2019, as well as the Third Special Sitting of the First Ordinary Session in 2019, took place.

During March, Committees considered 17 proposals for a law, and performed other activities within their oversight role.

In focus of this month's newsletter is holding of the Conference of Presidents/Speakers of Parliaments of the Adriatic & Ionian Initiative.

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 First Sitting of the First Ordinary Session of the Parliament of Montenegro in 2019, MPs adopted the following laws: Law on Ratification of the Protocol of the North Atlantic Treaty for the Accession of the Republic of North Macedonia, Law on Ratification of the Minamata Convention on Mercury and the Law on Ratification of the UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects. Within the item Elections and Appointments, the Parliament appointed Đorđije Vukčević as President of the State Election Commission.

At the Second Sitting of the First Ordinary Session of the Parliament of Montenegro in 2019, MPs adopted the following laws: Law on Amendments to the Law on Ports, Law on Administrative Fees, Law on Local Communal Fees, Law on Amendments to the Law on working hours, mandatory rest periods of mobile workers and recording equipment in road transport, Law on National Awards, Law on Amendments to the Law on Protection of Cultural Heritage, Law on Academic Integrity, Law on Amendments to the Law on the execution of suspended sentence and sentence of community service, Law on Amendments to the Law on Enforcement of Imprisonment Sentences, Fines and Security Measures, Law on Supplements to the Law on Public Enforcement Officers, Law on Amendments to the Law on Mediation, Law on Amendments to the Law on State Border Supervision, Law on Amendments to the Law on Identity Card, Law on Industrial Emissions, and the Law on Foreign and Invasive Foreign Species of Plants, Animals and Fungi.

At the Third Special Sitting of the First Ordinary Session of the Parliament of Montenegro in 2019, under the agenda item *Prime Minister's Hour and MPs' Questions*, MPs' questions were answered by the Prime Minister and ministers in the Government. MPs posed three questions to the Prime Minister and 36 questions to ministers.

Proposals for law deliberated in committees

- **Proposal for a Law on National Awards** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration.
- **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Enforcement of Imprisonment Sentences, Fines and Security Measures** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration.
- **Proposal for a Law on Supplements to the Law on Public Enforcement Officers** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration.
- **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Mediation** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration.
- **Proposal for a Law on Industrial Emissions** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Tourism, Agriculture, Ecology and Spatial Planning.
- **Proposal for a Law on Foreign and Invasive Foreign Species of Plants, Animals and Fungi** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Tourism, Agriculture, Ecology and Spatial Planning.
- **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Ports** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget.
- **Proposal for a Law on Youth** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Legislative Committee and the Committee on Education, Science, Culture and Sports.
- **Proposal for a Law on life partnership of same-sex partners** was considered by the Gender Equality Committee under the area of its competence, which decided to propose to the Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms-lead committee to propose it to the parliament for adoption.
- **Proposal for a Law on Medically Assisted Reproduction** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Legislative Committee.
- **Proposal for a Law on Medical Devices** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Legislative Committee.

- **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Tourism and Hospitality** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Legislative Committee.
- **Proposal for a Law on immovable Property Tax** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget.
- **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Efficient Use of Energy** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget.
- **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Execution and Security** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration.
- **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Civil Procedure** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration.

Other activities of working bodies

- At the 49th meeting of the **Committee on International Relations and Emigrants**, held on 12 March, members of the Committee considered and unanimously supported the proposal on appointing Marija Petrović as Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Montenegro to the Republic of North Macedonia, on a residential basis in Skopje.



- At the 50th meeting, held on 12 March, the Committee members considered and unanimously supported the proposal on appointing Dušanka Jeknić as Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, on a residential basis in Abu Dhabi.
- At the 51st meeting of 26 March, the Committee members considered and unanimously supported the proposal on appointing Srđan Stanković as Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador to the Republic of Argentina, on a residential basis in Buenos Aires.
- At the 27th meeting of the **Committee on European Integration**, held on 6 March, members of the Committee adopted a positive opinion for the

Intergovernmental Conference on the Accession of Montenegro to the European Union for chapter 8 - Competition.



