

**2021 from our perspective** 





2021 FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE



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# **Annual Report**

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Annual Report

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# **10 YEARS OF WORK OF CIVIC ALLIANCE**

Civic Alliance was founded 10 years ago, with the desire to achieve various goals gathered around one idea – providing support to citizens – which has remained the imperative until nowadays and the backbone in all aspects of our work. Protection of human and civil rights is something we have worked on tirelessly and successfully in the last decade.

Thanks to exceptional dedication and work of former and current team members, who coped equally well all successes and challenges, Civic Alliance has evolve into an organization with the respectable place in Montenegro.



We have achieved significant progress in the field of human rights protection in the last decade, monitoring of work of public institutions, strengthening of capacities and provision of support to civil initiatives, communication and provision of assistance to citizens. Despite the achieved results, there are still many challenges that our society has to face. Among others, Chapters 23 and 24 stand out the most.

Civil and democratic Montenegrin society based on the rule of law – is the vision that has lead through defining of our program at the very beginning. Tolerance, responsibility, equality, team work, transparency, constant learning and cooperation are values we affirm in everyday communication, but also in communication with our close partners. That is why CA office has been recognized for its positive atmosphere, mutual support, and team work. Members of all ethnic, religious and ideological affiliations in Montenegro are among employees. We all cherish the concept of civil country that colors all our activities.



Looking back on all we have achieved in the last decade, we are proud on all partnerships and cooperation with other organizations and associations that share the same values and contribute to our vision with its work.

That is why we continue with the same enthusiasm and the same pace on the road of Civic Alliance mission and values that are the constituent part of, not just our work, but the way of life.

Therefore, all activities of CA took place in 2021 aiming to mark this jubilee, which we present in this annual report.





Dear citizens,

Even 2021 was marked by a coronavirus pandemic. Despite the pandemic, the political situation in the country was very challenging and complex throughout the year. Citizens had high expectations after the change of government in August 2020. There were high hopes, above all, on the rule of law, reduction of corruption, crime, nepotism, and cronyism. However, the promotion of justice, respect for human rights, reconciliation and quality of life was lacking. While the COVID-19 pandemic continued intensively, our politicians did not contribute much to us feeling positive changes in the quality of life of our citizens. On the contrary, constant quarrels, mutual attacks and accusations have dragged us in the wrong direction again. The results were lacking exactly where the citizens expected them most - in terms of European integration, judicial and prosecutorial reform, the extremely poor economic situation of the citizens and the growing ethnic distance.

Milan Radović, Program Director

The ruling coalitions have failed to agree on how to continue to lead the country together, therefore Montenegro expects some new changes and new challenges.

Civic Alliance has maintained the same path and mission even in these difficult times, pointing out on noticed omissions and inconsistencies to the authorities. In the year when we had graffiti drawn to war criminals, profaning of religious buildings, attacks on journalists, extremely evident hate speech, both online and in the physical world, we bravely kept our views, which we tirelessly defended. We have constantly pointed out on all deviations, fascist phenomena and all those other phenomena that violate peace, equality and the civil state. Thus, during 2021, CA had more than 4,200 media statements, TV reports, guest appearances and other media appearances.

The following pages offer you information on what we worked tirelessly for in 2021, the year when we celebrated 10 years of work.



### Edina Hasanaga Čobaj, Executive Director



The promptness of decision-making and planning, with the adjustment to the prescribed measures, marked our complete work last year. Even though the situation with COVID-19 was unstable, it did not prevent us from implementing the planned events and activities. However, despite all challenges, we managed to implement the planned events and activities. Online meetings have become a common way of communication and reaching an agreement, which we organized according to the prescribed measures, often transferring them to the online platform. Since the administrative and financial sector adapted to these conditions, in 2021 we improved our skills to use various online tools for more efficient work during the corona virus pandemic, which reflected on better work efficiency in our organization.

The COVID crisis has generated greater number of people who need different types of help. In addition to the free legal aid that we continuously provide to citizens, due to the COVID crisis, a large number of requests of humanitarian nature arrived at our address. In accordance with the conditions, we tried to meet every request we received.

In addition to those donors with whom we have been cooperating for years, in 2021 we also had a couple of new partners, and we started cooperation to the mutual satisfaction. With all understanding of the pandemic conditions in which we worked, we successfully implemented many projects through institutional and other grants.

The composition of our team has undergone certain changes, so we have a renewed and expanded team that functions in accordance with the needs of the organization, and performs all obligations on time. Always taking into account that our employees have the opportunity for professional development, they were participants in trainings, seminars and events, which contributed to their progressing and positioning. The year ended with a positive outcome and numerous successfully implemented activities, which was additional motivation for us to be even better.



### **HUMAN RIGHTS AND JUSTICE PROGRAM**



Zoran Vujičić, Deputy Program Director

For Civic Alliance, 2021 had a special meaning. The symbolic 10 years of work contributing to the building of a civil, democratic and responsible society have passed like a flash. Commitment and persistence were the symbols of our team, while we implemented the goals we set through our programs Human Rights and Justice, School of Political Studies and Media Program. We did not change the focus on "building a Montenegrin society as a civil society, where the rights of all its citizens are respected", but we strengthened it during 2021. All activities envisaged by the plan were implemented by deadline.

The slowdown in the EU integration process, the threat to the civic concept of society and political instability, jointly with the COVID-19 pandemic were the main topics in 2021. Focused and targeted, we pointed out on numerous omissions, mistakes and anomalies in the society from the perspective of our work.

