



# STRATEGY FOR EXERCISING THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD 2019–2023

Podgorica, May 2019



Ministry of Labour  
and Social Welfare

unicef  for every child

**STRATEGY FOR EXERCISING  
THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD 2019–2023**

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## List of Abbreviations

AP	Action plan
CRC	Council for the Rights of the Child
EA	Employment Agency
EU	European Union
IPH	Institute for Public Health
ISCP	Institute for Social and Child Protection
ME	Ministry of the Economy
MF	Ministry of Finance
MC	Ministry of Culture
MHMR	Ministry for Human and Minority Rights
MD	Ministry of Defence
MONSTAT	Statistical Office
ME	Ministry of Education
MJ	Ministry of Justice
MLSW	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
MI	Ministry of Interior
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MH	Ministry of Health
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NSSD 2030	National Strategy of Sustainable Development by 2030
OFTHB	Office for the Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings
OP	Optional Protocol
PI	Public Institution
SC	Supreme Court
SPPO	Supreme Public Prosecution Office
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	World Health Organization

## 1 Introduction

*The Strategy for Exercising the Rights of the Child 2019-2023* is a national, comprehensive and inter-departmental document that deals with the improvement of conditions for exercising the rights of the child in all areas covered by the *United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child* and its optional protocols. This document covers a five-year strategic period and its implementation commences in the 30th, jubilee year since the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted.

The strategic planning system in Montenegro is based on *the Decree on the method and procedure for drafting, harmonizing and monitoring the implementation of strategic documents*<sup>(1)</sup>, which sets out the minimum quality criteria for each strategic document adopted by the Government of Montenegro. The Decree is accompanied and elaborated upon by *the Methodology for policy development, preparation and monitoring of implementation of strategic documents*, implemented by the General Secretariat of the Government of Montenegro- the department responsible for coordinating and monitoring compliance and for monitoring the implementation of strategies that define public policies. According to this methodology, strategic documents are public policy documents that define the situation in a specific public policy area (in this case, in the field of the rights of the child) and measures to be taken for its development and improvement. Thus, the national strategic document in the field of the rights of the child was given the title *the Strategy for Exercising the Rights of the Child 2019-2023*, instead of the usual prior title for such documents-

*the National Plan of Action for Children. The Strategy for Exercising the Rights of the Child 2019-2023* is aligned with the commitments arising from the overarching strategic document of Montenegro- the *National Strategy for Sustainable Development by 2030* (NSSD 2030)<sup>(2)</sup>. The alignment of the *Strategy for Exercising the Rights of the Child 2019-2023* with the NSSD 2030 is particularly evident regarding the two priority themes: *improvement of the state of human resources and strengthening of social inclusion* (priority theme 4.1.) and *support to values, norms and behaviour patterns significant for sustainability of the society* (priority theme 4.2.) and their corresponding strategic goals: the improvement of the health of citizens of all ages and the reduction of inequalities in health (strategic goal 4.1.2.), providing inclusive and quality education and the promotion of life-long learning opportunities for everybody (strategic goal 4.1.3..) and active attitude of key actors towards development sustainability (strategic goal 4.2.1.). The *Strategy for Exercising the Rights of the Child 2019-2023* also conveys the same message as the *Communication Strategy 2018-2020*<sup>(3)</sup> in terms of its communication priorities: 1. Fair and Safe State- among other campaigns, this includes a campaign on the promotion of the rights of the child, and 3. State in Service of Citizens- concerning communication tasks and key messages, including the improvement of education, health and social protection.

The *Strategy for Exercising the Rights of the Child 2019-2023* builds on the results

1 Decree on the method and procedure for drafting, harmonizing and monitoring the implementation of strategic documents, Official Gazette of Montenegro 54/18

2 National Strategy for Sustainable Development by 2030, available at: <http://www.mrt.gov.me/en/library/strategije>.

3 Communication Strategy 2018-2020, available at: [www.gov.me/biblioteka/strategije](http://www.gov.me/biblioteka/strategije) (in Montenegrin).

achieved through the implementation of the relevant sectoral strategies such as: the *Strategy for the Development of Social and Child Protection System 2013-2017*<sup>(4)</sup>; the *Strategy for the Development of the Social and Child Protection System 2018 - 2022*<sup>(5)</sup>; the *Strategy for the Prevention and Protection of Children from Violence 2017-2021*<sup>(6)</sup>; the *Strategy for Early and Pre-school Education in Montenegro 2016-2020*<sup>(7)</sup>; *Montenegro Inclusive Education Strategy 2014-2018*<sup>(8)</sup>; *Montenegro Inclusive Education Strategy 2019-2025*<sup>(9)</sup>; the *Strategy for the Social Inclusion of Roma and Egyptians 2016-2020*<sup>(10)</sup>; the *Strategy for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities from Discrimination and the Promotion of Equality 2017-2021*<sup>(11)</sup>, and the *Judicial Reform Strategy 2014-2018*<sup>(12)</sup>. Unlike the abovementioned sectoral strategies, the *Strategy for Exer-*

*cising the Rights of the Child 2019- 2023* deals with issues from each sector, exclusively from the position of the rights of the child. It engaged the active participation of children in the consultative process, has an emphasis on intersectoral cooperation and pays maximum attention to the rights of the child at all times.

The working group in charge of drafting the document, which was set up following the decision of the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, included the following members:

- Goran Kušević, Director of the Directorate for Social Welfare and Child Protection, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare - chair;
- Svetlana Sovilj, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare - member;
- Anđela Lalatović, PI Centre for Social Work for the Municipality of Herceg Novi - member;
- Marijana Vujović, Ministry of Interior Affairs - member;
- Sonja Perišić-Bigović, Office for the Prevention of Trafficking in Human Beings - member;
- Tamara Ivković, Ministry of Finance - member;
- Jelena Dragičević, Ministry of Justice - member;
- Senka Klikovac, Ministry of Health - member;
- Dobrila Popović, Ministry of Culture - member;
- Tamara Milić, Ministry of Education - member;



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- Slobodanka Doderović, Ministry of Defence - member;
- Milica Joksimović, Ministry for Human and Minority Rights - member;
- Lepa Žunić, representative from the NGO sector - member;
- Nataša Gospić, Institute for Social and Child Protection - member;
- Mensur Luković, representative of children - member.

The preparation of the Strategy for Exercising the Rights of the Child 2019-2023 was supported by the UNICEF Country Office, which hired Ms. Branka Pavlović as a consultant to provide expert and technical assistance to the Working Group.



All terms used in this document in the masculine gender refer equally to both masculine and feminine genders.

4 Strategy for the Development of the System of Social and Child Protection 2013-2017, available at: <http://www.mrs.gov.me/en/library/strategije?alphabet=lat>.

5 Strategy for the Development of the System of Social and Child Protection 2018 – 2022, available at: <http://www.mrs.gov.me/biblioteka/strategije>.

6 Strategy for the Prevention and Protection of Children from Violence 2017-2021, available at: <http://www.mrs.gov.me/biblioteka/strategije> (in Montenegrin).

7 Strategy for Early and Pre-school Education in Montenegro 2016-2020, available at: <https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/en/reports/strategy-early-and-preschool-education-montenegro-2016-2020>.

8 Montenegro Inclusive Education Strategy 2014-2018, available at: <http://www.mpin.gov.me/biblioteka/strategije> (in Montenegrin).

9 Montenegro Inclusive Education Strategy 2019-2025, available at: <https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/media/7876/file/MNE-media-MNEpublication312.pdf>.

10 Strategy for the Social Inclusion of Roma and Egyptians 2016-2020, available at: <http://www.minmanj.gov.me/en/library/strategije?alphabet=lat>.

11 Strategy for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities from Discrimination and the Promotion of Equality 2017-2021, available at: <http://www.minmanj.gov.me/en/library/strategije?alphabet=lat>.

12 Judicial Reform Strategy 2014-2018, available at: <http://www.pravda.gov.me/en/library/strategije?alphabet=lat>.

## 2 Current situation analysis



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### 2.1 General context for the preparation of the Strategy for Exercising the Rights of the Child 2019-2023

According to the 2011 Population Census, the total population of Montenegro was 620,029. Of this number, there were 306,236 men (49.4%) and 313,793 women (50.6%). The total number of children (up to the age of 18) was 145,126 or 23.4% of the total population (75,367 or 51.9% boys and 69,759 or 48.1% girls). According to MONSTAT estimates, the population in the country as of January 1, 2017 was 622,359. As per data from the TRANS-

MONEE database, there were 137,015 children in Montenegro in 2018 (or 22.1% of the total population) - 71,350 boys and 65,755 girls. The natural rate of increase in the country amounted to 1.4%. Montenegro belongs to the upper middle-income level countries. In 2017, the Montenegrin gross domestic product (GDP) was EUR 4,299 million, or EUR 6,354 per capita, and the real GDP growth rate was 4.7%.

Montenegro regained its independence in mid-2006, and it became the 192<sup>nd</sup> member of the United Nations that same year. It became the 47<sup>th</sup> member of the Council of Europe in 2007 and the 29<sup>th</sup> member of NATO in 2017. It is currently in the process of joining the European Union. It has the status of a candidate country, and the accession

negotiations officially began in June 2012. The state has signed and ratified many international conventions<sup>(13)</sup> that directly or indirectly refer to children, such as: *the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC), *the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW) and *the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (CRPD). Since then, the Government of Montenegro and national non-governmental organizations have been involved in the preparation of reports related to the implementation of these conventions and have submitted them to the relevant committees of the United Nations. As a UN member, Montenegro is also required to prepare a Universal Periodic Report (UPR). Over the last decade, Montenegro has made progress in creating legal and strategic preconditions<sup>(14)</sup> for the implementation of reforms aimed at ensuring that the rights of the child are exercised in accordance with the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* and the *EU Charter on Fundamental Rights*. In addition to improving domestic public policies and laws, the state also ratified the *Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Communication Procedure* in 2013.

The national strategic framework for children was defined in Montenegro in 2004 and has been implemented since then. The first *National Plan of Action for Children (NPAC 2004-2010)* was adopted in 2004, and the second one (NPAD 2013-2017) in

2013. In 2009, the Government of Montenegro constituted the Council for the Rights of the Child, as an inter-sector coordination body that monitors the fulfilment of the state's commitments arising from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and other international documents related to the rights of the child,<sup>(15)</sup> and NPAC. After the adoption of the NPAC of Montenegro 2013-2017, in 2013 the Council for the Rights of the Child was reappointed under the authority of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. The newly appointed Council involved representatives of three civil society organizations and one child in its work. In November 2018, at the meeting of the working group responsible for the preparation of the *Strategy for Exercising the Rights of the Child*, it was agreed to increase the number of children to at least two, one of whom would be an adolescent.

### 2.2 The rights of the child – current situation

The analysis of the current situation regarding the rights of the child was carried out by analysing documents and statistical data and by analysing the information gathered through a consultative process with interested parties, including children.

The key documents dedicated to the monitoring of the current situation with the rights of the child in Montenegro include:

- Analysis of the National Plan of Action for Children (NPAC) 2013-2017 (MLSW and UNICEF, 2018)<sup>(16)</sup>,

13 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (with the 1967 Protocol); 1954 Convention relating to the status of Stateless Persons; 1967 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness; International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; International Convention on the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Article 25); International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

14 An overview of the most relevant strategic and legal documents is given in Annex 1.

15 The Decision on the establishment of the Council for the Rights of the Child, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, 8 July 2017 (<http://www.mrs.gov.me/ministarstvo> - in Montenegrin).

16 Available at: [http://www.zsdzcg.me/images/dokumenta/Analiza%20Nacionalnog%20Plana%20akcija%202013-2017\\_MNE.pdf](http://www.zsdzcg.me/images/dokumenta/Analiza%20Nacionalnog%20Plana%20akcija%202013-2017_MNE.pdf) (in Montenegrin).

- Evaluation of the 2014-2017 Child Rights Monitoring System in Montenegro and Planned Approach to this topic for the period 2017-2021 (CORAM International and UNICEF, 2018) <sup>(17)</sup>,
- Alternative report of the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro concerning the second and the third periodic reports of Montenegro on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (2018) <sup>(18)</sup>,
- **Concluding observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on the combined second and third periodic reports of Montenegro** (UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, 22 June 2018) <sup>(19)</sup>,
- Follow-up information relating to the Concluding observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on the combined second and third periodic reports of Montenegro (Council for the Rights of the Child, 2018) <sup>(20)</sup>.

In addition to the abovementioned documents, this analysis also used the Alternative Report on the Implementation of the recommendations of the UN Committee

17 Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/en/reports/programme-informing-evaluation-child-rights-monitoring-system-montenegro>.

18 Available at: [https://www.ombudsman.co.me/Posebni\\_Izvestaji.html](https://www.ombudsman.co.me/Posebni_Izvestaji.html).

19 Available at: [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRC%2fC%2fMNE%2fCO%2f2-3&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRC%2fC%2fMNE%2fCO%2f2-3&Lang=en).

20 A document with this title is mentioned in the Platform for participation of the Montenegrin delegation in the 78th session of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on 18 May 2018 (see: [www.gov.me](http://www.gov.me)). Follow-up information is not available on the internet. However, the document is part of the MLSW documentation.

on the Rights of the Child (2010-2017) prepared by the NGO Centre for the Rights of the Child, as well as a number of other relevant national and international documents.

The consultative process was conducted through a series of individual and group interviews, group discussions, focus groups and electronic exchanges of information with the following stakeholders: children - NGO Union of Secondary School Students (40 participants in consultations), **Golden Councillors** <sup>(21)</sup> of the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro (nine participants) and children of primary school age <sup>(22)</sup> – participants in focus groups organized by the NGO Centre for the Rights of the Child of Montenegro (in total 45 participants in four focus groups); the Council for the Rights of the Child; the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms; the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare; the Institute for Social and Child Protection; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Institute for Public Health; MONSTAT- Statistical Office of Montenegro; the Professional service of the Supreme Prosecutor's Office of Montenegro; the Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms of the Parliament of Montenegro; the Working Group for the preparation of the **Strategy for Exercising the Rights of the Child 2019-2023**; the NGO Centre for the Rights of the Child of Montenegro, Podgorica; NGO Parents, Podgorica; the NGO Centre for Roma Initiatives, Nikšić and the UNICEF team in Montenegro.

21 Children - Golden Councillors - were selected based on a public call. The objective of the Network of Golden Councillors is to bring together children interested in participating in the work of the Protector. Golden Councillors communicate directly with the institutional representatives and participate in the protection scheme to enhance children's rights with their ideas, suggestions and attitudes. This network has 12 members aged between 11 and 17 from different cities.

22 The Children's Parliament of Mojkovac; the Children's Parliament of Njegos Primary School, Kotor; Children with Disabilities from 21st May Primary School, Podgorica; Roma and Egyptian Children from Božidar Vuković Podgoričanin Primary School, Podgorica.

## 2.2.1 Common recommendations of relevant documents concerning the situation with the rights of the child in Montenegro

An analysis of relevant documents - the NPAD 2013-2017, of the Evaluation of the 2014-2017 Child Rights Monitoring System in Montenegro and the Alternative report of the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro on the combined second and third periodic reports of Montenegro on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child - identified several common recommendations for exercising the rights of the child in the future and for monitoring the situation in that same field.

**The Concluding Observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on the combined version of both the second and third periodic reports of Montenegro** refer to a need for the state to implement all of the previous recommendations which have not been implemented or have not been sufficiently implemented and, in particular, that close attention should be paid to those relating to the coordination and allocation of resources and to those concerning children in street situations. Regarding future national documents designed to exercise the rights of the child, the Committee recommended the following: (a) To ensure that **any new document** encompasses **all areas covered by the Convention on the Rights of the Child** and for it to serve as a basis for the effective budgeting and monitoring of respective policies; (b) To **allocate sufficient human, technical and financial resources** for the implementation of any new document; (c) To establish **a mechanism that**

**ensures the implementation of regular monitoring.** All of the committee's recommendations were used as guidelines during the preparation of the **Strategy for Exercising the Rights of the Child 2019-2023**. In addition, this strategy also monitors the goals set by the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development by 2030 <sup>(23)</sup>, as well as the obligations of Montenegro in the process of European integration. The **Strategy for Realizing the Rights of the Child 2019-2023** is aligned with Montenegro's **Programme of Accession to the European Union 2019-2020** <sup>(24)</sup>, that is with the most important objectives of the European Union's social policy, as set out in Chapter 19, Social Policy and Employment <sup>(25)</sup>. Within the same chapter, the development and implementation of the Strategy for Exercising the Rights of the Child 2019-2023 is mentioned in the part relating to plans, needs and strategic framework in the field of Social Inclusion.

### 2.2.1.1 General measures for the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

#### Legislative and strategic measures.

Montenegro has intensified its efforts regarding harmonizing its internal

23 The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, available at: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/>.

24 Montenegro's Programme of Accession to the European Union 2019-2020, available at: <http://www.kei.gov.me/biblioteka/dokument> (in Montenegrin).

25 The most important goals of the European Union's social policy include achieving single and fair access to basic social services, improving social protection systems, high educational level of the workforce, high employment rate with special care for groups that are less present in the labour market, achieving safe and sustainable income and decent working conditions for both men and women.

Common recommendations for exercising the rights of the child and monitoring of the status

Area	Recommendations
Council for the Rights of the Child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Consider the possibility of reforming the institutional structure of the Council for the Rights of the Child</li> <li>» Set up a model of consultations with children on topics addressed by the Council</li> <li>» Provide the financial resources to implement the work plan of the Council for the Rights of the Child</li> </ul>
Data on children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Strengthen one single national system for the continuous collection of data on children's rights (disaggregated data) and for enabling data sharing</li> </ul>
Consultative process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Establish clear procedures to inform, consult and actively involve stakeholders in decision-making and in preparing a new strategic document for exercising the rights of the child (NGOs dealing with vulnerable groups of children, children's perspective in the consultative process)</li> </ul>
Exercising the rights of the child in practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Shift the focus from legislative and strategic frameworks for exercising the rights of the child to the improvement of its implementation in practice</li> <li>» Ensure equal access for vulnerable groups of children to enable them to exercise their rights (children with disabilities, children Roma and Egyptians, children victims of the sale of children, children in street situations and children living in extreme poverty, etc.)</li> </ul>
Monitor the exercise of the rights of the child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Establish a modern and concise system for monitoring the rights of the child and ensure inter- sector coordination when exercising children's rights and situation monitoring</li> </ul>
Raise public awareness and enhance the competences of professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Raise awareness of both the lay and professional public on several topics (discrimination, violence, sexual exploitation, forced marriages, child labour, deinstitutionalization, etc.)</li> <li>» Conduct general and specialized training sessions in the field of children's rights for professionals who work for and with children, including the training of trainers</li> </ul>
Financial framework for exercising the rights of the child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Allocate appropriate human, technical and financial resources for exercising the rights of the child and for situation monitoring</li> <li>» Provide strategies for a transition from international, donor- based sources of financing to local and national financing</li> </ul>
Participation of the civil sector in exercising the rights of the child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Increase the scope of services provided by NGOs in the area of children's rights and also improve the quality of those services</li> </ul>

legislation with international standards and has adopted several documents since 2010. Important system laws have been adopted, and other laws that directly or indirectly affect the exercise of the rights of the child have been amended.

- **The Law on the Treatment of Juveniles in Criminal Proceedings<sup>(26)</sup>** guarantees a higher level of protection for children in criminal law and also improves their position in criminal proceedings, inter alia by introducing professional offices (in two higher courts and in the Supreme State Prosecutor's Office).
- The amended **Criminal Code<sup>(27)</sup>** criminalizes all forms of torture and other forms of inhuman and degrading treatment and punishment of children, and in particular the sale of children for sexual exploitation, child pornography and also any customary marriage involving a child.
- New provisions in the **Law on Social and Child Protection<sup>(28)</sup>** enable the availability of services to all children and their families (with an emphasis on the development of alternative forms of protection for children without parental care and also to include a broad system of support for children with disabilities).

- The most important novelties in the amended **Family Law<sup>(29)</sup>** include: securing the general interest of the child both operationally and in concrete terms; the introduction of support persons; a definition of the child that is compatible with the definition in the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child** and the introduction of an explicit prohibition of the corporal punishment of children.
- **The Law on Prohibition of Discrimination<sup>(30)</sup>** prohibits discrimination against a child on any grounds.
- **The Law on Prohibition of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities<sup>(31)</sup>** includes the prohibition of all known and possible grounds as well as forms of discrimination against children with disabilities within the family, in education and in the field of social and child protection, sports, recreation and leisure activities.
- In the health sector, the relevant laws relating to the health care of children include the **Law on Healthcare<sup>(32)</sup>**, the **Law on Health Insurance<sup>(33)</sup>** and the **Law on the Protection of Patients<sup>(34)</sup>**, all of which prescribe equal rights to health care for all groups of children.

29 Family Law, Official Gazette of Montenegro no 1/07, 53/16.

30 Law on Prohibition of Discrimination, Official Gazette of Montenegro no 46/10. 40/11 – oth.law, 18/14. 42/17.

26 The Law on Treatment of Juveniles in Criminal Proceedings, Official Gazette of Montenegro no. 64/11 and 1/18.

31 Law on Prohibition of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities, Official Gazette of Montenegro no 35/15 & 44/15 - corr.

27 Criminal Code of Montenegro, Official Gazette of the RoM no 70/03, 13/04, 47/06; Official Gazette of Montenegro no 40/08, 25/10, 32/11, 64/11 – oth.law, 40/13, 56/13, 14/15, 42/15, 58/15 – oth.law and 44/17.