- At the 68th meeting of the **Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget**, held on 5 March, members of the Committee adopted the 2018 Performance Report of the Committee.
- At the 69th meeting of 25 March, members of the Committee conducted a consultative hearing on the topic: “Current situation in the area of energy efficiency and planned activities in light of the proposed amendments to the Law on Efficient Use of Energy”.



- At the 70th meeting, held on 25 March, members of the Committee determined the 2019 Work Plan of the Committee.
- At the 34th meeting of the **Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms**, held on 28 March, the Committee considered and unanimously supported the Report on the Mental Health of Children in Montenegro.
- At the 30th meeting of the **Gender Equality Committee**, held on 25 March, the Committee adopted the 2019 Work Plan of the Committee.
- At the 34th meeting of the **Committee on Education, Science, Culture and Sports**, held on 18 March, the Committee considered and unanimously supported the 2018 Performance Report of the Committee and the 2019 Work Plan of the Committee.
- At the 44th meeting of the **Committee on Health, Labour and Social Welfare**, held on 29 March,

there was a control hearing of Minister of Health Kenan Hrapović, on the topic: “Functioning of the Institute of the chosen team or chosen doctors”.



- At the 15th meeting of the **Anti-Corruption Committee**, held on 26 March, the Committee reached the Decision on initiating the procedure for the election of members of the Commission for selection of members of the Council of the Agency for Prevention of Corruption.
- At the 61st meeting of the **Administrative Committee**, held on 1 March, the Committee adopted the Decision on the Amendments to the Decision on exercising the right on subsistence allowance for parliamentarians residing outside Podgorica, for their attendance on parliamentary sessions.



- At the 62nd meeting, held on 6 March, the Committee adopted the 2018 Performance Report of the Committee and 2019 Work Plan of the Committee.
- At the Fourth Meeting of the **Commission for Monitoring and Control of the Privatisation Procedure** of 13 March, members of the Commission adopted the 2018 Performance Report and the 2019 Work Plan of the Committee.



NEWS FROM PARLIAMENT



Tenth Session of the Women's Parliament held - 8 March 2019

Tenth Session of the Women's Parliament, organised by the Gender Equality Committee of the Parliament of Montenegro, was held. Women's requests for increased political participation, greater economic independence and full protection from any kind of violence are never only women's requests, but are requests and obligations of every modern society, said President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović at the opening of the Tenth Session of the Women's Parliament. The Session was dedicated to considering the position of women in the Western Balkans in the context of the adoption of the Resolution on women's rights in the Western Balkans (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Albania, and Kosovo) at the meeting of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) of the European Parliament. Chairperson of the Gender Equality Committee Nada Drobnjak pointed out that the Gender Equality Committee had initiated the holding of the Women's Parliament on the International Women's Day to show that women in Montenegro, just like women

worldwide, had political opinions and their own view about everything. The participants also included MPs, heads of MP groups, chairpersons of working bodies of the Parliament of Montenegro, vice presidents of the Parliament of Montenegro, members of the Government of Montenegro, as well as members of women's associations, parliamentary parties and other segments of civil society and representatives of Western Balkans parliaments.



17th meeting of the European Union-Montenegro Stabilisation and Association Parliamentary Committee (SAPC), held in the European Parliament in Strasbourg - 13 March 2019

President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović was at the head of the Montenegrin Delegation taking part in the 17th SAPC Meeting, held in the European Parliament in Strasbourg. The EU-Montenegro Stabilisation and Association Parliamentary Committee (SAPC) was set up in June 2010, and consists of members of the Parliament of Montenegro and of the European Parliament. Meetings are held biannually in Brussels or Strasbourg and in Podgorica. The SAPC considers all aspects of relations between the EU and Montenegro and, in particular, the implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement. MPs and MEPs discussed the status of accession negotiations, progress in the rule of law and media freedoms, and EU-Montenegro relations. They also covered the activities of the Committee on Further Reform of Electoral and Other Legislation, as well as economic and fiscal reforms. President Brajović was Head of Montenegrin

Delegation, accompanied also by Chief Negotiator Aleksandar Drljević. The adopted Declaration and recommendations were primarily oriented towards the activities that should be undertaken in order to strengthen parliamentary dialogue, institutions and the rule of law on Montenegro's path towards the EU. It is noted in the joint statement that peaceful gathering represents a democratic right of Montenegrin citizens, and that all opposition MPs should take an active and constructive role in the work of the temporary parliamentary committee whose ambitious work plan is important for the European path of Montenegro. It is also expected from the opposition MPs to fully continue parliamentary dialogue and participate in the upcoming SAPC meetings. The next SAPC meeting will be held in Podgorica in October 2019, with new SAPC members from the European Parliament, following its May elections.