In the year of instability, we managed to remain one of the most numerous NGO teams in Montenegro. We continuously work on cooperation and dialogue, so under these conditions we have continued to cooperate with institutions, NGO partners and international organizations on the road to EU integration.

We are proud to be among the first organizations whose team members vaccinated when the mass vaccination against COVID-19 began, and we actively promoted vaccination as a way out of the pandemic. Our doors were always open for all complaints about the work of institutions, suggestions and communication with citizens. We believe that without this element, our work would not be of high quality. Certainly, many citizens we helped in more difficult circumstances than before understand that this is a process through which they contribute to better work of institutions.



We paid special attention to the most vulnerable groups in society and provided free legal aid to the socially vulnerable, refugees, Roma population and persons without documents.

There was a continuous focus on the EU accession process, especially Chapters 23 and 24. We worked on education of civil servants, people from judiciary and the police, we provided free legal aid and dealt with the status of Roma and Egyptians, we encouraged dialogue between ethnic and national communities aiming to promote diversity as a cultural asset and reduction of ethnic distance. By promoting the Information and Documentation Center, we raised awareness among citizens, students, and young people in political parties about the importance of dealing with the past. We encouraged investigative stories and awarded the best journalists. Through our School of Political Studies in 2021, we included young leaders from NGOs, politics and the media.

We also provided civic activism through activities that were not covered by the project. Through these activities, we participated in the work of Judicial and Prosecutorial Council, parliamentary committees and monitored the work of other institutions, provided daily free legal aid to citizens, and organized humanitarian activities. Traditionally, through many activities, we celebrated important dates in the field of human rights and worked on regional networking in the areas we operate.

On the following pages, there will be more words about specific projects and activities we implemented in 2021.



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### **CELEBRATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY**



Civic Alliance traditionally organized a series of activities on Human Rights Day in December, aimed at promoting respect of human rights, with a special focus on domestic violence. Domestic violence is a growing problem in Montenegro, where we even have cases that ended in death, which required focusing on this topic and informing the public about the problem of domestic violence, but also how to deal with it.



In the period from 3 to 19 December, a number of activities took place, such as the online game "Human Rights in the palm of your hand" in cooperation with the Council of Europe; TV debate "Naglas" on RTCG titled "Human Rights in Montenegro - Domestic Violence"; Open Door of the Information and Documentation Center; visit to the Center for Reception of Asylum Seekers in Montenegro; lectures at the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Political Science on topic "Protector of Human Rights and Freedom and Human Rights" and "Exercising the rights of children and youth in the digital environment"; the conference "How to protect the family from domestic violence"; a human-itarian football game; the conference "Media Freedom Days in Montenegro", and a seminar on "Human Rights in Montenegro".

Colleague Milan Radović was a guest on the show "Naglas" together with Mr. Siniša Bjeković, Protector of Human Rights and Freedom, Ms. Evgenija Giakomopolou, Head of the Council of Europe Program Office in Podgorica and Bojan Božović, State Secretary at the Ministry of Justice, Human and Minority Rights. They discussed about the fact that the issue of human rights is high on the agenda of Montenegro and that there are cases of human rights violations, which is a call for the state to react as promptly as possible.



TV show "Naglas" on "Human rights in Montenegro – domestic violence"

The conference "How to protect the family from domestic violence" brought together relevant speakers who discussed about the topic through several panels, where they focused on women and children as the most vulnerable category when it comes to domestic violence.





Conference "How to protect the family from domestic violence"



Humanitarian football game

Traditionally, a humanitarian football match was held, which was attended by volunteers who work in various spheres of our society. The funds raised during this event were donated to fight domestic violence.



Through the project "**Promotion of Roma culture and language**", the main goal was to contribute to preservation and development of minority culture in Montenegro, and to promote and inform the public about the culture and tradition of Roma and Egyptians. In the frame of the project, 25 videos and articles about Roma and Egyptians were published, as a direct result of the project, because they were submitted to our open call for the best investigative story on the culture and language of Roma and Egyptians.





Award ceremony for the best investigative journalistic story on the topic "Promotion of Roma culture, tradition and language"

Given that the media reports on Roma and Egyptians are mostly negative, this period was significantly different from the standard practice, since articles represented the Roma and Egyptians in a positive way, through their culture, customs and language. In this manner, we influenced the change of insufficient information about the culture and tradition of Roma and Egyptians, as well as the insufficient involvement of members of the Roma and Egyptian populations.



Info Day in Pljevlja



Info Day Kotor



The award ceremony for journalists for the best investigative story on promotion of Roma culture and language was organized. Additionally, within the School of Political Studies that functions under Civic Alliance, a seminar was organized in April 2021, for participants of XVIII generation of SPS about culture, customs, language and rights of Roma and Egyptians in Montenegro. During the lecture, we presented award-winning articles/texts. In this way, we shared information to young leaders of political parties, journalists and NGO activists about the culture and language of Roma and Egyptians, their customs and rights in Montenegro. A TV report about the Roma community in Montenegro was also presented and published on our social networks.