32 Law on Healthcare, Official Gazette of Montenegro no 03/16, 39/16, 02/17 and 44/18.

33 Law on Health Insurance, Official Gazette no. 06/16, 02/17, 22/17 i13/18.

28 Law on Social and Child Protection, Official Gazette of Montenegro no 27/13, 1/15, 42/15, 47/15, 56/16, 66/16, 1/17, 31/17 – Decision of the CC 42/17, 50/17

34 Law on Protection of Patients, Official Gazette of Montenegro no 40/10.



- The *Law Ratifying the Third Optional Protocol on Communication Procedures to the Convention on the Rights of the Child* (2013) provides direct access to justice for children from Montenegro at an international level, i.e. before the UN Committee for the Rights of the Child, through a newly adopted appeals procedure.<sup>(35)</sup>
- *The National Strategy for the Sustainable Development of Montenegro by 2030*<sup>(36)</sup>, as a comprehensive document, deals with various aspects of sustainable development and pays special attention to the development of children, through strategic goals related to the improvement of maternal and neonatal health care, the provision of an inclusive and quality education, the provision of conditions conducive to the healthy development of an individual within his/her family and the elimination of discrimination on any grounds.

Although each strategy provides an important and individual contribution to some aspect concerning the rights of the child, there is still insufficient data regarding coordination and implementation. Montenegro does not have one piece of legislation that covers all of the issues concerning the specific rights of the child along with the status of those rights in an internal legal order. One of the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child is that the state should adopt a comprehensive law on children. Although

35 There is an option on the Ministry of Justice website, under the section the Rights of the Child, for children to write to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child - a link has been set up to send a complaint via email, with detailed instructions on how and in which situations children can write to the Committee.

36 Available at: <http://www.mrt.gov.me/en/library/strategije>.

this extremely important recommendation was considered by various departments, it was concluded that the conditions needed to adopt that law and to ensure its implementation were still not in place. However, it has been recognized that the necessary human and financial preconditions required for the development, adoption and implementation of the law on children should be introduced as soon as possible.

#### KEY CHALLENGES<sup>(37)</sup>

- The current laws on the rights of the child are neither efficient nor adequately coordinated due to the fact that the human, technical and financial resources allocated for their implementation are insufficient.
- When laws and secondary legislation are adopted, their impact on the rights of the child is not assessed.

**Coordination and management of public policies.** Following the Government's Conclusion, no 06-486/2 of 14 March 2013, advisory bodies are no longer set up by the Government, but responsibility has been given to line ministries. As already mentioned, in 2013 the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW) adopted a decision

37 The challenges have been formulated based on the Concluding observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on the combined the second and third periodic reports of Montenegro and the Alternative report of the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro concerning the second and third periodic reports of Montenegro on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

establishing the Council for the Rights of the Child (CRC).<sup>(38)</sup> Members of the CRC and representatives of the Social Welfare Directorate believe that the changes in the organization of the MLSW and the formation of the Department for Children and Youth within the Directorate will result in better coordination. The council includes decision-makers and experts in specific areas from ministries and NGOs, as well as representative(s) of children. According to the opinion of council members, this has enabled the adoption of constructive proposals regarding the rights of the child.

#### KEY CHALLENGES

- The council's work is not visible enough.
- A lack of necessary financial and technical resources for the implementation of planned activities.

#### ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN - KEY CHALLENGES

- There is no accurate data on funds allocated for exercising the rights of the child, as there is no one uniform way

38 The council includes representatives of authorities and organizations that can provide a significant contribution to the improvement of the position of children. They include: representatives from the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, the Ministry of Culture, NGOs dealing with children and some child representatives.

of reporting data on specific allocations for children<sup>(39)</sup>.

- Sufficient budget allocations in all areas have not been guaranteed so far, particularly in relation to health, education, social care and child protection.
- The budget lines for vulnerable groups of children (children with disabilities, Roma and Egyptian children, child asylum seekers, children of foreigners asking for international protection, children not registered in the birth or citizens register, etc.) are not clearly defined.

**Data collection.** The competent state authorities have worked on establishing individual data collection systems and databases related to the exercise of specific children's rights. The *Social Welfare Information System* (SWIS) and the *Montenegrin Education Information System* (MEIS) can be cited as successful examples of such systems. The public health sector is developing a single information system, as well as establishing links with

39 This challenge should also be addressed by fully introducing the programme budget. Preparations for the introduction of a programme budget in Montenegro have been carried out since 2004, and in 2008 the Decision on the method of developing and on the content of the programme budget (Official Gazette of Montenegro No 38/08) was adopted. The Public Finance Management Programme 2016-2020 includes the development, among other things, of a detailed work plan 2018-2019 with an action plan and guidelines/manual for the implementation of the programme's budget ([www.gov.me.ResourceManager/](http://www.gov.me.ResourceManager/)). This means that a uniform presentation of data on special allocations for children, by programmes and projects related to them, can be expected during the implementation of the Strategy for Exercising the Rights of the Child 2019-2023.

the Montenegrin Health Insurance Fund and the Institute for Public Health. In order to establish an accessible systematic mechanism for collecting and analysing data relevant for exploring the position of children in judicial proceedings, the project *Access to Justice for Children in the Western Balkan Countries* has been launched. It is implemented by the Ministry of Justice, with support from the UNICEF Office in Montenegro. One of the project goals is to set up a new judicial information system - JIS.

MONSTAT runs the TRANSMONEE database on children, which contains numerous indicators on children from various domains in one place (demography, education, social and child protection, health, justice, etc.)

## KEY CHALLENGES

- ▶ There is no single, harmonized system for the comprehensive collection of data on children to enable data exchange and analysis, impact assessment of different public policies on children, etc.
- ▶ There is no regular collection and analysis of disaggregated data covering all areas of the convention and its optional protocols.
- ▶ MONSTAT publishes data on the total number of children

aged 0 to 17<sup>(40)</sup>, but a special request has to be sent for data on children segregated by sex and age groups.

**Independent monitoring.** Within the organization of the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro, there is one department that deals with children's rights, youth rights and social care. This is managed by the Deputy Protector. The status of children's rights is reported within the annual report on the work of the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms (separate chapter), which is discussed in the Parliament of Montenegro. From 2013 until today, special reports - *Abuse of Children via the Internet (2013)*, *Report on the results of conducted surveys on the protection of children from exploitation (2013)* and *Treatment of Children by the Police (2014)* have also been prepared and discussed in the Parliament of Montenegro. The Network of Golden Counsellors was established in 2014, in order to implement the concept of children participating in the Protector's work. In order to facilitate direct communication with children, a Facebook group *Children, write to the Ombudsman* was set up, a blog was launched, and a *Brave Mailbox* was set up on the institution's website, through which children can also write anonymously. In 2016, The Protector completed the procedure for accreditation by the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) and it was awarded "B" status.

40 In statistics-related terminology, children aged 0 to 17 are children that are newly born and up to the age of 17 and 364 days, i.e. the age of majority. The aforementioned TRANSMONEE database includes data on children by their year of birth and sex, for each calendar year from 2005.

## KEY CHALLENGES

- ▶ An independent impact assessment of policies and practices related to exercising the rights of the child in Montenegro is underdeveloped.
- ▶ The Law on the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms<sup>(41)</sup> does not adequately or explicitly define the responsibilities of the Deputy Protector in charge of the rights of the child nor those of the Department for the Rights of the Child.

**Dissemination, awareness raising and training.** In Montenegrin schools, the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* is taught within the subject called Learning about Society in the 4<sup>th</sup> year and within *Civic Education*, an elective course which covers different age groups (primary school pupils/secondary school students), but has a limited impact as it is limited only to those children who choose it as a mandatory subject. Additionally, children have the opportunity to learn about their rights through other school subjects within the field of social sciences, as well as through special events, starting from pre-school education. Schools also have a legal obligation to form children's parliaments (primary schools) and students' communities (secondary schools) as models of student participation.

41 The Law on the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro, Official Gazette of Montenegro No 42/11 and 32/14.

Since 2012 the Parliament of Montenegro has organized a civic education programme entitled the *Barbara Pramer Democratic Workshops*, with the aim of strengthening the relationship between the Parliament and children. The Human Rights and Freedoms Committee of the Montenegrin Parliament conducts periodic consultative hearings of the representatives of line ministries in the Government and other institutions regarding the exercising of the rights of the child. One such hearing, during which the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and recommendations from the *Report on Evaluation of the 2014-2017 Child Rights Monitoring System in Montenegro* were discussed, was held in early December 2018. In order to inform and raise the awareness of the public, the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro conducts regular activities related to the promotion of the rights of the child: thematic conferences, round tables, panel discussions, educational and promotional workshops. Special attention is paid to inform and raise children's awareness about their rights<sup>(42)</sup>. International organizations, in cooperation with the Government of Montenegro and non-governmental organizations, have also implemented a series of campaigns and promotions.

Specialized institutions in Montenegro train employees from the state authorities: the Human Resources Management Authority (provides training for employees in state administration and in local self-government bodies); the Judicial Training Centre; the Institute for Social and Child Protection (provides training for professionals employed in institutions regarding social and child protection) and the Bureau for Education Services (provides training for employees in the education system). There is no data on

42 In addition to the Facebook group *Children, write to the Ombudsman* and the *Blog*, a comic book *Trouble with Roki* should be mentioned.

the training of public-sector employees on the topic of children's rights.

### KEY CHALLENGES

- ▶ There are no planned or continuous activities on the rights of the child which target children, professionals, the general public or advocates of the children's rights. Nor is there any exchange of views regarding the rights of the child with the community and with parents.
- ▶ A system of accreditation for training programmes in the field of children's rights has not been established. Adequate and systematic training on the rights of the child for professional groups that work with and for children, for members of parliament and for media professionals, etc. is not provided.

**Cooperation with civil society.** Progress has been made in improving the legal and institutional framework for cooperation between the Government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Better cooperation between all state institutions and NGOs with regard to participation in drafting laws and strategic documents is noticeable, as representatives of NGOs are appointed into working groups responsible for drafting the relevant documents,

and as NGOs act on previously published public calls for participation. In June 2017, amendments to the *Law on Non-Governmental Organizations*<sup>(43)</sup> were adopted with the aim of achieving a more effective public-funding system for NGOs. The law guaranteed that a minimum percentage of the annual state budget should be allocated to NGO projects and also introduced new standards and procedures for financing NGOs from public funds. A good example of cooperation between the public and civil sector is the presence of civil sector members among the number of licensed providers from social and child protection services. The practice of the institution of the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms is to cooperate with NGOs in promoting the rights of the child and also in providing education on these rights. This is clearly evident in the Protector's annual reports<sup>(44)</sup>.

### KEY CHALLENGES

- ▶ Cooperation with the civil society/NGOs is not adequately implemented, nor is the monitoring and evaluation of policies, plans and programmes related to the convention and to the promotion of the rights of the child.
- ▶ There is no publicly funded quality model for monitoring the achievements of NGO projects.

43 The Law on Non-Governmental Organizations, Official Gazette of Montenegro No 39/11 and 37/17.

44 See [https://www.ombudsman.co.me/lzvještaji\\_Zaštivnika.html](https://www.ombudsman.co.me/lzvještaji_Zaštivnika.html) (in Montenegrin).

### 2.2.1.2 Definition of the child

Within the Montenegrin legal system, only the *Law on Social and Child Protection*<sup>(45)</sup> and the *Law amending the Family Law*<sup>(46)</sup> explicitly define the concept of a child in accordance with the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*: a child is a human being below the age of 18 years. In the *Criminal Code of Montenegro*<sup>(47)</sup>, the *Criminal Procedure Code*<sup>(48)</sup> and the *Law on the Treatment of Juveniles in Criminal Proceedings*<sup>(49)</sup> the term *child* applies only to a person up to 14 years old who is deemed criminally non-labile. The term *juvenile* is used for persons aged 14 to 18. A younger juvenile is a person aged 14 and not yet 16; an older juvenile is a person aged 16 not yet 18. Unlike children, juveniles are criminally liable persons.

As regards marriage before the legal age (below the age of 18), the *Family Law*<sup>(50)</sup> in Article 24 prescribes that a person who is not 18 years old cannot enter into marriage. Exceptionally, the court may allow a child older than 16 years to enter a marriage, in accordance with the special law (*Law on*

*Out-of-Court Proceedings*<sup>(51)</sup>), if it deems it is justified. One of such cases is when the persons are older than 16 and they already have a child/children, and they are allowed to get married in order to ensure that they are able to exercise their parental rights.

### KEY CHALLENGES

- ▶ The term child is not defined in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in laws governing criminal liability and procedure.
- ▶ The national legislation includes exceptions that refer to possible marriage before the age of majority, from the age of 16.

### 2.2.1.3 General principles

**Non-discrimination.** In the opinion of the children who participated in the consultations, discrimination against children is present and it is manifested at different levels: inequality among children- some children have special treatment, and this should not be the case; inequality in school - assessment of not only knowledge, but also of financial and social status; national divisions; discrimination on social or finan-

45 Law on Social and Child Protection, Official Gazette of Montenegro no 27/13, 1/15, 42/15, 47/15, 56/16, 66/16, 1/17, 31/17 – Decision of the CC 42/17 and 50/17.

46 Law Amending the Family Law, Official Gazette of Montenegro no 053/16.

47 Criminal Code of Montenegro, Official Gazette of Montenegro no 58/15

48 Criminal procedure Code, Official Gazette of Montenegro no 2/15.

49 Law on Treatment of Juveniles in Criminal Proceedings, Official Gazette of Montenegro 64/11 and 1/18.

50 Family Law, Official Gazette of Montenegro no 1/07, 53/16.

51 Law on Out-of-Court Proceedings, Official Gazette of the RoM no 27/06 and Official Gazette of Montenegro no 20/15.

cial grounds; discrimination on religious grounds; disrespect for diversity and contempt of *different* ones (poor children, children with disabilities, Roma and Egyptian children, children who are "super" students, children who are "bad" students, etc.); avoiding a friend for some reason; homophobic behaviour, etc.

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*We are often portrayed as bad, when something bad happens at school they immediately blame us, when we are with other children they isolate us because of the colour of our skin, our religion, because we are poor.*

A Roma child, participant in the focus group

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*Some children need a lot of luck to enrol at school, some do not go to school at all, they go to the day-care centre.*

*Some people do not accept us, and some do.*

*It happens that they laugh at the children with disabilities, they mock them.*

Children with disabilities, participants of the focus group

*The Constitution of Montenegro* prohibits any direct or indirect discrimination on any grounds, and also lays down the principle of affirmative action aimed at creating conditions for achieving overall equality and the protection of persons who are in an unequal position on any grounds. The right to non-discrimination is also protected by special laws: *Law on Prohibition of Discrimination*<sup>(52)</sup>, *Law on Gender Equality*<sup>(53)</sup>, *Law on Prohibition of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities*<sup>(54)</sup>, *Criminal Code*<sup>(55)</sup>, *General Law on Education*<sup>(56)</sup> and special laws in the field of education. Given that the act of causing discrimination on any grounds entails criminal liability, the state authorities are required to eliminate the current weaknesses in enforcing the laws and fully comply with the principle of non-discrimination. Special attention should be paid to the full protection of vulnerable groups, such as Roma and Egyptian children (especially girls from this community), children with disabilities and other children who are for some reason different from the majority, and who are therefore at risk from discrimination in our, and in any other, society.

Statistics show that 100 girls are born per 110 boys<sup>(57)</sup> in Montenegro, while the nat-

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- 52 Law on Prohibition of Discrimination, Official Gazette of Montenegro 46/10, 40/11 – oth. Law, 18/14 and 42/17
- 53 Law on Gender Equality (Official Gazette of Montenegro 46/07, 73/10, 40/11, 35/15).
- 54 Law on Prohibition of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (Official Gazette of Montenegro no 35/15, 44/15).
- 55 Criminal Code of Montenegro (Official Gazette of Montenegro 58/15).
- 56 General Law on Education, Official Gazette of the RoM no 64/02, 31/05 and 49/07; Official Gazette of Montenegro no 4/08 – oth. law 21/09 – oth. law, 45/11, 26/13 – Decision of the CC, 39/13, 44/13 – corr, 47/17).
- 57 Official MONSTAT data based on 2011 population census.

ural average is 100 to 102-104. According to data from the Council of Europe, Montenegro belongs to the four or five countries with the highest prevalence of male compared to female new-borns. There is some suspicion that sex-selective abortions<sup>(58)</sup> also contribute to this. They are mainly performed in private clinics and infirmaries outside Montenegro. Data from private healthcare institutions is not included in the public healthcare database. Therefore, the abovementioned suspicion cannot be verified. However, according to MONTSAT data, this ratio between the number of female and male new-borns has been present in Montenegro from the 1960s, and this demographic indicator has been monitored since then. However, at that time no reliable methods were available to identify the sex of a future new-born and to possibly opt for abortion based on that.

#### KEY CHALLENGES

- ▶ The presence of negative attitudes and discrimination against particularly vulnerable groups of children (Roma and Egyptian children, children with disabilities, etc.)

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- 58 The Law on the Conditions and Procedure for Terminating Pregnancy, Official Gazette of Montenegro no 53/09 prescribes the possibility of terminating pregnancy for both non-medical and medical reasons. The termination of a pregnancy for non-medical reasons can be performed only up to 10 weeks of pregnancy and is performed on the basis of a written request from the pregnant woman along with the approval of a doctor specializing in gynaecology. The Law on Protection of Genetic Data prescribes that the genetic testing of a foetus can only be performed for medical reasons and must be supported by the opinion of a doctor specializing in clinical genetics. The Law on Infertility Treatment prescribes that a reproductive cell cannot be specifically selected for fertilization, but that the selection must be spontaneous.

- ▶ A lack of public awareness-raising activities on the need to prevent discrimination on any grounds (campaigns, education programmes, etc.).
- ▶ Full implementation of relevant existing anti-discrimination laws is not ensured, including the proper sanctioning of perpetrators.

**The best interest of the child.** It is obvious that progress has been made in integrating the concept of *the child's best interest* in domestic legislation. Positive examples of this are the amendments to the *Family Law*<sup>(59)</sup> which relate to the actions of the court in cases involving children. By taking into consideration all of the circumstances and justified interests of all parties in the proceedings, the court primarily takes care that the decision it makes contributes to the best interest of the child. Amendments to the law also govern actions of the court if its decision is different from the child's opinion. In such cases, the rationale must include reasons why the child's opinion is not respected. However, there are still many challenges regarding the identification and interpretation of the best interests of the child.

#### KEY CHALLENGES

- ▶ The best interest of the child is not interpreted

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- 59 Law amending the Family Law, Official Gazette of Montenegro 53/16.

consistently and is not fully applied in all administrative procedures and court proceedings, nor in all policies, programmes and projects that affect children.

- There are no developed guidelines to determine the best interests of the child in each area.
- Continuous training is required, for professional staff who participate in procedures involving children, on the development needs of children and on the application of the principle of the best interest of the child.

**Respecting the child's opinion.** The children participating in consultations believe that adults - primarily teachers and parents - do not respect their opinion, and that the competent institutions are not sufficiently interested in their needs.

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*When we say something, adults think we are too immature to deal with some issues and therefore do not respect our opinions. Children are never taken seriously, even when they have a problem.*

Secondary school students, participants in consultations

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*We are glad that you are taking part in drafting the Strategy on Children. And that today we can say what we think and that no one is judging our answers ...*

*Even when they (the adults) ask us, most often it is just a formality, they rarely listen to us.*

Primary school pupils, focus group participants

The secondary school students offered the following reasons why only a small number of children actively participated in various activities in which they could express their opinions, realize their interests and exercise their rights: children's lack of information, a lack of social incentives (from schools, teachers and parents) and a lack of time and interest by children themselves.

Respecting children's attitudes is one of the key principles that is incorporated in to many laws. The **Law on Social and Child Protection** <sup>(60)</sup> prescribes an obligation to inform the child about anything that is important to determine his/her needs and to exercise his/her rights, with special emphasis on the involvement of the child, the selection and use of entitlements and the availability of social services and child protection measures. **Amendments to the**

60 Law on Social and Child Protection (Official Gazette of Montenegro no 27/13, 1/15, 42/15, 56/16,66/16, 1/17, 31/17 – decision of the CC, 42/17 and 50/17).

**Family Law** (2016) <sup>(61)</sup> prescribe that the court is obliged to allow a child to express his/her opinion if the child wishes to do so. They also prescribe that the child's opinion may be delivered to a court either by a supporting person or by a guardian authority. According to the **Law on Treatment of Juveniles in Criminal Proceedings** <sup>(62)</sup> (Article 4, paragraph 6), the child (juvenile) has the right to be informed about different possibilities to present his/her defence, in a manner he/she considers best for him/her and to choose a defence counsel he/she believes would best protect his/her interests. The child's opinion is also respected when the prosecutor imposes an alternative measure, because such a measure cannot be ordered without the child's explicit consent. Positive examples of respecting children's rights to express their opinions include sessions in the Parliament of Montenegro and in the municipal assemblies of some cities, in which children do participate. The reform process in the education system has led to the legal definition of **children's parliaments** in primary schools and **students' communities** in secondary schools. Unfortunately, there are still some examples that show that the role of these parliaments and communities is merely a perfunctory fulfilment of a legal obligation.

#### ▫ KEY CHALLENGES

- The consistent application of new solutions prescribed by the Amendments to the Family Law (2016) needs to be ensured.

61 Law amending the Family Law, Official Gazette of Montenegro no 53/16.

62 Law on Treatment of Juveniles in Criminal Proceedings, Official Gazette of Montenegro. 64/11 i 1/18.

- Existing mechanisms, such as children's parliaments, do not guarantee the significant or effective participation of a child in matters of concern to him/her.
- There is no obligation for the competent authorities and institutions to organize consultation processes with children when making decisions, policies and programmes that concern them.

### 2.2.1.4 Civil rights and freedoms

**Registration of birth.** The **Law Amending the Law on Out-of-Court Proceedings** <sup>(63)</sup> (2015) prescribes a procedure that determines the time and place of birth of persons not registered in the birth register, as well as for children born outside health institutions. This procedure is applied when the time and place of a birth cannot be determined in accordance with the law governing the keeping of birth registers. It is a duty of all maternity wards in the public health sector to report the birth of every child, including children born by a mother with the status of refugee, displaced or internally displaced person, as well as children abandoned by their mothers or children whose mothers do not have IDs, to the competent authorities responsible for keeping birth records. However, there are

63 Law Amending the Law on Out-of-Court Proceedings, Official Gazette of Montenegro no 20/15.

still a small number of cases, in practice, that some children - Roma and Egyptian children, children abandoned after birth and children whose mothers do not have IDs - face difficulties in having their birth registered.