PARLIAMENTARY GLOSSARY

Adriatic-Ionian Initiative (AII) is a regional initiative started in 2000 with a view to improving development and strengthening security in the Adriatic-Ionian area, as well as to intensifying cooperation among the countries in the region and providing incentives to the transition countries in the process of integration into and harmonization with the EU. The Adriatic-Ionian initiative is implemented through two fora: the Forum for the Exchange of Political Opinions and the Forum for Implementing Multi-Lateral Cooperation in various fields (transport, maritime affairs, tourism, education, environment and cultural heritage protection, the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, combating all forms of organized crime and regional development). The members of the AII are the seven states that have access to the Adriatic and to the Ionian seas: Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Montenegro, Greece, Croatia, Slovenia, and Serbia based on the principle of the succession of membership.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. 172

IN FOCUS



Conference of Presidents/Speakers of Parliaments of the Adriatic & Ionian Initiative held- 19 March 2019

President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović opened the 16th Conference of Presidents/Speakers of Parliaments of the Adriatic and Ionian Initiative, within our country's annual chairmanship of this Initiative. Opening the Conference, Brajović emphasised that although member states of the Adriatic & Ionian Initiative had different levels of development, economic features and perspectives, as well as achieved levels of democracy, membership in the European community of peoples was our common denominator, and that with synchronised action we could create a prosperous region, attractive for investments that would ensure economic and social growth and support the integration of the Western Balkans in the EU.

Brajović pointed out that Montenegro, as a Mediterranean country for which Adriatic sea represents a significant developmental resource, was especially interested in a more intensive participation in this Initiative, bearing in mind previous positive experiences and potential for regional cooperation, as well as the support of the EU.

Prime Minister Duško Marković also spoke at the opening.

The Conference is attended by presidents/speakers or vice presidents/deputy speakers of parliaments of nine members states of the Initiative: Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Albania, North Macedonia, and Greece. In addition to the host, President of the Parliament Ivan Brajović, participants from Montenegro also included MPs and Minister of Foreign Affairs Srđan Darmanović, Minister of Sustainable Development and Tourism Pavle Radulović, and Minister of Culture Aleksandar Bogdanović.

Brajović also held bilateral meetings with speakers of the following parliaments: Dejan Židan (Slovenia), Talat Xhaferi (North Macedonia), Gramoz Ruçi (Albania), Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina Nebojša Radmanović, and Deputy Speaker of the Hellenic Parliament Georgios Varemenos.

In the Joint Statement adopted at the end of the Conference, parliaments of participating states determined that cooperation of national parliaments within the AII is important for identifying regional projects which should, among other things, support the Western Balkans integration in the EU.

PARLIAMENT OF MONTENEGRO-FROM CATALOGUE OF RECEIVED PRESENTS

Title: *PLATE-SHAPED CRYSTAL*
Country of origin: AFGHANISTAN
Extended by: President of the Parliament of Afghanistan
Recipient: President of Parliament of Montenegro
Date of receipt: 13 February 2014



Title: *CAST SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF ITALY*
Country of origin: ITALY
Extended by: Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Emigration of the Italian Senate
Recipient: President of Parliament of Montenegro
Date of receipt: 28 February 2014



CALENDAR



1 March

- President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović had a meeting with President of *Sobranie* of the Republic of North Macedonia Talat Xhaferi, who had been attending the sitting of the Montenegrin Parliament in Cetinje, respectively, the discussion and voting on the Proposal for a Law on Ratification of the Protocol of the North Atlantic Treaty for the Accession of the Republic of North Macedonia. During the meeting, the President of the Parliament emphasised the importance of North Macedonia's Euro-Atlantic path and expressed pleasure that Montenegro showed once again an unequivocal support to the Macedonian Euro-Atlantic future, referring to the recently adopted law.