In order to contribute to the preservation and development of minority culture in Montenegro, and strengthen the concept of Montenegrin multiculturalism through the promotion of culture, customs and languages of national communities in Montenegro, we implemented the project "Mosaic of National Cultures of Montenegro". The project aims to raise awareness of minority rights and is supported by the Ministry of Justice, Human and Minority Rights. Project activities were implemented such as the development and promotion of the publication "Culture, customs and languages of national communities in Montenegro", organizing training of the School of Political Studies on "Culture and minority rights in Montenegro", Info days and promotional campaigns on culture, customs, languages and rights of minorities in Montenegro. This enabled the achievement of results related to raising awareness of citizens and participants of the seminar and Info Day on culture, customs, languages and rights of minorities in Montenegro, and building their capacity on culture, customs, languages and rights of minorities in Montenegro





One of the most important projects implemented by Civic Alliance for the fourth year in a row is the provision of free legal aid to persons seeking international protection in Montenegro and persons with the granted status with international protection in the integration process, supported by the UNHCR Office in Podgorica. Since 2020, the project includes the work with displaced persons from former Yugoslavia, persons at risk of statelessness as well as persons who have obtained stateless status. Our team of five legal advisers, three interpreters and three caseworkers covers these activities with great success, and provides the necessary assistance to persons of concern.

#### When it comes to persons seeking international protection in

**Montenegro**, the CA legal team monitors their case from the moment they apply for asylum. This includes representation before the Directorate for Asylum, filing legal submissions, drafting lawsuits, appeals, and in case of granting asylum, legal assistance is provided during the integration of these persons into Montenegrin society. Caseworkers monitor the course of acting at border crossings, i.e. the arrival and departure of these persons from Montenegro, providing them at the same time with basic legal information, with the assistance of our interpreters for Arabic and English.







Delegation from France visited the camp in Konik



Delegation from France visited the camp in Konik



Andela Đuković at the UNHCR international conference on statelessness "Best practice of Montenegro and France"

In 2021, we also celebrated the Migrants' Day on 18 December, by spending time with families from Pakistan and Cuba, who are users of our support services and who got to know each other. Together, we visited the New Year's Bazaar in Podgorica, where we talked with them about the problems they face and ways to solve them.

Our legal advisors provide free legal assistance to **displaced and internally displaced persons from former Republic of Yugoslavia, as well as to persons at risk of statelessness** and stateless persons in Montenegro. In 2021, CA legal team provided 1,545 services to 595 persons under the UNHCR protection. Within this project, CA legal team covers 18 municipalities and cooperates with the competent institutions of Montenegro, as well as diplomatic and consular missions of the countries in the region.

Milan Radović, Civic Alliance Program Director and Jean Yves Bouchardy, UNHCR Representative for Montenegro officially opened the CA office in Konik on 20 October.

The office was opened in the framework of the CA project aiming to provide free legal aid to persons under the UNHCR protection in order to regulate the status of displaced and internally displaced persons from the former Yugoslavia and persons at risk of statelessness, and to enable better CA presence on the terrain due to sustainable resolving of the legal status of these persons.

Our office is located at Španskih boraca, bb in Konik, where people can receive more information on regulating the legal status in Montenegro.



On 31 May 2021, the Civic Alliance signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Ministry of Interior of Montenegro and the Police Directorate, which regulates cooperation aiming to improve respect for human rights, especially of persons deprived of liberty, asylum seekers, migrants, internally displaced persons (IDPs), displaced persons (DPs), stateless persons, in order to improve the asylum system in Montenegro, finalize the legal status of IDPs and DPs, prevent statelessness in Montenegro and protect the rights of asylum seekers.

Civic Alliance is also dealing with the issues of migrants, more precisely, with their security, through the project "Security for Human Beings and Borders - Fight against Smuggling of Migrants in the Western Balkans", in partnership with the Group 484 from Belgrade, supported by the European Union. The project was developed as a regional response of seven civil society organizations gathered in the Balkan Refugee and Migration Council (BRMC) and the Danish Refugee Center (DRC) to a burning common problem along the Western Balkans migration route smuggling of migrants. The project aims to improve regional co-operation and good neighborly relations in the Western Balkans through development of a single regional response to migrant smuggling. CSOs in six Western Balkan countries cooperate with the government representatives in order to develop harmonized regional practices and legal framework in accordance with the EU legislation for fight against migrant smuggling. In that manner, the project will contribute to the process of access to the EU. By the end of 2021, we implemented a number of activities, such as the study "Analysis of Migrant Smuggling in Montenegro". In addition, a public call for sub-granting was announced, and in accordance to it four NGOs (CEDEM, the Association of Psychologists of Montenegro, the Professional Association of Journalists and the Social Center) received funds for the implementation of project activities. CA also organized a national training for prosecutors, border police and NGOs called "Capacity building in fight against human trafficking", which proved to be extremely accepted and constructive for our participants. The training took place in Budva from 30 November to 1 December 2021.



Training "Capacity Building in fight against human trafficking"

At the end of 2021, we started the implementation of the project "Transparent and effective judiciary for efficient fight against torture and human rights violations in accordance with negotiation chapters 23 and 24" aiming to strengthen the rule of law and protect fundamental rights in Montenegro in line with the EU negotiation. The project is being implemented with the support of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Norway and the Balkan Democracy Fund of the German Marshall Fund of the United States of America. The plan is to implement a number of activities, and we have already started to work on a few of them, namely: monitoring the respect and protection of human rights of detainees, prisoners and migrants and monitoring and evaluation of judicial system, focusing on cases of human rights violations and torture.