## KEY CHALLENGES

- The birth registration of **every** child needs to be ensured.

**Freedom of thought and religion.** The institution of the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms monitors the situation in this area, including the child's right to the freedom of thought and religion, as laid down by the law.<sup>(64)</sup> According to data from the annual reports on the work of the Protector<sup>(65)</sup>, there were no complaints filed to the Protector for the violation of this right during the past four years (2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018).

### 2.2.1.5 Violence against children

**Violence against children.** According to the available data, children of all ages think that various forms of violence are rather common and a large number of children are accustomed to it. Children experience verbal abuse (being put down, insulted) by adults, especially by teachers, but also

64 The Law on the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms, Official Gazette of Montenegro no 42/11 and 32/14.

65 See at: [www.ombudsman.co.me/lzvještaji\\_Zaštitnika.html](http://www.ombudsman.co.me/lzvještaji_Zaštitnika.html).

by their peers. Physical violence is also reported as common practice among peers. Research data shows that peer violence is present in schools, especially in those with a larger number of students.<sup>(66)</sup> In addition, secondary school students identified out the problem of digital violence.<sup>(67)</sup>

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*I think that people are not aware of the extent to which peer violence affects the mental health and normal development of children. Some are encouraged to respond to such violence with more violence, and some make walls around themselves, creating a form of barrier for everyone who approaches them.*

A secondary school student, participant in consultations

66 According to the data from a survey conducted in 2018 within the larger project Coalition Against Peer Violence in Montenegrin Schools (Association Parents, NGO Juventas, Union of Secondary School Students and Centre for Support to Local and Regional Development - CeP, with support from the EU), about a quarter of primary and secondary school students experienced some kind of peer violence during the month preceding the survey. More detailed information is available at <https://www.roditelji.me/blog/tag/koalicija-protiv-vrsnjackog-nasilja-u-crnogorskim-skolama/> (in Montenegrin).

67 Digital violence is conducted electronically, with an attack on a user via the Internet, i.e. Facebook, Twitter and other social networks, via chat or email communication, with unsolicited videos recorded on mobile phones and subsequent blackmail using the recording, or by the public release of the video. (Adapted from: <https://kompjuteraskom/digitalno-nasilje-sta-znate-o-njemu/> in Serbian.)

The 2013 survey data<sup>(68)</sup> indicates a high level of tolerance towards violence against children - about a half of all respondents believed that there were situations in which it was justified to beat a child. Citizens are mostly aware of the prevalence of peer violence, while there is very low awareness of the presence of sexual violence against children. According to this survey, 69% of children in Montenegro aged 1 to 14 were exposed to some kind of a violent disciplinary method in the month preceding the survey, which includes psychological, physical and severe physical punishment. According to the data obtained directly from the UNICEF Country Office, a 2012 survey of negative experiences in childhood, conducted among students aged 18-25, showed that most students had experienced emotional abuse (30.4%), and emotional neglect (27%) - 24.3% of respondents had experienced physical violence, and 3.9% sexual abuse. As for dysfunctional families, being present during the scenes of domestic violence involving the mother as the victim was the most frequent response (24%), followed by alcohol abuse scenes (11.9%). The WHO Survey on the Prevalence and Risk of Violence against Children, published in July 2012<sup>(69)</sup>, indicated that children with disabilities were at a 3.7 times higher risk of any kind of violence than children without disabilities. The survey conducted in May and June 2016<sup>(70)</sup> showed that every second child in Montenegro (45%) does not feel

68 The 2013 Survey on Violence against Children was conducted by Ipsos on a sample of 1,000 respondents aged 18 and older. Survey data was taken from the Strategy for Prevention and Protection of Children from Violence 2017-2021. (Available at: <http://www.mrs.gov.me/biblioteka/strategije> in Montenegrin.)

69 These surveys have not been conducted in Montenegro.

70 The study followed the methodology developed by the London School of Economics and Political Science and the UNICEF's Research Office – Innocenti. Available at: <https://wcmprod.unicef.org/montenegro/en/reports/key-findings-research-children-and-internet-montenegro-2016>.

safe on the Internet, and that most children experience peer violence on the Internet.

In June 2016, the Government of Montenegro and UNICEF launched the campaign **End Violence Online**, which later evolved into a campaign against all forms of violence against children, with emphasis on domestic violence. Within the campaign against online violence, UNICEF supported the capacity building of a Unit for Combating High Tech Crime, officially run by the police, to investigate and prosecute online violence. With the aim of raising the awareness of both children and parents, the Ministry of Education, with support from UNICEF, developed the **NET friends** application and web site<sup>(71)</sup>, for children aged 9 to 11. This teaches them how to behave on the Internet and who to contact in the event of something unpleasant happening online. The campaign phase focused on protection against domestic violence and included: a large national conference and public hearings on relations between parents and children. It was organized in 22 municipalities and included street performances and exhibitions, TV videos, billboards all over Montenegro and advertisements on social networks. The campaign aimed to support parents in applying best practices in parenting and included an advisory telephone line for parents managed by NGO Parents.

Table 1 shows data from the Institute for Social and Child Protection for 2018 on violence against children.

Protection against domestic violence, protection measures, procedures for determining protection measures and other matters of importance for protection against this type of violence are governed by the **Law**

71 Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/en/campaigns-advocacy-and-communications>.

Table 1: Reports of violence against children in 2018

	Number of reports to social work centres	Number of reports to multidisciplinary teams for protection from domestic violence and violence against children	TOTAL
Violence against children in the family	439	73	512
Total number of reports of violence against children	501	76	577

on *Protection from Domestic Violence*.<sup>(72)</sup> The *Criminal Code of Montenegro*<sup>(73)</sup> defines *domestic violence* or *family community violence*<sup>(74)</sup> as a criminal offence. For the purpose of taking a strategic approach to the protection of children against violence, Montenegro adopted its first *Strategy for the Prevention and Protection of Children against Violence 2017-2021*<sup>(75)</sup>, as well the *Strategy for the Protection against Domestic Violence 2016-2020*<sup>(76)</sup>.

72 Law on Protection against Domestic Violence Official Gazette of Montenegro no. 46/10. This law is not fully harmonized with the Council of Europe's Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, including children. The law provides a different definition of family from the one in the Convention. The definition of domestic violence is narrower than the one in the Convention and for that particular reason amendments to the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence are being drafted.

73 Criminal Code of Montenegro, Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro no. 70/03, 13/04, 47/06; Official Gazette of Montenegro no. 40/08, 25/10, 32/11, 64/11 – oth. law, 40/13, 56/13, 14/15, 42/15, 58/15 - oth. law and 44/17.

74 More on the Criminal Code can be found in section 2.2.1.1. (General measures for the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, section: Legislation and strategic measures).

75 Strategy for the Prevention and Protection of Children against Violence 2017–2021 (Available at: <http://www.mrs.gov.me/biblioteka/strategije> - in Montenegrin).

76 Strategy for the Protection against Domestic Violence 2016–2020 (Available at: <http://www.mrs.gov.me/biblioteka/strategije> - in Montenegrin.)

The Bureau for Education Services has collected data over the past two years on the number of cases of violence in schools and the professional measures taken. During that period, there were 133 cases of violence recorded in primary schools and 47 cases in secondary schools. Most cases of violence were addressed by the schools themselves, but in 38 cases (in total) they turned to other competent institutions for help.

Every year, the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights organizes educational programmes regarding the issue of violence against children (including the topic of arranged child marriages) and domestic violence. These educational programmes are intended for children, parents, representatives from civil society and state institutions, and are organized in all towns which have significant Roma and Egyptian populations. Educational programmes of this kind are also offered by NGOs, relevant system institutions, NGOs, resource centres and day-care centres, many of which are supported by UNICEF, and have developed a clear mechanism for identification and action in the case of any form of violence against children with disabilities. Similar procedures have also been adopted by the PI Children's Home "Mladost". The Ministry of Health is in the process of finalizing protocol for healthcare workers to ensure the prevention of violence



against children and adolescents, and the response to it.

When it comes to support for victims, there are two shelters for women and for child victims of violence in Montenegro. Both have been founded and are run by non-governmental organizations: the Safe Women's House in Podgorica (since 1999) and the SOS Phone Line for Women and Children Victims of Violence in Nikšić (since 2009). These NGOs are licensed providers of shelter services. In late 2008, the local government in Bijelo Polje also set up a

support centre for children and families, which is currently the only centre of its kind in Montenegro. This centre is open to victims of domestic violence, although this is not its primary purpose. In February 2018, the Crisis Centre for victims of domestic violence was opened within the Centre for Social Work (CSW) in Herceg Novi. The CSW in Kotor will also soon have its own crisis centre and its premises have already been refurbished for that purpose.

KEY CHALLENGES

- ▶ There is high prevalence and tolerance of violence against children and a very low level of reporting of such violence to competent authorities.
- ▶ There is a general lack of understanding of what constitutes violence against children. Professionals have limited ability to identify and deal with such cases of violence.
- ▶ There is a lack of primary and secondary prevention of violence and currently they include efforts to raise awareness about this problem, education and support services in all municipalities.
- ▶ Investigation and criminal prosecution rates are low and sanctions are lenient.

**Corporal punishment.** *The Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey - MICS<sup>(77)</sup> for Montenegro and Roma settlements* (2014) showed that 31% of children aged 1 to 14 were disciplined with some kind of corporal punishment in the month preceding the survey. Other studies pointed to a high degree of tolerance regarding corporal punishment as an upbringing method both in the family environment and at school. It

77 The survey was conducted by MONSTAT with support from UNICEF Montenegro Office. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/en/reports/montenegro-multiple-indicator-cluster-survey-2013>

is very important that the *Law Amending the Family Law<sup>(78)</sup>* introduced the explicit prohibition of the corporal punishment of children.<sup>(79)</sup> This prohibition applies to parents, guardians and all other persons who take care of children or come into contact with children. One segment of the previously mentioned campaign, *End Violence Against Children*, focuses on raising awareness about the prohibition of the corporal punishment of children, primarily among parents. The concept of *positive parenting* and respect of the child's best interest were promoted as alternatives to the corporal punishment of children. The third cycle of the programme, *Parenting for Lifelong Health*, intended for parents of children aged 2-9, is currently in progress. The programme has already been implemented in the four largest cities in Montenegro, and eight institutions/organizations have been involved in its organization. On 3 December 2018, the Human Rights Committee recommended the expansion of this programme to all municipalities in Montenegro.

KEY CHALLENGES

- ▶ Proper monitoring and enforcement of the prohibition of the corporal punishment of children in all environments has not been achieved. A confidential complaints mechanism

78 The Law Amending the Family Law, Official Gazette of Montenegro no. 53/16.

79 Article 63c of the Law Amending the Family Law says: "A child shall not be subjected to corporal punishment or to any other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. The prohibition referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall apply to parents, guardians and all other persons who take care of the child or come into contact with the child. Parents shall protect the child from acts referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article."



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Table 2: Data on child marriages in the population of Roma and Egyptians

Type of /characteristics	%
Percentage of women aged 15-19 living in a marriage	28.1%
Percentage of men aged 15-19 living in a marriage	16.5%
Percentage of women aged 20-49 who got married before the age of 18	56%
Percentage of men aged 20-49 who got married before the age of 18	35%
Percentage of women aged 20-24 who gave birth to a child at least once before the age of 18	36.9%



has not been set up in schools and other day-care and placement institutions for children, including children in foster care.

- ▶ There is currently no continuous programme aimed at strengthening positive parenting skills for parents and guardians (general programmes, indicated programmes, etc.), and continuous trainings for staff responsible for educating children about the importance and effectiveness of alternatives to violent discipline should be provided.

**Harmful practices - child marriages.** On average, the child marriage practice rate in Montenegro<sup>(80)</sup> is low – 2.4% of women and 0.4% of men aged 15–19 are living in a marriage or are living in some form of extra-marital relationship. However, as shown in Table 2, the percentage of child marriages is significantly higher in the Roma and Egyptian communities.

Although the Roma and Egyptian communities view child (adolescent) marriage as part of their tradition, it clearly represents a violation of the child's rights. These marriages often imply giving money for the bride, which is a form of selling a female child and is a violation of children's and women's rights from a legal point of view.

80 NGO Centre for Roma Initiative, Preventing Child Marriages in Montenegro: Challenges, Lessons Learned and Theory of Change, UNICEF, EDF, EU, 2017. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/en/publications-and-surveys-2017>.

”

*I told my sister that she should decide for herself what was good for her, and not just to listen to those who are older than her... because it could happen that her husband is beating and torturing her, and she may feel that she is not allowed to return home, because her father would kill her. Wedding ceremonies abound in money and gold, musical performances and everything.*

A Roma primary school pupil, participant in the focus group

In 2014, the NGO *Centre for Roma Initiatives* published the results of the national survey entitled *Arranged Marriage is Stronger than Law*. The survey was conducted in four Montenegrin municipalities (Nikšić, Podgorica, Berane and Ulcinj), on a sample taken from Roma and Egyptian populations. One of the results shows that 75.8% of female respondents believe that the state and its relevant institutions should take part in combating the practice of arranged marriages, while only half of the male respondents (50.7%) shared the same opinion. The study *Preventing Child Marriages in Montenegro: Challenges, Lessons Learned and Theory of Change*<sup>(81)</sup> offers recommendations for a comprehensive and systematic approach to this issue. The consequences of child marriage can be far-reaching and long-lasting: dropping out of

81 Ibid.

school; health risks arising from early sexual activity and pregnancy, including sexually transmitted diseases and maternal mortality; in the case of giving birth early in life, child malnutrition and child mortality; domestic violence against a wife; exploitation.<sup>(82)</sup>

#### KEY CHALLENGES

- ▶ There is no clear definition of child marriage nor is there statistical data on this matter as most child marriages are traditional in their legal nature, i.e. they are not registered and thus avoid legal safeguards.
- ▶ The level of prosecution and conviction of perpetrators of violent crimes against women, including child marriages, is low. The protection, rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of arranged marriages is also low.

**SOS telephone lines.** There are several important SOS telephone lines for children in Montenegro: the National SOS line for victims of domestic violence (080 111 111); the National Children's SOS Line<sup>(83)</sup> (116 111); the SOS line for Victims of Trafficking

82 As stated in section 2.2.1.2. (Definition of the child), the Family Law, in its Article 24, provides that a person younger than 18 cannot enter into a marriage. As an exception, the court may allow a marriage to be entered into by a minor person older than 16 in accordance with a separate law (the Law on Extra-Judicial Procedure).

83 The line was established on 17 December, 2018 within the support programme of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, implemented by PI Children's Home Mladost (professionals from the Children's Home provide services on business days).

in Human Beings (11 66 66) and SOS Line for Parents (080 888 888), which is run by the licensed service provider NGO Parents. The National SOS Line, run by the licensed service provider, NGO SOS Line for Women and Children Victims of Violence Nikšić, meets the standards of the *Istanbul Convention*. This service is funded by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare with the support of UNDP Montenegro. While no one questions the importance of SOS telephone lines for direct support to victims, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed a degree of concern about their future operation, primarily about the possibility of financing this number of SOS telephone line services.

#### KEY CHALLENGES

- ▶ The sustainability (primarily in financial terms) of several important SOS telephone lines for children and parents.
- ▶ The information collected is not used to inform policies and programmes.
- ▶ A low level of awareness regarding this type of support and a lack of information provided to children on how to access telephone help-lines.

Table 3: Alternative care of children without parental care

Type of data	2010	2018
Total number of children in institutional placement (Children's Home "Mladost" Bijela, JU Ljubović, institutions in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Small group house in Bijelo Polje)	-	100
Number of children placed in the Children's Home "Mladost" in Bijela	156	66
Number of children in non-kinship foster families	-	49
Number of children in kinship foster families	-	315
Total number of children in foster families	313	364
Number of small group houses for the placement of children without parental care	-	1

### 2.2.1.6. Family environment and alternative care

**Children without parental care.** A functional biological family provides the best environment for a child to develop in. Bearing this in mind, the system of social care and child protection has recognized the importance of providing support to the biological family and for this purpose has identified a range of services - counselling services for children and parents, family outreach workers, day-care facilities for children at risk, etc. These services are still in the planning phase and will be systematically developed based on an assessment of needs. Nevertheless, there are always children who, for various reasons, live without parental care and the state is required to take care of their protection.

Any child without parental care is entitled to special protection and assistance from the state. This includes foster family placement, adoption, and, in exceptional cases, placement in adequate childcare institu-

tions. Both the *Family Law* and the *Law on Social and Child Protection* define foster care as the preferred form of alternative family care for children. The state has also introduced a foster family training system.<sup>(84)</sup> The Law Amending the Family Law<sup>(85)</sup> stipulates that, before a placement is finalized, the guardianship authority is required to provide, to the child, all available information regarding the placement to enable the child to form his/her own opinion, and that all such information should be provided in a language understood by the child and at a level relevant to the child's age. A child has the right to express his/her opinion freely regarding its family placement; the guardian authority is required to pay due attention to the child's opinion, taking into account the child's age and maturity.

84 Training is currently being delivered to potential foster parents by professional workers from CSWs who attended the Safe Way to Foster Care programme. It is expected that the Institute for Social and Child Protection will develop and accredit a training programme for foster parents adjusted to the needs of Montenegro in this domain.

85 Law Amending the Family Law, Official Gazette of Montenegro no. 53/16.

Following international regulations, the *Law on Social and Child Protection*<sup>(86)</sup> stipulates that a child younger than 3 years old cannot be placed in an institution, except in exceptional circumstances. In such a case there must be "particularly justified reasons" as well as prior consent from the competent state administration body (Article 70).<sup>(87)</sup> According to the law, the "particularly justified reasons" refer to cases where it is not possible for a child to stay in the family providing support to him/her, or where foster family placement cannot be provided or where it is not in the best interest of the child. The Centre for Social Work is obliged to review its decision on such a placement at least once every six months.

Table 3 gives an overview of the most relevant information on alternative forms of care for children without parental care.

The implementation of the Operational Plan for the Transformation of the Children's Home in Bijela, the only institution for the placement of children without parental care in Montenegro, is now complete. As shown in Table 3, there were 156 children in the Children's Home "Mladost" in Bijela in 2010, while at the end of 2018 this number stood at 66 children<sup>(88)</sup>, a decrease of 58%. However, social work centres also place children in other institutions such as the "Ljubović" Centre, institutions for children in Bosnia and Herzegovina and also in Serbia. In 2018 a total of 100 children were placed in institutions. In 2010, 313 children were referred to foster families compared with 364 at the end of 2018. Of these, 315

86 Law on Social and Child Protection, "Official Gazette of Montenegro", no. 27/13, 1/15, 42/15, 47/15, 56/16, 66/16, 1/17, 31/17- decision of the CC, 42/17, 50/17.

87 It is important to note that only one child younger than 3 years old was placed in an institution in 2018 (in the Children's Home in Bijela). In accordance with the law, the Centre for Social Work is obliged to review its decision and to seek a better solution.

88 Data of the Institute for Social and Child Protection.

children were placed in kinship foster families and 49 children in non-kinship foster families.<sup>(89)</sup>

Table 4: Number of foster families in 2018

Type of foster family	Number
Non-kinship foster families with placed children	33
Kinship foster families with placed children	219
Total number of families with placed children	252
Non-kinship foster families eligible for foster care, without placed children	7
Non-kinship foster families in the process of becoming eligible for foster care	7

As shown in Table 4, despite the fact that there are more non-kinship foster families in 2018 than in 2010, their number is still modest compared to the number of kinship foster families – 33 non-kinship and 219 kinship. Social Work Centres provide support to foster parents if a problem arises. However, there is no support in terms of organized exchanges of experience, nor is there advice or recommendation regarding the daily duties of foster parents. The MLSW plans to establish a foster care centre in Bijela, an institution that would provide continuous development opportunities and professional standards in this field. It is also planned for the Institute for Social and Child Protection to develop a national foster family training programme.

89 There were only nine children in non-kinship foster families in 2010.

In addition, it is also important to establish support services for community life in this process of deinstitutionalization. The first and only **small group home** for children without parental care was built in Bijelo Polje with funds donated by the US Embassy. The **small group house** is a good model for the further development of this service in other municipalities.

The system of licensing service providers, the accreditation of training programmes and the delivery of training for work with children without parental care are all still in their initial stages of development. In addition to social welfare institutions, three non-governmental organizations are also licensed as service providers: the NGO Centre for the Rights of the Child from Podgorica for **day-care services for children from families at risk**, the NGO Family Centre from Kotor for the service **family outreach worker**, and the NGO Parents for the service **SOS telephone line**. These services are currently predominantly project-funded.

## KEY CHALLENGES

- ▶ Although the number of children in institutions has been significantly reduced, there are still many children living in institutional care.
- ▶ Children living in the most unfavourable conditions (extreme poverty, children who are victims of neglect, in large families with unemployed parents, etc.) remain at high risk of separation from their families.

- ▶ Current support for the development of non-kinship foster care is not sufficient.
- ▶ Capacities to monitor children (their status and living conditions) placed in alternative care systems are limited, as well as resources required to ensure that sustainable progress is achieved during deinstitutionalization.
- ▶ Problems are evident when seeking to establish support for child-foreigners<sup>(90)</sup>; the main problems relate to language barriers, cultural barriers, psychological barriers, etc.
- ▶ The system set up to license service providers and to accredit programmes is not functional enough.
- ▶ The scope and quality of services provided to support biological families to retain their children are inadequate.

90 This category includes children who were granted international protection, child - foreigners seeking international protection and child - migrants.



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### 2.2.1.7 Developmental disorders, primary healthcare and social protection

**Children with disabilities.** Children with disabilities who participated in the consultations expressed their views regarding the problems they face. Their comments included the following: some adults and some children 'do not like' them (discrimination); some children with disabilities do not attend school and only use the services of the local day-care centres; parents bear the high costs of treatment, food, clothing and education; they lack certain necessary medical doctors - specialists; some doctors do not have adequate communication skills to engage with children

with disabilities (they only address their parents); all sports activities attended by children with disabilities, and children without disabilities, are charged for, so not everyone can afford to pay, etc.