- Chair of Committee on Health, Labour and Social Welfare Suad Numanović and members Nikola Divanović, Nedžad Drešević, Draginja Vuksanović - Stanković and MP Mirsad Murić, paid a visit to the General Hospital "Danilo I", in Cetinje. The aim of the visit was to introduce members of the Committee with the manner of organisation and functioning of the Hospital, as well as with the standard of living of patients in the health institution. On the basis of the submitted opinions and proposals, Chair of the Committee expressed Committee's full support to the Hospital "Danilo I" and readiness to, within its ability, provide further cooperation and assistance.

4 March

- President of the Parliament Ivan Brajović received Secretary General of the CEI Roberto Antonione. Brajović was convinced that the Initiative would further strengthen its role as a credible regional organisation, devoted to promoting European Integration and sustainable development of the region, and stated that Montenegro shall continue to provide its full support in the process. The interlocutors agreed that the enlargement process must be continued. The same day,

there was a meeting between Antonioni and Head of the Permanent Delegation of Parliament of Montenegro to the Parliamentary Dimension of the Central European Initiative Miodrag Vuković. The interlocutors agreed that the signing of the memorandum of understanding between the secretariates of the Central European Initiative and Adriatic & Ionian Initiative, within Montenegro's Chairmanship over Adriatic & Ionian Initiative, would signify a great step ahead, and help create a synergy action which would contribute to the strengthening of both frameworks of regional cooperation in which Montenegro participates. They jointly assessed that the Central European Initiative should remain open for accession of new member states as well as the possible return of Austria to the CEI membership.

- Chair of the Committee on International Relations and Emigrants Andrija Nikolić met with Ambassador of Turkey in Montenegro Songül Ozan. Chair Nikolić expressed gratitude for the support Turkey had provided to Montenegro during its NATO accession process, and welcomed the projects realised in Montenegro by the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency. The interlocutors agreed that



numerous Montenegrin emigrants in the Republic of Turkey represented the most significant cooperation bridge between the two states, adding that it is very significant that Montenegrin diaspora has formalised its activities through the work of a large number of emigrant associations. The same day, Vice-President Genci Nimanbegu met with the Turkish Ambassador. Vice-President Nimanbegu acquainted the Ambassador with the current state of affairs in Montenegro, and also as President of the Parliamentary Friendship Group Montenegro - Turkey commended the previous cooperation with her predecessor, and the overall cooperation between the two countries.

- Committee on European Integration organised a Public

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debate on “Montenegro and the EU - Chapter 8: Competition”. The debate was marked by a discussion on the results achieved so far within the concerned chapter, and readiness of Montenegro to provide the most favourable conditions for its citizens during the negotiations with the EU in this field. During the discussions, participants of the debate were interested in issues such as unfair competition, transparency of granting state aid, capacity of the Agency for Protection of Competition, appeal procedures and similar. The debate concluded that the legislative framework was mostly harmonised with the EU acquis, but that the results of the said Agency and other relevant institutions, would determine the negotiation pace and work on closing one of the most important chapters in the negotiations process.

7 March

- President of the Parliament met with President of the Republic of Greece Prokopios Pavlopoulos. President Brajović pointed out that the parliamentary dimension of strengthening stability and cooperation among countries in the region would be especially covered at the upcoming 16th Conference of Speakers of Parliaments of the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative. The President of the Hellenic Republic emphasised that the international role of Montenegro was measured by the degree of its Europeanism and in line with consistent implementation of principles it shared with the community of European nations.
- Chair of the Committee on International Affairs Andrija Nikolić met with Ambassador of the State of Palestine to Montenegro H.E. Rabii Alhantouli. Nikolić pointed out that the entire international community should give support to solving the long lasting conflict between Palestine and Israel, in order to preserve peace and stability in the Middle East, with emphasis that Montenegro was strongly advocating for peaceful and diplomatic solution of this conflict. They voiced expectation that the parliamentary cooperation of the two states would be intensified after the new convocation of the Palestinian Parliament was formed.

8 March

- Tenth Session of Women’s Parliament was held. Women’s requests for increased political participation, greater economic independence and full protection from any kind of violence are never only women’s

requests, but are requests and obligations of every modern society, said President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović at the opening of the Tenth Session of the Women’s Parliament.