From 2019 to 2021, we worked on strengthening of status of migrants in Serbia, Montenegro and Northern Macedonia, which will be based on full respect of international human rights standards. Civioc Alliance carried out this activity through the project "Support to migrants and local communities in Serbia, Montenegro and Northern Macedonia", whose leader is the Belgrade Center, in partnership with Civic Alliance. One of the most significant results of this project is the Report on Legal Framework in Montenegro, Macedonia and Serbia. On behalf of Civic Alliance, Milan Radović and Aleksandra Vukčević worked on this report. The project was implemented with the support of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Norway in Belgrade.



The report "Detention of migrants based on migration regulations – Review of legislation and practice in Montenegro"



Jointly with partners Center for Palliative Care and Palliative Medicine "BELhospice" from Serbia and Sue Ryder from Albania, Civic Alliance participated in the implementation of project "Palliative care - my care, my right". The goal of the project is to emphasize the importance of palliative care as a human right, as well as the establishment of legal mechanisms related to palliative care.

As part of the project, a study "Needs and barriers to the implementation of palliative care" was conducted in Serbia, Albania and Montenegro and was distributed to relevant authorities, national and regional partners, in order to encourage desired changes for improvement of palliative care and quality of lives of patients living with life-limiting diseases.



Proposals for policy changes developed through the project in each country will provide the grounds for improvement of palliative care services in health and social care institutions and will enable a better quality of life for citizens with serious illnesses.

The framework for cooperation between health and social care professionals and civil society organizations was created through the exchange of experiences and knowledge between 45 participants from Serbia, Albania and Montenegro, improved knowledge on principles and values of palliative care that enable them to provide better services.



# SCHOOL OF POLITICAL STUDIES



Jelena Ristović, School of Political Studies, Coordinator

School of Political Studies (SPS) as the key platform for dialogue and cooperation of social and political actors, continued to develop its program in 2021. Through education goals, SPS contributed to the synergy between various sectors and political options, social cohesion and improvement of the reform process.

Through education of actors of social changes and political processes in Montenegro on practical skills and topics that are not covered by the existing educational system, SPS continued to improve the work of politicians, journalists, representatives of nongovernmental and international organizations, public servants.

In 2021, SPS finished the program for XVIII generation and composed the new – XIX generation of SPS. The new generation gathered representatives of political parties, journalists of the most prominent media in Montenegro, representatives of public institutions and international organizations.

During 2021, the thematic framework covered areas such as ethical media reporting on socially vulnerable groups; culture, customs, language and rights of Roma and Egyptians in Montenegro; facing the past. SPS also organized the conference on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Declaration on the Proclamation of Montenegro as an Ecological State, which was also an opportunity to gather members of the Green Parliamentary Group (GPG) formed by the School in cooperation with GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH).





The goal of establishing of GPG is to promote topics such as environmental protection, sustainable energy use and energy efficiency, climate protection and generally sustainable development. By joining the group, MPs, in cooperation with the civil sector, will have the opportunity to actively influence the harmonization of Montenegrin regulations with European standards and norms in these areas.

V Forum of SPS Alumni, entitled "Consensus. Justice. Europe." took place at the Barutana memorial complex in Podgorica in May 2021. Mr. Aleksa Bečić, President of the Parliament of Montenegro opened the Forum, which continued with the introductory speech H.E. Christian Thimonier, Ambassador of France and H.E. Jørn Eugene Gjelstad, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway. The forum continued with panels about the culture of dialogue and search of consensus and the rule of law. Following the panels, participants of XVIII generation were awarded diplomas for participation in the SPS 2020/2021 program.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was difficult to logistically hold all events and comply with all protection measures. Nevertheless, SPS successfully implemented all its program activities in accordance with regulations.

Below are the activities Civic Alliance carried out last year within the School of Political Studies program.

The fourth seminar for participants of XVIII generation of SPS, which consisted of representatives of political parties, international organizations, public institutions and leading media in Montenegro, took place in February 2021. The seminar entitled "Ethical Reporting of the Media on Socially Vulnerable Groups" was held in Ulcinj and in addition to participants of this generation, the seminar was attended by SPS alumni. The aim of the seminar was to develop the capacity of participants on media democratization, media freedom and the status of journalists. In addition, we have contributed to raising awareness on respect of fundamental principles of journalism and ethical standards that include accuracy of facts, impartiality in reporting, and reliability in terms of the origin of content and the use of journalistic methods. Mr. Dritan Abazović, Deputy Prime Minister of Montenegro, addressed the participants and emphasized the importance of ethics in media reporting, but also challenging position of media in Montenegro.





Seminar "Ethical Reporting of Media on socially vulnerable groups"



This year, as part of the celebration of 10 years since the establishment of Civic Alliance, the V Forum of SPS Alumni took place at the Barutana memorial complex in Podgorica on 17 May 2021. Mr. Aleksa Bečić, President of the Parliament of Montenegro, opened the forum and the event continued with the introductory speech of H.E. Christian Thimonier, Ambassador of France and H.E. Jørn Eugene Gjelstad, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway. H.E. Jørn Eugene Gjelstad, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway, said that SPS proven to be a good mechanism for contributing to democracy by improving capacities of young leaders, who are already involved in decision-making processes in the Parliament, Government and other key institutions. According to H.E. Christian Thimonier, Ambassador of France to Montenegro, building consensus is one of the most important matters in conducting politics, especially when there are forces against it, and that France has a lot of experience in that term.