One of their proposals for the slogan for exercising the rights of the child in Montenegro was:

“*Let's teach all those who do not know how to love, to be good, and to respect.*”

A child with disabilities – a focus group participant

The cash benefits that a child with disabilities (personal disability allowance, care and support allowance and child allowance) is entitled to are fixed in terms of their amount and remain very limited. These funds cannot cover the child's basic needs. Therefore, the family carries a heavy burden.

Currently, there are 13 day-care centres for children and youth (up to 27 years old) in Montenegro. The problem is that the users of day-care centres are persons of very different ages (ranging from 3 to 27), who have completely different needs and interests. Despite the adoption of the policy of developing specialized foster care with intensive and additional support for children with disabilities<sup>(91)</sup>, its application has yet to begin. Of the total number of children in foster care at the end of 2018, there were four children with disabilities in kinship foster care and four in non-kinship foster care. There are also some children with disabilities without parental care who are still placed in institutions. At the end of 2018, there were 25 children with disabilities, 12 boys and 13 girls, in the Children's Home "Mladost".

It is also evident that more children with disabilities now attend mainstream educational institutions. However, there are still problems relating to architectural barriers in educational institutions, as well as an insufficient involvement of parents in creating individual development plans, a lack of customized textbooks and a lack of professionals with specific expert knowledge (speech therapists, defectologists, tiflopedagogues, oligophrenologists, etc.) who can adequately respond to the needs of children with disabilities. In addition, support for children with disabilities who additionally face the problem of a language barrier is not clearly defined.

91 Rulebook on more detailed conditions for providing and using family placement services – foster care and family placement, Official Gazette of Montenegro no. 19/14 and 15/16, Art. 5.

The findings from the *Analysis of support and multi-sector response to the needs of children with disabilities in Montenegro*<sup>(92)</sup> indicate that the general level of accessibility to the physical environment and to transport and information for children with disabilities and their families remains low. This is due to the incomplete implementation of existing legislation and a lack of proper inspections in this area. According to the findings of the analysis, early intervention appears to be the weakest link in the system. Some of the major problems include cross-sectoral cooperation, physical distance from health institutions, an inadequate environment in various institutions, inappropriate working hours and a lack of necessary specialist services, counselling and rehabilitation services. Additionally, the approach to children is predominantly medical in nature, rather than embracing the bio-psycho-social model that is recommended in science. Key recommendations for improving multi-sector support to children with disabilities<sup>(93)</sup> refer to: the further alignment of regulations and policies with the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* and the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*; ensuring the full operation of new information systems and interlinking the data; the co-financing of integrated and cross-sectoral services; investing in the professional development of employees to provide services that support efforts to keep the child in the family; a diverse range of services in the family and community (day-care centres, adapted transportation services, personal assistance at home, counselling for children and the family); judicial procedures and institutions that correspond to the needs of children with disabilities, etc.

92 R. Irimija, D. Kirjačesku, S. Vasić, Analysis of support and multi-sectoral response to the needs of children with disabilities in Montenegro, Pluri Consult and UNICEF Country Office, 2018.

93 Ibid.

## KEY CHALLENGES

- ▣ Cash benefits for children with disabilities in the system of social and child care are low.
- ▣ With regard to the education system, all children should be included in the mainstream educational environment while the competencies and responsibilities of teachers should be strengthened.
- ▣ Day-care centres for children with disabilities accept persons aged 3 to 27.
- ▣ There is a lack of understanding of the importance of early development and multi-sector approach to the needs of children with disabilities, as well as lack of development of services.

**Health and health services.** Laws from the field of health<sup>(94)</sup> govern healthcare and health insurance for children up to 18 years of age from the budget of Montenegro. Primary health care for children is provided in 18 primary health care centres within the territory of Montenegro through a system

94 Law on Health Protection, Official Gazette of Montenegro no. 3/16, 39/16, 2/17; Law on Health Insurance, Official Gazette of Montenegro no. 6/16 and 2/17 and the Law on the Rights of Patients, Official Gazette of Montenegro no. 40/10.

of chosen paediatricians. These health institutions all house prevention centres, and each of them contains a counselling unit for adolescents and youth as well as a counselling unit for reproductive health. In addition, some new support mechanisms have been introduced in the healthcare system, such as: *the Code of practice for health institutions and health professionals regarding the marketing of breast-milk substitutes* (2017), and the *Buprenorphine drug application guidelines for drug and other psychoactive substance users* (2017). The training of paediatricians and radiologists for the ultrasound examination of children's hips during their first year of life has commenced.

According to the *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey in Montenegro*<sup>(95)</sup> and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey in Roma settlements in Montenegro (2014)<sup>(96)</sup>, some of the key indicators regarding the poor health status of children include: the number of new-borns with a low birth weight (4% in the general population and 12% in Roma settlements), undernourished children up to 5 years of age (1% in the general population and 10% in Roma settlements), and the rate of immunization coverage of children aged 24 to 35 months (61% in the general population and 12% in Roma settlements). The rate of exclusive breastfeeding of children up to six months in the general population was 17%, in Roma settlements 14%.

95 Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/en/reports/multiple-indicator-cluster-survey-2013>.

96 Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/en/reports/montenegro-roma-settlements-multiple-indicator-cluster-survey-2013>.

Table 5: IPH data on mandatory primo-immunization of children born in 2016 conducted in 2017 <sup>(97)</sup>

Type of vaccine	Coverage of children in %
MMR1 vaccine	57.83%
Vaccine against Hepatitis B	73.45%
DtaP-IPV-Hib vaccine	86.64%
BCG vaccine	93.3%

With the exception of primo-immunization by MMR and BCG vaccines (Table 5), these coverage rates are lower compared to 2016 and are almost the lowest in the last 10 years. The revaccinations coverage rate was 61.89% in the case of the DTaP-IPV-Hib vaccine in the second year of life, up to 93.9% - the last dosage of the vaccine against child paralysis in the final grade of primary education. The projected rate for satisfactory vaccination coverage should be 95% for each mandatory vaccine.

World Health Organization (COSI) data points to an epidemic of obesity and excessive weight in children, which is considered to be the consequence of insufficient physical activity and the consumption of high-sugar foods, saturated fats and salt. Some of the remaining unresolved issues concerning child health care are: healthcare services are not equally accessible for all children (children from rural areas; children with disabilities, <sup>(98)</sup> children from Roma and Egyptian communities; poor children; children living on the street, etc.); problems related to medical

97 Institute for Public Health of Montenegro, Centre for control and prevention of infectious diseases (2018): Report on the conducted immunizations in Montenegro during 2017, Podgorica, 2018.

98 See section 2.2.1.7. (Development disorders, primary healthcare and social protection).

treatment abroad, including the cost of stay; inadequate protection of children's mental health - there is a lack of human resources (no child psychiatrists) and of conditions for in-patient treatment; a lack of equipment in health institutions; a rather modest quality of care for mothers and new-borns and insufficient coverage for visits by a nurse; procedures regarding action to be taken in certain situations and record-keeping methods lack details. In addition, according to GLAAS 2018–2019 <sup>(99)</sup> data, there are significant inequalities between rural and urban zones in Montenegro with regard to the availability of water supplies and sanitation services. The need to strengthen a sustainable system offering a safe water supply has been identified as well as the need for schools to provide adequate sanitation and hygiene services.

**KEY CHALLENGES**

- ▢ Lack of access or limited access to certain healthcare services for vulnerable children (children with disabilities, poor children, children from rural areas, children from Roma and Egyptian communities, children who are granted international protection, children of foreigners seeking international protection, child migrants, children living on the street, etc.) – a lack of, or distance from, available specialist medical services, additional burden of transport costs to bigger towns where such services are

99 GLAAS – UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water 2018-2019. available at: [https://www.who.int/water\\_sanitation\\_health/monitoring/investments/glaas/en/](https://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/monitoring/investments/glaas/en/).

provided, mismatch between health laws and the Law on International and Temporary Protection of Foreigners, etc.

- ▢ The immunization coverage rate has decreased due to anti-vaccination campaigns.
- ▢ The exclusive breastfeeding rate is low.
- ▢ Inability to adequately treat children with mental health disorders due to a lack of child psychiatrists in the public health system.

**The health of adolescents.** Secondary school students who participated in the consultation process have identified several issues of relevance for the health of adolescents: insufficient information about risky sexual behaviour and reproductive health ("We cannot learn more about this topic, because our society perceives it as a taboo, even though sexual drive is one of the biological urges."); social anxiety - fear that they will say something 'wrong' and that they will consequently not fit into their peer group; poor mental health of young persons – a growing phenomenon of depression, lack of psychological support and peer pressure to use psychoactive substances (drugs, alcohol).

“  
*I believe that young people want to escape from reality by using alcohol and psychoactive substances.*  
 —  
 A secondary school student – participant in the consultation process

Both teachers and parents believe that today's generation of adolescents is generally well informed about health issues given the availability of such information on the Internet <sup>(100)</sup>. However, there is data that disproves their views, such as MONSTAT's data on the high rate of adolescents who gave birth in Montenegro - in 2015, this rate was 11.12 <sup>(101)</sup> – as well as data from the Institute for Public Health of Montenegro that registered 262 adolescent pregnancies in 2016.

Doctors usually come into contact with children of this age through their work in counselling units of primary health care centres, regular medical examinations and preventive health lectures that take place at schools. The communication in these lectures is predominantly one-way in its nature and it rarely includes the adolescents' opinions and their evaluations of these activities and the healthcare professionals' behaviour towards them. <sup>(102)</sup> Doctors have not received any training on how to communicate with adolescents and rarely adapt their approach to them. In general, health professionals are not sufficiently involved in the early identification of problems in adolescents, and they are of the opinion that this should be the responsibility of parents. <sup>(103)</sup> Counselling units for voluntary and confidential counselling and testing (DPST) for HIV exist in seven primary health care centres and the Institute

100 According to the Capacity Analysis of Education, Healthcare and Social Protection Systems Related to Support to the Development of Adolescents in Montenegro, (UNICEF, 2017).

101 According to MONSTAT's data, the rates of adolescents who gave birth in the period 2011-2015 were as follows: 2011 – 14.26; 2012 – 13.31; 2013 – 11.97; 2014 – 11.16; 2015 – 11.12.

102 Adolescents- secondary school students who participated in the consultations generally think that health-related lectures at schools are uninteresting, lacking any interaction between the lecturers and students.

103 The Capacity Analysis of Education, Healthcare and Social Protection Systems Related to Support to the Development of Adolescents in Montenegro, (UNICEF, 2017).

for Public Health. These are elements of the prevention centres that exist within the aforementioned public health facilities. In addition to testing for HIV, these facilities provide information on sexually transmitted infections, reproductive health, drug abuse prevention and other related topics of interest in the domain of health/healthy lifestyle of adolescents. However, this type of counselling is only available in some municipalities / primary health care centres.

The mental health of adolescents also remains a problem.<sup>(104)</sup> In addition to the lack of child psychiatrists, there is also a lack of psychologists specialized in working with children and adolescents. A lack of capacity in institutions specializing in addiction and mental disorders often prevents adolescents from starting hospital treatment. In such instances, they are referred to a mental health centre where they are treated by specialists for adults. Formally, adolescents do not enjoy a special status in our health system. This leads us to the conclusion that this population is not being considered seriously enough when planning improvements in the functioning of a segment of the health system.<sup>(105)</sup> The *Capacity Analysis of Education, Healthcare and Social Protection Systems Related to Support to the Development of Adolescents in Montenegro* (2017) found that: there was no systemically regulated joint action of health, education and social welfare institutions in the domain of work with

104 Mental Health of Children in Montenegro-The Report on Mental Health of Children in Montenegro. The Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro, Podgorica 2018. Available at: <https://www.ombudsman.co.me/img-publications/25/mentalno-zdravlje-2018-1010.pdf> (in Montenegrin).

105 See: The Capacity Analysis of Education, Healthcare and Social Protection Systems Related to Support to the Development of Adolescents in Montenegro, UNICEF Country Office, 2017. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/en/reports/capacity-analysis-education-healthcare-and-social-protection-systems-related-support>.

adolescents; the policy and regulatory frameworks do not identify them as a separate age group and there is not a sufficient number of services developed for boys and girls aged 10 to 19.<sup>(106)</sup>

In its most recent report on Montenegro<sup>(107)</sup>, the European Commission stated that further efforts were necessary to efficiently control harmful effects of alcohol abuse and alcohol-induced disorders. Reports from the World Health Organization show that the ban on selling alcoholic products to children is not being enforced. There is a tendency among adolescents to start harmful habits earlier in their lives (smoking, harmful use of alcohol), and it is also evident that cases of binge drinking are increasingly present in that population.

#### KEY CHALLENGES

- ▣ Adolescents are not recognized as a special age group within the public health system.
- ▣ There is a lack of qualified specialists, especially child psychiatrists and psychologists. The lack of community-based mental health services for adolescents is also obvious.
- ▣ Support services are limited, especially those related to

106 Ibid.

107 Working document of the European Commission: 2018 Montenegro Report. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20180417-montenegro-report.pdf>.

confidential counselling in the areas of reproductive health, the prevention of adolescent pregnancies, and in the efficient control of alcohol and drug abuse, etc.

- ▣ Adolescents from vulnerable groups (adolescents with disabilities, drug users, internally displaced persons, Roma adolescents, etc.) do not have equal access to health care in the same way as do other adolescents.

**The standard of living.** Primary and secondary school-age children, who participated in the consultations, identified poverty as a problem affecting children and their families. Primary school students listed concrete consequences due to a lack of money, ranging from basic needs, such as food ("There are children who do not have enough to eat and need help, there are lots of them at the Konik camp, and we sometimes help them; however, they need more help"), to the problem of how to find money for sports activities and other forms of quality leisure time. Secondary school students identified poverty as a problem that destroys the self-esteem and self-confidence of children.

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*Extreme poverty also affects the mental condition of young people, because today I may have enough money for a snack, but that may not be the case tomorrow...*

A secondary school student, participant in the consultation process

According to data from the 2017 publication *Statistics on Income and Living Conditions*<sup>(108)</sup>, the risk-of-poverty rate for children was 31.7% (the EU average is 20%). This means that the child poverty rate is 8% higher than the national rate of relative poverty, which is 23.6%. Since 2013, child poverty has reduced by 3%. During the same period, the risk of poverty rate in households with two adults and three or more dependent children was 45.9%; 18% of children live in households severely affected by poverty (the EU average is 7%).

The application of new provisions of the *Law on Social and Child Protection* and the SWIS operating system resulted in a reduction in the number of beneficiaries of individual cash-benefit entitlements, for example the allowance for mothers of three or more children was abolished. This change happened after the Constitutional Court declared the provisions on the allowance for mothers of three or more children unconstitutional<sup>(109)</sup>, and the law was indisputably discriminatory against women who have less than three children, women without children, as well as against men. There are no studies showing that the situation of children living in households led by women became worse after the allowance was abolished.

According to data from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, the number of child allowance beneficiaries in 2018 was 14,721—7,581 boys and 7,140 girls. It is important to remember that there are many different groups of poor children: children whose parents completed only primary school, children in the north of the country, children living in rural areas, children from households with three or more dependent

108 Statistics on Income and Living Conditions, MONSTAT, UNICEF and World Bank, 2018.

109 The Law on Social and Child Protection, Official Gazette of Montenegro 31/17 – CC decision.

Table 6: Overview of data on children in the education system

6.1. Number of education institutions in Montenegro			
Pre-school institutions	43	21 state-owned 22 private	
Primary schools	163 main schools	247 branch units	
Primary art schools	15		
Secondary schools	42	12 grammar schools 9 combined sec. schools 21 vocational sec. schools 6 art schools 2 educational centres	
6.2. Number of children by levels of education in the school year 2018 - 2019			
Pre-school education	21,410		
Primary education	67,495		
Secondary education	27,798		
6.3. Number of children with disabilities / special education needs at pre-school and primary level in the school year 2017 - 2018			
Pre-school education	727		
Primary education	3.368		
Number of children given a decision on orientation	1,515 (October 2018)		
6.4. Number of Roma and Egyptian children by education level in the school year 2018/2019			
	Total	Boys	Girls
Pre-school education	126	76	50
Primary education	1.799	941	858
Secondary education	136	74	62

children, multi-member households with dependent children etc.

**KEY CHALLENGES**

- Vulnerable groups of children (the youngest children - children under five, children from families with three or more children, children from single-parent families or extended families, children from the north of Montenegro and from rural settlements, children from Roma and Egyptian communities, children who are granted international protection, children of foreigners seeking international protection, child migrants, children with disabilities, children living on the street, etc.) are still disproportionately more affected by poverty than other children.
- The child poverty rate is still significantly higher than in EU countries.

**2.2.1.8 Education, free time and cultural activities**

**Education.** Children of primary school age, who participated in the consultations, singled out the following challenges they face at school: uneven assessment criteria (too demanding or too relaxed); mismatch between curricula and textbooks, meaning that pupils are left to themselves to find sources for studying; poorly planned

knowledge assessment tests – very often, two written assignments take place on the same day with several oral tests in addition; a lack of understanding by teachers, which is justified by the necessity to adhere to the curriculum. Secondary school students stressed the following: students are overburdened with too many subject courses, while children are interested in only a third of them (on average); too many lessons per school day; insufficiently modern and boring classes; education fails to prepare them for life and a future profession; overpriced textbooks that change every year; insufficient support for learning within the school.

Table 6 gives an overview of basic data on children in the education system.

The education system for children includes preschool education, compulsory primary education and secondary education. **Pre-school education** is offered to children up to 6 years old (up to primary school age) in institutions that can be state-owned (public) or private. The total number of children enrolled in pre-school institutions in the school year 2017/18 was 20,762, which is an increase of 30.5% when compared with the school year 2014/2015 (15,913 children).<sup>110</sup> During the school year 2017/2018, pre-school education in Montenegro was offered by 43 pre-school institutions, of which 21 were public and 22 were privately owned.<sup>111</sup> The lack of capacity in pre-school institutions, particularly the lack of capacity for children up to 3 years old in nurseries, represents a problem. The Government of Montenegro has adopted a new **Strategy for Early and Pre-school Education 2016-2020** with strategic goals related to increasing coverage, improving quality and developing sustainable financ-

110 According to the data of the Ministry of Education – MEIS database.

111 According to data from MONSTAT.

ing models. The attendance rate for pre-school institutions of children aged 3-6 has increased significantly in recent years and was recorded by MONSTAT's as 69.99%.

**Primary education.** In Montenegro, primary education lasts nine years and consists of three cycles. The education process is carried out in 163 main school and 247 branch units. During the school year 2018/2019, there were 67,495 pupils in primary schools.<sup>(112)</sup> In order to improve the conditions in primary education, the number of pupils per class has been reduced – first-grade classes may have up to 28 pupils, and only in exceptional cases, they may have 30 students following approval from the minister. Amendments to the law include a reduction in the number of lessons per week. Primary education is provided free of charge, but the costs of purchasing textbooks, school supplies, equipment for physical education classes and similar expenses represent an additional burden for the family budget. In addition to this, student transportation is still not completely free of charge, nor is it available to all children who need to use it.

Parallel to primary school, children can attain primary art education in art schools. There are 15 primary art schools in Montenegro. During the school year 2017/18, 4,865 pupils attended primary art school. Branch units of the PI School of Music and Ballet *Vasa Pavić* have been opened within primary schools in Tuzi and Golubovci.

**Secondary education.** Educational programmes for general and vocational secondary education in Montenegro in the school year 2018/2019 were taught in 12 general secondary schools, nine combined secondary schools that teach programmes of vocational and general secondary educa-

tion, 21 secondary vocational schools, 6 art schools and 2 education centres. In total, 27,798 students attended secondary school in the school year 2018/2019.<sup>(113)</sup> In order to facilitate the transition from school to the labour market, amendments were made to the *Law on Vocational Education*<sup>(114)</sup> and a *dual education system* was introduced. The information campaign that ensued contributed to a 15% increase in the enrolment in this system in the school year 2017/2018, with 264 students signing contracts with 97 employers. There is a need for the introduction of a system of quality assurance in the secondary vocational education as well as a mechanism to monitor it.

**Inclusive education.** The education of children with disabilities or with special educational needs is based on the provisions of the *Law on the Education of Children with Special Educational Needs*<sup>(115)</sup>. The first priority is to provide an inclusive education to these children in pre-school institutions and in mainstream schools; this is illustrated by a constantly increasing trend in the number of such children attending these institutions. The number of children with special educational needs in pre-school education in the school year 2017/2018 was 727, which represents an increase of 88% compared to the school year 2014/2015, when there were only 89 such children<sup>(116)</sup>. There were 3,095 children with special educational needs in primary education in the school year 2017/2018<sup>(117)</sup>. A child with special educational needs,

113 According to the data of the Ministry of Education – MEIS database.

114 The Law on Vocational Education, Official Gazette of Montenegro no. 47/17.

115 The Law on Education of Children with Special Educational Needs, Official Gazette of Montenegro no. 45/10 and 47/17.

116 Ibid.

117 According to the data of the Ministry of Education – MEIS database.

112 According to the data of the Ministry of Education – MEIS database.



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who is not enrolled in an inclusive class of a mainstream school, may choose to attend, in line with the decision of its parents: integrated classes in a mainstream school, a resource centre<sup>(118)</sup>, or a day-care/stay centre. Children who are issued with a decision on orientation attend pre-school education institutions free of charge, and get free textbooks during their primary and secondary education. A total of 2,323

118 Special schools were transformed into resource centres oriented towards supporting inclusive education (early intervention, mobile activities, trainings, assistive technology classrooms: specialized didactic and teaching resources, textbooks in Braille, Daisy format books, sign language and the like. There are three resources in Montenegro: PI Resource Centre for hearing and speech disorders "Dr Peruta Ivanović", Kotor, PI Resource Centre for children and persons with intellectual disorders and autism "1. jun", Podgorica and PI Resource Centre for Children and Youth "Podgorica" for persons with physical disabilities and visual impairment.

children were given such a decision on orientation in October 2018, which was 53.33% more than in 2014, the total number in 2014 was 1,515<sup>(119)</sup>. The *Individual Development and Education Plan* (IDEP) represents the basis for work with children with special educational needs. In addition, the *Individual Transition Plan ITP-1* serves to establish a link between primary and secondary education, while the *ITP-2 Plan* facilitates an easier transition to the labour market and an increase in the employment rate. The Bureau for Education Services coordinates regional *mobile teams* that provide support to schools in the implementation of inclusive education. Teaching assistants are hired to assist the children with special educational needs throughout

119 Data received from the UNICEF Country Office.



the school year. An *Inclusive web-portal* has been put in place to foster an exchange of new ideas and examples of good practice among professionals. *The Inclusive Education Strategy in Montenegro 2014-2018* has been fully implemented, and a new one is being drafted - *Inclusive Education Strategy 2019-2025*.