- Vice-President of the Parliament Genci Nimanbegu met with Acting Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania Gent Cakaj. The interlocutors agreed that Montenegro and Albania fostered great relations, with no open issues, however, there was always opportunity for improvement. The interlocutors agreed that meetings between the Republic of Albania and Montenegro at all levels were fruitful and encouraging for Albanians in Montenegro.



11 March

- Students of five classes of the fifth grade of “Vladimir Nazor” Primary School in Podgorica visited the Parliament of Montenegro. During their tour of the Montenegrin Parliament’s building, the students learned about the manner of work and operation of this institution. The visit was a part of the Open Parliament project of the Parliament of Montenegro.

12 March

- Chair of the Committee on Tourism, Agriculture, Ecology and Spatial Planning Petar Ivanović met with President of the Society for the Protection of Animals “Galop” Dušan Pajović. The President of the Society informed the Chairperson of the Committee about the campaign aimed at legally banning fur farms in Montenegro, which will be led in cooperation with “PETA Deutschland” organisation.
- Slovak media and election expert Rastislav Kužel held a presentation on “The Role of Media in the Electoral Process”, within the premises of the Montenegrin Parliament. The event has gathered members of the Committee on Further Reform of Electoral and

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Other Legislation, associate members of the Committee from the NGO sector and academic community, members of the Working Group for Preparing the Draft Law on Amendments to the Law on National Public Broadcaster Radio and Television of Montenegro, members of the Working Group for Preparing the Draft Law on Media, ODIHR experts, as well as representatives of the EU Delegation, OSCE Mission and the Embassy of the Slovak Republic. The Slovak expert's presentation was followed by active discussion of participants on relevant details from the field of media and electoral legislation. The attendees were also addressed by the ODIHR representative Vladimir Misev, who referred to recommendations relating to media from the OSCE/ODIHR election observation reports from 2016 and 2018.



13 March

- Seventeenth SAPC Meeting took place in the European Parliament, in Strasbourg.
- Committee on Tourism, Agriculture, Ecology and Spatial Planning held a meeting with representatives of the Directorate for Food Safety, Veterinary and Phytosanitary Affairs, NGO "Korina Animals", Council for Civilian Control of Police Operations, and NGO "Network for Protection of Cats and Dogs in Montenegro". At the meeting, they discussed the initiative of the NGO "Korina Animals", which was launched two years ago, and relates to the prohibition of animal circuses in Montenegro. Representatives of the NGO "Korina Animals" pointed out the significance of the initiatives, informed the Committee about the comparative experiences from the region, the EU member states and countries world-wide and pointed out that they had the support of distinguished professionals. During the discussion,

they pointed out that the Law on Animal Welfare should be amended and that citizens needed to be educated with regard to their responsibility towards animals. The Committee pointed out the significance of the role and responsibility of inspectors, the intensifying of inter-sectoral cooperation, as well as the adoption and application of norms and standards which are in effect in the EU member states.

14 March

- President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović hosted the non-resident Ambassador of the Kingdom of Sweden to Montenegro Jan Lundin, with whom he discussed the significance of parliamentary dialogue, political and economic relations between Montenegro and Sweden, as well as the developments in the country and the region. The interlocutors agreed that the two friendly states should intensify their parliamentary cooperation, as well as economic relations, especially in the field of energy.
- Member of the Permanent Delegation of the Parliament of Montenegro to the NATO PA Obrad Mišo Stanišić paid a two day visit to the Economics and Security Committee - Sub-Committee on Transition and Development of the NATO PA to Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia. About 30 parliamentarians from NATO member states participated in the visit to Skopje, the Republic of North Macedonia, by the Economics and Security Committee - Sub-Committee on Transition and Development, but also there were meetings held with senior officials of the Assembly and the Government of North Macedonia, state institutions, representatives of international organisations etc. Stanišić had a separate meeting with President of *Sobranie* of the Republic of North Macedonia Talat Xhaferi. Xhaferi expressed gratitude to the Montenegrin Parliament for ratifying the Protocol of the North Atlantic Treaty for the Accession of the Republic of North Macedonia and the support of our country to the Macedonian Euro-Atlantic Integration path.