The forum continued with panels on the culture of a dialogue, the search for consensus, and the rule of law with Mr. Gojko Perović, the Rector of the Theological Seminary "Sveti Petar Cetinjski" in Cetinje and Prof. Dr. Nebojša Vučinić, Professor at the University of Montenegro, and Danijel Živković, President of the MP club of Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS) and Slaven Radunović, President of the MP club of Democratic front (DF). Through the examples of the region and in our country, the panelists pointed out the importance of the dialogue, as well as its success and effectiveness.

At the end of Forum, participants of the XVIII generation consisting of MPs, representatives of political parties, media, state and international institutions, were awarded diplomas for participation in the School 2020/2021 program.









In September 2021, we composed the new **XIX generation of SPS**. This generation consists of leaders from the field of politics, journalism, NGO sector and international organization. More than 70 applications arrived after the open call, and of that number we elected 25 applicants. In 2021, we organized three modules with the new generation. One module took place in Petrovac, another one in Dubrovnik while the third module took place in Ulcinj.

The first module titled "Facing the War Past in Montenegro", took place from 22 to 24 October. The lecturers at the seminar talked about the war crimes in Montenegro committed during 1990s, and about the importance of facing the past. The seminar also included discussion about the responsibility of media and professional standards, with the special reflection on reporting on war in 1990s. Participants and lecturers talked about the processing of war crimes through the vision of prosecution, and from the perspective of victims and witnesses. At the end, the seminar included the anti-war movements at the beginning of 1990s, and the new initiatives in terms of facing the past.



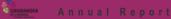


The second module of the School took place in the form of the study visit to Dubrovnik, titled "**Reconciliation and Building of Trust**" from 18 to 22 November 2021. In the framework of the study visit, participants had the opportunity to visit the Old Town jointly with the guide Marko Sjekavica, who taled about Dubrovnik with participants, attacks on Dubrovnik in 1990s. The city tour also included the visit to the National Archive in Dubrovnik, museum Homeland War Museum, War Photo Limited Gallery, and the Konavle County Museum. In the course of the visit to Konavle, participants heard the witnessing and talked to the camp Morinj prisoner Metodije Prkačina. Participants also talked to Luka Brailo, a journalist who reported during the assaults on Dubrovnik.















The final SPS seminar in 2021, entitled "Human Rights in Montenegro - between standards and practice", took place in Ulcinj from 17 to 19 December 2021. The seminar was devoted to topics such as importance of human rights in order to build better society on the foundations of principles, but also about discrimination of vulnerable groups. Lecturers at the seminar also focused on positive obligations of the country in a view of protection from discrimination, inhuman and degrading treatment, and human rights in Montenegro through the prism of international reports. In the framework of numerous reports, there were also discussions about the labor, minority, and rights of LGBT community in Montenegro, migrant and refugee crisis in Europe and the situation in Montenegro, and the relationship between the right to freedom of informing and right to privacy.

Representatives of SPS – Amina Murić, Božena Jelušić, Tatjana Perović, Darko Saveljić and Aleksandra Dragićević, participated in the ninth World Forum for **Democracy**. The Forum entitled "Can Democracy Save the Environment?" traditionally took place in Strasbourg, from 8 to 10 November 2021. Participants had the opportunity to hear more about how our societies are under extreme and unexpected global challenge, but as the key battle is fought against the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences, the greatest existential threat to humanity is growing. Thus, the Forum sent the message that it is time for an action that will involve all countries worldwide in order to act in time and protect the environment. The Forum participants visited the office of the Permanent Mission of Montenegro to the Council of Europe, as well as the European Court of Human Rights, where they talked with the Judge Dr. Ivana Jelić about the work of the Court and her role as ECtHR judge on behalf of Montenegro.



World Forum for Democracy



Visit to the office of the Permanent Mission of Montenegro to the Council of Europe



Visit to the European Court for Human Rights



With the support of GIZ, SPS started the implementation of project "**Capacity Building of the Green Parliamentary Group in Montenegro for Sustainable Energy and Urban Mobility**" that will continue in 2022. Namely, the pressure of the society on national government and municipal administrations is still relatively low in terms of Sofia Declaration on Green Agenda for the Western Balkan, which was adopted in November 2020, while the awareness on importance on energy and transport sector for climate issues is still insufficiently developed.





Conference "Celebration of 30 years since the adoption of Declaration on the proclamation of Montenegro as an ecological state"





#### Charter of the Green Parliamentary Group



MP Boris Mugoša on the Western Balkan Green Agenda

The goal of this project is to strengthen the capacity of the informal Green Parliamentary Group in Montenegro to promote the EU's energy and transport agenda, within their sphere of influence. One of the most important activities that was organized by the end of 2021 is the conference on 20 September - "Celebration of 30 years since the adoption of the Declaration on the proclamation of Montenegro as an ecological state." In addition to participation of relevant speakers, the Charter of the renewed Green Parliamentary Group in Montenegro, which currently consists of 12 deputies, was adopted at the conference.



The project "**Digital Democratic Empowerment and Mobilization for a Stronger EU (DigiDEM)**" implemented by Civic Alliance in cooperation with ECAS from Brussels and eight more European organizations, is supported by the European Commission in the framework of the program Europe for Citizens. DigiDEM aims to establish the community of Montenegrin policy makers, academics, companies, journalists and nongovernmental organizations who will advocate the use of ICT, in order to provide inclusive and collaborative decision-making process at all levels, and contribute to citizens in terms of improvement of air quality through multiple platform for crowdsourcing in 2022.



