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Part II: Republic of Montenegro Experts' report

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The opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily engage the responsibility of the Council of Europe

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Meeting Schedule

Friday, 12 December, 2003

Arrival

Saturday, 13 December, 2003

Cetinje: Meeting with directors and associates of cultural institutions related to cultural and natural heritage under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Culture

“Education in Arts”

Meeting with deans and collaborators of the Faculty of Drama Arts Academy of Music, Academy of Fine Arts and a representative of the Ministry of Education and Science

Podgorica: Meeting with the Minister of Culture and her Secretary

Sunday, 14 December, 2003

Kotor: Meeting with directors of cultural institutions in Kotor under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Culture and representatives of NGOs

Monday, 15 December, 2003

Podgorica: Meeting with representatives of institutions, associations and NGOs active in the field of fine arts

Meeting with representatives of institutions, associations and NGOs active in the field of music

Meeting with representatives of institutions, associations and NGOs active in the field of cinematography

Meeting with representatives of associations and NGOs active in the field of publishing

Meeting with representatives of theatres and relevant associations

Meeting with the Republic Institute for International Cultural, Educational and Technical Cooperation

Tuesday, 16 December, 2003

Nikšić: Meeting with the Mayor and representatives of cultural institutions in Nikšić

Podgorica: Meeting with the Secretary of the Ministry for Protection of Minorities' Rights

Meeting with the Deputy Minister for Media and representatives of state and private media

Wednesday, 17 December, 2003

Departure

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1. Introductory remarks

Our report is primarily based on the “National Report on Cultural Policy of Montenegro”, drafted by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Montenegro. This report, having been most thoroughly composed, was a helpful basis for our work. We want to mention, though, that we were somehow missing statistical material in the report, e.g. as to the participation of the population in cultural life in the country, cultural expenditure in the different fields and regions, income through ticket sales and other resources, knowing that such material is a good basis for strategic research and recommendations.

Our proper findings relate to our talks with relevant personalities in Montenegro during our visit in December 2003.

It is necessary and appropriate, though, to point out that we had just four days for meetings and consultations. It was apparently the wish from all parties involved that the experts’ visit to the country should take place before the end of the year 2003. In spite of the limited time, we had numerous meetings with about 70 personalities. This means for instance that in a one-hour-meeting we heard 12 persons and in another 90-minutes-meeting we discussed with 15 persons. It goes without saying that under such conditions it is most difficult if not impossible to get into the depth of a description of an institution and, moreover, to get sufficient critical knowledge of the problems.

Our meetings were held in the capital of Montenegro, Podgorica, and in the cities of Cetinje, Kotor and Nikšić. This means that some segments of the short time available had to be dedicated to travelling, which, consequently, shortened our direct working time.

We also want to point out that we did not have the opportunity to visit any of the cultural institutions. We saw no cultural manifestation, no theatre performance, no concert, no museum (except a quick rush across one section of the National Museum in Cetinje and of the Cultural Centre in Nikšić). Consequently we could not get any impression of the technical condition of the houses, nor of the quality or variety of artistic expression. This is regrettable but we hope to be able to express competent views based on our meetings and informal discussions.

Another remark relates to the National Report. As mentioned above, this report was most helpful in its frankness, thoroughness and competence. We were astonished, though, to learn from several of our interview partners, like directors of institutions or cultural managers at different posts, that they had not been engaged in drafting the report nor did they know of its existence or contents. In certain circumstances this was understandable, like in the case of a director who had just been appointed a few weeks before our visit. In other cases we did not understand, why aspects of this report had not been given a certain transparency by handing it out to the persons concerned. Consequently, it was sometimes difficult and even embarrassing coming up with questions based on statements in the National Report. Our interlocutors were not able to react properly as they did not know what was stated in the Report.

We do, of course, hope that in the future process of discussion within Montenegro more transparency will be applied. Based on the experience with other countries we repeatedly recommended that an open National Debate in Montenegro should be part of the entire

exercise and could possibly follow the official presentation of both the National and the Experts' Reports to the Council of Europe.

We strongly suggest that such a National Debate should be held in Montenegro at the earliest possible date, to which all persons carrying responsibilities in the cultural field in that country should be invited.

Structure of the report

We decided to split the report into the following parts:

We start with some general observations concerning the country, remarks related to tourism, culture and the political structure in the cultural domain.

The second section reflects the talks during our visit in December 2003 and it presents facts - as incomplete, as they must remain -, which seemed important to us.

The third section will give some commentaries, which cannot be comprehensive but must remain selective due to the circumstances mentioned above.

Finally, in the last section we draw up some recommendations.

2. General aspects related to the subject of the report

The Republic of Montenegro (being one of two members of the "State Union of Serbia and Montenegro"), situated in southeast Europe, has an area of about 14.000 square km and about 620.000 inhabitants. One may add to this figure a considerable number of refugees and IDPs from neighbouring states, many of whom stay in Montenegro, whereas others moved to other countries or went back to their countries of origin within Ex-Yugoslavia.

The country consists of 21 municipalities, which form units of local self-government with a certain political and economic autonomy. The municipalities of Podgorica (administrative capital) and Cetinje (historical capital) have a special status.

Montenegro is a multi-ethnic community with the Montenegrins (above 60 %), Muslims-Bosnians (almost 15 %), Serbs (about 10 %), Albanians, Roma and Croats (together about 12 %). About eighteen nationalities and ethnic groups are to be added.

