



# Overview of the Higher Education System

## Montenegro



February 2017

This document has been produced by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) on the basis of contributions from the National Erasmus+ Office in Montenegro and the authorities of the country concerned:

Vanja Drljević, Ranko Lazović - National Erasmus+ Office in Montenegro  
Biljana Mišović, HERE member and BFUG member, Ministry of Education

Prof. Saša Milić, Prof. Mira Vukčević, Prof. Gordana Đurović - HERE member, University of Montenegro

The approach and data collection have been implemented in close cooperation with Eurydice, the Network Education Systems and Policies in Europe.

This document reflects the views of the Erasmus+ Office and the Authorities of the country concerned. The European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

© European Union, 2017

For any use or reproduction of photos which are not under European Union copyright, permission must be sought directly from the copyright holder(s).

ISBN: 978-92-9492-389-9

doi: 10.2797/817978

**For further information:**

**Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)**

Erasmus+ : Higher Education – International Capacity Building

Postal address: Rue Joseph II, 59 B-1000 Brussels - Belgium

Contact: [EACEA-EPLUS-CBHE@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EACEA-EPLUS-CBHE@ec.europa.eu)

Web-site: [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus_en)

**National Erasmus+ Office in Montenegro**

Postal address: Bulevar Džordža Vašingtona 45, 1 st floor, 81000 Podgorica, Montenegro

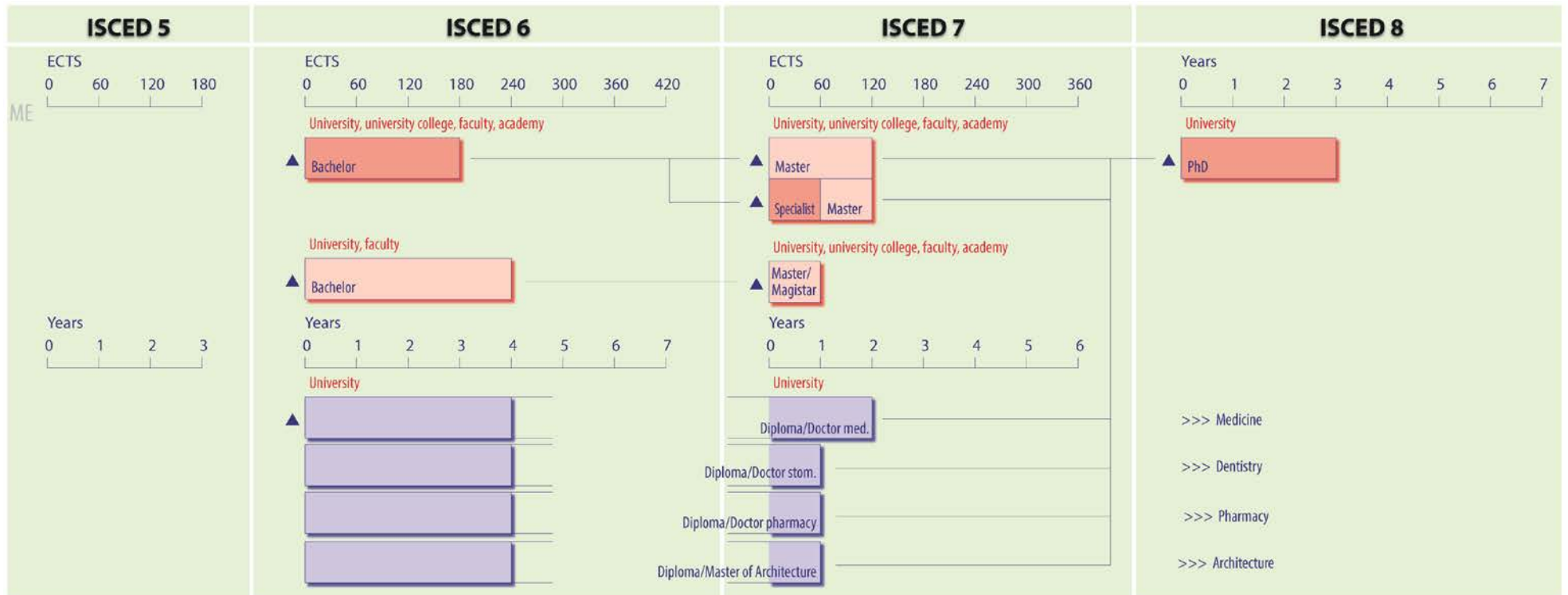
Contact: [neo@ac.me](mailto:neo@ac.me)

Web-site: <http://www.neomontenegro.ac.me/>

**Eurydice**

Web-site: [http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/index\\_en.php](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/index_en.php)

## The higher education system in Montenegro



- Most common length of a Bologna cycle
- Other length of a Bologna cycle
- Professional programme

- Programme outside the typical Bologna model
- Professional programme non Bologna

**ECTS:**  
Credits according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System

		regulated at national level	decided at institutional level
All	programmes have admission requirements	▼	▲
SOME		▽	△



## Table of Contents

1	Overview.....	1
1.1	Fundamental Principles and National Policies .....	1
1.2	Lifelong Learning (LLL) Strategy.....	1
1.3	Organisation of Private Education.....	2
1.4	National Qualifications Framework.....	2
1.5	Statistics on Organisation and Governance .....	4
1.6	Distribution of responsibilities .....	4
2	Higher Education Funding .....	5
2.1	Public Education .....	5
2.1.1	Financial Autonomy and Control.....	5
2.1.2	Fees within Public Higher Education .....	6
2.2	Private Education .....	6
2.2.1	Financial Autonomy and Control.....	6
2.3	Financial Support for Learners' Families .....	6
2.4	Financial Support for Learners .....	6
3	The structure of the Higher Education system.....	8
3.1	Types of Higher Education Institutions .....	10
3.2	First Cycle Programmes .....	10
3.2.1	Branches of Study.....	10
3.2.2	Admission Requirements.....	11
3.2.3	Curriculum .....	11
3.2.4	Teaching Methods .....	12
3.2.5	Progression of Students .....	12
3.2.6	Employability .....	13
3.2.7	Student Assessment .....	13
3.2.8	Certification .....	13
3.3	Short-Cycle Higher Education.....	14
3.4	Second Cycle Programmes .....	14
3.4.1	Branches of Study.....	14
3.4.2	Admission Requirements.....	14
3.4.3	Curriculum .....	15
3.4.4	Teaching Methods .....	15
3.4.5	Progression of Students .....	15
3.4.6	Employability .....	15
3.4.7	Student Assessment .....	15
3.4.8	Certification .....	15
3.5	Programmes outside the Bachelor and Master Structure .....	16
3.6	Third Cycle (PhD) Programmes.....	16
3.6.1	Organisation of Doctoral Studies .....	16

3.6.2	Admission Requirements.....	16
3.6.3	Status of Doctoral Students/Candidates .....	17
3.6.4	Supervision Arrangements .....	17
3.6.5	Employability .....	17
3.6.6	Assessment.....	17
3.6.7	Certification .....	18
3.6.8	Organisational Variation.....	18
4	Teachers and Education Staff .....	18
4.1	Initial Education for Academic Staff in Higher Education .....	18
4.2	Conditions of Service for Academic Staff Working in Higher Education .....	18
4.2.1	Planning Policy.....	18
4.2.2	Entry to the Profession.....	18
4.2.3	Professional Status .....	19
4.2.4	Salaries.....	19
4.2.5	Working Time and Holidays.....	19
4.2.6	Promotion, Advancement .....	19
4.2.7	Retirement and Pensions .....	20
4.3	Governing Bodies of Higher Education Institutions .....	20
5	Management and Other Education Staff in Higher Education.....	20
5.1	Requirements for Appointment .....	21
5.2	Service Conditions .....	21
6	Quality Assurance in Higher Education .....	21
6.1	Responsible Bodies.....	21
6.2	Approaches and Methods for Quality Assurance.....	22
7	Educational Support and Guidance.....	24
7.1	Support Measures for Learners in Higher Education .....	24
7.1.1	Definition of the Target Group(s).....	24
7.1.2	Specific Support Measures .....	24
7.2	Guidance and Counselling in Higher Education .....	25
7.2.1	Academic Guidance .....	25
7.2.2	Psychological Counselling.....	25
7.2.3	Career Guidance .....	25
8	Mobility and Internationalization in Higher Education .....	25
8.1	Student Mobility.....	25
8.2	Academic staff mobility.....	27
8.3	Other Dimensions of Internationalization in Higher Education .....	28
8.3.1	European, Global and Intercultural Dimension in Curriculum Development .....	28
8.3.2	Partnerships and Networks .....	28
8.4	Bilateral Agreements and Worldwide Cooperation .....	29
8.4.1	Bilateral Agreements.....	29

8.4.2	Cooperation and Participation in Worldwide Programmes and Organisations.....	29
9	On-going Reforms and Policy Developments.....	29
9.1	Overall national education strategy and key objectives .....	29
9.2	Overview of processes and drivers for the education reform .....	30
9.3	National Reforms in Higher Education .....	30
9.3.1	2016.....	30
9.3.2	2015.....	31
9.3.3	2014.....	31
10	Legislation.....	32





## 1 Overview

---

Montenegro officially declared its independence in 2006. The population of Montenegro is about 623 000 inhabitants. In November 2010, Montenegro was accepted as a candidate country for European Union (EU) membership. Today, Montenegro is an independent state internationally recognized. The United Nations welcomed Montenegro as its 192<sup>nd</sup> country member on July 27, 2006.

The structure of the Montenegrin population by ethnicity is as follows: Montenegrins 44.98%, Serbs 28.73%, Bosnians 8.65%, Albanians 4.91%, Muslims 3.31%, Croats 0.97%.

Concerning religions, 74.2% of the population is Orthodox, 17.7% Catholic, 3.5% Muslim, 1% declaring themselves atheist. The official language is Montenegrin.

Pre-university education is financed entirely from the state budget. Concerning financing of public HEI, the Government, upon the opinion of the Council for Higher Education, determines the amount of funds for financing of public institutions and students at those institutions for every academic year, taking into account the number of study groups, academic and non-academic staff and price unit per student. It is prescribed by Law on Higher Education (Official Gazette of Montenegro, no 44/14, 47/15 and 40/16) and Regulation on Norms and Standards for Financing of Public Higher Education Institutions and Financing of Students at the Higher Education Institutions (Official Gazette of MNE 33/11).

Overall allocation for education from GDP is around 4.5%.

### 1.1 Fundamental Principles and National Policies

---

The principal legal document governing higher education policy in Montenegro is the Law on Higher Education<sup>1</sup> as well as the Strategy of Development of Higher Education<sup>2</sup>.

The Strategy has highlighted some issues of importance for the overall development of higher education in Montenegro, such as lifelong learning orientation, internationalization of higher education, students mobility, harmonization of the study programmes with the labour market needs etc.

### 1.2 Lifelong Learning (LLL) Strategy

---

The University of Montenegro set up a strategic plan for the introduction of LLL concept, with support from the Tempus project 511382-TEMPUS-1-2010-1-XM-TEMPUS-SMHES “Development of the Lifelong Learning Concept at the University of Montenegro”. The major outcome of the project was a LLL strategy of the University of Montenegro. In order to create a solid base for the development of the LLL concept, the university defined needed prerequisites in terms of amendments to the national and institutional documents, establishing an operative network for the administrative support as well as creating sustainable links with the social partners and labour market. In order to strengthen cooperation with the labour market and facilitate strategic orientation in future LLL offers, the University of Montenegro has created the Career Development Centre meant to facilitate lifelong career development and assist students, future students and alumni in career exploration, career decision making and the implementation of their career choices, as well as to provide online coaching, personal coaching or group coaching through workshops on different topics including CV writing, launching LinkedIn Profile, job search, information interviewing, interest assessment, decision making, stress management and other topics.

However, open questions still exist, such as the issue of learning outcomes as the basic element for the recognition of prior learning. The need of recognition of prior learning has also been defined in terms of implementation from the academic community and the social stakeholders, possible target groups for

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.neomontenegro.ac.me/t.php?v=126&l=en>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.neomontenegro.ac.me/t.php?v=152&l=en>

(Recognition of Prior Learning) as well as the way the process should be conducted (organizational structure, management and advisory aspects) and various tools to be used for the assessment.

### **1.3 Organisation of Private Education**

---

Educational institutions at all levels of education may be in the hands of the state (public) or of private entities or persons. Educational institutions have equal status, regardless of ownership or the founder's identity. Establishment and operation of educational institutions, both state and private, is monitored by the Ministry of Education as well as Council for Higher Education.