The quality of education for children with special educational needs still needs to be significantly improved regarding the monitoring of their attainment, improving access, conditions, work methods and strategies and in terms of providing didactic teaching aids, equipment and assistive technologies.

**Education of Roma and Egyptian children.** There were 2,061 Roma and Egyptian children enrolled in the education system at the beginning of the school year 2018/2019 - 1,091 boys and 970 girls, which is an increase of 25% compared to the number of children enrolled in 2015/16. In the school year 2018/2019, 126 children attended pre-school education - 76 boys and 50 girls; 1,799 pupils were enrolled in primary education - 941 boys and 858 girls, while 136 students in total attended secondary education - 74 boys and 62 girls. In line with the Action Plan of the *Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma and Egyptians 2016-2020*, the Ministry of Education organized preparatory kindergarten services for Roma and Egyptian children in nine municipalities; complementary mechanisms of inclusion in pre-school institutions; a campaign to increase enrolment rates of Roma and Egyptian children in the first grade of primary school in four municipalities; the branch unit of "Božidar Vuković Podgoričanin" Primary School in camp Konik was closed and its students were enrolled into seven primary schools in Podgorica; additional language and educational support for children from those schools and free transportation for all Roma and Egyptian pupils in Podgorica was provided. The Bureau for Education Services has organized training for 22 educators, has financially supported nine mediators and

has established a dropout prevention team. In the school year 2018/2019, 20 mediators, assistants for social inclusion in schools, will be paid from the state budget. Roma and Egyptian children who wish to continue their education are allowed to enrol in their preferred secondary school programmes. In addition to this, they are allowed to attain a level-4 qualification through an extraordinary exam, which is free of charge. A scholarship and mentoring programme for Roma and Egyptian secondary school students is being implemented. Every year,<sup>(120)</sup> the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights provides the following: free textbooks for all Roma and Egyptian pupils from the first to third grades of primary school; seven-day summer and winter vacation trips for Roma and Egyptian pupils from the seventh to ninth grades of primary school; and funds for scholarships for secondary school students. The biggest problem regarding the education of Roma and Egyptian students is the early dropout rate. The Ministry of Education, in cooperation with UNICEF, is implementing a programme aimed at improving the MEIS application along with related procedures at a school level in order to identify those who are at risk of dropping out early from primary and secondary school.

**The general picture regarding the education of children** is evident from data obtained from the results in the international PISA testing. In *2015 PISA testing results and recommendations for the improvement of educational policy*<sup>(121)</sup> showed that the average attainment of pupils in Montenegro, in 2015, was about 65-80 points lower than the average attainment of pupils from OECD countries. In order to develop key competencies, the general

120 MHMR has provided this until the school year 2018/2019, and ME will take over starting from 2019/2020.

121 2015 PISA testing results and recommendations for the improvement of education policy (2018), available at: <http://www.gov.me/biblioteka/izvjestaji?pagerl&pagerIndex=5>. 2015 PISA results were: mathematics – 418 points; reading – 427; science – 411.

quality of teaching and learning practices must be further improved. In many cases, the process of teaching and learning is focused on the uncritical acquisition of knowledge and students are simply trained to reproduce what they have learned. Particular attention must be paid to pupils whose progress is slower so that they can, at least, achieve a minimum level of functional literacy by the end of their compulsory education.

**Free time and cultural activities.** During the consultation process, secondary school students highlighted: the low quality of media and cultural programmes on offer to them (young people are exposed to TV programmes that do not promote moral values); there is an absence of cultural and educational content for young people; there are issues concerning the use of free time; information is poor regarding events that encourage young people to expand their interests; there are few places to go out to; there are insufficient sports activities and creative workshops that do not charge a lot; there are few seminars and training programmes for young people.

Part of the cultural institutions' programme<sup>(122)</sup> refers to cultural content intended for children of pre-school and school age (festivals, theatre plays, concerts, exhibitions, creative workshops, etc.). The purpose of these cultural events is to provide equal access to constructive free time for all children. The development of educational and entertainment programmes and projects by cultural institutions represents an innovation aimed at implementing the state's cultural policy. Thus, the Royal Theatre "Zetski dom" in

Cetinje came up with an *Art Education Day*<sup>(123)</sup>, a special programme including all primary schools in the territory of Montenegro. The pilot project was implemented in 2018, with the participation of about 2,000 pupils and students from primary and secondary schools from all over Montenegro. The further continuation of this programme is expected. Some cultural and educational activities are creative workshops that take place in the institutions of culture<sup>(124)</sup>. Seventy children took part in a programme aimed at encouraging children to design and realize cultural and media content, together with professionals, in 2018.

In November 2018, the Agency for Electronic Media of Montenegro and UNICEF organized a conference to present the key findings from the *Survey on Children, Parents and the Media in Montenegro*, conducted in August 2018. The results showed that over the previous year, the majority of children and parents (about 70%) had not visited any cultural institution. During the past year, 22% of children had not read any book outside of the compulsory list prescribed by the curriculum, and during the same period, as many as 43% of parents had not read a single book<sup>(125)</sup>.

123 *Art Education Day* includes the following activities: watching the play "Children – the Capital"; conversations of children with artists, actors and authors of the play; guided tour and learning about the history and work of all parts of the Royal Theatre; educational drama (acting) workshop; Guided tour around Cetinje, visiting key landmarks and institutions (museums, faculties, diplomatic missions/ministries).

124 An example of a creative workshop is available at: <https://www.cetinjskilst.com/index.php/kultura/item/2885-nmcg-kreativne-radionice-za-djecu-nastavljene-i-tokom-ljeta> (in Montenegro).

125 The survey is available at: <https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/en/reports/key-findings-children-parents-and-media-montenegro>.

## KEY CHALLENGES

- ▶ Lack of capacity in preschool institutions for children up to the age of 3 years.
- ▶ Insufficient use of active teaching and learning methods in schools.
- ▶ A mismatch between teaching content, methods and the developmental characteristics of children, especially adolescents.
- ▶ Hidden costs of education (textbooks, educational accessories and materials, transportation, appropriate clothing and footwear) represent an obstacle to accessing education for all poor groups of children.
- ▶ Poor access, conditions, methods, work strategies and means, technology, equipment and teaching aids.
- ▶ Lack of good quality cultural and media content for children.
- ▶ Inadequate financial allocation for education and culture for children (below the average of OECD countries).

## 2.2.1.9 Special protection measures

**Children who are granted international protection<sup>(126)</sup>, child-foreigners seeking international protection and child-migrants.** The *Law on International and Temporary Protection of Foreigners*<sup>(127)</sup> was implemented on 1 January, 2018. All proceedings conducted in accordance with this law must be guided by the best interest of the child (a "minor", according to the law), taking into consideration: his or her well-being, social development and origin; protection and safety, especially if there is a possibility of him or her being a victim of trafficking in human beings; the child's opinion, depending on his/her age and maturity and the possibility of family reunification. The centre for social work appoints a guardian to an unaccompanied child-foreigner, who expresses an intention to apply for international protection. The guardian is a professional, trained to work with children seeking international protection, whose interests are not contrary to the interests of that specific child. In line with this law, the procedure following an application for the international protection of an unaccompanied child-foreigner is led by an authorized official person trained to work with child-foreigners seeking international protection. A decision on the application for the international protection of an unaccompanied child-foreigner is made urgently. Despite the fact that it is very comprehensive and modern, the full implementation of the *Law on International and Temporary Protection of Foreigners* requires further capacity building for all of the public authorities involved in its implementation, especially regarding working

<sup>126</sup> Child asylum seekers and children with subsidiary protection.

<sup>127</sup> The Law on International and Temporary Protection of Foreigners, Official Gazette of Montenegro. 2/17.



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with unaccompanied child – foreigners. The allocation of appropriate financial resources for its implementation is also necessary.

In February 2017, the Government also adopted the new *Strategy for Permanent Resolution of the Issue of Displaced Persons and Refugees in Montenegro, with a Special Emphasis on the Konik Area 2017-2019*<sup>(128)</sup>. There are still some displaced and internally displaced persons who have not been granted the status of foreigner in Montenegro. According to UNHCR data, the number of pending applications filed by persons younger than 18 to obtain the status of foreigner in Montenegro was 146 at the end of 2018 (78 applications for permanent residence and 68 applications for temporary residence). According to the same source, one unaccompanied child-foreigner (unaccompanied child migrant) was registered in 2018.

<sup>128</sup> The Strategy for Durable Solutions of Issues regarding Displaced Persons and Refugees in Montenegro, with Special Emphasis on the Konik Area 2017-2019 is available at: <https://un.org.me/library/>.

## KEY CHALLENGES

- ▶ Building the capacity of all civil servants regarding implementing the law in practice and the allocation of sufficient budget funds are necessary to achieve the effective application of the Law on International and Temporary Protection of Foreigners on children.
- ▶ Ensuring that all state authorities are guided by the principle of the best interest of the child in all proceedings involving children. This should apply from the moment they enter Montenegro until a final decision is made on their application for international protection.

- ▣ Difficult access to education, social and child care and health services for children who are granted international protection, for children of foreigners seeking international protection and for child migrants, due to language and cultural barriers, lack of knowledge about local regulations and personal circumstances.

**Children living on the street.** The children who participated in the consultation process identified children living on the street as a particularly vulnerable group, exposed to various forms of violence and abuse, as well as to trafficking in human beings. They singled out the children who beg on the street because they believe that the rights of these children are violated by their loved ones - parents and other close persons. Roma children who participated in focus groups expressed their opinions on the situation of children who beg on the streets.

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*A lot of Roma children beg on the streets, some even go to coastal towns to beg there, their parents take them there and make them beg, only to take all that money away from them later.*

*For some, it is a habit, for others it is the only way to make living. The police come to us, to the camp (Konik) and tell our parents that they should not let their kids beg. However, some still do it..*

Roma children, focus group participants

There is still no estimate of the number of children living on the street, nor is there any updated study on the underlying causes of their situation. As a consequence, a comprehensive strategy for addressing this problem has never been developed, one that would take into account the recommendations outlined in the *Special Report on Child Begging in Montenegro*<sup>(129)</sup> prepared by the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms. For the time being, there is no support provided for the processes of reintegration of children into the family or for their placement in an alternative care system. There is, however, a service for victims of violence in the Children's Home "Mladost" in Bijela. The PI "Ljubovic" Centre also has an emergency reception unit, a kind of on-call service that provides urgent and immediate intervention if required - temporary, short-term accommodation and care for children and young people with behavioural problems, those found loitering on the street or escaping from their homes, etc. without parental or adult supervision, until a more permanent solution is found in accordance with the law. In Montenegro, preventive support activities for families at risk have not been developed to prevent children from leaving their families and taking to street life. There are also no services such as temporary shelters, which offer some kind of protection to children living on the street, in accordance with their needs. Limited progress has been achieved in terms of carrying out official action in cases of violations of the rights of the child, such as the suppression of begging, forced labour and the exploitation of children. The penal policy targeting parents who send their children to beg is relatively mild and there are no means of sanctioning parents who cannot afford to pay a fine.

129 Special Report on Child Begging in Montenegro, available at: [https://www.ombudsman.co.me/img-publications/11/naucimo\\_ih\\_nesto\\_drugo.pdf](https://www.ombudsman.co.me/img-publications/11/naucimo_ih_nesto_drugo.pdf) (in Montenegrin).



## ▣ KEY CHALLENGES

- ▣ There is no estimate of the number of children living on the streets.
- ▣ There is no comprehensive strategy to address the causes of a large number of children living on the streets, nor to provide support for those children (prevention of and support for the families of children who live on the streets; information available to children living on the streets regarding how to protect themselves from the risk of becoming victims of trafficking and labour exploitation; support services for children living on the streets, etc.)

**Sexual exploitation and trafficking in human beings.** According to data from the aforementioned 2013 survey conducted by IPSOS on violence against children in Montenegro<sup>(130)</sup>, awareness of the presence of sexual violence against children in Montenegro was low – with only 30% of respondents admitting that this problem exists. On the other hand, a survey on the knowledge, attitudes and practices of the citizens of Montenegro on violence against children conducted by the NGO SOS Line Nikšić, the NGO Centre for Women's Rights and UNICEF in late 2016, showed that 8% of citizens knew a child who was the victim of sexual abuse, while 12% of the citizens knew an adult who was a victim of sexual abuse

130 Study on violence against children conducted by Ipsos in 2013 on a sample of 1,000 respondents older than 18. Data from the survey is taken from the Strategy for the prevention and protection of children from violence 2017-2021, which is available at: [www.mrs.gov.me/biblioteka/strategije](http://www.mrs.gov.me/biblioteka/strategije) (in Montenegrin).

as a child.<sup>(131)</sup> In terms of activities that aim to combat such abuse, the following are worth mentioning: the revised Agreement on Mutual Cooperation between State Institutions and NGOs in the area of combating trafficking in human beings has been signed; a coordination body to monitor the implementation of this Agreement has been established; the Government has approved finances for a Shelter for Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings from 2016 to 2019<sup>(132)</sup>; the Ministry of Health now provides free healthcare to potential victims and victims of trafficking in human beings, following the principles of urgency and priority.

However, there are still some evident problems, including: no accurate records of child victims of sexual abuse and exploitation; insufficient number of cases of sexual abuse and exploitation of children get to court; sanctions for perpetrators are very mild; there is no developed shelter network or continuous support for child victims of sexual abuse and exploitation; lack of specialist training for professionals working with child victims and the identification of indicators of sexual abuse and exploitation is poor; a lack of prevention programmes; problems with reporting procedures, child victim identification, inter-departmental cooperation, investigation and prosecution, as well as the safety of the child in the process of protection.

Also, a National Registry for recording the perpetrators of sexual abuse of children has not yet been established.

**KEY CHALLENGES**

- Low level of public awareness about the presence of sexual violence against children.
- A lack of coordination among relevant institutions in prevention, identification of victims and provision of support.
- Insufficient training provided to various professionals to work with child victims of sexual violence.
- A high level of risk for children living in adverse circumstances (Roma and Egyptian children, children seeking international protection and children who are granted international protection, children living on the streets) to become victims of sexual abuse and exploitation.

**Children with behavioural disorders and children in judicial proceedings.** Children with behavioural disorders (children in conflict with the law) present a challenge for both the social and child protection system and the justice system. PI "Ljubović" Centre

131 Ibid.

132 The Law on Social and Child Protection has introduced the licensing of all providers of placement services, including shelter service providers, the inspection of service providers by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and financial support by this Ministry through a public call.

in Podgorica<sup>(133)</sup> is the only institution for social and child care in the entire system of social and child protection in Montenegro. Here an educational measure of referral to a non-penitentiary institution is executed for a period of between six months and two years. The centre provides the following services: enhanced supervision by the guardianship authority, with a day-stay in an educational institution and temporary placement until the preliminary proceedings following the decision of the competent court have been completed; admission and short-term placement of children found loitering, children at high risk of committing criminal offences, children apprehended during an attempt to illegally cross a state border, the placement of unaccompanied children - migrants/foreigners and unaccompanied child foreigners seeking international protection. In 2018, the PI "Ljubović" Centre provided services to a total of 46 children, one child used the day-stay service, 26 children were given short-term placements and 19 children used the institutional treatment services.

The measure of enhanced supervision for a day-stay was imposed in the case of a 17-year-old child. Twenty-six children used the services of the emergency reception unit, five of whom were "returnees" (repeatedly apprehended by the police for loitering, begging, fleeing from home, etc.). Seventeen boys and two girls received institutional treatment. Eleven were referred by competent courts and eight by the social work centres. Among those who used the services of the centre, there was a significant number of them who tested positive for psychoactive substances.

Table 7: Children in conflict with the law in 2017<sup>(134)</sup>

Data	Number
Number of children in conflict with the law	747 (655 boys and 92 girls)
Number of misdemeanour offences committed by children	679
Number of criminal offences committed by children	271
Total number of offences committed by children (misdemeanour + criminal)	950
Number of children who committed criminal offences <sup>(135)</sup>	317
Number of imposed criminal sanctions	332 (of which 10 resulted in referrals to juvenile prison)

Given the number of children in conflict with the law (table 7), the fact is that community services for children at risk and their families and for children with behavioural problems have not yet been established represents a major challenge (day-care centres for children at risk, counselling services for parents of those children, etc.).

The position of children in judicial proceedings has been improved through

134 Data of the Institute for Social and Child Protection

133 The following information was taken from the 2018 Report on the Work of PI "Ljubović" Centre.

135 Data from the TRANSMONEE database, which is available at: <http://www.transmonee.org/>.

the implementation of legal reforms<sup>(136)</sup>. There are 17 licensed child support persons<sup>(137)</sup> in Montenegro, all of whom are on the Support Person list compiled by the Ministry of Justice, and shared with the courts of law. Training for attorneys on the topic of representing children in family law proceedings has also been organized. It was completed by 33 attorneys who are currently on the List of Lawyers for the representation of children in family law proceedings, in cases where the court decides that there is a need for their engagement in accordance with the law. Following UNICEF's expert support, the Ministry of Justice developed materials for children and parents/guardians on the rights of the child, and in particular on the rights of the child in court proceedings and regarding available support services. **The Law on Treatment of Juveniles in Criminal Proceedings**<sup>(138)</sup> introduced a greater degree of criminal law protection not only for children who are in conflict with the law, but also for child victims and witnesses of criminal offences. In addition, this law introduced the mandatory professionalization of those who work with children in criminal proceedings, as well as a range of educational measures to foster the re-socialization of a child in conflict with the law. According to the **Report on the work of the Professional Service of the Supreme Prosecutor's Office**, the opinion of the Professional Service was requested for 34 children - juveniles who had committed criminal offences - for 38 offences they had committed in total in 2017. In 27 cases, the Professional

136 Legislative reforms had been presented in section 2.2.1.1. General measures for implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child - legislation and strategic measures

137 The Law Amending the Family Law, Official Gazette of Montenegro no. 53/16, Art. 317v and Article 317lj.

138 The Law on Treatment of Juveniles in Criminal Proceedings, Official Gazette of Montenegro no. 64/11 and 1/18.

Service proposed use of an educational order, which the public prosecutor for juveniles accepted (19 children completed their educational order; one child partially completed its order; two children continued serving their order in 2018. In the case of five children, the victim of their offence refused to be involved in the educational order, which included a settlement with the victim; therefore, the educational measure was enforced against those children); the educational measure was proposed for four children, which the state prosecutor for juveniles accepted; the evaluation continued for three children in 2018.

Although normative preconditions to provide children in conflict with the law with special treatment have been established, conditions for full application, in practice, have not yet been created. The **Judicial Information System** - PRIS is outdated, so the Ministry of Justice is developing a new information system- JIS, which should allow the data collection on children to be improved in accordance with international standards. UNICEF is providing support for the development and integration of indicators relating to all children in the justice system. There is only a small number of specialized prosecutors for juveniles and there is a great need for their further and continued education. There are no child-friendly rooms<sup>(139)</sup> in the judiciary. In order to address this problem, with the support of UNICEF, and together with relevant partners, a **Study on Modalities for Creating Child-Friendly Rooms in the Judicial System of Montenegro** and the

139 Child-friendly rooms\* in criminal procedure include three rooms: two technically connected rooms (audio-visual communication, recording, recording on a CD) and a waiting room. The room in which to interview a child during criminal procedures (forensic examination) should be simple and with minimum equipment - without additional furniture, toys or other details that disturb or attract attention and interfere with concentration. When arranging a waiting room, it should be noted that children from pre-school to adolescent age will be interviewed.

**Roadmap/Guidelines** for its implementation in the upcoming period have been developed.

In order to address the problem of **enforcing criminal sanctions against children** in premises that are separated from the one in which adult persons serve their sentences, a juvenile prison with a total surface area of 170 square metres has been built. Thanks to a donation from UNICEF, equipment for cultural, sports and educational activities appropriate for children has been provided. However, this prison has not yet been put into operation due to an insufficient number of employees.

There is not one specialized institution in Montenegro in which the educational institutional measures intended for children with intellectual disabilities who have committed a criminal offence can be enforced, despite the fact that this has been stipulated as necessary by the **Law on Treatment of Juveniles in Criminal Proceedings**<sup>(140)</sup>.

#### Child victims and witnesses of crime.

According to the Professional Service of the Supreme State Prosecutor's Office, **children are most often victims** of crimes which contain elements of sexual abuse and physical maltreatment by adults. More often, perpetrators tend to be parents and close relatives, rather than some unknown persons. Data from the TRANSMONEE database shows that the number of crimes in which children were victims stood at 258 in 2017, of which 54 were crimes against life and body (Chapter XIV of the Criminal Code of Montenegro), such as serious bodily injuries (26) and rape (5), etc. Data on child witnesses of crime is not available nor is data on the potential protection of such children through various programmes. According to the **Report on the Work of**

140 The Law on Treatment of Juveniles in Criminal Proceedings, Official Gazette of Montenegro no. 64/11 and 1/18.

**the Professional Service of the Supreme Prosecutor's Office**, the opinion of the Professional Service was requested by public prosecutors for 25 children victims/witnesses of criminal offences (interviews with 21 children were recommended, which the public prosecutor for juveniles accepted). Treatment of child victims is the responsibility of the healthcare system. Children who are victims of criminal offences, who have experienced serious forms of abuse, especially sexual abuse, following an interview with the public prosecutor, are advised to undergo psychological and psychiatric treatment within the healthcare system: Centre for Autism, Developmental Disorders and Paediatric Psychiatry in Podgorica (treatment is provided by a clinical psychologist and child psychiatrist, four child psychiatrists from the Republic of Serbia visit regularly); healthcare centres in each municipality and/or mental healthcare centres (psychologist, psychiatrist)/counseling for young people (psychologist).