18 March

- Chair of the Committee on Tourism, Agriculture,

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Ecology and Spatial Planning Petar Ivanović met with the Ambassador of the Republic of Kosovo to Montenegro Skender Durmishi. The meeting discussed obligations of the countries on their EU path concerning Negotiation Chapter 27 - Environment and climate change. A special accent was placed on the issues such as air quality, the preparation of a regulatory framework in this area and the need to define a clear negotiating strategy. They proposed strengthening of parliamentary cooperation and concrete initiatives in order to strengthen regional cooperation in the field of environment and to make European funds available through joint activities. The same day, members of the Committee met with representatives of the Assembly and Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning of the Republic of Kosovo. The meeting discussed experiences and data concerning regulations in the field of air quality. Representatives of the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism also attended the meeting. The interlocutors proposed strengthening of the regional cooperation in the field of air protection and stressed that the Republic of Kosovo had a reliable partner on its European road.

19 March

- President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović opened the 16th Conference of Speakers of Parliaments of the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative, within the annual chairmanship of Montenegro over the Initiative.
- Members of the Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms Momčilo Martinović and Mirsad Murić with the rest of Delegation paid a study visit to the Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms to the Republic of Slovenia and other relevant institutions in the field of human rights and freedoms and minority policies in the Republic of Slovenia, within the period 19-22 March. The study visit commenced with the meeting with the Montenegrin Ambassador to Slovenia Vujica Lazović, which took place within the Embassy premises. The Second day, members of the Committee held a meeting with representatives of the Ministry of Culture: Petra Culetto, state Secretary, Saša Gazdić, Head of the Office for Cultural Diversity and Human Rights, Gregor Lesjak, Director of the Bureau for Religious Communities and Marjeta Preželj, officer of this Ministry. The third day, the Delegation paid a visit to the Commission for Petitions, Human Rights and Equal Opportunities of

the Slovenian Parliament and the Office for National Minorities of the Republic of Slovenia.



21 March

- Member of the Committee on Tourism, Agriculture, Ecology and Spatial Planning Ana Nikolić participated in the Sixth Danube Parliamentary Conference, which took place in Bucharest, in Romania. The Conference discussed the possibility of introducing a brand under the title "Danube Tourism" which would promote the identity of the Danube region and cross border cooperation. The importance of providing support to the implementation of a harmonised system of monitoring dedicated to tourism was emphasised, which would provide full and comparable data in all 14 countries in the region and compliance with the reporting mechanisms of the World Tourism Organisation, thus improving the level of reporting within the region. The same Conference was attended by the Ambassador of Montenegro to Romania Goran Poleksić. A joint statement was adopted at the end of the Conference.
- Chair of the Committee on Education, Science, Culture and Sports Radule Novović participated in the Sixth Danube parliamentary conference, which took place in Bucharest, Romania, within the period 20-21 March 2019. The Conference was organised with the purpose of strengthening the parliamentary dimension of the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region and showcasing joint valuable resources, such as Culture, Tourism Education and Research.
- Delegation of the Committee on European Integration consisting of Deputy Chair of the Committee Adrijan Vuksanović and members of the Committee Marija Maja Čatović and Ranko Krivokapić. paid a visit to Berlin, within the period 21-22 March. The visit was organised at the invitation of the Chairman of the

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Committee on the Affairs of the European Union of the Bundestag Gunther Krichbaum. Aside from the meetings with Chairman and members of the Committee on the Affairs of the European Union of the Bundestag, there were also meetings with Josip Juratović, Chairman of the Bundestag Parliamentary Group for the South Eastern Europe, Matthias Lüttenberg, advisor to the Federal Chancellor and Head of the Department for Bilateral Relations with the countries of Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe, and representatives of the Western Balkans Unit in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany Christiane Hullmann and Thomas Motak. The discussion with the German officials was about the progress of Montenegro in the EU accession process, the reforms that should be conducted in the priority areas, and embracing of European values, as well as the overall political situation in the country and the region. Members of the Committee on European Integration exchanged opinions with the German officials concerning the current state of affairs in Montenegro, deemed important in terms of the EU accession path, while special attention was dedicated to recent civic protests, freedom and work of the media in Montenegro, and the boycott of the parliamentary opposition. The message conveyed by the interlocutors was that the reforms must be continued, especially in the field of rule of law, and embracing of European values, both for the European future of the country, and the responsibility of Montenegro for all the processes in the Western Balkans.