Private HEIs can be founded by a domestic or foreign legal entity or by a natural person. The founding act and act of closing down a private institution shall be passed by the founder. An institution can be founded and can perform its activity, if it fulfils the following conditions:

- 1) a certificate on accreditation of a study programme issued by Council of Higher Education;
- 2) adequate premises (classrooms, laboratories, library, premises for extracurricular activities of students) owned or on lease, along with teaching materials, equipment and other materials necessary for the performance of activities;
- 3) conditions and unrestricted access for persons with disabilities;
- 4) academic staff elected into academic titles in accordance with the regulations of Montenegro, for teaching all study courses at all years of studies, of whom at least one third have concluded employment agreements;
- 5) one half of associates out of the total number of associates required for teaching all study courses on each year of studies, with concluded employment agreements;
- 6) financial assets for founding and performing activities; and
- 7) hygienic and technical conditions, in compliance with special regulations.

An institution shall be deemed to have the required academic staff from the area of medical sciences, for clinical courses, who are employed at a health institution serving as a teaching base of the institution. Founders of a private institution have to submit a commercial bank's guarantee on time-deposited financial assets in the amount required for the implementation of the study programme for a period of one year. Assets required for the implementation of a study programme is calculated on the basis of cost price of education per student for a certain study programme, as well as the number of students for which the license is requested. Prior to the expiry of the financial guarantee an institution is obliged to, until the beginning of the next academic year, provide the Ministry with the evidence on provision of funds for the performance activity of the institution during the next academic year.

The guarantee of a commercial bank will be activated in case the founder decides to discontinue or close down an institution or a study programme before students complete their education according to the relevant study programme, following the request of a public administration body competent for financial affairs. Assets can be used only for students' completion of education.

### **1.4 National Qualifications Framework**

---

The work on the Law on NQF was a clear reflection of the government's priority to create mechanisms that will consider the learning outcome approach when employing graduates, support lifelong learning through opportunities of vertical and horizontal access within the system of education and training, and improve the international comparability of qualifications. This legislative undertaking was also important for bringing EU strategic framework close to the Montenegrin strategic framework.

The law on National Qualifications Framework was adopted by the Parliament of Montenegro in December 2010<sup>3</sup>. A very comprehensive approach was adopted during the work on this law, involving all

---

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.neomontenegro.ac.me/t.php?v=153&l=en>

the relevant stakeholders, such as representatives of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Welfare, Employment Office, Chamber of Economy, Bureau for Education Services, University of Montenegro, Centre for Vocational Education, Union of Employers, public and private higher education institutions. The objective was to create a mechanism for understanding and comparing qualifications to be used by learners, employers and general public, pointing out the links between different types and levels of education, and the progression paths available through lifelong learning. Levels within the Montenegrin Qualification Framework (MQF) provide guidelines for recognizing the existing qualifications and defining new qualifications in terms of the expected learning outcomes, i.e. knowledge, skills and competences. Using learning outcomes, it is possible to secure recognition of non-formal and informal learning in addition to that acquired through formal programmes. This allows people of all ages to gain qualifications, as well as employers to evaluate the skills of their labour force against standards prescribed for a specific work place. MQF made it possible to compare Montenegrin qualifications with qualifications acquired abroad, thus promoting the mobility of learners and labour force both in the country and abroad. Montenegro has developed national qualifications framework for lifelong learning, based on learning outcomes. MQF enhances all the qualifications of formal education (general education, vocational education and training, and higher education), as well as the system of national professional qualifications (NPQ) oriented towards the labour market. This piece of legislation defines the principles and the objectives of NQF, the structure of levels and sub-levels, qualification types to be included, as well as the management structure.

The Council for Qualifications has a very important role in the whole process, since it makes decisions on placing of qualifications into the MQF. The Council also proposes new qualifications to institutions in charge of qualification development, decides on the methodological documents for the classification of qualifications and adopts guidelines for sectorial commissions.

The web site<sup>4</sup> offers an overview of activities concerning the MQF, implemented in the period 2008-2010, as well as the set of activities implemented in the period from January 2011 to June 2012. It is of utmost importance to point out to the variety of partners involved from the very beginning in development process of MQF: the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Welfare, the Employment Office of Montenegro, the Chamber of Economy of Montenegro, universities, the Centre for Vocational Education and the Examination Centre.

In the process of producing the Referencing Report, the comparison of MQF levels with the EQF levels was done in line with the recommendations of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of EQF for lifelong learning. The data and information in the Report were procedurally adopted by the National Council for Education, the Council for Higher Education and the Qualifications Council. The information from the report was described as relevant, transparent, comparable and consistent. The Report was also approved by the Government of Montenegro.

The Referencing Report was prepared by an inter-sectorial group, with the support of international experts from Austria, Slovenia, Croatia and Estonia.

The referencing process was conducted according to the criteria and procedures set by EQF Advisory Group (EQF AG), through the methodological guidelines for carrying out the process for comparing and referencing national frameworks to the EQF. The process of self-certification against the QF-EHEA was conducted according to the criteria passed within the Bologna process.

Qualifications within the MQF are placed on eight qualification levels, with sub-levels on levels I, IV and VII. Level descriptors comparable to the Dublin ones have been allocated to each level and sub-level according to the principles of knowledge, skills and competences provided by qualifications of a certain level. Qualifications were placed on adequate levels in line with the defined learning outcomes. MQF includes three types of qualifications: educational, professional and additional qualifications. Educational

---

<sup>4</sup> [www.cko.edu.me](http://www.cko.edu.me)

qualifications are those attained upon the completion of a publicly recognized educational or study programme. Professional qualifications are attained upon the assessment of non-formal and informal learning or upon the completion of a special educational programme. Additional qualifications are those obtained after the acquisition of a basic qualification. The results of referencing MQF to EQF levels demonstrate a clear connection between the two frameworks as follows:

MQF I level (I.1 and I.2)	as EQF I,
MQF II level	as EQF II,
MQF III level	as EQF III,
MQF IV level (IV.1 and IV.2)	as EQF IV,
MQF V level	as EQF V,
MQF VI level	as EQF VI,
MQF VII level (VII.1 and VII.2)	as EQF VII,
MQF VIII level	as EQF VIII.

The Report also includes the self-certification to the QF-EHEA. The results of self-certification point out to comparability of three MQF levels (VI-VIII) with the respective QF-EHEA levels.

The Report on Referencing the Montenegrin Qualifications Framework to the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning and the Qualifications Framework for the European higher Education Montenegro has presented State-of-Play concerning the MQF development at 25th meeting of AG group in June 2014. This was followed by the presentation of the Final report on 26th meeting of AG group in October 2014. At the 27th AG meeting on November 6, 2014 Final Montenegrin Referencing report was adopted.

## 1.5 Statistics on Organisation and Governance

<b>Number of students (in academic year 2014/2015)</b>	
Public HEIs	Private HEIs
22 000	4 000

<b>Number of HEIs (in academic year 2015/2016)</b>	
Universities	Independent Faculties
<b>1 (public)</b> <b>2 (private)</b>	<b>1 (public)</b> <b>9 (private)</b>

## 1.6 Distribution of responsibilities

The Ministry of Education<sup>5</sup> is responsible for planning, implementing and reviewing the policy of education at all levels. The Ministry is supported by a range of advisory bodies and executive institutions.

The most important body responsible for the improvement of higher education area is the Council for Higher Education<sup>6</sup>, appointed by the Government of Montenegro. One of the principal tasks of the Council is to participate in the creation of the development strategy of higher education, and in the accreditation and reaccreditation process of HEIs and study programmes.

<sup>5</sup> [www.mps.gov.me](http://www.mps.gov.me)

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.svo.gov.me/>

### 2.1 Public Education

---

As mentioned earlier, there is one public university, two private universities, one independent public faculty and nine independent private faculties in Montenegro. From the very beginning of higher education in Montenegro up to the emergence of the first private institutions, there was only one university, the public one. Thus, the system-level funding was equivalent to funding a single institution. The only public university and the students are partially funded by the State. Like in many other countries in the region, the public university budget is supposed to be conceived through negotiations between the government and the university representatives. The budget consists mainly of the salaries of academic and administrative staff and some minor expenses for equipment. In 1995, some of the faculties started to charge limited tuition fees for certain study programs (management, computer engineering, etc) and it was approved by the Government, since this self-generated income was used to partially bridge the existing gap between the real expenses and the funds provided by the state budget. From then on, the University of Montenegro had its ups and downs, but budget cuts occurred from 2009, when the consecutive downsizing of the budget followed. Irrelevant to the assigned budget, one may say that this period could not be characterized as coherent and systematic financing, but rather as an *ad hoc* approach to the problem. In 2010 the Government started to adopt several documents that were aimed at tackling the problem of higher education funding:

- The Strategy of Development and Financing of Higher Education in Montenegro 2011-2020;
- Norms and Standards for Financing Higher Education in Montenegro.

Analysis of the available data shows that the goals set by these two documents are far from being achieved, and that a viable and sustainable model is still to be formulated and applied.

Currently, funding of higher education by the Government may be roughly divided into the following categories:

- direct funding, reflected by the annual budget of the public university and by the financing of certain study programs and the associated students of private universities (the latter was allowed by the amendment of the Law on Higher Education in 2010, where it is stated that certain private university programs may be financed if the Council of Higher Education recommends to the Government that those programs are of public interest);
- indirect funding, reflected by the grants and loans allocated to the selected student population based on merit criteria;
- occasional capital investments aimed to the infrastructure improvement for the public university and its students (buildings, sport hall, etc).

The Regulation on Norms and Standards for Financing of Public Higher Education Institutions and Financing of Students at Public HEIs, adopted on July 8, 2011<sup>7</sup>, determines norms and standards for financing of public higher education institutions and students, as well as financing students of those study programmes at private higher education institutions that have been determined as programmes of public interest.

There is no core funding for research, but the Ministry of Science, established in 2010 relatively modest funds for research projects on a competitive basis, for scientists from both public and private universities.

#### 2.1.1 Financial Autonomy and Control

---

The internal financing model of the University of Montenegro has evolved under the combined influence of two challenging factors: the transformation of what were once independent faculties into a

---

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.svo.gov.me/en/library/uredbe>

conglomerate of loosely related entities under a common university framework, and the downward trend of public subsidies in a context of growing enrolment. As a result, the allocation of resources within the University is shaped at the same time by the reinforcement of historical trends to protect the basic budget allocation for salaries of each faculty and smaller contributions from the richest faculties able to charge fees to a large proportion of their students to those who are less in demand. The net effect of this approach is that it tends to punish the best performers and keep afloat faculties that are less efficient or relevant. This encouraged a return to the old status of full independence of the various faculties, instead of promoting increased integration into the common university framework. The recent University Statute significantly increased contributions from the richest faculties to the central account, but the long term effect of this measure may result in discouragement of these faculties to create the self-generated income from tuition fees. In this respect, a compromise should be achieved which would benefit all the involved parties in the process.

### **2.1.2 Fees within Public Higher Education**

---

Tuition fee at the undergraduate studies at the public HEI-University of Montenegro (the only public university) for self-financed students is between 500 and 1 000 € per year, depending on the study programme profile. Students financed from the state budget who do not fulfil the criteria to continue their studies as budget-funded student may continue as self-financing students. However, self-financing students who pass all exams may become budget-funded students if there are places available on their study programme. Those students are chosen on the basis of the ECTS gained and academic performance during their studies.

Tuition fees at the postgraduate studies are between 1 500 and 2 000 € per year. All students of master study programs are obliged to pay tuition fee. Fees at the doctoral studies are between 750 and 1 500 € per semester, depending on the study programme profile.

At individual public HEI named Faculty for Montenegrin Language and Literature tuition fee at undergraduate studies is 400 € per year.

## **2.2 Private Education**

---

### **2.2.1 Financial Autonomy and Control**

---

The way of managing private higher education institution has been defined by the founder in accordance with the Statute of institution concerned. Founder of private institution is obliged to, besides proofs on fulfilment of conditions for founding and performing its activities, submit also the guarantee of the business bank on the deposited financial resources at the amount necessary for the realization of the study period for a year.

### **2.2.2 Fees within Private Higher Education**

---

Tuition fees at private higher education institutions vary from 1 350 to 1 600 € per year at the undergraduate studies; from 1 600 to 2 500 € per year at the postgraduate studies and at the doctoral studies from 2 000 to 3 000 € per year.

## **2.3 Financial Support for Learners' Families**

---

No information available.