In the framework of the project, CA organized workshops named "Can Democracy improve the environment?" where the panelists discussed the challenges of Montenegro in air quality and protection of environment, but also about the importance of participation of citizens in decision making process at the national level. Panelists Božena Jelušić and Dragica Sekulić, members of the Green Parliamentary Group, but also Nataša Kovačević, on behalf of the CEE Bankwatch network, made a great contribution to the quality of the conference.





### **MEDIA PROGRAM**



### Amina Murić, Deputy Executive Director

During the previous year, Civic Alliance enhanced its activities through the Media Program by the number of activities, as well as by active participation in the media and advocating for a better position of the media and freedom of the media in Montenegro.

We continue to strive to contribute to the improvement of information exchange between citizens and institutions, with the aim to increase the degree of democracy of our society, which we realize through various activities implemented through projects.

This year, our activities focused on the importance of ethics in journalism, with a special focus on young students in Montenegro. Through practical knowledge, they have learned many secrets of ethical writing, as well as research for journalistic stories in general. We also raised the issue of the use of minority languages in public broadcasters, and on giving recommendations for improving the situation. We strive to initiate the work of institutions and create conditions for public debate on this issue. We have monitored the ethical reporting of the media on vulnerable categories, especially portals, and made recommendations for improving the situation regarding this matter.

We are constantly present in public and stand on the side of defending freedom of the media, freedom of expression, improving the position of journalists in Montenegro, and we continuously invite competent institutions to take responsibility for attacks on journalists and resolve all prvious cases.

This year, the project "Ethical and Professional Reporting for Students" was finalized, which was implemented with the support of the US Embassy in Montenegro. The aim of the project was to increase media literacy and critical

thinking in Montenegro through assistance in training students of the final year of journalism and communication studies to improve practical skills and training for the next generation of Montenegrin journalists.

A round table "Challenges of professional journalism in Montenegro" was held. The Minister of Public Administration, Digital Society Media, Tamara Srzentić also participated in the round table, emphasizing that attacks on journalists and media property in Montenegro are continuous and do not have an adequate judicial epilogue, which was one of the main conclusions of this event.



Minister Tamara Srzentić at the round table "Challenges of professional journalism in Montenegro"

We have also developed a publication called "Investigative Journalism through the Prism of Students", which has been translated into English and Albanian. The publication contains ten research stories on which 11 young Montenegrin journalists and students worked after attending a training program with prominent local journalists, during which they shared their experiences and knowledge. The research stories cover some of the most important reform issues facing Montenegrin society on the path to EU accession and the adoption of a complex system of standards - from human rights, war crimes, environmental protection to the rule of law, as the broadest possible framework. public system and its ability to respond to the needs of citizens.

Activities on the project **"Towards better respect for the right to use the mother tongue of minority peoples in Montenegro**" are at the beginning of implementation. The project is supported by the Fund for the Protection and Exercise of Minority Rights. Research through surveys on harmonization of legal provisions and practices regarding the use of minority languages by public broadcasters at the national and local levels is planned, as well as document



analysis and the use of the Law on Free Access to Information. Results of the research will be presented in the final phase of the project, together with recommendations for overcoming the identified problems. Through monitoring and research, the degree of respect for the right to use the mother tongue of minority peoples, which is one of the most politically and culturally sensitive in the field of minority rights, will be determined. The main problems regarding the use of minority languages in public broadcasters at the national and local level will be identified, recommendations for improving the situation will be made, and the work of institutions will be initiated and conditions for public debate on this issue will be created. Finally, a Guide for Public Broadcasters will be developed, in line with Council of Europe standards, which would help editors and public broadcasters management to design and implement programs in minority language in a better way.

So far, we have conducted a survey with the aim of determining the degree of satisfaction with the quality of programs in minority languages on public broadcasters among members of minority people.

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Survey on the degree of satisfaction with the quality of programs in minority languages at public broadcasters

In cooperation with the Trade Union of Media of Montenegro, we have successfully implemented the project "**Support** to Media Freedom and Journalistic Standards", with support of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Norway and the Balkan Fund for Democracy (BTD) of the German Marshall Fund of the United States of America.

The goal of the project is to contribute to the promotion of media freedoms, which was achieved through monitoring implementation of new media legislation, capacity building of journalists on ethical reporting and human rights standards, contribution to journalist safety, and public advocacy of media freedom standards and issues. Civic Alliance monitored the ethical reporting of the media on vulnerable categories, the results of which we presented at the conference "Days of Media Freedom in Montenegro", which was organized in cooperation with the Trade Union of Media of Montenegro. In addition, the colleague Milan Radović presented a report on court proceedings for attacks



on journalists, which we also worked on. The results of the research have shown a worryingly large increase in attacks and death threats against journalists over the past year, and the safety of journalists is one of the main problems that journalists face in their work in Montenegro. Therefore, it is necessary to work on increasing the protection of journalists at the institutional level, and this can best be achieved through training of prosecutors conducted by the Centre for Training in Judiciary and State Prosecution Service in cooperation with the Council of Europe, which also cover protection of journalists.



Conference "Days of Media Freedom in Montenegro"





As part of this project, a seminar entitled "Ethical reporting of the media on socially vulnerable groups" was held, which was attended by participants of the School of Political Studies. At the seminar, lecturers from the field of media, but also from state institutions spoke about the ethics in the media, but also about the position of socially vulnerable groups and the way of reporting on this category.