#### KEY CHALLENGES

- ▶ Lack of community-based services for children at risk, children with behavioural problems and for their families.
- ▶ There are no child-related indicators in any of the judicial proceedings to be integrated into the new Judicial Information System or into other relevant systems, according to MONSTAT's definitions and statistics.

- ▶ There are no child-friendly interview rooms within the Montenegrin judiciary <sup>(141)</sup>.
- ▶ Alternatives to the detention and sanctioning of children are still insufficiently applied.
- ▶ Free legal aid for all children requesting help in representation before the court has not yet been provided.
- ▶ National human resources should be provided and equipped with appropriate level of professional competency to train professionals, who work with children at risk and children with behavioural problems, from the judiciary and

social and child protection system - specialized ToT (training of trainers).

**Monitoring of the previous final observations and recommendations of the Committee on the Optional Protocol on the Prohibition of the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Pornography.**

Montenegrin legislation and practice address the sale of children in the context of "trafficking in human beings", while the recommendation of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child is to address the "sale of children" separately. Although the Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child relating to the *Optional Protocol on the Prohibition of the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Pornography* are mainly included in *the Strategy for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings 2019–2024* <sup>(142)</sup>, the term "trafficking in human beings/children" remains.

In order to raise public awareness on child-trafficking issues, public campaigns have been organized. In order to enable the proactive identification of children who are victims of the trafficking of children found on the street, children living on the street, Roma and Egyptian children and unaccompanied children, police officers pick up child beggars and take further action, in cooperation with professionals from social work centres, in order to help those children. In addition to this, they engage in collecting data and in monitoring the situation related to trafficking in human beings and illegal migration, as well as to other related criminal offences. In cooperation with the National Office for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, the Ministry of Education

141 According to Montenegrin legislation and procedural rules, only an interview of a child conducted by a public prosecutor for juveniles with the assistance of the Professional Service can be used as evidence in criminal procedures. Such an interview is carried out with audio-visual technology adapted to the needs of the child, in the sense that the child and a representative of the Professional Service are in one room, in which they talk, while in the other, technically connected room are: the public prosecutor for juveniles, who directs the interview, the suspect/ his lawyer, the child's legal representative/attorney and the recording secretary. These persons can participate in the criminal proceedings. They listen to the representative of the Professional Service interviewing the child in the adjacent room. The suspect/lawyer may ask the child a question through the juvenile prosecutor, who decides whether to refer the question to the representative of the Professional Service for further interview with the child. Also, according to legislation and procedural rules, an interview with a child at a police station (sometimes preceded by an interview with the child conducted by a representative of the Centre for Social Work) cannot be used as evidence in criminal proceedings, and the child is therefore again interviewed in the Public Prosecutor's Office in the above-mentioned manner. Thus the child is exposed to repeated victimization and trauma. It is in the best interests of the child NOT TO BE INTERVIEWED at the police station and then again at the Centre for Social Work.

142 Strategy for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings 2019–2024, available at: <https://childhub.org/en/child-protection-news/montenegro-strategy-combating-human-trafficking-2019-2024>.



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produced a leaflet with indicators for identifying victims of trafficking in a form that was adapted to the needs of educational institutions. The definition of child pornography was introduced for the criminal offence of child pornography under Article 211 of the Criminal Code. The National Office for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings has a database on all perpetrators of criminal offences trafficking in human beings. Data on offenders in cases involving child victims can be derived from this.

▼ **KEY CHALLENGES**

- ▶ The state focuses almost exclusively on human trafficking, but this is not identical to the concept of the sale of children - legislation does not provide an explicit definition of the

criminal offence of selling a child in accordance with Articles 2 and 3 of the Optional Protocol on the Prohibition of the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Pornography.

- ▶ No mechanisms and procedures have been established to protect the rights of child victims, including Roma and Egyptian children, children who are granted international protection and unaccompanied child migrants.
- ▶ Insufficient data on programmes for the protection, physical and psychological rehabilitation and social integration of children who are victims. Insufficient data on the training of professionals (legal and psychological) working with victims.

**Monitoring of previous final observations and recommendations of the Committee on the *Optional Protocol on the Participation of Children in Armed Conflicts*.** The *Law on the Army of Montenegro*<sup>(143)</sup> stipulates that a military service obligation arises in the calendar year in which a Montenegrin citizen reaches 18 years of age (Article 188, paragraphs 1 and 2), and that persons under the age of 18 cannot join the Army of Montenegro or the

143 The Law on the Army of Montenegro (Official Gazette of Montenegro no. 51/17)

reserve corps of the Army. Amendments to the *Law on the Army of Montenegro* and the *Law on Defence* are underway and it is expected that they will clearly state that military service is possible only after 18 years of age. Amendments to these laws will be adopted in 2019. Given that the Constitution of Montenegro prescribes that the establishment of secret, subversive and irregular armed forces is prohibited (Article 55, paragraph 2), there is no possibility of children being recruited to paramilitary formations that would potentially operate on, or from, the territory of Montenegro. The *Criminal Code*<sup>(144)</sup> of Montenegro stipulates that recruiting citizens of Montenegro for service in an enemy army or in any other hostile armed forces, or for participating in a war or in an armed conflict against Montenegro or its allies, is punishable by an imprisonment sentence of five to 15 years (Article 478, paragraph 2).

In its next periodic review on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Montenegro will report this to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

144 Criminal Code Montenegro, "Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro" no. 70/03, 13/04, 47/06; "Official Gazette of Montenegro", no. 40/08, 25/10, 32/11, 64/11 – oth. Law, 40/13, 56/13, 14/15, 42/15, 58/15 – oth. Law and 44/17.



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### 3 The vision of exercising the rights of the child

- ▶ Children in Montenegro are able to exercise all their rights, to feel that they are respected and safe citizens and to accept the values and responsibilities which contribute to the prosperity of the entire society.
- ▶ Montenegro is investing in children as the most important human capital, and encouraging them to actively participate in social life and to fully develop their potential.

## 4 Strategic goals, operational objectives with accompanying indicators

Strategic goal	Areas of the Convention to which the strategic goal refers	Strategic goal impact indicators		Operational objectives	Operational objectives performance indicators
<p><b>Strategic Goal II</b></p> <p>IMPROVE ACCESS AND QUALITY OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH PROTECTION AND EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN</p>	<p><b>Family environment and alternative care</b></p> <p>Children without parental care</p> <p><b>Disabilities, primary healthcare and social protection</b></p> <p>Children with disabilities Health and health services Health of adolescents The standard of living</p> <p><b>Education, free time and cultural activities</b></p> <p><b>Early childhood development</b></p>	<p>Number and type of the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child realized in the areas of the Convention covered by Strategic Goal II</p> <p>The number and type of quality improvement measures in social, health protection and education of children</p>		<p>3. An effective alternative care system for children without parental care is provided</p>	<p>a. Number of children placed in institutions</p> <p>b. Other forms of support and the number of children without parental care who are beneficiaries of these forms of support (non-kinship foster care; non-kinship foster care with intensive and additional support; small group homes; living with assistance)</p> <p>c. Number of licensed providers of social care services for children without parental care (by type of services, by type of service provider)</p>
				<p>4. Support for children with disabilities and other children from vulnerable groups and adolescents to make use of free and timely healthcare and adequate social protection is enhanced</p>	<p>a. A register of children with disabilities in the public health to be set up and maintained</p> <p>b. The number and type of integrated services for children with disabilities and their families</p> <p>c. NILJ23 MDG4.1.1. Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)</p> <p>d. NILJ24. MDG4.1.2, under 5 mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)</p> <p>e. NILJ28 MDG4.2.1. proportion of vaccinated infants against smallpox (%)</p> <p>f. NILJ29 MDG4.2.2. Proportion of vaccinated children against Hepatitis B and with BCG, DTP, OPV (%)</p> <p>g. SDG3.7.2. Adolescent birth rate (aged 10-14 years, aged 15-19 years) per 1,000 women in that age group</p>



Strategic goal	Areas of the Convention to which the strategic goal refers	Strategic goal impact indicators		Operational objectives	Operational objectives performance indicators
<p><b>Strategic Goal II</b></p> <p><b>IMPROVE ACCESS AND QUALITY OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH PROTECTION AND EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN</b></p>	<p><b>Family environment and alternative care</b></p> <p>Children without parental care</p> <p><b>Disabilities, primary healthcare and social protection</b></p> <p>Children with disabilities Health and health services Health of adolescents The standard of living</p> <p><b>Education, free time and cultural activities</b></p> <p><b>Early childhood development</b></p>	<p>Number and type of the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child realized in the areas of the Convention covered by Strategic Goal II</p> <p>The number and type of quality improvement measures in social, health protection and education of children</p>		<p>5. Reduced material poverty of children</p>	<p>a. The child poverty risk rate</p> <p>b. The rate of material deprivation of children during the year</p> <p>c. The child poverty risk or social exclusion rate during the year (ARPE)</p>
				<p>6. Improved access to education for vulnerable children, the quality of education for all children and access to quality cultural and media content</p>	<p>a. Percentage of coverage of preschool education</p> <p>b. Primary school attendance rate</p> <p>c. Number of secondary school students</p> <p>d. Number of children with disabilities in education, by educational level</p> <p>e. Number of Roma and Egyptian children in education, by educational level</p> <p>f. PISA testing results</p> <p>g. NID39. Percentage of children who drop out of education in Montenegro</p> <p>h. NID44. Proportion of teaching hours (%) dedicated to art compared to total number of teaching hours (grades 7-8)</p>
				<p>7. Enhanced support for early child development</p>	<p>a. Number of paediatricians in the country, by health care level</p> <p>b. Number of centres for children “with special needs” in healthcare centres</p> <p>c. Number of children of early age (up to school age) in foster care (children without disabilities and children with disabilities)</p>

Strategic goal	Areas of the Convention to which the strategic goal refers	Strategic goal impact indicators		Operational objectives	Operational objectives performance indicators
<p><b>Strategic Goal III</b></p> <p><b>PREVENT ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN AND IMPROVE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIAL CHILD PROTECTION MEASURES</b></p>	<p><b>Violence against children</b></p> <p>Violence against children                      Corporal punishment                      Harmful practices                      SOS telephone line</p> <p><b>Special protection measures</b></p> <p>Children seekers of international and temporary protection and children who are granted international protection                      Children living on the street                      Sexual exploitation and trafficking in human being                      Children with behavioural problems                      Children in judicial proceedings                      Child victims and witnesses of crime</p> <p><b>Monitoring of previous concluding observations and recommendations of the Committee on: <i>Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography and Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts</i></b></p>	<p>Number and type of the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child realized in the areas of the Convention covered by Strategic goal III</p> <p>Number and type of improvements made in the area of prevention of violence against children and improvements in implementing special child protection measures</p>		<p>8. Improved prevention of all types of violence against children and support to children-victims</p>	<p>a. Number of child abuse cases (all forms of violence and neglect) registered by/reported to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a.1. Health sector</li> <li>a.2. Centres for social work</li> <li>a.3. Police</li> <li>a.4. Prosecutor’s office</li> <li>a.5. Education</li> </ul> <p>b. Number of boys and girls exposed to abuse (all forms of violence and neglect) who are provided with support measures within:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b.1. Healthcare</li> <li>b.2. Social and child protection</li> <li>b.3. Police</li> <li>b.4. Judiciary</li> <li>b.5. Education</li> </ul> <p>c. NID17. Number of court proceedings (criminal, offensive, and protective measures) where the perpetrator had protective measure pronounced for them in relation to children victims of violence, compared to total number of court proceedings where the perpetrators and/ or victim had children at the annual level;</p>

Strategic goal	Areas of the Convention to which the strategic goal refers	Strategic goal impact indicators		Operational objectives	Operational objectives performance indicators
<p><b>Strategic Goal III</b></p> <p><b>PREVENT ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN AND IMPROVE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIAL CHILD PROTECTION MEASURES</b></p>	<p><b>Violence against children</b></p> <p>Violence against children Corporal punishment Harmful practices SOS telephone line</p> <p><b>Special protection measures</b></p> <p>Child seekers of international and temporary protection and children who are granted international protection</p> <p>Children living on the street</p> <p>Sexual exploitation and trafficking in human being</p> <p>Children with behavioural problems</p> <p>Children in judicial proceedings</p> <p>Child victims and witnesses of crime</p> <p><b>Monitoring of previous concluding observations and recommendations of the Committee on: <i>Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography and Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts</i></b></p>			<p>9. Enhanced support for children to whom special protection measures apply</p>	<p>a. Number of undecided applications from persons under the age of 18 to obtain the status of foreigner</p> <p>b. SDG16.2.2. Number of victims of human trafficking, per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation</p> <p>c. Total number of offences against children during the year</p> <p>d. Total number of offences committed by children or with the participation of children</p> <p>e. Total number of child perpetrators of crimes during a year</p> <p>f. Total number of children who were detained during a year</p> <p>g. Number of child perpetrators of a criminal offence on whom were imposed alternative measures or whose criminal proceedings were suspended</p>
				<p>10. Improved protection of children from sale, child pornography and involvement in armed conflicts</p>	<p>a. Number and type of implemented previous concluding observations and recommendations of the Committee on: <i>Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography and Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts</i></p>

Strategic goal	Areas of the Convention to which the strategic goal refers	Strategic goal impact indicators		Operational objectives	Operational objectives performance indicators
<p><b>Strategic Goal I</b></p> <p><b>ENHANCE INTER-DEPARTMENTAL AND INTER-SECTOR COOPERATION AND OTHER KEY CONDITIONS FOR EXERCISING THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD</b></p>	<p><b>General implementation measure</b></p> <p>Legislation Coordination Reallocation of resources Data collection Independent monitoring Dissemination, awareness raising and training Cooperation with civil society</p> <p><b>Definition of the child</b></p> <p><b>General principles from the Convention</b></p> <p>Non-discrimination The best interest of the child Respect for the child’s opinion/participation</p> <p><b>Civic rights and freedoms</b></p> <p>Birth registration Freedom of thought, conscience and religion</p> <p><b>Ratification of international instruments for the protection of human rights</b></p> <p><b>Cooperation with international bodies</b></p>	<p>The number and type of recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child realized in the areas of the Convention covered by Strategic Goal I</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improved Implementation of all processes related to the data on children, including the inter-departmental and inter-sector exchange of such data</li>   <li>2. Improved implementation of legislative, strategic and financial frameworks and of the coordination of all stakeholders in exercising and monitoring the rights of the child</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The number of child-related indicators planned in the NSSD until 2030 that are regularly monitored.</li> <li>b. The number of operating systems belonging to different line ministries, public institutions and MONSTAT that are linked and continuously exchange data on children.</li> <li>c. The level to which a functional, centralized and comprehensive system for collection of data on children is developed.</li> <li>d. The number of institutions that sustain inter-sector cooperation in the promotion and realization of all operational goals of the Strategy for the Exercise of the Rights of the Child 2019-2023.</li> <li>a. Number and type of laws in which the definition of the child is harmonised with the definition in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.</li> <li>b. The Secretariat of the Council for the Rights of the Child is established.</li> <li>c. The mandate of the Council for the Rights of the Child to be broadened to include all areas from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and optional protocols.</li> <li>d. The state allocates funds for the Council’s work</li> <li>e. Number of NGO programmes, services and projects that contribute to the Strategy’s goals, funded from state sources/calls.</li> <li>f. Programme budget to be introduced (analysis of spending on children is possible)</li> </ol>

## 5 Description of the activities of authorities responsible for implementation of the Strategy

The implementation of the Strategy for the Exercise of the Rights of the Child 2019-2023 will be coordinated by the Council for the Rights of the Child of Montenegro.

Line ministries and other institutions whose representatives were members of the Strategy Working Group will remain primarily responsible for the direct implementation of this Strategy: the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Interior Affairs, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, the Office for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, and the Ministry of Finance. In accordance with their mandates in relation to children, the competences and responsibilities of all of these ministries and other institutions are precisely defined in the Action Plan (see Chapter 7).

In addition to their involvement in activities for children and with stakeholders working with children, all line ministries and institutions will be involved in inter-departmental cooperation and inter-sector cooperation, primarily with the NGO sector and international organizations. Such cooperation makes it possible to achieve the goals of the *Strategy for Exercising the Rights of the Child 2019-2023*. Inter-departmental cooperation will be reflected in joint activities aimed at achieving the goals of the Strategy, including joint training programmes for professionals organized by different sectors to tackle individual issues from the domain

of children's rights, to the development of integrated services for children.

During the process of the Strategy's implementation, where needed, all ministries will involve institutions that fall within their sector - educational institutions, centres for social work, primary health centres, etc. In addition to this, all line ministries and other institutions will cooperate with institutions that collect and process various data on children, such as the Statistical Office of Montenegro (MONSTAT) and the Institute for Public Health of Montenegro.

Within the context of inter-sector cooperation, partnerships with NGOs and international organizations will be established in order to achieve the objectives of the Strategy through various projects and programmes; ministries and other institutions will ensure that organizational authority is achieved regarding all matters relating to the Strategy. Each line ministry and institution will also promote and present the goals of the Strategy for Exercising the Rights of the Child 2019-2023 in their public appearances and presentations.

It is estimated that the total funds needed for the implementation of the Strategy until the end of 2030<sup>(145)</sup> amount to EUR 4,000,000. These funds will be provided from the budget (around 70%) and from donations (around 30%). The estimated funds needed for implementation of the Action Plan 2019-2020 are given at the end of the Action Plan.

145 This is an indicative amount that will be spent for the implementation of the Strategy for Exercising the Rights of the Child 2019-2023. The estimate is made based on the actual approach used for budget development.



## 6 Reporting and evaluation method

Reporting on the implementation of the Strategy for Exercising the Rights of the Child 2019-2023 will be based on monitoring the performance indicators from the Action Plan and on evidence that the Action Plan has implemented its operational objectives during the year.

This implies that data on the implementation of activities planned for each year will be collected continuously. At the end of each year, an annual review of the implementation of the Action Plan will be carried out, which will serve as a basis for the preparation of the annual implementation report. The annual report is supposed to provide an answer to the following question: What has been done and how much has that contributed to achieving the operational objectives of the Strategy? Most indicators relate to operational objectives that are already being monitored in accordance with the National Sustainable Development Strategy by 2030 or to others that are included in the TRANSMONEE database. It is also important to monitor and annually report on how the implementation of the Action Plan of the Strategy contributes to the implementation of recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare will coordinate the development of future action plans for the period covered by the Strategy. The implementation of the Strategy and annual action plans will be monitored by the Working Group for Monitoring and Reporting on the Implementation of the Strategy. Since the development and implementation of programme measures from the Strategy implies an inter-sector ap-

proach at all levels, reporting on the implementation of Strategy action plans will be performed by the ministries involved in the implementation, based on the principle of rotation: the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Justice. Thus, each ministry will be responsible for, and play its own role in, the implementation of the Strategy and for achieving the results which form the basis for reporting. The first reporting period will be July 2019 - end of December 2020. All subsequent reports will be for the period of one year. After reviewing the report and making potential corrections, the Working Group for Monitoring and Reporting on the Implementation of the Strategy will present its report on the implementation of the Action Plan of the Strategy for the given year to the members of the Council for the Rights of the Child, for their consideration and recommendation for adoption. The annual report will be sent to the Government of Montenegro to decide on its adoption. The adopted reports will be available to the public on the website of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare.

Evaluation of the implementation of the Strategy will be carried out in 2023, in quarters 3 and 4,<sup>146</sup> in the form of an external final evaluation done by an independent expert. This evaluation will focus on reviewing the achievements made in terms of the operational objectives and strategic goals and on the impact of the implemented Strategy regarding children's rights in Montenegro. Planned funds for this evaluation amount to EUR 20,000 and will be provided from the budget and donors.

<sup>146</sup> Evaluation needs to be carried out in this period so that its findings can be included in the final report on the implementation of the Strategy, as prescribed by the methodology for policy development, preparation and monitoring of implementation of strategic documents.



## 7 Accompanying action plan with estimated costs for the period

STRATEGIC GOAL I:		IMPROVE INTER-DEPARTMENTAL AND INTER-SECTOR COOPERATION AND OTHER KEY CONDITIONS FOR EXERCISING THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD	
Operational Objective 1:		Improved implementation of all processes related to the data on children, including their inter-departmental and inter-sector exchange	
<b>Performance indicator a)</b> Number of indicators on children planned in the <i>NSSD by 2030</i> regularly monitored (Council on the Rights of the Child)	<i>Baseline value</i> 2018 22 indicators <sup>(1)</sup>	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i> Year 2021  All ministries and other institutions to monitor all indicators for which they are responsible	<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i> Year 2023  All ministries and other institutions to monitor all indicators for which they are responsible
<b>Performance indicator b)</b> Number of operating systems of different line ministries and public institutions that are linked and constantly exchange data on children (ME, MLSW, MH, IPH, MJ)	<i>Baseline value</i> Year 2018 0	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i> Year 2021 4 (ME, MH, IPH, MLSW)	<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i> Year 2023 5 (ME, MH, IPH, MLSW, MJ)
<b>Performance indicator c)</b> Development level of functional centralized or comprehensive system for the collection of data on children	<i>Baseline value</i> Year 2018 No centralized or comprehensive system	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i> Year 2021 Developed pilot version	<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i> Year 2023 Developed functional, centralized and comprehensive system
<b>Performance indicator d)</b> Number of institutions and organizations involved in inter-sector cooperation in the promotion and realization of all operational objectives of the Strategy for Exercising the Rights of the Child 2019–2023.	<i>Baseline value</i> Year 2018 0	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i> Year 2021 6 (MLSW, ME, MC, MH, MHMR, NOFTHB), and at least 5 NGOs	<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i> Year 2023 9 (MLSW, ME, MC, MH, MJ, MI, MHMR, NOFTHB, MD, MFA), and at least 7 NGOs

STRATEGIC GOAL I:		IMPROVE INTER-DEPARTMENTAL AND INTER-SECTOR COOPERATION AND OTHER KEY CONDITIONS FOR EXERCISING THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD				
Operational Objective 1:		Improved implementation of all processes related to the data on children, including their inter-departmental and inter-sector exchange				
Activity that has an effect on the implementation of operative objective 1	Result indicator	Responsible institutions	Start date	Planned end date	Funds planned for implementation of activities	Source of funding
<b>1.1.</b> Regular collection and sharing of data, which cover all areas of the Convention and its optional protocols, among relevant sectors and their use for policies, programmes, and projects	Number of areas in which data on children is regularly collected and shared; Numbers and types of policies, programmes, and projects based on this data	MH, ME, MLSW, MI, MJ, MHMR, NOFTHB, IPH, MONSTAT	I quarter of 2020	IV quarter of 2020	Regular funds	Budget
<b>1.2.</b> Improvement of individual systems for the collection of data on children and for monitoring the situation at a departmental level where necessary - preparation and planning	Number of individual information systems of ministries and public institutions to be improved	MLSW, MH, ME <sup>149</sup>	I quarter of 2020	IV quarter of 2020	Regular funds	Budget
<b>1.3.</b> Improvement of the independent monitoring of children's rights – Amendments to the Law on the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms (explicit definition of the Deputy Protector's mandate and of the Department for the Rights of the Child and the allocation of appropriate resources)	Number and type of responsibilities of the Deputy Protector and of the Department defined by the mandate; Scope/amount of human, material and financial resources for the implementation of the mandate	Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms, Government, Parliament of Montenegro	I quarter of 2020	III quarter of 2020	Regular funds	Budget

147 ME – 7; MLSW – 5; IPH – 5; MI – 1; NOFTHB – 1; only MONSTAT – 3. There are indicators monitored and expressed by both MONSTAT and other institutions.