## **2.4 Financial Support for Learners**

---

Financial support for learners is foreseen by the Law on Higher Education and closer defined by Rulebook on the Criteria, Method, Conditions and Compensation Amount for Exercising Rights to Dormitory Room and Board, Student Loan, Scholarship and Transport Allowance prescribed by Ministry of Education.

When considering financial aid given to the students, it is important to carefully assess possible sources of their income. In case of Montenegro, these are usually represented by parental support, scholarships, loans or rewards from either public or private sector, and own income if a student is employed during studies. The most important source is parental support.

The Ministry of Education offers a comprehensive student aid package consisting of grants and scholarships. As Table 1 below indicates that, about 1.5% of the students receive a scholarship, and 14% of the students are able to take a loan. About 12% of student loan beneficiaries are enrolled in private universities, whereas the students attending one of the two private universities represent 15% of the total university enrolment.

Table 1. Student Aid from Ministry of Education<sup>8</sup>

	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>2012/13</b>
University of Montenegro Enrolment	17 224	21 623
Private Universities Enrolment	n.a.	3 985
Budget-Funded Students	5 245	5 571
Student Loan Recipients UM – grant students	4 361	770
Student Loan Recipients UM – fee paying students	0	2 312
Student Loan Recipients Private Institutions	0	200
Scholarships	350	300
Total Amount of Scholarships	152 400 Euros	271 800 Euros
Total Amount of Loans	1 500 000 Euros	1 200 000 Euros

Having a student loan system in place is in itself a positive achievement. In fact, Montenegro is the only country from the former Yugoslav republics— and one of only a few in Eastern Europe—with a functional student loan system, but it nonetheless can be significantly improved. A student who completes the studies within the timeframe defined by a HEIs Statute as a period necessary for completion of full-time study programme, with the average grade ranging from 9.00 to 10, can be granted full loan remission. A student who completes the studies within the timeframe defined by a higher education institution’s Statute as a period necessary for completion of full-time study programme, with average grade ranging from 8.00 to 9.00, can be granted 80% remission. A student who completes the studies within the timeframe defined by a higher education institution’s Statute as a period necessary for completion of a full-time study programme, with the average grade ranging from 7.00 to 8.00, can be granted 60% loan remission.

Despite some positive effects, this scheme is somewhat in contradiction with the idea of the student loan system. In theory, the student loan system is supposed to allow successful graduates to repay almost in

<sup>8</sup> Source: Ministry of Education

full the cost of their studies, thereby alleviating the financial burden on the State. Presently, this scheme leans more towards a grant system than to an effective loan system.

### **3 The structure of the Higher Education system**

---

Access to higher education in Montenegro is open to every person that completes four year secondary education. The reform of higher education, which began by adopting the Law on Higher Education (2003), is based on the principles of the Bologna Declaration. After the new law has entered into force all higher education institutions in Montenegro were obliged to organize teaching in line with the Bologna principles. The goal of the reform is to increase the efficiency of studies and to harmonize national higher education system with European tendencies, along with better inclusion of Montenegro into the single European Higher Education Area.

The reformed higher education system is characterized by quality assurance and continuous quality control, introduction of “diploma supplement”, intensified mobility of students and teaching staff, recognition of obtained qualifications and diplomas in line with the Lisbon Convention, inclusion of students as partners in educational process and decision making system, as well as the development of lifelong learning concept.

In Montenegro, higher education can be obtained at the University of Montenegro, two private universities, nine independent private faculties and one independent public faculty. Educational activities at higher education institutions are carried out through academic and applied study programmes, as well as through various professional development and training programmes. Study programmes are organized at undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral level.

Taking into account the fact that at the time of adopting the 2003 Law on Higher Education, there was only one university in Montenegro, and in the meantime the two private ones were established, the need has arisen to revise the 2003 Law. Not only that, but also necessity to improve its quality assurance system led to the fact that in October 14, 2014 the Assembly adopted the new Law on Higher Education. The total number of students is about 26 000, which represents a significant increase compared to the number of students ten years ago.

The Law on Higher Education regulates the fundamentals of higher education, the requirements for conducting the activities, types of study programmes, organisation principles of institutions conducting this activity, rights and obligations of academic staff and students, quality assurance, financing of higher education, as well as other matters significant for the performance of higher education activities.

The Law prescribes the requirements for establishing an institution, referring also to adequate premises, academic staff and other employees, financial resources needed for establishing as well as for carrying out activities, access to institutions, etc.

Key novelties introduced by the new law relate to quality assurance and improvement of standards and procedures which allow for continuous quality control at institutions. Quality assurance includes accreditation, self-evaluation and reaccreditation. Accreditation is the procedure of evaluating the quality of a study programme and its compliance with the professional needs and adopted standards, conducted by a commission appointed by Higher Education Council. A more detailed procedure of accreditation of study programmes is prescribed by the Ministry, upon the proposal of the Council. The accreditation is issued for a period not longer than three years, whereas in case of study programmes taking longer than three years, accreditation is issued for a period equal to duration of that study programme.

Within the reaccreditation procedure, the evaluation of an institution is conducted by an internationally recognized accredited agency for quality assurance. Foreign accreditation agency performs evaluation of an institution according to their own evaluation standards for institutions or evaluation standards for institutions passed by the Council, all in line with evaluation standards for institutions within the European Higher Education Area.



The Law prescribes ranking of higher education institutions which is conducted on the basis of methodology for ranking institutions in the European Higher Education Area.

The Law prescribes also that the founder of an institution is obliged to submit to the Ministry a request for licensing at least six months prior to beginning to work. The licensing procedure determines the type of institution, accredited study programmes, maximum number of students to be enrolled to certain study programmes, levels of education and degrees to be awarded. Decision on licensing is passed by the Ministry, after which the institution is recorded in the Register of Higher Education Institutions kept by the Ministry.

Students represent at least 20% out of total membership in professional bodies and managing bodies.

The Law prescribes that lectures may also be organized as distance learning, whereas the exam is carried out at the seat of an institution. Conditions and manner of organizing lectures and exam taking are prescribed by the Ministry following the opinion of the Council.

The Law prescribes that institutions can implement special development programmes in the area of higher education as part of lifelong learning, so as to obtain a professional qualification or a part of professional qualification. To a person that completes the development programme, the institution will issue a relevant credential, in accordance with a special law.

An institution is financed from the resources of the founder, tuition fees and other fees paid by students, providing intellectual and other types of services, donations, gifts and legacies, property income (lease), projects and contracts with national, international, public or private entities for the purpose of promoting teaching, research and consulting activities. The amount of resources required for financing state-founded institutions, as well as students at those institutions for each study year, are determined by the Government following the opinion of the Council, based on norms and standards for financing public institutions. The Government determines the number of students to be funded from the budget of Montenegro for a certain study programme, in accordance with the number defined in the license of the public institution, following the proposal of the governing body of that state-founded institution.

The Government, following the opinion of the Council, determines the number of students and the amount of resources for financing students at study programmes of public interest at private institutions for each study year, on the basis of specially prescribed criteria for determining programmes of public interest.

For persons, i.e. students with disabilities the principle of affirmative action is applied on the occasion of enrolment into higher education institutions and are exempt from paying tuition fee.

In accordance with recommendations from the bilateral and explanatory meeting for Chapter 26 Education and Culture, which has been temporarily closed, and Action Plan for Negotiation Chapter 23 – Judiciary and Fundamental Rights, measure 3.10.2.6, i.e. recommendation to ensure further registration of displaced persons as well as their equal access to economic and social rights, foreigners are entitled to enrol into study programmes in Montenegro under equal conditions as Montenegrin nationals, in accordance with this law and statute of an institution.

The Law prescribes that an institution is obliged to carry out research of labour market by conducting a survey among graduate students, employers' association, legal entities, entrepreneurs concerning the applicability of acquired knowledge, skills and competences required by labour market and to publish the results of survey on their website

In addition, the Law prescribes protection against plagiarism according to which any professional, scientific or artistic work identified by a competent body as plagiarism will be considered as null, along with awards, degrees and titles that a person using plagiarism has obtained on the basis of such work.

In order to prioritize areas to be further developed, *Strategy on the Development and Financing of Higher Education* was adopted in April 2011. The Strategy put a special emphasis on new approaches to funding and quality assurance, student enrolments and research opportunities for both public and private HEIs. Given that HEIs are recognized as creators of both human capital and knowledge, it is imperative that the

outputs of its higher education institutions, including universities and research institutes are of the best quality and are aligned with the labour market and local/regional industry.

### 3.1 Types of Higher Education Institutions

---

The University of Montenegro is the only public university in Montenegro. It was officially founded in 1974. Higher education may be provided by the universities and higher education institutions, which are licensed and accredited in accordance with the Law on Higher Education.

For the time being there are three accredited universities in Montenegro, of which the University of Montenegro (*Univerzitet Crne Gore* - UCG) is the largest and the only public HEI, and nine individual private faculties. The Mediterranean University (*Univerzitet Mediteran* - UM) and the University Donja Gorica (UDG) are the two licensed private universities. Until 2006, the University of Montenegro was the only HEI in Montenegro. Today, this university consists of 20 faculties, three research institutes, and one independent study program, located in eight different towns throughout Montenegro.

Around 21 000 students are currently enrolled at this university.

Public and private HE institutions are covered by the same Law on Higher Education. The Ministry of Education issues a license to an institution, changes it and divests an institution of it.

In the academic year 2012-2013, the total number of students in Montenegro was 26 054.

### 3.2 First Cycle Programmes

---

First cycle programmes are offered at all HEIs and independent faculties in Montenegro. The condition for entering a first cycle study programme is a completed four year secondary education. First cycle programmes are organized as three year courses – 180 ECTS for the majority of study programmes. However, there are some exceptions like Philosophy, Teacher training, Teacher training in Albanian Language and Economy which are organized in the duration of four years. However, students who complete undergraduate studies at Medical faculty (6 years), Dentistry and Pharmacy (5 years) can be directly enrolled in doctoral studies. All the first cycle qualifications (both academic and applied studies) have the possibility of access to the second cycle.

#### 3.2.1 Branches of Study

---

HEIs in Montenegro can carry out the following study programmes: undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral and interdisciplinary. The Bachelor's study programme at HEI in Montenegro lasts three years (180 ECTS) at the most first cycle programmes. After completing a three years Bachelor's study programme, the student can enrol in a one year specialised study program or two years Master's programme. Students who complete a three years Bachelor's study programme (180 ECTS) can be enrolled in a one year master's study programme after completing a so called one year (60 ECTS) specialised study programme;. The specialised study programme is the first step of post graduate study. Total number of awarded credits after a one year master's programme is 240 (180+60).

Exceptions are Bachelor's Programmes in Economy, Philosophy, Teacher Training organized as four years programmes (240 ECTS). After completing these first cycle study programmes students can be directly enrolled in a Master's programme.

Qualifications acquired after completing so called specialised study programmes are accommodated in VII1 sublevel of MQF. Qualifications acquired after completing undergraduate study program lasting four years (240 ECTS) are also accommodated in VII1 sublevel. In VII2 sublevel are accommodated qualifications acquired after completing master study program 180+120, 180+60+60 and 240+60 ECTS.

The Undergraduate medical study programme is arranged as a six years programme carrying 360 ECTS, while dentistry and pharmacy are arranged as five years programmes, carrying 300 ECTS. Students who complete these study programmes can be directly enrolled in a doctoral study programme.

### 3.2.2 Admission Requirements

---

Access to higher education in Montenegro is open to every person that completes a four year secondary education (IV-1 sub-level of MQF).

Enrolment to undergraduate academic and applied studies is conducted on a competitive basis in accordance with the results accomplished during the secondary education. The results accomplished on external graduation exam, or vocational exam, performance in two subjects of third and fourth grades relevant for continuing education, and diplomas awarded for excellent study performance are also taken into account.

For enrolment to certain study programs admission exams may be introduced. Candidates that have not completed secondary school may be enrolled to undergraduate studies of professional-artistic study programs at faculties and art academies provided that they pass the admission exam in accordance with the Law.

High-school graduation or professional exam is valued with at least 15% of the total number of points acquired on enrolment by valuating all above noted criteria. More detailed conditions and criteria, method and procedure of enrolment to the first year of undergraduate academic and applied studies is prescribed by the Ministry, following the prior opinion of the Council for Higher Education. For persons with disabilities the principle of affirmative action is conducted on the occasion of enrolment to a study programme, as well as when enrolling specialized or master study programme. This means student with a disability is entitled to take an exam in a manner adjusted to his/her educational needs in compliance with statute of an institution, they are exempted from paying tuition fee and unrestricted access to HEI have to be enabled to them.