25 March

- Delegation of the Parliament of Montenegro consisting of Branko Čavor, Head of the Delegation and Milorad Vuletić, member of the Delegation, paid an official visit to Hungary. The visit was organised at the invitation of the Committee on Immunity of the National Assembly of Hungary János Hargitai. Hungarian MPs commended the progress made by Montenegro in the EU accession process and experiences were exchanged in the field of related responsibilities of the committee, with regard to immunity rights of MPs and the maintenance of order at plenary sittings, but also with regard to the boycott of the work of the parliament. In addition to the meeting with Hargitai, the Chairman, Olivio Kocsis-Cake, the Deputy Chairman and Károly Becsó, the member of the Committee on Immunity, the meetings of the delegation were also held with István Jakab, the

Vice-President of the National Assembly of Hungary and representatives of the Committee on Justice, led by Imre Vejkey, the Chairman, in the National Assembly of Hungary. Delegation of the Administrative Committee met with Péter Polt as well, the Prosecutor General of Hungary. Meetings were attended also by Aleksandar Moštrokol, Ambassador of Montenegro to Hungary.



26 March

- Delegation of the Committee on Health, Labour and Social Welfare of the Parliament of Montenegro, consisting of Chair of the Committee Suad Numanović, and the Committee members Maja Bakrač, Nedžad Drešević and Boris Mugoša, paid a two-day visit to the Republic of Slovenia. The first day, meetings were held at the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and the Ministry of Health. Also, the delegation of the Committee visited the Ljubljana University Medical Centre (Ljubljana UMC). Chair of the Committee, Suad Numanović pointed out that the main reason for the study visit of the Committee on Health, Labour and Social Welfare were amendments to the Pension and Disability Insurance Law. Katja Rihar Bajuk, Director General of the Directorate for Labour Relations and Labour Rights acquainted the members of the Montenegrin Delegation with the functioning and the main characteristics of the Slovenian Pension system. At the Ministry of Health, the delegation of the Committee held a meeting with the Director General of the Directorate for Healthcare, Tanja Mate, and the Director General of the Directorate for Healthcare Economics, Mirko Stopar, and the associates. The final day of the visit, the Delegation had a joint meeting with Chairman of the Committee on Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Disability Vojko Starović and Chairman of the Committee on Health Franc Trček and member of the Committee Moica Žindarić. At the invitation of the Ambassador of Montenegro to Slovenia Vujica Lazović,

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the Montenegrin Delegation paid a visit to the Embassy of Montenegro. On the occasion, Ambassador Lazović acquainted the Delegation with the current state of affairs in Slovenia, and the cooperation realised between Montenegro and the Republic of Slovenia.

27 March

- President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović met in Vatican City State with the head of the Catholic Church, Pope Francis, once again emphasising the importance of a harmonious coexistence of members of different religions, nations and cultures, nurtured by contemporary Montenegro. President Brajović also met at the Apostolic Palace with the Secretary of State, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, and the Secretary for Relations with States, Monsignor Paul Richard Gallagher. In separate meetings, the most covered topics were those of the importance of the opening of the Apostolic Nunciature in Montenegro, the situation in the region, legal treatment of issue of freedom of religion, and the enabling of access to the Vatican archives. In this sense, President Brajović said that the insight into the Vatican archive's available material, as well as the planned opening of the diplomatic mission of the Vatican City in Podgorica, are important steps toward the strengthening of relations of our country and the Holy See in all its aspects: political, historical, scientific, cultural and others. President Brajović and Cardinal Parolin assessed the relations of the two countries as excellent, which has been particularly influenced by the intensive exchange of visits at the highest level. In a conversation with the Secretary for Relations with States, Monsignor Paul Richard Gallagher, President Brajović stressed the importance of opening the Vatican archives for Montenegrin researchers, which will provide for our historical heritage to be made more familiar and to be further enriched. In a conversation with the Grand Chancellor of the Sovereign Order of Malta, Albrecht Freiherr von Boeselager, the expectation was expressed that the new Ambassador in Montenegro would



contribute to the successful implementation of projects of mutual interest. The President of the Parliament expressed his gratitude for the efforts made so far by the Order of Malta with the aim to protect and promote the icon of the Holy Virgin of Philerme, which has been one of the priorities in the upcoming period as well.