148 For some of the activities it is planned that they last longer, or that they are continuously implemented, during the implementation of this Strategy. This plan includes only activities that will be carried out during the period 2019–2020 or in one of these two years.

149 For the Ministry of Justice, see activity 9.4.

STRATEGIC GOAL I:		IMPROVE INTER-DEPARTMENTAL AND INTER-SECTOR COOPERATION AND OTHER KEY CONDITIONS FOR EXERCISING THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD	
Operational Objective 2:		Improved application of the legislative, strategic and financial framework and the coordination of all stakeholders in exercising and monitoring the rights of the child	
<b>Performance indicator a)</b>	<i>Baseline value</i> Year 2018	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i>	<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i>
Numbers and types of laws in which the definition of the child is aligned with the definition in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child	2  Law on Social and Child Protection; Family Law	Year 2021  At least 50% of the laws related to children or relevant for children	Year 2023  All laws related to children or relevant for children
<b>Performance indicator b)</b>	<i>Baseline value</i> Year 2018	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i>	<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i>
Secretariat of the Council for the Rights of the Child (CRC) is established	Secretariat of the Council for the Rights of the Child does not exist	Year 2021  Secretariat of the Council for the Rights of the Child is established	Year 2023  Secretariat of the Council for the Rights of the Child is established and operational
<b>Performance indicator c)</b>	<i>Baseline value</i> Year 2018	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i>	<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i>
CRC's mandate is extended to all areas of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and optional protocols (MLSW)	CRC monitors seven areas <sup>150</sup> of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child	Year 2021  CRC monitors all areas of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and optional protocols	Year 2023  CRC monitors all areas of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and optional protocols
<b>Performance indicator d)</b>	<i>Baseline value</i> Year 2018	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i>	<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i>
Country allocates financial resources for the work of the Council (MLSW)	No financial allocations for the CRC	Year 2021  Financial resources for the CRC are allocated	Year 2023  Financial resources for the CRC are allocated

150 Council on the Rights of the Child mainly monitors the following areas of the Convention on the Rights of the Child: General principles of the Convention; Citizens, rights and freedoms; Family environment and alternative care; Difficulties in development, primary health and social protection; Education, leisure and cultural activities; Violence against children, and Special measure of protection.

STRATEGIC GOAL I:		IMPROVE INTER-DEPARTMENTAL AND INTER-SECTOR COOPERATION AND OTHER KEY CONDITIONS FOR EXERCISING THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD				
Operational Objective 2:		Improved application of the legislative, strategic and financial framework and the coordination of all stakeholders in exercising and monitoring the rights of the child				
<b>Performance indicator e)</b>	<i>Baseline value</i> Year 2018	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i>	<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i>			
Performance indicator e) Number of NGO programmes, services, and projects which contribute to the goals of the Strategy, and which are funded from government sources/ call for proposals (MLSW)	4	Year 2021  8 (increase by 100%)	Year 2023  10 (increase by 150%)			
<b>Performance indicator f)</b>	<i>Baseline value</i> Year 2018	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i>	<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i>			
Programme budget introduced (analysis of costs for children is possible) (ME, MLSW, MH, MC, MJ, MI, NOFTHB)	Programme budget not introduced	Year 2021  Programme budget introduced	Year 2023  Programme budget applied and expenditure for children is analysed			
Activity that has an effect on the implementation of operative objective 2	Result indicator	Responsible institutions	Start date	Planned end date	Funds planned for implementation of activities	Source of funding
<b>2.1.</b> Analysis of laws related to children or relevant for children and a list of laws in which the definition of the child is not aligned with the definition from the Convention	Proper list of laws is prepared	MJ, ME, MH, MLSW, MHMR, Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms	I quarter of 2020	IV quarter of 2020	Regular funds	Budget
<b>2.2.</b> Implementation of activities on the prevention of discrimination against children (full implementation of all laws prohibiting discrimination; campaigns on the tolerance of diversity and on equal value for both sexes, punishing perpetrators)	Number of registered cases of children discriminated against regarding access to their rights within the educational system, the health system, the social and child protection system and regarding their access to justice	MI, Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms, ME, MH, MLSW, MJ	III quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	Regular funds	Budget



STRATEGIC GOAL I:		IMPROVE INTER-DEPARTMENTAL AND INTER-SECTOR COOPERATION AND OTHER KEY CONDITIONS FOR EXERCISING THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD				
Operational Objective 2:		Improved application of the legislative, strategic and financial framework and the coordination of all stakeholders in exercising and monitoring the rights of the child				
Activity that has an effect on the implementation of operative objective 2	Result indicator	Responsible institutions	Start date	Planned end date	Funds planned for implementation of activities	Source of funding
2.3. Development of clear and operational procedures for the implementation of the principle of the best interest for the child in all areas concerning children (all judicial procedures and public policies)	Number and type (area) of developed operational procedures that are regularly implemented	ME, MH, MI, MJ, MLSW, MHMR, NOFTHB, IPH, MONSTAT	I quarter of 2020	IV quarter of 2020	Regular funds	Budget
2.4. Providing conditions for the registration of the birth of every child	All children born in the territory of Montenegro are registered	MI, MLSW, ME, MH	III quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	Regular funds	Budget
2.5. Continuous strengthening of the role of the Council for the Rights of the Child (extension of the mandate to all areas of the Convention and optional protocols, interdepartmental cooperation, increase the visibility of the Council's work)	Number and type of coordination activities of the Council: a) envisaged by the mandate, and b) scope of human, material and financial resources for the work of the Council	MLSW	IV quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 20,000 per year	Budget <sup>151</sup>
2.6. Strengthening of the institutional structure of the Council for the Rights of the Child	Establishment and work of the Secretariat of the Council for the Rights of the Child	MLSW	IV quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 20,000 per year	Budget
2.7. Promotion of basic principles of the Convention and its optional protocols	Number of implemented promotional activities;  Number and type of target groups in promotional activities (parents, children, local community, etc.)	ME, MHMR, MLSW, MH, MI, MJ, NOFTHB, IPH and health institutions, MONSTAT, CRC	I quarter of 2020	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 5,000	Budget

151 MLSW budget.

2.8. Systematic inclusion of NGOs in the implementation of the Convention and optional protocols (trainings, workshops, round tables, development of plans and programmes, development of services, development of public policies)	Number of NGOs included in the implementation of the Convention and optional protocols	ME, MLSW, MZ, MUP, MJ, MHMR, NOFTHB, IPH, MONSTAT, in cooperation with the NGO sector	III quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 4,000 (2,000 EUR/ per year)	Budget
2.9. Strengthening of the control role of Parliament in monitoring of the rights of the child	Number and type of activities of the Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms regarding this Strategy	The Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms of the Parliament of Montenegro	III quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	Regular funds	Budget
STRATEGIC GOAL II:		IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY AND QUALITY OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN				
Operational Objective 3:		Effective system of alternative care provided for children without parental care				
<b>Performance indicator a)</b>	<b>Baseline value</b>	<b>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</b>	<b>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</b>			
Number of children without parental care placed in child care institutions <sup>152</sup> (TRANSMONEE)	Year 2018  100	Year 2021  Number of children placed in institutions reduced at least 10%	Year 2023  Number of children placed in institutions reduced at least 20%			
<b>Performance indicator b)</b>	<b>Baseline value</b>	<b>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</b>	<b>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</b>			
Performance indicator b) Other types of support and number of children without parental care – beneficiaries of these types of support (non-kinship foster care; non-kinship foster care with intensive and additional support; small group homes; housing with support) (MLSW)	Year 2018  Number of children - beneficiaries of non-kinship foster care – 49 Number of children beneficiaries of non-kinship foster care with intensive and additional support – 4 Number of functional small group homes – 1 Number of flats for housing with support – 0	Year 2021  Number of children beneficiaries of non-kinship foster care – 60 Number of children beneficiaries of non-kinship foster care with intensive and additional support – 10 Number of functional small group homes –2 in total Number of flats for housing with support – at least 4	Year 2023  Number of children beneficiaries of non-kinship foster care – 60 Number of children beneficiaries of non-kinship foster care with intensive and additional support – 10 Number of functional small group homes –3 in total Number of flats for housing with support – at least 6			

152 Children's Home "Mladost" in Bijela, Pl Ljubovic (number of children without parental care), Small group community in Bijelo Polje and children in institutions in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

STRATEGIC GOAL II:		IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY AND QUALITY OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN				
Operational Objective 3:		Effective system of alternative care provided for children without parental care				
Performance indicator c)	Baseline value Year 2018	Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document Year 2021 At least 30	Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document Year 2023 At least 40			
Number of licensed providers of social protection services for children without parental care (by types of services, by types of service providers)	10					
Activity that has an effect on the implementation of operational objective 3	Result indicator	Responsible institutions	Start date	Planned end date	Funds planned for implementation of activities	Source of funding
3.1. Analysis of needs and possibilities for the introduction of support services in the community for biological families with the aim of preventing the measure of a child being taken from its family	Analysis done and recommendations for the development of services defined	ISCP, MLSW	I quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 10,000 (EUR 3,000 for 2019, and EUR 7,000 for 2020)	Budget
3.2. Establishment of the Centre for Foster Care at the Children's Home "Mladost" in Bijela (for assessment of foster parents, capacity strengthening of foster families, foster care promotion, etc.)	Functional Centre for Foster Care developed	MLSW	I quarter of 2020	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 20,000	Budget
3.3. Development, accreditation, and implementation of a foster care training programme adapted to the needs of Montenegro	Developed and accredited foster care training programme,  Number of implemented training programmes;  Number of participants	Institute for Social and Child Protection	III quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 20,000 (In 2020 - implementation)	Budget <sup>153</sup>

153 With a possibility of using donor resources from IPA 2.

154 Ibid.

3.4. Providing more intensive support for children leaving the state system through supported housing and counselling (by the Children's Home "Mladost")	At least one flat for supported housing and counselling	MLSW	II quarter of 2020	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 50,000	Budget <sup>154</sup>
3.5. Introduction of complaint mechanisms for the foster care service and for other services for children without parental care	Complaint mechanism for services is established for: foster care, small group community/home, housing with support and flyers and evaluation sheets produced	MLSW	IV quarter of 2019	III quarter of 2020	EUR 1,000	Budget
STRATEGIC GOAL II:		IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY AND QUALITY OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN				
Operational Objective 4:		Improved support to children with disabilities and other children from vulnerable groups and adolescents in exercising free of charge and timely health and proper social protection				
Performance indicator a)	Baseline value Year 2018	Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document Year 2021	Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document Year 2023			
Register of children with disabilities in public health is established and kept (MH, IPH)	Register is not established	Register established	Register is continuously kept			
Performance indicator b)	Baseline value Year 2018	Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document Year 2021	Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document Year 2023			
Number and type of integrated services <sup>155</sup> for children with disabilities and their families (MH, MLSW, ME)	0	At least 2	At least 4			
Performance indicator c)	Baseline value Year 2017	Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document Year 2021	Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document Year 2023			
NILJ23. MDG4.1.1. Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births) (MONSTAT and IPH)	1.3%	Up to 1%	Less than 1%			

155 Integrated services – support services, in this case for children with disabilities and their families, which are introduced and implemented through the cooperation of the healthcare, social and child protection and educational services. Recommendations for these services are given by: Irimija, R., Kirjacesku, D. and Vasic, S. Analysis of support and multi-sectoral response to the needs of children with disabilities in Montenegro, Pluriconsult, 2018.

STRATEGIC GOAL II: IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY AND QUALITY OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN			
Operational Objective 4:		Improved support to children with disabilities and other children from vulnerable groups and adolescents in exercising free of charge and timely health and proper social protection	
<b>Performance indicator d)</b>	<i>Baseline value</i> Year 2017 2.7%	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i> Year 2021 2%	<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i> Year 2023 Less than 2%
NILJ24. MDG4.1.2, Mortality rate among children up to 5 years old (per 1,000 live born children) (MONSTAT and IPH)			
<b>Performance indicator e)</b>	<i>Baseline value</i> Year 2017 57.83% (MMR1)	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i> Year 2021 75%	<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i> Year 2023 95%
Performance indicator e) NILJ28 MDG4.2.1. Share of 1 year-old children vaccinated against measles (%) (IPH)			
<b>Performance indicator f)</b>	<i>Baseline value</i> Year 2017 73.45% – hepatitis B; 86.64% – DTaP-IPV-Hib vaccine and 93.3% – BCG	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i> Year 2021 At least 95%	<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i> Year 2023 Over 95%
NILJ29 MDG4.2.2. Share of children vaccinated with BCG, DTP, OPV and vaccinated against hepatitis B (%) (IPH)			
<b>Performance indicator g)</b>	<i>Baseline value</i> Year 2015 11.12%	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i> Year 2021 Less than 7%	<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i> Year 2023 Less than 3%
SDG3.7.2. Adolescent birth rate (aged 10–14 years; aged 15–19 years) per 1,000 women in that age group (MONSTAT)			

Activity that has an effect on the implementation of operational objective 4	Result indicator	Responsible institutions	Start date	Planned end date	Funds planned for implementation of activities	Source of funding
<b>4.1.</b> Assessment of needs and definition of priorities for the introduction of new counselling offices for adolescents in the areas of: reproductive health, use of psychoactive substances and mental health	Number and type of defined priorities;  Number and location (place) of planned counselling offices	MH	III quarter of 2020	IV quarter of 2020	Regular funds	Budget
<b>4.2.</b> Specialization of clinical psychologists and child psychiatrists to work with adolescents in centres for mental health (in accordance with the plan for each year)	Number and structure of specialist trainees	MH	I quarter of 2020	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 90,000	Budget
<b>4.3.</b> Provision of support to parents of children with disabilities through services that enable children to stay in their family (assistance at home, parenting programmes, relief-service, etc.)	Number of services for children with disabilities which enable them to stay in their family;  Number of beneficiaries in each of the services	MLSW	III quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 100,000 (EUR 50,000/ per year)	Budget <sup>156</sup>
<b>4.4.</b> Ensuring that day-care facilities/centre work only with children with disabilities (without young/ adult beneficiaries)	At least five existing day-care centres work only with such children	MLSW	I quarter of 2020	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 20,000	Budget <sup>157</sup>
<b>Operational Objective 5:</b>		Reduced material poverty of children				
<b>Performance indicator a)</b>	<i>Baseline value</i> Year 2017 31.7%	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of strategic document</i> Year 2021 Up to 30%		<i>Target value at the end of implementation of strategic document</i> Year 2023 Up to 28%		
Rate of children at risk of poverty (MONSTAT)						
<b>Performance indicator b)</b>	<i>Baseline value</i> Year 2017 material deprivation – 38.2% significant material deprivation – 18.2% severe material deprivation – 8.4%	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i> Year 2021 To achieve the status from 2014 material deprivation – 38.2% (2017) significant material deprivation – 16.4% (2014) severe material deprivation – 7.6% (2014)		<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i> Year 2023 To achieve the status from 2013 material deprivation – 33.7% (2013) significant material deprivation – 12.4% (2013) severe material deprivation – 6.9% (2013)		
Material deprivation rate among children during the year (MONSTAT)						

156 With possible support of IPA 2.  
157 Ibid.

<b>STRATEGIC GOAL II:</b>		<b>IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY AND QUALITY OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN</b>				
<b>Operational Objective 5:</b>		<b>Reduced material poverty of children</b>				
<b>Performance indicator c)</b>	<i>Baseline value</i>	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i>		<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i>		
At risk of poverty or social exclusion rate during year (AROPE) (MONSTAT)	Year 2017 40.1%	Year 2021 Up to 39%	Year 2023 Up to 38%			
<b>Activity that has an effect on the implementation of operational objective 5</b>	<b>Result indicator</b>	<b>Responsible institutions</b>	<b>Start date</b>	<b>Planned end date</b>	<b>Funds planned for implementation of activities</b>	<b>Source of funding</b>
<b>5.1.</b> Provision of free access to education and health services at all levels for children from the poorest households <sup>158</sup>	Number and type of support available for free access to education and health;  Number of children beneficiaries of each type of support and total at an annual level	ME, MH	III quarter of 2019 (continued provision of already developed types of support)	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 50,000	Budget
<b>5.3.</b> Development and adoption of a plan for the implementation of recommendations from the analysis on multidimensional poverty of children (expected by the end of 2019)	Plan for implementing recommendations is prepared	MLSW, ME, MH, ME, MF, IS CP, EA	II quarter of 2020	IV quarter 2020	EUR 5,000	
<b>Operational Objective 6:</b>		<b>Increased accessibility to education for children from vulnerable groups, quality of education for all children and access to quality cultural and media content</b>				
<b>Performance indicator a)</b>	<i>Baseline value</i>	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i>		<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i>		
Percentage of pre-school education coverage (ME)	Year 2018 48% <sup>160</sup>	Year 2021 60%	Year 2023 75%			

158 Free textbooks in primary schools, accessories, kit, support with clothes and footwear, free and accessible transport, free access to specialist services in healthcare, etc.

159 Further implementation of the plan, beyond 2020, will also require donor funds.

160 In 2018, according to data from the MEIS database, 21,410 children attended preschool education, compared with a total of 44,566 children of pre-school age (from birth to starting school), according to data from the TRANSMONEE database.

<b>Performance indicator b)</b>	<i>Baseline value</i>	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i>	<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i>
Primary education attendance rate (ME)	Year 2018 99.5% <sup>161</sup>	Year 2021 100%	Year 2023 100%
<b>Performance indicator c)</b>	<i>Baseline value</i>	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i>	<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i>
Number of secondary school students (ME)	Year 2018 27,798	Year 2021 <b>At least 28,000</b>	Year 2023 At least 28,500
<b>Performance indicator d)</b>	<i>Baseline value</i>	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i>	<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i>
Number of children with disabilities in education, by levels of education (ME)	Year 2018 Total: 4,892 Preschool education: 727 Primary schools: 3,368 Secondary schools: 797	Year 2021 Total: at least 5,150 Preschool education: at least 800 Primary schools: 3,500 Secondary schools: at least 850	Year 2023 Total: at least 5,350 Preschool education: at least 850 children Primary schools: 3,600 Secondary schools: at least 900
<b>Performance indicator e)</b>	<i>Baseline value</i>	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i>	<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i>
Number of Roma and Egyptian children in education, by educational level (ME)	Year 2018 Total: 2,061 (1,091 M+970 F) Preschool: 126 (76 M+50 F) Primary school: 1,799 (941 M+818 F) Secondary school: 136 (74 M+62 F)	Year 2021 Total: more than 2,200 Preschool: more than 150 Primary school: at least 1,900 Secondary school: more than 150	Year 2023 Total: more than 2,400 Preschool: more than 200 Primary school: at least 2,000 Secondary school: more than 200
<b>Performance indicator f)</b>	<i>Baseline value</i>	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i>	<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i>
PISA test results (ME)	Year 2015 (Reading – 427; Mathematics – 418; Science – 411)	Year 2021 (Reading – 437; Mathematics – 425; Science – 420)	Year 2023 (Reading – 450; Mathematics – 450; Science – 450)

161 In 2018, according to data from the MEIS database, 67,495 children attended primary school, compared with a total of 67,864 children of appropriate age, according to data from the TRANSMONEE database.