Enrolment to specialised academic and applied studies is done on a competitive basis, based on results achieved at undergraduate academic or applied studies, carrying at least 180 ECTS. The same principle applies when master studies are concerned.

An institution determines the number of students for enrolment to study programmes, which cannot exceed the number determined by the license.

A foreigner is entitled to be enrolled into study programmes in Montenegro, under the same conditions as Montenegrin citizens, in compliance with the Law and statute of an institution.

If foreigner belongs to category of disabled student all above noted will apply to him/her in the same way as to Montenegrin disabled student.

### 3.2.3 Curriculum

---

The HEI is entitled, among others, to determine study programmes to be carried out and courses to be taken, independently develop and carry out study programmes and determine methods of teaching and assessment of students' knowledge. Studies at institutions can be carried out on the basis of an accredited study programme by the Council for Higher Education and licensed by the Ministry of Education. Institutions can carry out the following study programmes: undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral and interdisciplinary. Programmes of undergraduate studies contain at least two elective modules. Postgraduate study programmes include specialised and master studies. Undergraduate and postgraduate study programmes can be accredited as academic and applied. Doctoral study programmes can be accredited only as academic. Interdisciplinary study programmes are organized from at least two scientific areas. Within the programme implemented, a higher education institution provides students with conditions for acquiring knowledge of at least one foreign language on a level of proficient user.

There are differences in the structure of programmes depending on whether they are academically or professionally oriented. In that sense, academic studies consist of:

- 50% of teaching dedicated to essential and general educational disciplines
- 20% of teaching dedicated to general professional disciplines

- 30% of teaching dedicated to specific professional disciplines

While applied studies consist of:

- 30% of teaching dedicated to essential and general educational disciplines
- 20% of teaching dedicated to general professional disciplines
- 50% of teaching dedicated to specific professional disciplines

The volume of a study programme in one academic year is 60 credits (ECTS). Transfer of ECTS credits may be realised between different study programmes or institutions. The criteria and conditions for transfer of ECTS credits are prescribed by a general act of an institution, or a contract between institutions.

Each faculty is autonomous to change the curricula up to 30 ECTS, only with the consent of the faculty council. However, if changes of curricula require more than 30 ECTS, the accreditation procedure is obligatory. Sectorial commissions established for each sector of qualifications play an important role, since they have direct influence to the content of the programme from the aspect of its harmonization with the real labour market needs.

### **3.2.4 Teaching Methods**

---

At the beginning of an academic year an institution is obliged to inform students on the manner, time and place of holding lectures, knowledge assessment and exams, results of exams and other matters relevant for the organization of studies. The number of academic staff required for implementing a study programme at the public institution is set, based on the number of study groups for lectures and practical classes. The number of students necessary for defining a study group for lectures, and/or practical classes is defined depending on the type of the study programme.

Teaching methods are defined in accordance with the study programme and statute of the institution, and Regulation on Norms and Standards for Financing Public Higher Education Institutions and Financing of Students at the Higher Education Institutions. It implies preparation and delivering of theoretical teaching and practical classes at undergraduate, specialised, master and doctoral studies, as well as any other teaching activities, preparation and conducting examinations, consultations with students. It also implies performing other teaching activities, such as organization of individual and collective scientific and/or artistic work with the students; mentoring work with students; participating in the work of the committee for approval, assessment and defence of master and/or doctoral theses; participation in the development and upgrading curricula of the study programs offered at the institution, as well as monitoring and application of novelties in the area of teaching methods.

Also, audio-visual materials, smart tables, demonstration at the equipment, preparation and testing of samples, practical work at the specific equipment are commonly used in the teaching process.

### **3.2.5 Progression of Students**

---

A student financed from the budget of Montenegro who obtained at least 40 ECTS credits in an academic year enrolled for the first time is entitled to be financed from the budget in the next academic year as well. If student financed from the budget of Montenegro has obtained less than 40 ECTS credits in an academic year enrolled for the first time she/he can continue studies with the status of self-financing student. A self-financing student who passes all exams, i.e. obtains 60 ECTS credits, in compliance with a study program for a certain year of studying, can be financed from the budget of Montenegro in the following year, provided that they are ranked within the total number of students whose studies are financed from the budget in a manner and according to the procedure determined by a general act of the institution.

A student is entitled to complain to the managing body with regard to a grade, if student considers that the exam was not conducted in compliance with the law and general act of institution, within 48 hours from obtaining the grade. The managing body forms a Commission to review and grade the student's

work again, retesting the student within three days. The grade given by the Commission is final. If a student requests an exemption of a course teacher, that teacher cannot be a member of Commission. There are two regular examination periods for students, and one additional before the beginning of the next academic year.

### **3.2.6 Employability**

---

One of the specific measures of the Strategy on Development and Financing of Higher Education in Montenegro 2011-2020 is linking higher education and labour market and increasing entrepreneurial and innovation character of education. It combines including practical teaching in different forms of entrepreneurial education and concrete practice in different institutions and companies. In that sense, some HEIs have included practical training like internship program into their study curricula, especially in the fields of medical studies, teacher training, IT, engineering. Very important role in employability of graduates have career centres established at HEIs. In order to enable students to receive practical knowledge, skills and competences HEIs are obliged to organize practical training in laboratories of an institution or on-the-job training for the purpose of smooth and efficient inclusion in the labour market. One of the very important indicators of graduates' employability is a labour market research at least once in five years by conducting survey among graduate students, associations of employers, commercial entities and entrepreneurs by HEIs concerning the applicability of the obtained knowledge, skills and competences required in the labour market. The results of surveys are taken into account for the self-evaluation and reaccreditation reports and are published on the website of the institution.

In accordance with provisions of the Law on Professional Training of Persons with Acquired Higher Education and its respective Rulebook, the professional training programme of graduates is being implemented for the fifth time now, starting as from 2013. The programme enables the graduates without working experience, to acquire knowledge, skills and competences, at a chosen employer for a period of nine months. The programme beneficiaries are enabled to acquire appropriate working experience, while the employers in both public and private sector are able to recognize high quality staff that could, once the professional development programme is finished, be hired as permanent employees. Nine-month professional development, during which beneficiaries get monthly net salaries in the amount of 50% of average net salary in Montenegro, supports youth education while being a clear incentive for young people to secure full time employment.

### **3.2.7 Student Assessment**

---

A student can take an exam upon completion of lectures from that study course in a manner determined by a study programme, in compliance with statute of the institution. The success of students to master a course and overcome all forms of knowledge assessment before the exam is valued and expressed in points. Total number of points a student can earn through all pre-exam forms of knowledge assessment, or study results amounts to at least 50 points, in compliance with the rules of studying. On the basis of all pre-exam forms of knowledge assessment, or learning outcomes and by taking exams, a student can earn a maximum of 100 points, in compliance with the rules of studying. Students' performance on exam and other forms of knowledge assessment is expressed as follows: A, B, C, D, E and F. Grade F is an insufficient grade.

Average grade during studies is determined as quotient of the sum of numerical grades multiplied by ECTS points for each course, and the total number of obtained ECTS points.

### **3.2.8 Certification**

---

Higher education institutions are responsible for certification. The Diploma of undergraduate studies is issued upon the completion of the study programme carrying at least 180 ECTS. The Diploma of specialised studies is issued upon the completion of a specialised programme with the volume of at least 60 ECTS, after obtaining a diploma of undergraduate studies. The Diploma of master studies is issued

upon the completion of a master's programme, with the volume up to 120 ECTS, after obtaining a diploma of undergraduate, i.e. specialised studies and defending a master's thesis. The Diploma of academic doctoral studies can be obtained by a person having the title of master of sciences and a completed study programme of doctoral studies with the volume of 180 ECTS as well as defended doctoral dissertation. Also, diploma of academic doctoral studies can be obtained by a person who has completed undergraduate academic studies with the volume of 300 ECTS, study programme of doctoral studies with the volume of 180 ECTS as well as defended doctoral dissertation. Doctoral study programmes in Montenegro can be only performed at the HEIs which have the status of universities.

The diploma supplement (DS) is attached to a diploma providing a more detailed insight into the level, nature, content, system and rules of studying as well as the results achieved during the studies by an individual to whom the diploma is awarded. Diploma and Diploma Supplement are issued bilingually, in both Montenegrin and English. If the student studies in one of minorities' languages, a diploma and DS is issued in the minority's language, Montenegrin and English language.

### **3.3 Short-Cycle Higher Education**

---

No short cycle programmes have yet been accredited in either academic or professional studies in the education system of Montenegro.

### **3.4 Second Cycle Programmes**

---

#### **3.4.1 Branches of Study**

---

In Montenegro, Master studies can be organized by universities and faculties, at both academic and applied programmes. Concerning the applied masters, the applied education finishes with master level and there is no possibility of transferring from applied to academic studies programmes even in the second cycle. The length of studies at this level is either one or two years (60 or 120 ECTS). Even in the rare cases when the master's programme lasts for two years (120 ECT), the enrolment condition must be completed bachelor (180 ECTS). No matter how many credits it carries, a master's programme has to be crowned by the master's thesis which usually carries 30 ECTS.

Specialist studies last for one year and can be either academic or applied. Specialist academic study programmes can be conducted at universities, faculties of academic studies. A specialist study programme curriculum can include a final thesis. To enrol in a specialist study programme, the student needs to have completed a Bachelor's programme.

#### **3.4.2 Admission Requirements**

---

Admission requirements and procedures at this level of studies are regulated by University Statute and individual HEIs. Statute defines general conditions of enrolment to second cycle which requires a completed first cycle of studies and obtained diploma. At the end of scholastic year, all the university units publish the number of students for the second cycle. It is up to the institutions/units themselves to define this number. If the number of interested candidates exceeds the number in the call, faculties have their institutional rulebook for evaluation of candidates within the admission requirements. Some of the institutions, especially arts and humanities organize an entry exam, while the others make the selection according to other criteria (average grade or some other references like working experience or academic activities in a relevant field, etc.).

Candidates who possess a first cycle diploma can enrol the second cycle in a different or similar field. However, sometimes the procedure requires additional differential entry exam. The admission procedure starts with the call published by the University specifying the number of available places for a particular study programme, eligibility details, candidate rating criteria and regulations governing the competition procedure. The number of students enrolled per year may not exceed the number mentioned in the accreditation and licensing process.

### 3.4.3 Curriculum

---

The curricula are developed at the institutional level, launched and approved by the faculty council. Sometimes different experts from different fields may be involved in the process of curriculum design. In the case of regulated professions, EU directives in the respective fields have to be followed, as it is the case with architecture, medicine, pharmacy etc. Study programmes consist of the core part and elective part, which is not less than 20% of overall number of courses. On the second cycle the instruction language is Montenegrin, but some programmes can be accredited in English, according to the set of accreditation guidelines.

Second cycle programmes can be accredited as distance learning programmes only when they comply with all the rules from the national set of accreditation.

### 3.4.4 Teaching Methods

---

Compared to the first level, a smaller number of students enrolls for the second cycle. Lectures are mostly conducted for large groups of students. Mentoring system is quite common at the second cycle of studies. There are no specific rules for the second cycle studies regarding the teaching methods. Teachers have to organize their lectures in compliance with the curriculum. However, the teaching methods they should use are not prescribed. Modern teaching tools in professional training as well as IT training are almost always present.

The number of students necessary for defining a study group for lectures, and/or practical classes is defined depending on the type of the study programme as follows:

-120 students for lectures, and/or 60 students for practical classes at the study programmes in the fields of social sciences and humanities (law, economics, political sciences, philosophy, philology, etc.)

-120 students for lectures, and/or 40 students for practical classes at the study programmes in the fields of natural and technical sciences (civil, mechanical, electrical engineering, transport, technology, metallurgy, architecture, environmental protection, mathematics and natural sciences, biotechnical sciences, physical education, informatics, etc.)

-80 students for lectures, and/or 20 students for practical classes in preclinical subjects, five to ten students at clinical subjects for students studying in medical sciences (medicine, pharmacy, dentistry, veterinary, etc.)

-15 students for lectures and/or five students for practical classes at the programmes in the field of arts.

This is prescribed by the Regulation on Norms and Standards for Financing Public Higher Education Institutions and Financing of Students at the Higher Education Institutions, 2011.

### 3.4.5 Progression of Students

---

For more information, please see Progression of Students in Bachelor section.

### 3.4.6 Employability

---

This part is the same as for the Bachelor studies. For more information, please see Employability in Bachelor section.

### 3.4.7 Student Assessment

---

The assessment of students is a continuous process based on pre-examination activities and students' success at the exam. Students earn a certain number of ECTS for each activity they conduct during their studies. The maximum number of credits student can achieve during the semester is 50 out of total 100 per course. Grades are the same as in the first cycle: A, B, C, D and E.