Seminar "Ethical reporting of the media on socially vulnerable groups"



# **YOUTH INITIATIVE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS**

Mehdina Kašić Šutković, Program Coordinator





Aleksandra Vukčević, Program Director

Although in the conditions of the corona virus pandemic, Youth Initiative for Human Rights was successfully guided by the goals of its mission, monitoring the situation related to human rights violations, dealing with the past, and youth in Montenegro and the region and their activism.

YIHR responded promptly to various cases of hate speech, human rights violations and attempts to revise history, especially with regard to the war events in the 1990s. We have reminded institutions of their responsibility, as well as the obligation that the state must pay much more attention to the commemoration of the victims of the wars of the 1990s.

Through the work of the Information and Documentation Center, we have focused on reconciliation activities, especially of young people. We organized a series of activities with them, such as visits to the Center with lectures on war events and cooperation with other organizations, i.e. with the Srebrenica Memorial Center.

Below you can read more about the projects and activities of the Youth Initiative for Human Rights during the previous year.

Youth Initiative for Human Rights continued with the activities related to the project "**No impunity for the past!**", which was implemented with the support of the European Union.





At the beginning of the year, we prepared flyers describing the war crimes that the project i.e. the established Information and Documentation Center treats, which happened during the 90's. The flyers contain basic information about these events, as well as their current status regarding the court epilogue. One of the main goals of this activity is to meet young people primarily with the existence of these war crimes.

We held panel discussions in six towns of Montenegro on the topic "Dealing with the past. Justice for the past pledge for the future". The purpose of the panel was to discuss and exchange opinions on war crimes in the 1990s at the local level. Panel discussions were held in Bijelo Polje, Kotor, Ulcinj, Rožaje, Herceg Novi and Pljevlja.



Panel discussion in Bijelo Polje



Panel discussion in Kotor



We also promoted the project through TV guest appearances, hence the colleague Amina Murić spoke for Dnevnik RTCG about the project, its importance related to the danger of revision of history, but also about the panel discussions held in the towns of Montenegro.



Guest appearance at II Dnevnik at RTCG

Six TV and radio shows were broadcasted throughout the towns of Montenegro, but on local broadcasters, in order to discuss the topic of dealing with the past at the local level. In cooperation with local media and TV broadcasters, these activities were successfully implemented, whereby guests were relevant speakers from these towns.



TV show at RTR, Rožaje



TV show at TV Teuta, Ulcinj



We organized an online lecture for law students from Montenegro on the topic of transitional justice and dealing with the past in Montenegro.

The lecturer was an assistant at the Faculty of Law of UDG, Bojan Božović, MA.





Lecture of professor Bojan Božović for law students



Short video with facts about war crimes committed in the 90s



**Seminar on exchange of experiences** was organized in Rozaje in June, which gathered over 20 young people from the region (Serbia, BiH, Croatia, Kosovo and Montenegro), who visited the area of Kaluđerski Laz together. During the visit, we laid flowers at Kaluđerski Laz, whereby we paid tribute to the victims of this crime. A lecture on war crimes in Kaluđerski Laz was given by: Velija Murić, lawyer, Haxhi Lajçi, director of the "Dacići" school and Šemso Dedeić, former head of Rožaje Police. Young people from the region had the opportunity to hear from relevant people the facts about this crime. We ended the day by broadcasting the film "Emptiness" by Sead Sadiković, with whom we had the opportunity to discuss the topic of war crimes.











The project ended with a regional conference entitled **"Reconciliation and Dealing with the Past in the Western Balkans**". The conference was opened by Branka Bošnjak, Vice President of the Parliament, Oana Kristina Popa, Head of the EU Delegation to Montenegro and Serge Brammertz - Chief Prosecutor of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Courts. Among the panelists at the conference there were Drita Hajdari, war crimes prosecutor of Kosovo Special State Prosecutor's Office, and Valentina Pavlicic, Montenegro's representative before the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. Such participants ensured a quality conference with constructive opinions and advice.

Mr Serge Brammertz welcomed, as he said, "the courageous decision of the Montenegrin MPs" who voted for the Resolution on Srebrenica and called on other countries in the region to follow the example of Montenegro, and congratulated the Parliament of Montenegro on this important step.







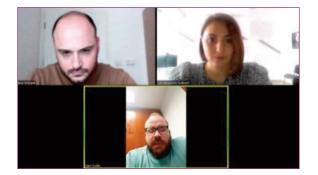




Through the project **"To Reconcile is to Reinforce"** and in cooperation with YIHR regional offices, we organized activities aimed at expanding civic space through the establishment of innovative inclusive civil society practices, ensuring greater participation of stakeholders, state institutions and civil society actors. Together with partners, we held 12 meetings with national actors, and a regional consultative meeting with key actors in the region on existing regional practices aimed at identifying gaps and barriers affecting regional cooperation and good neighborly relations. Five reports on the monitoring of commemorations in local languages and English were prepared. In addition, a handbook on proposed public labeling policies and best practices in the Western Balkans has been developed.

The project was supported by the Balkan Civil Society Development Network, with financial support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).







In the light of marking 10th anniversary, Civic Alliance decided to participate in numerous humanitarian activities.

Together with great students of the Music Academy, we visited the **Youth Club within the Resource Center**, which is attended by young people with disabilities. As part of the visit, the students of the Music Academy held a concert that took place in a great atmosphere and mood of all those who were present. It was a pleasure to spend time with the young people at the Resource Center, who enjoyed a two-hour concert with us.







We visited the **orphanage "Mladost"** in Bijela where we held a decoupage workshop for children in the lower grades of primary school. In addition to the workshop, students of the Music Academy held a concert for these students, who enjoyed their performance.