Operational Objective 6: Increased accessibility to education for children from vulnerable groups, quality of education for all children and access to quality cultural and media content						
Performance indicator g)	Baseline value	Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document		Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document		
NID39. Drop-out proportion of Roma and Egyptian children in primary education in Montenegro (ME)	Year 2018 0.17%	Year 2021 Less than 0.12%	Year 2023 Less than 0.10%			
Activity that has an effect on the implementation of operational objective 6	Result indicator	Responsible institutions	Start date	Planned end date	Funds planned for implementation of activities	Source of funding
6.1. Integration of Roma and Egyptian children in: a) early, b) primary, and c) secondary education	Number and type of activities that encourage integration at each educational level;	ME	III quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 52,000 a) EUR 6,000 / per year b) EUR 14,000 / per year (transport, textbooks, mediators) c) EUR 6,000 / per year (scholarships)	Budget
6.2. Provision of free textbooks for Roma and Egyptian children – first, second and third grade primary school pupils	Number of children provided with free textbooks on an annual basis	ME	III quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 16,000 (EUR 8,000 / per year)	Budget
6.3. Organization of summer and winter vacations in children's resorts for Roma and Egyptian students	Number of children benefitting from summer vacations on an annual basis	MHMR	III quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 20,000 EUR (EUR 10,000 / per year)	Budget
6.4. Continuous development of early and preschool learning	Number and type of activities introduced to further the development of early and preschool learning	ME	III quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 72,000 (EUR 36,000 / per year)	Budget
6.5. Improvement of employee competences and of the work model	Number and type of competence advancement programmes introduced; Number of employees – beneficiaries of the programme	ME	III quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 32,500 (EUR 10,000 / 2019; EUR 22,500 / 2020)	Budget

6.6. Improvement of the initial education of professionals	Number and type of changes made to the initial education programme for professionals	University	I quarter of 2020	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 5,000	Budget
6.7. Development of a model of inter-departmental cooperation to promote and support inclusive education	Number and type of activities implemented through cooperation	ME, MLSW, MH	I quarter of 2020	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 12,500	Budget
6.8. Development of community-based services: psychological, social, educational and other support	Number and types of developed services; Number of beneficiaries	ME, MLSW, MH	III quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 26,000 (EUR 13,000 / per year)	Budget
6.9. Inclusion of children with disabilities/with special educational needs in education programmes at all levels and the employment programmes based on a human rights model	Number of children included in education and employment programmes	MP, MLSW	III quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 20,000 (EUR 10,000 /per year – education EUR 10,000 (EUR 5,000 / per year)- employment	Budget
6.10. Implementation of education programmes for children with a cultural content (Art Education Day, etc.)	Number of children reached by educational level; Number of towns included	MC, Royal Theatre Zetski Dom, MP	III quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 36,000 (EUR 18,000 / per year)	Budget
6.11. Fostering participation of children in creating and implementing cultural and media content together with professionals	Number of children included	MC, Royal Theatre Zetski Dom, ME	III quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 13,000 (EUR 6,500 / per year)	Budget
Operational Objective 7: Improved support for child's early development						
Performance indicator a)	Baseline value	Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document		Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document		
Number of paediatricians in the country, by healthcare level (IPH)	Year 2017 153 in total 97 – primary health care 56 at higher levels of healthcare	Year 2021 Over 100 in primary healthcare Over 60 at higher levels of health care	Year 2023 Over 110 in primary healthcare Over 75 at higher levels of healthcare			
Performance indicator b)	Baseline value	Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document		Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document		
Number of centres for children with "special needs" (MH)	Year 2017 8 centres for children with "special needs" <sup>162</sup>	Year 2021 At least 9 centres for children with "special needs" in healthcare centres	Year 2023 At least 10 centres for children with "special needs" in healthcare centres			

Operational Objective 7:		Improved support to child's early development				
<b>Performance indicator c)</b>  Number of small children (of pre-school age) in foster care (children without disabilities and children with disabilities) (MLSW, Institute for Social and Children Protection)	<b>Baseline value</b>  Year 2017  Total 17 (0–2 years old: 8 3–6 years old: 9)  Year 2018  4 children with disabilities	<b>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</b>  Year 2021  25% more on an overall level and also on a group basis	<b>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</b>  Year 2023  50% more on an overall level and also on a group basis			
Activity that has an effect on the implementation of operational objective 7	Result indicator	Responsible institutions	Start date	Planned end date	Funds planned for implementation of activities	Source of funding
7.1. Preparation of new programmes for parents regarding the importance of a healthy start after birth – support for the breastfeeding of children and for compulsory immunization	Number of new draft programmes	MH	I quarter of 2020	IV quarter of 2020	Regular funds	Budget
7.2. Improvement of early discovery and intervention in children with disabilities at an early age	Number of early discoveries (0–3 years of age) of disabilities; Number and types of interventions made	MH, healthcare centres – paediatrics service, secondary and tertiary level of healthcare	I quarter of 2020	IV quarter of 2020	Regular funds	Budget, donor funds
7.3. Development of new work programmes of centres for children with “special needs” within healthcare centres (fostering parental skills, psychological and social support to parents of children with disabilities of early age, etc.)	Number and type of new programme activities	MH, health centres	I quarter of 2020	IV quarter of 2020	Regular funds	Budget

STRATEGIC GOAL III:		PREVENT ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN AND IMPROVE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIAL MEASURES FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN			
Operational Objective 8:		Improved prevention of all types of violence against children and support to children victims			
<b>Performance indicator a)</b>  Number of registered cases of child abuse (all types of violence and neglect) reported by/to: a.1. Health sector a.2. Centres for social work a.3. Police a.4. Prosecutor's office a.5. Education (MH/IPH, MLSW, MI/ Police Administration, Prosecutor's Office, ME)	<b>Baseline value</b>  Year 2018  It is not monitored (it will be monitored from 2019)	<b>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</b>  Year 2021  Number of registered/ reported cases of child abuse in every sector increased at least 10% compared to 2019.	<b>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</b>  Year 2023  Number of registered/ reported cases of child abuse in every sector increased at least 20% compared to 2019.		
<b>Performance indicator b)</b>  Number of boys and girls exposed to abuse (all types of violence and neglect) provided with support measures within: b.1. Healthcare b.2. Social and child protection b.3. Police b.4. Justice b.5. Education (MH/IPH, MLSW, MI/ Police Administration, Prosecutor's Office, ME)	<b>Baseline value</b>  Year 2018  It is not monitored (it will be monitored from 2019)	<b>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</b>  Year 2021  Number of boys and girls exposed to abuse provided with support measures in all sectors increased by at least 10% compared to 2019	<b>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</b>  Year 2023  Number of boys and girls exposed to abuse provided with support measures in all sectors increased by at least 10% compared to 2019		
<b>Performance indicator c)</b>  NID17. Number of court proceedings (criminal, offensive, and protective measures) where the perpetrator was found guilty or for whom protective measures was pronounced in relation to children victims of violence, compared to total number of court proceedings where the perpetrators and/or victim had children at the annual level; (MONSTAT, TRANSMONEE database)	<b>Baseline value</b>  Year 2017  Total number of crimes against children during the year – 258	<b>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</b>  Year 2021  Increased by at least 20%	<b>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</b>  Year 2023  Increased by at least 30%		

STRATEGIC GOAL III: PREVENT ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN AND IMPROVE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIAL MEASURES FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN						
Activity that has an effect on the implementation of operative objective 8	Result indicator	Responsible institutions	Start date	Planned end date	Funds planned for implementation of activities	Source of funding
<b>8.1.</b> Joint training for professionals employed in education, healthcare, social and child protection, police and justice on the prevention and recognition of violence against children, and on the intersectoral protection of children (including sexual violence against children and child abuse via internet)	Number and type of training sessions; Number and structure of trained professionals	MLSW, ME, MH, MJ, MHMR, MI, NOFTHB, prosecutor's office, courts	IV quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 20,000 (EUR 10,000 / per year)	Budget
<b>8.2.</b> Campaigns for the general public (types and harm caused by violence against children, recognition of different types and the responsibilities of citizens for reporting violence against children)	Number of implemented campaigns (at least 2) and their objectives; Number and type of implemented actions in each campaign; Estimated number of citizens covered by each campaign	ME, MH, MLSW, MI	IV quarter of 2019 (plan and programme campaign)	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 25,000, Regular funds for MH	Budget <sup>163</sup>
<b>8.3.</b> Promotion of free SOS telephone lines for children	Number and type of implemented promotional actions	SOS telephone line, with support from MLSW	IV quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 20,000	Budget <sup>164</sup>
<b>8.4.</b> Implementation of a programme for children in primary and secondary schools on the prevention of peer violence	Content and method of programme; Number and age of child participants	ME	III quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	Regular funds	Budget <sup>165</sup>
<b>8.5.</b> Implementation of a programme to raise the awareness of parents on the advantages of 'positive' parenting	Number and structure of developed programmes on positive 'parenting' conducted with the parents of children from pre-school age to the end of secondary school; Number of parents participating in programmes; Number of institutions implementing programmes	MEP, MLSW, MH, MLSW, educational institutions	I quarter of 2020	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 60,000 (EUR 20,000 for MH) EUR 30,000 donor funds	Budget, donor funds

163 With possible resources from donor funds.

164 Ibid.

165 With a possibility to provide resources from donor funds.

Activity that has an effect on the implementation of operative objective 8	Result indicator	Responsible institutions	Start date	Planned end date	Funds planned for implementation of activities	Source of funding
<b>8.6.</b> Implementation of a programme to raise awareness among professionals in education, health, social and child protection institutions and in the police/MI, on the effectiveness of positive educational practices	Number and structure of programmes for professionals on the effectiveness of positive educational practices; Number and structure of professionals participating in programmes	ME, MH, MLSW,MI	I quarter of 2020	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 60,000, (EUR 10,000 for MH)	Budget
<b>8.7.</b> Establishment of a confidential complaint mechanism for corporal punishment in schools (mailbox for anonymous complaints, etc.)	Number of schools in which mechanism is established; Number and types of complaints; Number of actions taken by schools following complaints	ME, schools	I quarter of 2020	II quarter of 2020	Regular funds	Budget
<b>Operational Objective 9: Improved prevention of all types of violence against children and support to children victims</b>						
<b>Performance indicator a)</b>	<i>Baseline value</i> Year 2018 146 Number of unresolved applications made by persons younger than 18 for the status of foreigner (MI)	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of strategic document</i> Year 2021 All requests received up to the end of 2018 resolved		<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i> Year 2023 All requests received in period of 2019–2022 resolved		
<b>Performance indicator b)</b>	<i>Baseline value</i> Year 2018 Total: 3 By sex: 2 boys and 1 girl Type of exploitation: forced begging Number of potential child victims and victims of trafficking in human beings, by sex and type of exploitation, that are granted protection by the state (National Office for the Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings)	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i> Year 2021 Number of children who are granted protection by the state increased at least 30%		<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i> Year 2023 Number of children who are granted protection by the state increased at least 30%		

STRATEGIC GOAL III: PREVENT ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN AND IMPROVE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIAL MEASURES FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN			
Operational Objective 9: Improved prevention of all types of violence against children and support to children victims			
<b>Performance indicator c)</b> Total number of crimes against children during the year (TRANSMONEE)	<i>Baseline value</i> 258 (2017)	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i> Less than 200	<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i> Less than 150
<b>Performance indicator d)</b> Total number of crimes committed by children or involving children (TRANSMONEE)	<i>Baseline value</i> Total: 490 (2017)	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i> Less than 450	<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i> Less than 400
<b>Performance indicator e)</b> Total number of children perpetrators of criminal offences during the year (TRANSMONEE)	<i>Baseline value</i> Total: 317 (2017)	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i> Less than 280	<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i> Less than 250
<b>Performance indicator f)</b> Total number of children that were held in detention during the year (by sex) (TRANSMONEE)	<i>Baseline value</i> Total: 243 (2017) Boys – 233 Girls – 10	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i> Less than 200	<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i> Less than 150
<b>Performance indicator g)</b> Performance indicator g) Number of child perpetrators of crimes on whom alternative measures were imposed, i.e. against which criminal proceedings were suspended (the Professional Service of the Supreme Prosecutor’s Office)	<i>Baseline value</i> Year 2017 Total: 119	<i>Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document</i> Year 2021 Total number of children increased by at least 10%	<i>Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document</i> Year 2023 Total number of children increased by at least 20%

STRATEGIC GOAL III: PREVENT ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN AND IMPROVE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIAL MEASURES FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN						
Activity that has an effect on the implementation of operative objective 9	Result indicator	Responsible institutions	Start date	Planned end date	Funds planned for implementation of activities	Source of funding
<b>9.1.</b> Enabling child foreigners <sup>166</sup> to fully exercise all of their children's rights and also their rights from the Law on International and Temporary Protection of Foreigners/Child Foreigners	Number of child foreigners that use psychological and social measures, healthcare and who are included in the educational system; Number of child foreigners that had problems in exercising their rights	MI, MH, ME, MLSW, MC, MHMR, NOFTHB	III quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	Regular funds	Budget
<b>9.2.</b> Accreditation of the training programme for professionals in the system of social and child protection to provide support to children to whom special protection measures apply (children with behavioural problems – in conflict with law, children victims of crimes)	Number and type of accredited training programmes	ISCP	I quarter of 2020	IV quarter of 2020	Regular funds	Budget
<b>9.3.</b> Integration of principles and measures that refer to equal access to justice for children into the Justice Reform Strategy and Strategy for Exercising the Rights of the Child 2019- 2023	Number and types of principles and measures that refer to equal access to justice for children integrated into the aforementioned strategic documents	MJ	III quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 14,000	UNICEF donor funds
<b>9.4.</b> Development and integration of indicators on children involved in all judicial proceedings <sup>167</sup> into the new JIS information system and into other relevant systems (e.g. MONSTAT)	Number and type of indicators on children in all judicial proceedings included in the JIS system and in other relevant systems	MJ	III quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 18,000	UNICEF donor funds
<b>9.5.</b> Specialization and sensitisation of experts for work in all areas of all judicial and administrative proceedings which include children, in accordance with the standards of child-friendly judiciary, adapted by experts in social and children protection	Number and type of specialized training sessions; Number and structure of included professionals that successfully complete training in accordance with the standards of a child-friendly judiciary	Judiciary and Public Prosecution Office Training Centre, MJ	I quarter of 2020	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 24,000	UNICEF donor funds

166 This refers to children with approved international protection, child foreigners that are looking for international protection and children migrants.

167 Children in contact with the law, child victims and child witnesses, and children in civil proceedings.



STRATEGIC GOAL III: PREVENT ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN AND IMPROVE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIAL MEASURES FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN						
Activity that has an effect on the implementation of operative objective 9	Result indicator	Responsible institutions	Start date	Planned end date	Funds planned for implementation of activities	Source of funding
9.6. Capacity strengthening of professional services in the higher courts, in the Supreme Prosecutor's Office, and for persons supporting children in family-related legal disputes	Number and type of expert / services/ persons whose capacity is strengthened	SC, SPO, MJ	I quarter of 2020	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 15,000	UNICEF donor funds
9.7. Support for civil society to increase the awareness of children and families regarding access to justice (with a focus on children from minority groups, children with disabilities, children living in poverty, etc.)	Number and type of support provided for civil society	Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro, MJ, in cooperation with NGO	III quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 30,000	UNICEF donor funds
9.8. Provision of child-friendly interview premises in the Montenegrin judiciary	Number of municipalities in which a child-friendly environment for interviewing children is provided, only within judicial authorities	SC, SPO, MJ	III quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 48,000	UNICEF donor funds
9.9. Specialization for attorneys on the use of free legal aid for children and its practical provision	Number of trained attorneys ready to offer free legal aid to children; Number of children provided with free legal aid whilst participating in judicial proceedings	Bar Association, MJ	I quarter of 2020	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 9,000	UNICEF donor funds
9.10. Support for the institution of the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms in shaping and disseminating information adapted to children on access to justice for children and concerning free legal aid <sup>168</sup>	Number of support products – information adapted to children ready for dissemination	MJ	III quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2020	EUR 20,000	UNICEF donor funds

168 Including the dissemination of information to minority groups, in appropriate language and adapted for dissemination to children with disabilities.

STRATEGIC GOAL III: PREVENT ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN AND IMPROVE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIAL MEASURES FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN						
Operational Objective 10:		Improved protection of children from sale, child prostitution and child pornography and from involvement in armed conflicts				
Performance indicator a)	Baseline value	Target value halfway through the implementation of the strategic document	Target value at the end of implementation of the strategic document			
Number and type of implemented previous recommendations of the UN Committee for the Rights of the Child related to the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography and Optional Protocol on Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts	0	All recommendations implemented	All recommendations implemented			
Activity that has an effect on the implementation of operative objective 10	Result indicator	Responsible institutions	Start date	Planned end date	Funds planned for implementation of activities	Source of funding
10.1. Amendments to the Declaration on accepting the Optional Protocol on Protection of Children in Armed Conflicts (alignment with changes in national legislation <sup>169</sup> )	Number and type of amendments	MD in cooperation with MFA	III quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2019	Regular funds	Budget
10.2. Inclusion and implementation of compulsory training on the rights of the child in armed conflicts for persons participating in international missions and operations	Number of persons that participate in international missions and operations who were given training	MD	III quarter of 2019	IV quarter of 2019	Regular funds	Budget
10.3. Provision of child-friendly interview premises in the Montenegrin judiciary	Number of municipalities in which a child-friendly environment for interviewing children is provided, only within judicial authorities	MD	I quarter of 2020	IV quarter of 2020	Regular funds	Budget

Total planned funds for implementation of activities in the period 2019-2020

EUR 1,063,000 + regular funds (funds planned in the budget of each institution for the mentioned regular activities of importance for children)

169 This refers to the amendments to the Law on Armed Forces of Montenegro and to the Law on Defence that will be adopted in 2019 and clearly will define the age limit (above 18 years of age) for the participation of Montenegrin citizens in the national army, armed conflicts and emergency situations.

## 8 Information for the public on the objectives and expected effects of the Strategy for Exercising the Rights of the Child 2019–2023 in accordance with the 2018 Communication Strategy of the Government of Montenegro

The Strategy for Exercising the Rights of the Child 2019–2023 is a comprehensive, national, strategic document that deals with the improvement of exercising the rights of the child in all areas covered by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The vision of this Strategy is:

Children have the opportunity to exercise all their rights, to feel they are respected and safe citizens, and to accept the values and responsibilities that contribute to the prosperity of society.

Montenegro is investing in children as its most valuable human capital, encourages them to actively participate in social life and to fully develop their potential.

The strategic aims defined by this document are:

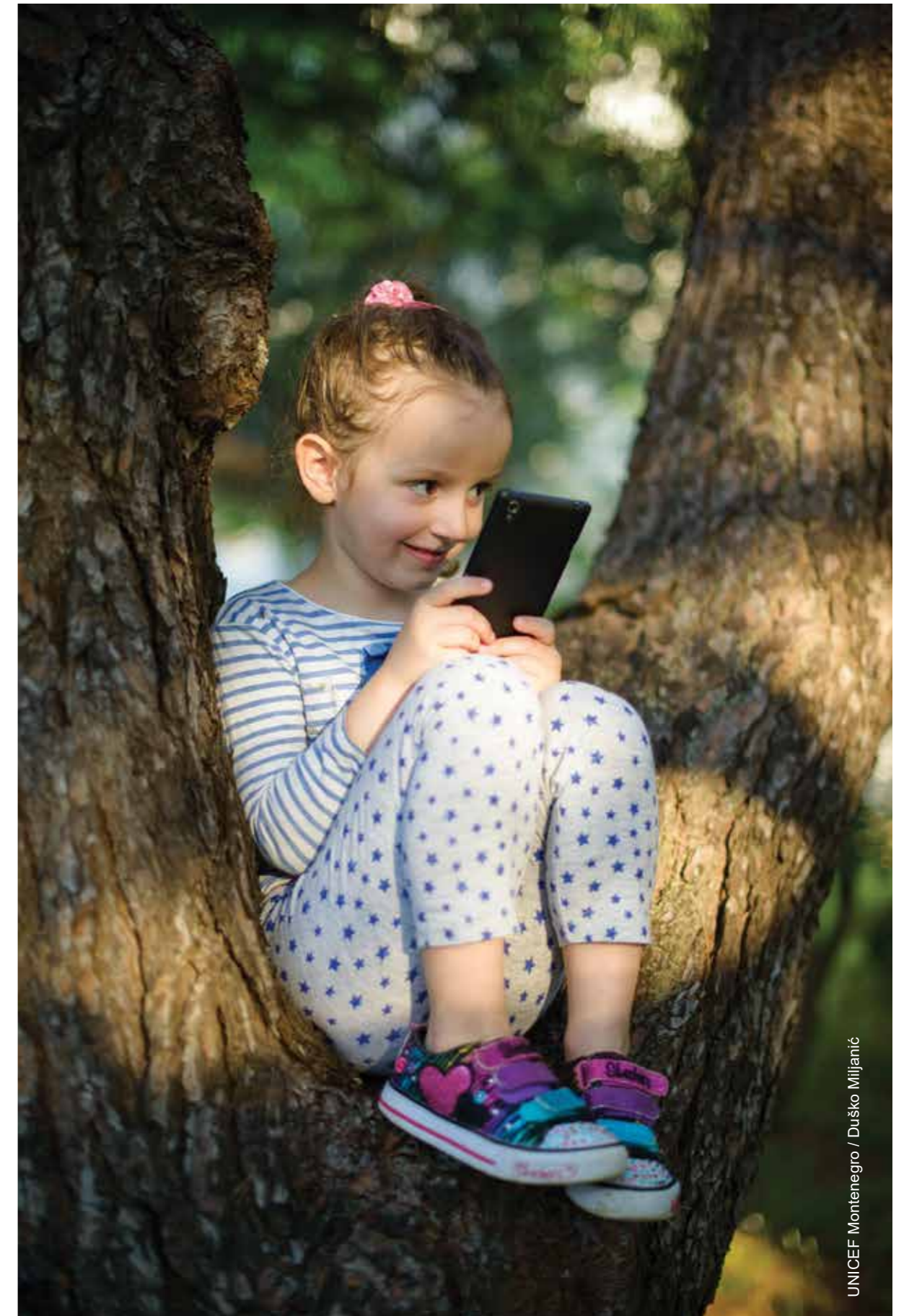
1. To improve inter-departmental and inter-sector cooperation, along with other key conditions to exercise the rights of the child.
2. To improve the availability and quality of social and healthcare protection as well as education for all children.
3. To prevent all types of violence against children and to improve the implementation of special measures for the protection of children.

The implementation of the Strategy implies the effective inter-departmental cooperation of all ministries and other institutions



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relevant for exercising the rights of the child, as well as inter-sector cooperation – of the public sector with the NGO sector and international organizations. The Strategy has been prepared through a wide consultative process in which approximately 100 representative children participated. The opinions of these children were crucial in analysing the current situation and in identifying the problems in the area of the rights of the child in Montenegro; indeed, they provided the basis on which to formulate the Strategy. It is expected that this Strategy will contribute to the continued improvement of the exercising of rights of the child and to a better quality of life for children in Montenegro.



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