One semester can have 30 ECTS. The last semester is for the master's thesis dominantly. Thesis may carry up to 30 ECTS.

### 3.4.8 Certification

---

The authority responsible for certification is the higher education institution. Upon completion of the first level of higher education, the student receives a diploma with his/her relevant professional title, average degree and the number of ECTS earned. The student also receives a diploma supplement, which contains information regarding the level, type and content of the studies successfully completed.

### **3.5 Programmes outside the Bachelor and Master Structure**

---

Unlike other programs, which follow the Bologna Bachelor and Master cycles (either 3+1+1, 3+2 or 4+1 years), programs in the field of medical science are integrated into a unique six-year cycle carrying 360 ECTS points. This type of study programme integrates Bachelor and Master academic studies into one cycle.

Studies of pharmacy are also integrated into a unique cycle, lasting five years and carrying 300 ECTS points. Starting from academic year 2016/17, studies of architecture will also be integrated into a unique five-year cycle, carrying 300 ECTS points.

### **3.6 Third Cycle (PhD) Programmes**

---

#### **3.6.1 Organisation of Doctoral Studies**

---

The Ministry of Education is responsible for overall educational policy in Montenegro. Education process is regulated by the Law on Higher Education (2003). The new Law was adopted in October 2014. In accordance with the latter, HEIs are autonomous and free to create and design their doctoral studies. Doctoral studies are organized in the same manner at both public and private universities, but each HEI has its own rulebook defining the criteria for admission, manner of organization of exams and research work, procedures for applying and defending the doctoral thesis, procedure for promotion, as well as other issues important for the realization of doctoral studies, in line with the Law on Higher Education.

Doctoral studies (PhD) are organized at the state university (University of Montenegro) and two private universities (University Donja Gorica and University Mediterranean) and last for three years (180 ECTS). To enrol in a doctoral programme, the student must have previously completed a Master's programme and obtained at least 300 ECTS during his/her previous studies, or 360 ECTS in the case of medical studies. PhD programmes involve five courses/exams, extensive scientific research and publication of papers in scientific journals (according to new Doctoral Studies Rules, from April 2016, doctoral students must publish at least one article in Thomson Reuters SCI, SSCI or A&HCI journals). A PhD thesis is the final part of the doctoral study programme.

The PhD thesis carries at least 50% of the total number of ECTS at this level of studies. The preparation procedure and conditions for the defence of the PhD thesis are defined by the particular HEIs general act, subject to the opinion of the Ministry of Education of Montenegro. The institution where the PhD thesis is defended has the obligation to make it available to the public on its web page, together with a printed version of the work, which needs to be available in the institution's library at least 30 days prior to the adoption of the commission report and defence of the thesis.

The university is obliged to establish a digital repository containing electronic versions of all defended theses, along with reports submitted by respective commissions for thesis evaluation, data about respective mentors and commission members, and information about copyright protection. All of the foregoing documentation must be made available to the public. A copy of each thesis has to be sent to the central repository of the Ministry of Education of Montenegro within 3 months.

#### **3.6.2 Admission Requirements**

---

Higher education institutions individually determine their PhD enrolment rates in line with numbers allowed by accreditation, estimated needs of society for the development of science, education and arts, but also bearing in mind their capacities in terms of space and human resources, especially in



accordance with the number of competent mentors (the mentor has to have at least one article published in Thomson Reuters SCI, SSCI or A&HCI journals in last five years).

General admission requirements are: at least 300 ECTS, or 360 in the case of integrated medical study programs, and fluency in at least one foreign language. Candidates are also assessed on the basis of their average grades from previous levels of studies, their professional skills and previous accomplishments.

### **3.6.3 Status of Doctoral Students/Candidates**

---

Doctoral students are formally full time students, even though some of them are engaged in the teaching process as teaching assistants. They enrol doctoral studies at different university units. No form of centralized doctoral school within Montenegrin higher education exists. If students of doctoral studies are hired as teaching assistants, they do not pay tuition fees. They can teach for a period of up to six years. Both employed and unemployed students have equal rights in terms of eligibility for any particular programme as long as they meet all other preconditions. Unemployed students are entitled to all benefits and rights as those granted at the previous levels of study - health insurance, student subsidies for meals, public transport and scholarships. On the other hand, employed students exercise such rights through their employee status.

### **3.6.4 Supervision Arrangements**

---

Faced with a difficult situation of financial sustainability of doctoral studies, universities in Montenegro are dealing with another big challenge: how to avoid the reputation of *lecturing* universities and strengthen the research results.

In order to organize PhD study programmes, the higher education institution has to observe the specific selection criteria applicable to PhD teaching staff. Such criteria include the number of published papers and involvement in scientific projects.

Until 2017, a PhD mentor must have at least 1 work published in Thomson Reuters SCI, SSCI or A&HCI journals over the past ten years and after 2017 the mentor must have at least 3 works published in same group of journals. A PhD mentor can have a maximum of 3 students under his/her supervision at a time. In accordance with the Law on Higher Education, international tutoring and co-tutoring is possible.

Organisation and performance of doctoral studies, enrolment at doctoral studies, manner of organisation of exams and research work, procedure of application and defending of PhD thesis and/or PhD art project, issuing of diplomas and the procedure for promotion of PhD candidates at public HEIs is defined by Rules on Doctoral Studies<sup>9</sup>.

### **3.6.5 Employability**

---

While cooperation between higher education institutions and employers is not formally regulated in Montenegro, there are examples of good and long lasting cooperation between universities and larger companies.

### **3.6.6 Assessment**

---

Students are assessed on the basis of their overall performance and engagement, as well as on the basis of credits earned through their exams and pre-examination activities. The PhD thesis, being the final part of the studies, is assessed on the basis of its scientific or artistic significance and contribution to the field in question. It represents an independent scientific research paper. Each higher education institution sets its general rules of application procedure and PhD thesis defence, which apply to all of its constituent departments.

---

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.ucg.ac.me/fajlovi/PRAVILA%20DOKTORSKIH%20STUDIJA%20.pdf>

### **3.6.7 Certification**

---

Once the students have completed all of their examination obligations and defended their PhD theses, they receive a diploma stating their official title – Doctor of Sciences. The competent certifying authority is the higher education institution where the PhD studies took place. The authorities responsible for assessing the standards are the Ministry of Education and the Council for Higher Education of Montenegro.

### **3.6.8 Organisational Variation**

---

Universities are partially autonomous in organization of PhD studies. It is generally regulated by the national Law on Higher Education, but there are some implementation issues (exams, preconditions for defence of thesis etc.) which are regulated by the senates and councils of the universities.

## **4 Teachers and Education Staff**

---

### **4.1 Initial Education for Academic Staff in Higher Education**

---

Initial education, conditions of service and professional development of academic staff is regulated by the Law on Higher Education and, more specifically, by the higher education institution statutes and rules.

There are no special programmes for the initial education of future academic staff in higher education. Likewise, there are no requirements concerning particular subjects during studies, such as psychology, pedagogy, teaching methodology or other education related subjects.

Admission criteria to higher education institutions for those planning to pursue academic career is equivalent to those anticipated for any other student applying for a higher education programme. Typically, a PhD degree is required for those applying for academic staff positions. The duration of initial education for academic staff is usually 8 years (3 or 4 years of a Bachelor degree programme + 1 or 2 years of a Master degree programme + 3 years of a PhD degree programme).

Research work and the publication of scientific papers are highly valued for students aiming for academic career.

### **4.2 Conditions of Service for Academic Staff Working in Higher Education**

---

Academic staff at HEIs includes teachers, associates and researchers. There are several levels of titles within the teachers' profession: college professor and college lecturer; assistant professor; associate professor; and full professor. College professor and college lecturer may teach only at colleges and not at a university level. Assistant professors, associate professors and full professors may teach at all levels of higher education.

A teaching associate may be: a student of master studies who has completed undergraduate or specialist studies with a minimum average grade B (8.50); a student of doctoral studies, i.e. PhD candidate who has completed master studies with a minimum average grade B (8.50); a person who has acquired a scientific degree of Doctor of Sciences. A teaching associate shall be elected on the basis of public competition announced by an institution, in compliance with statute of the institution.

Academic staff is elected by the Senate, based on a public call, for a period of five years, except for full professors who are elected as permanent staff for unlimited time period.

#### **4.2.1 Planning Policy**

---

No planning policy has yet been established in terms of teacher supply and demand in higher education.

#### **4.2.2 Entry to the Profession**

---

Procedure, manner and conditions for election into an academic title at public HEI (University of Montenegro) are defined by Statute of the University of Montenegro<sup>10</sup> and Rules on Election in Academic and Scientific Titles<sup>11</sup>.

Recruitment of new teachers in higher education is carried out through an open recruitment procedure conducted by the university, as proposed by the relevant belonging faculty. Persons shall be elected into academic titles by senate of university on the basis of public competition, for a period of five years, except in case of full professors who are elected for an unlimited time period.

A person holding a doctoral degree, documented scientific work and having proven pedagogical skills may be elected into academic titles (Assistant Professor: PhD and published scientific papers; Associate Professor: PhD and published scientific papers or other publications of considerable scientific relevance; Full Professor: PhD and an extensive amount of published scientific papers or other publications of considerable scientific relevance in their field of expertise, alongside other contributions to science and higher education quality). A person having a higher education degree, recognized works of art and proven pedagogical skills may be elected into academic titles for art and the corresponding courses at a faculty and academy for visual, applied, music, dramatic arts and architecture.

Conditions for election into an academic title shall be prescribed by the Council for Higher Education (including evaluation of scientific/research/art work; evaluation of engagement in the improvement of teaching and other educational processes and evaluation of pedagogical work). Students' opinions may be taken into account when evaluating the teachers' previous pedagogical engagement.

Procedure of election into academic titles, as well as other related matters, shall be regulated by statute of a university and related rulebooks.

An institution may engage a person with academic title from other institution outside the territory of Montenegro as a visiting professor, without public competition, based on a decision of a competent body of the institution. Rights and obligations between the visiting professor and institution shall be regulated by an agreement, in compliance with statute of the institution.

---

#### **4.2.3 Professional Status**

Most commonly, higher education teachers and associates are employed on a full time basis. However, the duration of their employment may vary in accordance with their respective titles.

---

#### **4.2.4 Salaries**

Salaries are regulated by the General Collective Agreement and the Collective Agreement for the University of Montenegro (public institution).

---

#### **4.2.5 Working Time and Holidays**

Full time employees work 40 hours per week with all other specifics being determined by their contract and class schedules issued by the higher education institution. The institution determines the structure and schedule of teachers' annual and weekly obligations. Staff members are entitled to a minimum of 20 vacation days per year, which are used up during collective holidays and during breaks determined by the academic year calendar. A staff member may use paid absence days in situations determined by the institution (professional development, conferences, illness, maternity leave etc.)

---

#### **4.2.6 Promotion, Advancement**

Moving from a lower professional title to the next in the line (from teaching assistant to full professor) is considered career advancement. Although academic staff members have to formally undergo a

---

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.ucg.ac.me/fajlovi/Statut%20Univerziteta%20Crne%20Gore%20.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.ucg.ac.me/fajlovi/PRAVILA%20POSTUPKA%20IZBORA%20U%20AKADEMSKA%20I%20NAUCNA%20ZVANJA.pdf>

recruitment process in order to earn a higher title, it is an expected sequence of events for those who wish to continue their career at the same institution.

A higher-ranking title brings a salary increase, like in any other case of teacher promotion (e.g. becoming the Dean or vice-dean, etc.). Furthermore, each year of working experience brings an increase in salary and number of annual leave days, as specified by the Labour Law and the Collective Agreement.

Honourable professor emeritus title may be assigned to a retired professor for their distinguished scientific work and contribution to higher education. Professor emeritus may be involved in all teaching activities within the second and third degree levels of study.

#### **4.2.7 Retirement and Pensions**

---

Teachers may retire at the age of 67 with a minimum of 15 years of work. After retirement, teachers are allowed to keep some of their official engagements such as membership in committees or mentorship, for a period not longer than 2 years.

After retirement, teachers keep their respective titles. A very small percentage of teachers can get promoted to professor emeritus.

Pensions are determined by the Law on Pension and Disability Insurance.