28 March

- Chair of the Committee on International Relations and Emigrants Andrija Nikolić met with the Head of the EU Delegation to Montenegro Aivo Orav. Chair Nikolić informed Aivo Orav of the initiative of the Committee on holding the Conference of Young Parliamentarians of the European Union and the Western Balkans. The interlocutors also discussed the possibility of a high EU official attending the Conference. The interlocutors also discussed the work of the Committee on Further Reform of Electoral and Other Legislation, whereby Nikolić acquainted Orav with the previous activities of the Committee.

29 March

- Chair of the Committee on International Relations and Emigrants Andrija Nikolić met with the Polish Ambassador to Montenegro Artur Dmochowski. According to Dmochowski, Poland will continue to provide its full support in the Montenegro's EU path, assessing that Montenegro has shown consistent progress in the process. The interlocutors exchanged views on the current state of affairs in Montenegro, noting that civic protests are the cornerstone of democratic societies, nevertheless, the political dialogue should be conducted within the institutions.

30 March

- NATO PA Spring Standing Committee Meeting was held in Zagreb, Croatia. In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, the Meeting is attended by representatives of the NATO Member States, namely the heads of permanent delegations, members of the Bureau and chairmen of the committees, and the Permanent delegation of the Parliament of Montenegro to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly was on this occasion composed of Obrad Mišo Stanišić, Head of the delegation, and Genci Nimanbegu, member of the delegation. The meeting was aimed, among other things, on planning the upcoming activities of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, consideration of the Draft Declarations and Reports to be discussed during the forthcoming Spring Session, as well as series of financial documents covering the work

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of the Parliamentary Assembly. The attention of participants was, on this occasion, dedicated also to the issue of amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly. The Head of the Permanent Delegation Obrad Mišo Stanišić met with Professor of the Faculty of Political Sciences of the University of Zagreb, Radovan Vukadinović, on the margins of the meeting.



- Delegation of the Committee on Education, Science, Culture and Sports of the Parliament of Montenegro, consisting of Chair of the Committee Radule Novović and members of the Committee Branka Tanasijević and Aleksandra Vuković, paid a visit to Warsaw, respectively a study visit to Sejm of the Republic of Poland, within the period 26-30 March. The purpose of the visit was establishing an intensive cooperation and exchange of experiences concerning the work of both committees, respectively the Committee on Education, Science, Culture and Sports and the Committee on Education, Science and Youth. The first day of the visit, the Delegation of the Committee met with Deputy Marshals of Sejm Beata Mazurek and Ryszard Terlecki. It was jointly concluded that both parties fostered great bilateral relations, with additional interest to further strengthen and enhance cooperation in all the areas, especially in the area of Education. During the visit, the Delegation met with Director of the Sector for International Relations, Director of the Sector on Analysis in Sejm, members of the Committee on Education, Science and Youth, together with members of the Committee Culture and the Media and Committee on Physical Education, Sport and Tourism, Chairman of the Parliamentary Friendship Group Sejm of Republic of Poland - Parliament of Montenegro, representatives of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, representatives of the Ministry of National Education, Director of the Sector on Committees of Sejm, representatives of Universities in Warsaw, as

well as with the Director of the Sejm Library.



31 March

- Head of the Permanent Delegation of Parliament of Montenegro to the Parliamentary Dimension of the Central European Initiative Miodrag Vuković participated in the meeting of the General Committee on Cultural Affairs of the CEI Parliamentary Dimension, held in Budapest. The Meeting was organised by the Hungarian National Assembly, and it covered the following topics: "Cross Border Tourism development programmes and their perspectives within CEI countries", "New cultural-touristic thematic: the pilgrim routes in CEI countries". It was stated during the meeting that a new opportunity had been presented to the CEI region, respectively the possibility of shaping its unique touristic product containing the individual characteristics of all CEI member states. At the end of the Meeting, the participants adopted unanimous conclusions. Aside from the hosting country and the Montenegrin Delegation, representatives of the following parliaments also attended the Meeting: Czech Republic, Italy, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, and Ukraine. The Meeting held in Budapest was also attended by the Montenegrin Ambassador to Hungary Aleksandar Moštrokol.

