

HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT 2015 - MONTENEGRO

SUMMARY REPORT ON CORRUPTION AND LACK OF TRANSPARENCY

Achievements:

There is an increase in the prosecution for corruption, including of some ruling party officials; the police and security forces have been provided with training aimed at reducing abuse and corruption and promoting respect for human rights; the government continued to reform the judicial system by strengthening the independence, responsibility and capacity of judges and prosecutors and increasing the transparency of court rulings; the prosecutors' offices at all levels became some of the most transparent institutions in the country; Special Prosecutor Mllivoje Katnic initiated a number of high-level corruption cases; a new law on public procurement was implemented allowing the monitoring of tender implementation and the publishing of the related documentation; the parliament adopted a new law that boosted possibilities for the freezing, seizure and confiscation of illicit proceeds and authorized the creation of investigation teams.

Key issues:

The corruption is wide spread in various sectors in the country. It affects the government, the public sectors at national and local levels, the health care, the higher education, the judiciary, the customs, the political parties, police, urban planning, the construction industry and employment; lack of cooperation and information sharing between agencies fighting corruption; interference by the government in legal proceedings involving officials' misuse of public resources and abuse of positions to employ party followers; the names of the officials who did not respect the law related to financial disclosure have not been published due to requirement of consent by the respective persons.

Statistics:

In 2014, 59 public authorities violated the legal requirement in public procurement process; about the financial disclosure of public officials there have been 635 who did not report correctly their income or assets for the first eight months of the year, 304 officials have been subject of financial penalties for various violations.

Public access to information:

The main concern is touching the privatization of public property. Some ministries responded to information requests, while others at times publicly criticized the requests. When access is denied the arguments are confidentiality and personal data protection. Some NGO's criticized public authorities because they regularly denied their access to information. However the Agency for Protection of Personal Data has a mechanism by which it reviews appeals of people whose request have been denied. In the majority of the cases for 2014 the Agency found that the denials were improper. The problem emerges when after its decision the public authorities fail to reverse their initial denials.

**Source: U.S. Department
of State**

**Country Reports on
Human Rights Practices
for 2015**