#### **4.3 Governing Bodies of Higher Education Institutions**

---

In accordance with the Law on Higher Education (“Official Gazette of Montenegro”, no 44/14, 47/15 and 40/16), the governing body of a university is the Governing Board, which determines the business policy of a university. The Governing Board of a public university has 15 members and is composed of the representatives of academic staff, other employees, students and the founder's representatives. The Governing Board is elected for a period of four years, except the student representative who is elected for a period of two years. Competence, method of election and dismissal, as well as the principles of operation and decision making of the Governing Board are determined in more detail by the statute of the public university. The same procedure stands also for the private university, as well as for a non-university institution.

The professional body of a university is the Senate. The Senate comprises of: the rector, vice-rectors, representatives of academic staff, and representatives of students in compliance with the statute of the university. At least 50% of its members must be from among the full professors of the university. Competence, number, composition, duration of term of office, method of election and dismissal, as well as the manner of operation and decision-making of senate are regulated by statute of the university.

The professional body of an organisational unit of a public university is the Council, composed of the dean, vice-deans, persons with academic titles, representatives of associates and students, in compliance with the statute of the public university. Competence, duration of term of office, manner of work and decision making of the Council shall be regulated by the statute of the public university. The same stands for private, as well as non-university institution.

According to the Law on Higher Education, students are entitled to at least 20% representation from the total number of members in professional and managing bodies.

### **5 Management and Other Education Staff in Higher Education**

---

The managing body of a university is Rector.

Rector is responsible for the work of university, as well as for the management within the business policy determined by the Governing Board of the university.

A university may have vice-rectors.

The Secretary General of the university is responsible for functioning of the university's administration-technical services.

The managing body of organisational unit of a public university is dean, or director elected by the Governing Board of a university in compliance with its statute.

The method of election of dean, or director, authorizations, duration of term of office and other issues shall be regulated by statute of the public university.

The managing body of a non-university institution shall be determined by statute of that institution.

The method of election of managing body, authorizations, duration of term of office and other issues shall be regulated by statute of the institution.

## **5.1 Requirements for Appointment**

---

Rector of a public university is elected for a period of three years on the basis of public competition and a submitted programme for the development of university.

Rector of a public university is elected by the Governing Board, from among full professors of the public university.

Same person can be elected rector of public university twice in a row.

The method and procedure of electing a rector, or a vice-rector, their authorisations, term of office of a vice-rector and other matters are regulated by statute of public university.

Rector of a private university is elected by the founder from among full professors in compliance with its statute.

The method of electing a private university rector, or a vice-rector, authorisations, duration of term of office and other issues is regulated by statute of the private university.

## **5.2 Service Conditions**

---

The selection of professional staff is conducted on the basis of public competition, either for an indefinite or definite period, in line with provisions of Statute, act on internal organisation and systematisation of work places for an organisational unit of the University at which the selection is carried out. Call is published by the dean, or director with prior consent of the rector. As for the administrative staff, general rules pertaining to the employment relationship are applied. Contract of employment with academic and administrative staff is concluded by the dean, or the director, with prior consent of the rector.

## **6 Quality Assurance in Higher Education**

---

### **6.1 Responsible Bodies**

---

Quality Assurance of higher education is regulated by the Law on Higher Education. For improving higher education area, the government appointed the Council for Higher Education, responsible for achieving high quality of higher education in Montenegro and for assisting the HEIs in improving and sustaining the quality of their activities. Council performs the following:

- 1) analyses the condition and achievements in higher education and offer expert proposals to the Ministry and the Government of Montenegro
- 2) provides opinion concerning the proposal of strategy for the development of higher education;
- 3) prescribes conditions and criteria for election into academic titles;
- 4) provides opinion on the amount of funds for financing public higher education institutions and students attending them, for each academic year;
- 5) provides opinion on the number of students and the amount of funds for financing students

attending study programmes of public interest at private higher education institutions, for each academic year;

- 6) conducts the accreditation procedure of a study programme and issue a certificate on accreditation of the study programme;
- 7) issues a certificate on reaccreditation of a higher education institution on the basis of reaccreditation report;
- 8) proposes measures for quality improvement of higher education based on recommendations from reaccreditation report concerning higher education institutions and provide them to the Ministry and the Government;
- 9) cooperates with higher education institutions in terms of assurance and improvement of quality;
- 10) ranks higher education institutions according to methodology of ranking institutions in the European Higher Education Area;
- 11) performs other activities prescribed by the law.

## 6.2 Approaches and Methods for Quality Assurance

---

In accordance with the Law on Higher Education<sup>12</sup> activities concerning the improvement and development of higher education are conducted by the Council for Higher Education<sup>13</sup>.

In performing the activities the Council:

- 1) analyses the conditions and achievements in higher education and offers expert proposals to the Ministry and the Government of Montenegro;
- 2) provides opinion concerning the proposal of strategy for the development of higher education;
- 3) prescribes conditions and criteria for election into academic titles;
- 4) provides opinion on the amount of funds for financing public higher education institutions and students attending them, for each academic year;
- 5) provides opinion on the number of students and the amount of funds for financing students attending study programmes of public interest at private higher education institutions, for each academic year;
- 6) conducts the accreditation procedure of a study programme and issue a certificate on accreditation of the study programme;
- 7) issues a certificate on reaccreditation of a higher education institution on the basis of reaccreditation report;
- 8) 8)proposes measures for quality improvement of higher education based on recommendations from the reaccreditation report concerning higher education institutions and provides them to the Ministry and the Government;
- 9) cooperates with higher education institutions in terms of assurance and improvement of quality;
- 10) ranks higher education institutions according to methodology of ranking institutions in the European Higher Education Area;
- 11) performs other activities prescribed by the law.

The Council is appointed and dismissed by the Government. It is composed of 13 members appointed for a period of four years. The Council members are appointed from among eminent experts in the area of higher education, science, arts, and from among students appointed for a period of two years.

The work of the Council is public. For some areas of its activities, the Council may form working entities,

---

<sup>12</sup> Official Gazette of Montenegro", no 44/14, 47/15 and 40/16 <http://www.mps.gov.me/en/library/zakoni>

<sup>13</sup> [www.svo.gov.me](http://www.svo.gov.me)

commissions and independent expert groups. Foreign experts included in the list of experts which is determined by the Ministry may be appointed as members of working entities, commissions and independent expert groups.

Council member cannot be a member of an accreditation commission.

Funds required for the work of the Council are allocated from the budget of Montenegro.

Expert and administrative-technical activities for the Council are performed by the Ministry of Education.

Quality assurance and improvement in higher education are achieved through accreditation, self-evaluation and reaccreditation. An institution conducts the procedure of quality self-evaluation concerning study programmes, teaching and working conditions at the end of each academic year, in compliance with its statute.

In the procedure of self-evaluation, student surveys are carried out at all levels, at least twice a year with regard to study programmes, teaching, conditions and work of academic staff. The results of student surveys are published on the website of the institution.

Within the procedure of reaccreditation, evaluation of an institution is conducted by a foreign accreditation agency for quality assurance. A decision on the engagement of agency is passed by the Ministry of Education following the prior opinion of the Council, after conducting a public call. Based on the self-evaluation report and the conducted evaluation procedure the agency prepares a reaccreditation report. The reaccreditation report is submitted to the institution, Ministry and Council.

Based on the positive report of a foreign accreditation Agency, the Council issues a certificate of reaccreditation to the institution.

The form of the certificate is determined by the Ministry of Education.

The costs of evaluation are financed by the institution.

During the period of accreditation or reaccreditation validity, a licensed institution can make alterations in a study programme at the undergraduate level of up to 30 ECTS credits without undergoing accreditation and licensing procedure.

Within the Project "Higher Education and Research for Innovation and Competitiveness" financed through a World Bank loan, an external evaluation of all higher education institutions has been carried out by the European University Association experts (EUA). The external evaluation of higher education institutions resulted in individual reports of institutions, already available to the public, and integrated in the report on the quality of higher education system in Montenegro. The reports on external evaluation are available on the official site of EUA<sup>14</sup>.

According to the Law on Higher Education an institution conducts a labour market research at least once in five years by conducting survey among graduate students, associations of employers, commercial entities and entrepreneurs concerning the applicability of the obtained knowledge, skills and competences required in the labour market.

The procedure of Study programmes' assessment by graduates at the University of Montenegro began in the experimental phase in 2012 within the regional TEMPUS project CONGRAD (<http://www.congrad.org/tempus>). The surveying procedure has been conducted for two generations (students who graduated in 2007 and 2011). The procedure and experience from this project served for preparation of the study for TRACER research at the level of the state for all HEIs in Montenegro.

In order to continuously enhance quality, the Centre for Studies and Quality Control was established at the University of Montenegro in 2008, supported by WUS Austria and IPA 2007 funds<sup>15</sup>.

The establishment of HEIs and licensing procedures are prescribed by the Law on Higher Education. Licensing procedure is performed in accordance with the Rulebook on more detailed conditions for the

---

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.eua.be/iep/who-has-participated/iep-evaluation-reports.aspx> &nbsp; <http://www.eua.be/iep/types-of-evaluations/coordinated-evaluations.aspx>

<sup>15</sup> [www.qas.ac.me](http://www.qas.ac.me)

establishment, performance of activities, licensing procedure and the manner of keeping a register of higher education institutions<sup>16</sup>.

## **7 Educational Support and Guidance**

---

### **7.1 Support Measures for Learners in Higher Education**

---

#### **7.1.1 Definition of the Target Group(s)**

---

The Law on Higher Education recognizes disadvantaged people as a special target group that has access to public higher institution based on affirmative practise-without paying any tuition fees. The Law also stipulates meeting certain conditions for students with disabilities when passing examinations, as well as regarding access to the premises of university, where no physical impediments should exist. A cooperation agreement has also been signed between the University of Montenegro and the Association of Youth with Disabilities, in accordance with which students with disabilities are exempted from paying tuition fees.

The Law on Higher Education also stipulates equal access to higher education for both foreign and local students that can enrol HEIs under the same conditions as Montenegrin students. If the foreign students comply with the criteria for enrolment, they can equally, as Montenegrin students, apply for places in student dormitories, student loans etc.

However, there is no article in the Law on Higher Education concerning students in disadvantaged socio-economic situations. A kind of special social security provision does not exist, although the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is currently preparing a document specifying the social security provisions. For the time being, all students are considered on the same basis irrespective of their economic and social status.

The courses are thought in the Montenegrin language. No specific attention has been paid to minority languages at this level of studies.

#### **7.1.2 Specific Support Measures**

---

In accordance with the Law on Higher Education, there is no differentiation between students of public and private higher education institutions. Both have the right to:

- accommodation and food in a students' dormitory,
- students' loan,
- scholarships for talented students,
- participation in local and inter-city public transportation expenses for students ,
- professional training, and
- health care.

Montenegrin students are using students` loans in accordance with the Law on Higher Education. Grants are given to „talented students“, that are students with highest marks and special affinity towards scientific/artistic work, and who were rewarded prizes at state and international competitions. In accordance with the Law on Higher Education, the Government with prior consent of Council of HE determines the number and the amount of funds to finance students studying at private institutions in the areas of public interest. The amount of funds is determined based on the Decree on Norms and Standards for Financing of Public HEIs and Students at HEIs, adopted by the Government. The Government may prescribe certain conditions for the use of resources allocated to a private institution, as well as ask a private institution to submit the budget proposed for performing its activity for the following

---

<sup>16</sup> Official Gazette of Montenegro”, no 22/15 <http://www.mps.gov.me/en/library/pravilnici?alphabet=lat>



fiscal year. A private institution is accountable to the Government for lawful use of resources allocated by the Government, and it is obliged to enable access to financial books and records to the Government.

Also, the Ministry of Education in accordance with criteria prescribed by the annual Public Call for Co-financing of scholarship for master and doctoral studies allocates a certain amount of money for co-financing scholarships for master and doctoral studies and travel costs of mobility students.

---

## **7.2 Guidance and Counselling in Higher Education**

---

### **7.2.1 Academic Guidance**

The Career Development Centre of the University of Montenegro offers to the students of the University of Montenegro services career guidance services.

One of the main objectives of the Career Development Centre is strengthening both practical and soft skills of the students. In this respect, free of charge workshops are organised where students can learn how to write a CV and motivation letter or how to introduce themselves to the employer, how to find a job, etc.

The Career Development Centre also represents the link between students and employers, connecting them through the organization of internships.

The Centre also organises and offers lectures, seminars and other types of educational trainings for students at each level of studies as well as for the academic and administrative staff of the University of Montenegro.

---

### **7.2.2 Psychological Counselling**

No information available

---

### **7.2.3 Career Guidance**

Career guidance services are available at the University of Montenegro within the Career Development Centre where students can get information about different professional opportunities while they are studying as well as upon graduation.