Our volunteers participated in two actions, together with the children of our employees: Humanitarian race "We run for friends who cannot" and Great planting action in Gorica.

With the pleasure of participating in activities that have a humanitarian character, our volunteers were part of these events with enjoyment and fun. The youngest ones especially had fun - they participated in the race together with many children from Podgorica, but also planted seedlings in Gorica, and learned about the importance of environmental protection.

As part of the action against breast cancer, which is celebrated in October, we have provided free check-ups for our colleagues, in order to prevent this vicious disease.

Finally, we donated funds to the Equestrian Club "Budućnost", which will be used to support children with disabilities, who attend this club.











# **COMMITTEES AND MEMBERSHIPS**

In addition to program activities, our team is active by monitoring the Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms, as well as other parliamentary committees.

Through his membership in RTCG Council, our colleague **Milan Radović** had numerous initiatives related to the information program, promotion and protection of human rights, and he also dealt with these issues during his membership in NPM, i.e. working body formed by the Protector of Human Rights for Torture Prevention. He was also a member of several working groups for drafting human rights legislation. We would especially like to single out the working groups for drafting the Law on the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms and the Law on Public Assemblies.

The position of a member of the RTCG Council is now performed by the colleague **Amina Murić**, who will also try to give her maximum contribution to the improvement of media freedom, but also to the professionalization of the Public Broadcaster, while respecting human and minority rights.

Colleague Edina Hasanaga Čobaj was a member of the Transparency Council of the Ministry of the Interior.

Colleague **Zoran Vujičić** has been a member of the State Election Commission since 2018. His work has increased the transparency of the work of this institution. He was also a member of the Ethics Committee of the Ministry of the Interior in the previous mandate. He influenced the introduction of an article in the Code which prescribes that police officers must adhere to the Code in their announcements on social networks. Exactly after the introduction of this article, violations of the Code were found with several officers. He was a member of the Working Group for the Drafting of the Law on Amendments to the Law on the Execution of Probation and Community Punishment.

Colleague Aleksandra Vukčević was a member the Council for the Rule of Law.

Colleague Ivana **Đođić** is a member of the Ethics Committee of the Ministry of Interior.

Colleague Andela Đuković is a member of the Working Group for Chapter 23.

Colleague Aleksandra Srbljanović is a member of the Working Group for Monitoring the Migrant Crisis in Pljevlja.



Colleague **Pavle Ćupić** is a member of the Working Group for Chapter 24.

Colleague **Dino Hodžić** is a member of the Interdepartmental Operational Team for providing assistance in exercising the rights of Montenegrin citizens upon their return to Montenegro.

By participating in the bodies listed above, our colleagues have shown how it is possible to impassively improve the situation in the field of human rights, but also to act with principle.

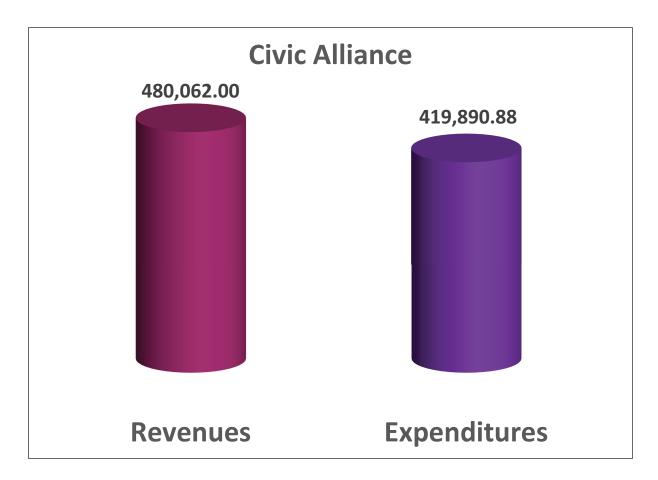


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- **Balkan green foundation-BGF**
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- Group 484
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- Rockefeller Brothers Fund
- Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)
- The Balkan Trust for Democracy / German Marshall Fund
- The Open Regional Fund for South-East Europe Energy, Transport and Climate Protection (ORF-EE), Deutsche Gesellschaft f
  ür Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
- UNDP
- **WINDER Representation in Montenegro**
- US Embassy in Podgorica



#### **TOTAL STATISTICS: REVENUES, EXPENDITURES**



Regarding the taxes, all payables and receivables towards the state have been duly settled.



# **CIVIC ALLIANCE TEAM**

- **Milan Radović**, Program Director
- Edina Hasanaga Čobaj, Executive Director
- **Zoran Vujičić**, Deputy Program Director
- **Amina Murić**, Deputy Executive Director
- Selena Ristović, Coordinator of the School of Political Studies
- Aleksandra Vukčević, Program Director of YIHR
- Mehdina Kašić Šutković, Program Coordinator of YIHR
- Dušica Merdović, Legal Advisor
- Anđela Đuković, Legal Advisor
- Ivana Đođić, Legal Advisor
- Pavle Ćupić, Legal Advisor
- Dino Hodžić, Legal Advisor
- Aleksandra Srbljanović, Program Assistant
- Vojo Đuranović, Program Assistant
- Zoran Zola Vujačić, Office and IT Manager
- Sonja Radulović, Translator
- Meliha Murić, Translator
- Sabit Pajazitaj, Field worker / Translator
- Bojan Andrejević, Accountant
- Lidija Cerović, Housekeeper