So far, the Career centre had programmes focused on informing students about resume writing, professional behaviour, student mobility, and other career options. Through their website and social media they inform students about all the possibilities they could make use of. Career guidance is provided for all students at the University of Montenegro's Career Development Centre. Various activities offered for the students are free of charge.

The Centre for Effective Development of Higher Education in cooperation with the Ministry of Education organizes a fair on higher education and available scholarships. The Fair is organized in the capital Podgorica and in two Montenegrin municipalities Bar and Bijelo Polje. The main objective of this Fair is to provide students, pupils and all those interested in acquiring higher education with the opportunity of getting informed about national and regional HE study programmes, scholarship opportunities, as well as seasonal employment programmes that are offered in Montenegro.

All relevant information related to the study programmes, enrolment criteria and general conditions of study could be found on the official web sites of the HEIs.

---

## **8 Mobility and Internationalization in Higher Education**

---

### **8.1 Student Mobility**

Academic mobility has been recognized as one of the strategic objectives of the Montenegrin Higher Education and Research System. One of the objectives of the Strategy on Development and Financing of

Higher Education 2011-2020 is the internationalization of higher education, which implies a more intensive work on signing bilateral and multilateral agreements for promoting and encouraging student exchange, since human capacity development and intensifying mobility is a crucial precondition for development of higher education and science, as well as social and economic development in Montenegro on the whole. The point is not only to enable Montenegrin students to use scholarships for going abroad, but also attract young people (both students and researchers) from foreign HEIs.

The University of Montenegro, comprising more than 4/5 of all the students in Montenegro has worked a lot in the past years to foster and enhance its international position through attracting foreign students, staff and research projects.

Nowadays, continuous exchanges of experience, as well as an open approach to the cooperation with other HEIs in line with its mission, enables the University of Montenegro to develop and modernize the quality of its work, while remaining the leading national HEI in Montenegro. University is capitalizing on participating in numerous international projects, primarily Tempus, to make bilateral cooperation and agreements with HEIs from the WB region and abroad. In the last six years, it signed 96 agreements with universities from 32 countries.

Many of these programmes resulted in the formation of successful research groups, research cooperation and intensified mobility. Visible progress has been made in the attempt to foster internationalization, which resulted in increase of a number of successful applications to international funds. Currently, various departments at the University of Montenegro are coordinating 5 TEMPUS projects, while other 15 Tempus projects, as well as 4 CB projects are currently running. The University of Montenegro is acting as partner in more than 90 projects, over 10 structural IPA projects (Cross Boarder, MED, SEE), 2 collaborative FP7 projects, as well as several FP7 CSA projects.

Mobility of students has been also considerably improved. The University of Montenegro participated in 16 Erasmus Mundus action 2 projects (5 Basileus, 5 Joineusee, Sigma, Sigma Agile, Greentech, Sunbeam, Eraweb I, Eraweb II).

University of Montenegro cooperates closely with the Ministry of Education in managing of CEEPUS (Central European Exchange Program for University Studies), co-manage UGRAD (former FORECAST)-mobility scheme with American universities), as well as Mevlana Exchange Programme (the mobility schemes with Turkish universities).

In the period 2009-2013, the university had 196 outgoing students under ERASMUS MUNDUS programme, as well as 35 incoming students mainly from Central and Western Europe. In the same period, CEEPUS recorded 201 outgoing and 137 incoming students. There are also 40 Montenegrin outgoing students under the UGRAD (Global Undergraduate Exchange Program) scheme in the last three years. In 2013 there were 6 outgoing students under Mevlana Exchange Programme, funded by Turkish government. In order to deal appropriately towards recognition of credits gained during the mobility periods and overpass the administrative problems in recognition of students' progress, Senate of the University has adopted the Rules on Student Mobility. Student interest in exchange programmes and foreign government scholarships is growing from year to year. Mobility is the highest through the Central European Exchange Program for University Studies – CEEPUS, Erasmus Mundus mobility programme and bilateral cooperation with Croatia and Slovenia. IAESTE, DAAD, Go Stiria and UGRAD programmes are also used to a significant extent. In addition to the mentioned programmes, some of the faculties have developed an intensive inter-faculty cooperation, which also provides for student exchange.

Within Erasmus + programme, the University of Montenegro has signed 36 Inter-institutional Agreements for Credit mobility with partner institutions from the European Union. It is investing considerable efforts into increasing the number of agreements, thus providing more opportunities to its students and staff for academic exchanges.

However, there is a slight gap between the number of outgoing and incoming students. The reasons can be found in the fact that teaching in English especially in the first cycle of studies is not common in

Montenegro. For the incoming students, the international relations office prepares an English courses catalogue and develops all the organizational services, accommodation included.

Mobility of researchers did not follow the mobility of students. The number of activities and successful applications among the former are lower. There are several possibilities for mobility schemes for researchers within ERASMUS MUNDUS, institutional, national bilateral agreements as well as project mobility. In close cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science (at the time), University of Montenegro joined the pan-European network for the mobility of researchers -EURAXESS. University has published the second edition of Researchers' guide to Montenegro as the number of guidelines to facilitate administrative procedures for the employment of the foreign researchers and carriers of research visa in Montenegro. University of Montenegro gained this initiative under the project EURAXESS Montenegro financed under FP7 for the period 2009-2011. Today it works as self-sustainable national network with University of Montenegro as a Bridgehead organization at the national level.

There are numerous programmes of academic mobility, foreign government scholarships and programmes of financial support for scholarship winners, information about which can be found on the website of the Ministry of Education<sup>17</sup>.

A new **Law on Recognition of Foreign Educational Credentials and Equivalence of Qualifications**<sup>18</sup> was adopted on December 08, 2011 aiming to facilitate mobility. It was done with the representatives of the Employment Bureau, University of Montenegro and Mediterranean University, supported through the TAIX instrument of the EC. Estonian expert assisted in drafting the law and the Slovenian Ministry organized study visit for the representatives of Montenegrin WG. The new law replaced the Law on Recognition of Foreign Credentials adopted in 2008.

In the field of recognition of foreign credentials Government of Montenegro on July 17, 2014 adopted the document named "Analysis of the state in the field of recognition of foreign educational" with recommendations for improvement in this area, prepared by the Ministry of Education, in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, institutions of higher education and the Chamber of Commerce

Furthermore, the internationalization of higher education represents one of the project components within the "Higher Education and Research for Innovation and Competitiveness" project, funded from the World Bank loan in the amount of 12 million euro, and implemented by the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Science.

In order to promote the internationalization and programmes of academic mobility, the Ministry has engaged an international consultant for the preparation of Study on programmes of academic mobility available to Montenegrin students, with an emphasis on the European and American area. Almost 1 million euro has been allocated from the project for the renovation of student dormitories in Montenegro, which is an important precondition for attracting foreign students and foster incoming mobility.

The project component – Internationalization of Higher Education, envisages the development of scholarship schemes for masters, doctoral and post-doctoral studies abroad by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Science. The allocated funds amount is 1 200 000 Euro; The Ministry of Education will be in charge of the scholarship programme for master's studies, and the Ministry of Science for doctoral and post-doctoral studies.

## 8.2 Academic staff mobility

---

Montenegro participated in the Tempus programme from 2001 until the 2013. During this period, through numerous mobility periods spent abroad teaching staff capacities have been considerably improved. Academic staff mobility has continued within the new Erasmus+ programme through Capacity Building in

---

<sup>17</sup> [www.mps.gov.me](http://www.mps.gov.me)

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.svo.gov.me/en/library/zakoni>><http://www.svo.gov.me/en/library/zakoni>

Higher Education and International Credit Mobility Actions.

Academic staff mobility has also been organized within the Seventh Framework Programme and new Horizon 2020 programme.

For academic staff, Career Development Centre implements the Program for Professional Development of Academic Staff and Researchers – TRAIN. The aim is to develop, improve and evaluate the skills of the young academic staff at the universities of the Western Balkans.

The trainings are delivered on the below topics in cooperation with the central university services of the University of Montenegro:

1. Project Management - preparation of applications and project management (training is implemented in cooperation with the International Relations Office of the University of Montenegro);
2. Methodology of Scientific Research (training is implemented in cooperation with the Centre for Doctoral Studies of the University of Montenegro);
3. Development of Curricula (training is implemented in cooperation with the Centre for Studies and Quality Control of the University of Montenegro).

The target groups of the training program are: PhD students, teaching assistants, professors and students of post-doctoral studies.

### **8.3 Other Dimensions of Internationalization in Higher Education**

---

#### **8.3.1 European, Global and Intercultural Dimension in Curriculum Development**

---

A majority of Tempus running projects, as well as those completed deal/are dealing with curricula development.

Apart from this continuous activity through Tempus, and now through Capacity Building projects, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Science started the implementation of a five-year project entitled “Higher Education and Research for Innovation and Competitiveness”, in 2012, financed by a World Bank loan.

Within the framework of this project, the Ministry of Education aims to improve the quality and relevance of higher education in Montenegro. Within the components of the programme, one of the planned activities is the creation of a study on mobility programmes, in which information about study opportunities abroad, with an emphasis on Europe and the United States, will be at the disposal of Montenegrin students. The study, which includes the ability of degree studying / study stay for 1 to 2 semesters / summer language courses and cultural / research stay, has already been done and presented to the representatives of HEIs.

Excellent candidates for master, doctoral and postdoctoral programmes will be financed through partial or full scholarships in order to complete their studies at prestigious European and worldwide higher education institutions.

A feasibility study for enrolment in study programmes in English language will be done also, aiming to attract international students and teaching staff in Montenegro.

#### **8.3.2 Partnerships and Networks**

---

The major benefit for HEIs and consequently students, in terms of partnerships and networks has been achieved by TEMPUS programme, since it contributed to the establishment of long lasting partnerships with European and regional HEIs, creating a framework for the sustainability of these partnerships through other forms of cooperation. Through projects, Tempus provided also possibilities for mobility of students and professors. A large number of both students and professors have benefited from mobilities through this programme. It is also important to highlight the fact that the first Erasmus Mundus partnership projects (BASILEUS, JoinSEEE) were created thanks to the partnerships established through Tempus projects.

Through ERASMUS MUNDUS Joint Master Courses 36 Montenegrin students received scholarships for

participation in EM JM courses, and were enabled to study at prestigious EU HEIs and receive joint diplomas, while 7 Montenegrin students received scholarships for EM Joint Doctorates. In Erasmus+, 3 Montenegrin students in 2015 received scholarships for EM JM degrees.

Quite good results have been achieved within the CEEPUS programme, one of the most popular mobility programmes, mainly thanks to the fact that the application procedure is not too complex. It is important to highlight the new elements of research introduced as of 2010, which is to contribute to the establishment of links between education, research and industry.

## **8.4 Bilateral Agreements and Worldwide Cooperation**

---

### **8.4.1 Bilateral Agreements**

---

The University of Montenegro cooperates with numerous universities worldwide, based on the bilateral agreements signed. They stipulate areas of cooperation such as student and staff exchanges, participation in joint scientific and research projects, exchange of scientific literature and experiences in the teaching process and scientific work. The University of Montenegro has signed agreements with 118 universities from 34 countries. Montenegro has signed many bilateral agreements with partners from the region (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia, Albania, Ukraine, Poland,) while several more are underway. Bilateral schemes provide student and research exchanges, in accordance with the selection criteria and priority fields.

### **8.4.2 Cooperation and Participation in Worldwide Programmes and Organisations**

---

The University of Montenegro is a member of a number of university associations such as the European University Association, the Mediterranean Universities Union (Unimed), the Centre for Mediterranean Universities (CUM), the Balkans Universities Association, Uniadriion, having representatives in the working bodies and participating in the initiatives of these networks.

## **9 On-going Reforms and Policy Developments**

---

### **9.1 Overall national education strategy and key objectives**

---

The vision of the Montenegrin education system is to develop Montenegro as a society of knowledge, where education, as the key factor of economic and social development will be of high-quality, flexible, efficient, with the professional human resources who will have competitive knowledge, skills and competences and who will be qualified to take part in the labour market, where each individual has equal opportunities for personal and professional development. Most significant recommendations and steps which should ensure the sustainability of education reform and enable the implementation of this vision are as follows:

1. Further development of social partnership and active involvement of partners in planning, organization and implementation of education and training, thus providing faster response to the labour market needs;
2. The improvements of flexibility of VET through development of modularized curricula based on vocational and key competences, which ensure wide basic vocational knowledge and which, by the means of elective modules, satisfy special interests and affinities of pupils;
3. Further development of indicators for institution quality assessment, defining procedures for curricula evaluation, as well as the evaluation itself, will contribute to the improvement of quality of education;
4. Early school leaving prevention, taking into account its complexity and influence on individuals and society in general. Further development of career guidance system for all types of education;
5. The improvement of initial and continuing professional training of teaching staff has been recognized as a key factor of education quality. Special attention will be dedicated to the education of teachers of practical training;

6. Finding out the way to involve local community representatives and employers in the financing of education to the possible extent, which should encourage better cooperation between school and local community. Preparation for the implementation of a model of financing per capita, which would ensure more efficient expenditures, with greater autonomy of both school and local community. Developing role of school will be encouraged;
7. One of the priorities in the upcoming period has been defining of enrolment policy which will reflect labour market needs as well as Montenegrin mid-term and long-term development policy requirements, along with further work on the creation of relevant working conditions at schools, school equipment and teaching aids upgrading and development of textbooks and relevant learning materials;
8. International context will be taken into account in the envisaged activities;
9. Linking higher education and labour market and increasing entrepreneurial and innovation character of education;
10. The share of population with higher education degrees aged 30-34 should be at least 40% in 2020;
11. Establishing a model of lifelong learning based on a good international practice;
12. Research oriented higher education;
13. The further development of the National Qualification Framework will ensure quality of qualifications, and connection and comparability of the outcomes, achieved through different learning types.

## **9.2 Overview of processes and drivers for the education reform**

---

The Ministry of Education is the body responsible for overall higher education policy in the country, as well as one of the main drivers of higher education reform processes. The Ministry is in charge of proposing new acts on higher education, various legislative and strategic documents. It also follows the higher education policy in the country, and tackles the issues most in need in the field of higher education.

Important stakeholders in HE reforms are HEIs themselves, since they can also adopt strategic documents reflecting specific issues pertaining to internal management and organization. HEIs are also responsible for creating various analyses of the current HE reform that can further help the relevant Ministry create specific policy measures.

## **9.3 National Reforms in Higher Education**

---

### **9.3.1 2016**

---

- The Government of Montenegro adopted the Strategy for Development of Higher Education in Montenegro (2016–2020), together with its Action plan. The rationale behind the Strategy is to define the new strategic framework in HE field that will respond to societal needs and inputs coming from EHEA. Key reforms relate to the changes of HE structure and their financing model, aiming to improve both teaching and research.
- The Parliament of Montenegro adopted changes and amendments of the Law on Recognition of Foreign Educational Certificates and Equivalence of Qualifications (Official Gazette of Montenegro, 57/11 i 42/16), that further stipulates authorities of ministries, HEIs, and schools in the recognition process procedure.
- The Parliament of Montenegro adopted a Law on Youth (Official Gazette of Montenegro 42/16). This is the first law defining the legal framework in the field of youth. The law aims to contribute to the improvement of the position of young people and their role in creation of youth policy.

- The Parliament of Montenegro adopted changes and amendments of the Law on National Vocational Qualifications (Official Gazette of Montenegro 80/08, 14/09, 80/10, 40/11 i 40/16), aiming at further development of lifelong learning, linking of formal and informal education, recognition of informal and non-formal education, and previously acquired knowledge, enabling the visibility of qualifications that individuals possess, thus facilitating its employment perspectives and better positioning at the labour market, as well as further fostering mobility.
- Within the “Higher Education Research for Innovation and Competitiveness” Project, and on the basis of the feasibility study for establishing a system of tracing university graduates’ career (Tracer Study), hardware and software were acquired and questionnaire for tracing university graduates’ career were developed. The implementation is scheduled at the end of 2016 for 2009 and 2013 generations of graduates.

### 9.3.2 2015

---

- In accordance with the provisions of the Law on Professional Training of Persons with Acquired Higher Education (Official Gazette of the Montenegro 38/12) and Rulebook on Manner of Publishing of Public Call, Procedure and Criteria for Professional Development (Official Gazette of the Montenegro 46/12), all activities related to the Programme of professional training of persons with acquired higher education were completed. After completion of the electronic matching of employers and users, about 3 500 persons with acquired higher education got the opportunity to be professionally trained in 2015. The programme enables persons with higher education, but without working experience, to acquire knowledge, skills and competences, during nine months, which will help them to perform independently their activities. The Programme beneficiaries were enabled to acquire appropriate working experience, while the employers in both public and private sector were able to identify high quality staff that could be recruited at the end of the professional training programme.

### 9.3.3 2014

---

- A new Law on Higher Education adopted in October 2014 (Official Gazette of the Montenegro 44/14) aimed at a more precise regulation of the quality assurance process, which includes accreditation, self-evaluation and reaccreditation, conditions for establishing and discontinuing institutions and study programmes, organisation at higher education institutions, enrolment procedure and rules of studying and financing. Key novelties introduced by the new law relate to quality assurance and improvement of standards and procedures which allow for continuous quality control at institutions. Within the reaccreditation procedure, the evaluation of an institution is conducted by an internationally recognised accredited agency for quality assurance. The decision on engaging the agency, upon the public call, is passed by the Ministry following the opinion of the Council.
- The Report on Referencing the Montenegrin Qualifications Framework to the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning and the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Montenegro has presented the state-of-play concerning the MQF development at the 25th meeting of AG group in June 2014. This was followed by the presentation of the Final report on the 26th meeting of AG group in October 2014. At the 27th AG meeting in November 2014 Final Montenegrin Referencing report<sup>19</sup> was adopted.
- In the field of recognition of foreign credentials Government of Montenegro on July 17, 2014 adopted the document named "Analysis of the state in the field of recognition of foreign educational documents" with recommendations for improvement in this area.
- The Ministry prepared a document named Analysis on Financing with Possible Financing Models of Higher Education, based on the current situation in the field of financing Higher Education in

---

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.cko.edu.me/default.aspx>

Montenegro. In order to create appropriate higher education financing model, the Ministry appointed a working group consisting of relevant representatives with the task to prepare a new model of higher education financing and submit it to the Government.

- The Ministry prepared a study on labour market needs in the field of higher education, based on the Employers' Perception of Higher Education Relevance in Montenegro. It highlights the needs of further harmonization of admission policy with labour market needs in regard of graduates' knowledge, skills and competencies, taking into account the need of human resources development for a longer period, in line with the state strategic objectives.
- Within the Project Higher Education and Research for Innovation and Competitiveness, financed by World Bank loan, the external evaluation of the all higher education institutions has been done by IEP EUA. The result of this evaluation are individual reports for each higher education institution and a comprehensive, integrated report on the overall higher education system in Montenegro, which highlights common problems and challenges. Reports were presented in November 2014 and can be found at the official web site of IEP EUA-Institutional Evaluation Programme<sup>20</sup>.
- In May 2014, a study was prepared on mobility programs for Montenegrin students and academic staff, including a comprehensive multi-year training plan for strengthening the Office of mobility. The Ministry of Education, together with the Ministry of Science is preparing a detailed scheme of scholarships for master studies that will be administered by the Ministry of Education, as well as for doctoral and postdoctoral studies that will be administered by the Ministry of Science.
- The TEMPUS project "Development Of Learning Outcomes Approach: A Way to a Better Comparability, Recognition and Employability" (DEVCORE<sup>21</sup>) focused on providing methodological concepts necessary to the introduction of learning outcomes in the Montenegrin institutions of higher education.
- In April 2014 the Montenegrin Government adopted the National plan of qualification development for practicing regulated professions with an Action plan for the period from 2013 to 2018 and Table of concordance (See Chapter 3).

## 10 Legislation

---

The Montenegrin educational system is governed by a set of **laws**:

- 1) General Act on Education (Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro 64/02, 31/05, 49/07, Official Gazette of MNE 04/08, 21/09, 45/10, 45/11, 37/13);
- 2) Preschool Education Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro 64/02, 31/05, 49/07, Official Gazette of MNE 04/08, 21/09 and 45/10);
- 3) Primary Education Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro 64/02, 49/07, Official Gazette of MNE 04/08, 21/09, 45/10 and 37/13);
- 4) Vocational Education Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro 64/02, 49/07, Official Gazette of MNE 45/10 and 37/13);
- 5) General Secondary School (Gymnasium) Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro 64/02, 49/07, Official Gazette of MNE 45/10 and 37/13);
- 6) Adult Education Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro 64/02 and 49/07, Official Gazette of MNE 04/08, 21/09 and 20/11);
- 7) Law on National Vocational Qualifications Act (Official Gazette of MNE 80/08, 14/09, 80/10, 40/11 i 40/16);

---

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.eua.be/iep/who-has-participated/iep-evaluation-reports.aspx>; <http://www.eua.be/iep/types-of-evaluations/coordinated-evaluations.aspx>

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.devcore.ac.me>



- 8) Act on Education of Children with Special Needs (Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro 80/04, Official Gazette of MNE 45/10);
- 9) National Qualifications Framework Act (Official Gazette of MNE 80/10);
- 10) Higher Education Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro 60/03, Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro 44/14, . 47/15 and 40/16);
- 11) Act on Recognition of Foreign Educational Credentials and Equalization of Qualifications (Official Gazette of MNE 57/11 and 42/16).

#### **Strategies in the field of education:**

- 1) Strategy of Development of Higher Education 2016-2020  
(<http://www.neomontenegro.ac.me/t.php?v=152&l=en> )
- 2) Strategy of Vocational Education 2015-2020  
(<http://www.neomontenegro.ac.me/uploads/file/MONTENEGRIN%20VOCATIONAL%20EDUCATION%20DEVELOPMENT%20STRATEGY.pdf> )
- 3) Strategy of Inclusive Education 2014-2018  
(<file:///C:/Users/Ranko/Downloads/Strategija%20Inkluzivnog%20Obrazovanja.pdf> )
- 4) Strategy of Youth 2017-2021  
<http://www.mps.gov.me/biblioteka/strategije>
- 5) Strategy of LLL Career Orientation  
<http://www.mps.gov.me/biblioteka/strategije>
- 6) Strategy for Development and Support for Talented Pupils (2015-2019)  
<http://www.mps.gov.me/biblioteka/strategije>
- 7) Strategy on Early and Preschool Upbringing and Education in Montenegro 2016-2020  
<http://www.mps.gov.me/biblioteka/strategije>

#### **Rulebooks in the field of education:**

- 1) Rulebook on the Criteria, Method, Conditions and Compensation Amount for Exercising Rights to Dormitory Room and Board, Student Loan, Scholarship and Transport Allowance,(Official Gazette of MNE 39/15)
- 2) Regulation on Norms and Standards for Financing Public Higher Education Institutions and Financing of Students at the Higher Education Institutions (Official Gazette of MNE 33/11)
- 3) Rulebook on more detailed conditions for the establishment, performance of activities, licensing procedure and the manner of keeping a register of higher education institutions (Official Gazette of MNE 22/15)
- 4) Rulebook on the description of qualification levels and sublevels (“Official Gazette of MNE 51/11)
- 5) Rulebook on the procedures of developing qualifications from the sixth to the eighth level of qualifications (“Official Gazette of MNE 52/12)
- 6) Rulebook on the content and form diploma and diploma supplement (supplement), keeping the register of students, records and contents of public documents issued by the university and higher education institutions (Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro 9/07)



## HOW TO OBTAIN EU PUBLICATIONS

### Free publications:

- one copy:  
via EU Bookshop (<http://bookshop.europa.eu>);
- more than one copy or posters/maps:  
from the European Union's representations ([http://ec.europa.eu/represent\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/represent_en.htm));  
from the delegations in non-EU countries ([http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/index\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/index_en.htm));  
by contacting the Europe Direct service ([http://europa.eu/europedirect/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/europedirect/index_en.htm)) or  
calling 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 (freephone number from anywhere in the EU) (\*).

(\* ) The information given is free, as are most calls (though some operators, phone boxes or hotels may charge you).

### Priced publications:

- via EU Bookshop (<http://bookshop.europa.eu>).

### Priced subscriptions:

- via one of the sales agents of the Publications Office of the European Union ([http://publications.europa.eu/others/agents/index\\_en.htm](http://publications.europa.eu/others/agents/index_en.htm)).

**Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency**

Erasmus+ : Higher Education - International Capacity Building (CBHE)

**Write to us:**

Erasmus +  
Rue Joseph II, 59 (J-59 04/33)  
B-1000 Brussels  
Belgium

**Visit us:**

Rue Joseph II, 59  
B-1000 Brussels  
Belgium

**Fax:** +(32 2) 299 4530**Website:**[http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/library\\_en](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/library_en)**General questions about CBHE:**[EACEA-EPLUS-CBHE@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EACEA-EPLUS-CBHE@ec.europa.eu)