On economic and social terms Montenegro finds itself in an ongoing process of transformation. The economy of the country has been suffering a significant decrease, mainly in the period 1991-99. The unemployment rate is high (some 80.000 unemployed persons in 2000 in relation to a work force of about 275.000). The average net salary in the first half of 2002 was 118 EUR/month (see the National Report for more details).

3. Economic aspects / tourism

The National Report (p. 9) indicates a rather difficult economic situation of the country, a fact repeatedly confirmed in our talks. There are almost no natural resources, except some bauxite deposits serving the (polluting) aluminium industry.

The experts' group cannot claim sufficient economic competence, but it seems to us that more concerted action within the government towards the development of cultural tourism as an economic factor for the country might be advisable.

We were told that the financial volume of tourism in Montenegro had decreased during the period of transition from about 300 Mio. USD to at present 43 Mio. USD, mainly international tourism having suffered. Montenegro has a beautiful landscape, an abundant coast with immeasurable beaches and vestiges of cultural heritage (old cities, city-centres, castles, churches, monasteries, etc.). After the severe earthquakes in the past, astonishing reconstruction work has been accomplished and is still in progress. We believe that a strong development of cultural tourism could turn out to be an important economic factor, which might serve the country as a whole, if the benefits were made, at least partly, available for the development of the cultural structure and scene.

4. The Ministry of Culture

The Republic of Montenegro has seen several parliamentary elections during the last decade of the 20th century. Consequently there were frequent personnel changes, the Ministry of Culture having seen seven different ministers. We learned that the present minister started with not more than ten collaborators, a figure that has increased in the meantime to about 25 (including the staff for the newly integrated Media Section). The Ministry of Culture is invested with the classical tasks of such a governmental authority. It exercises its responsibility towards national institutions, mainly in the cultural heritage field. We noted, though, that three important institutions on the national level, the Montenegrin National Theatre (Podgorica), the Royal Theatre *Zetski Dom* (Cetinje) and the State Archive (Cetinje), are financed by the budget of the Republic – outside the budget of the Ministry of Culture, which just “monitors their work”.

Within the overall state budget about 2,5% (1,54% if one excludes the Media Section) go to cultural funding, including rebuilding and modernising the infrastructure. 92 % of this budget concern fixed expenses, leaving only 8% for project work. Although this percentage may look rather acceptable and comparable to that of other states, we were repeatedly confronted in our discussions with seemingly unbearable financial insufficiencies. We also got the impression that the effectiveness of the administration in its structure and management would well benefit from efforts of modernisation, e.g. through communication technologies. We repeatedly learned that institutions, even such of larger size, still have to work without Internet access and adequate technical support.

Admitting financial problems, we strongly suggest that more efforts should be made to supply the institutions with the necessary hardware, e.g. computers, and - not less important - to offer training programmes for the proper application of those technologies.

The National Report repeatedly refers to legislative acts or rather to the lack of updated legislation in a large variety of sectors. Of course we see the need for a clear basis on legal terms - as is usual in all countries -, but we sometimes got the impression that the call for legislation served as a kind of escape to cover other problems. To quote just two examples: On p. 22 of the National Report a law on theatre activities is mentioned (we have not seen the text of it, nor of any other legal documents), which “normatively regulates the area of theatres”, dating from 2001. On p. 27 the demand for a new law on cinematography, which would “regulate import and showing of films...” is stipulated. We do, of course, see the need for establishing rules for the support of film production as a way of economic promotion, but the question remains, why the showing of films should not be left to economic self-regulation. This, consequently, would imply that cinematography should probably not remain “under state care”, as stated on p. 28 of the National Report. Similar aspects might apply to the performing arts’ field. The real problem certainly lies in the lack of sufficient subsidies.

We have the impression that an improvement in inter-ministerial cooperation would be helpful in many fields. Take the example of the relations between arts and education:

We must be aware of the fact that the values of culture can be forwarded to the new generations only through a well-considered educational system (not ignoring the task of the families, unfortunately very often neglected or limited by insufficiencies). This will be of increasing importance taking into consideration the influence of the new media (TV - including private channels -, electronic games, the Internet) on young people, which risks leading to a simply receptive and less participative society. This in turn may lead to a society not willing or able to act and to get involved as responsible citizens so much needed for democracy. What is needed are critical citizens who accept the state as their own matter, challenge and task.

It will be of increasing importance to point out the role of the arts in what is called “Young Creative Industries” (fashion, design, architecture, advertising and others). Artistic work is an important factor here and must be properly positioned in the economic world.

More generally speaking, a well structured inter-ministerial approach by integrating culture with tourism, economy, labour, education and town and country planning might strengthen the cultural area.

Of course, we would strongly recommend that a strategic paper be worked out on a firm and wide basis, i.e. with the integration of the cultural community of the country, and thus be a result of a thorough process of discussion. The results of the MOSAIC project, including the National Debate, could possibly serve as basis for such a paper.

5. Particular areas

5.1. Cultural heritage

We retain the following from our meeting with representatives of national institutions located in Cetinje and Podgorica (Republic Institute for Protection of Cultural Monuments, National Museum of Montenegro, Central National Library, State Archive, Centre for Archaeological Research of Montenegro, Republic Institute for Protection of Nature and Natural History Museum of Montenegro):

Most of the directors and their collaborators were not familiar with the National Report or even did not know of its existence. Only in rather few cases our interlocutors had contributed to the National Report, without having seen the complete report, though. This somehow burdened our discussions.

The main concerns of the institutions are technical deficiencies, the lack of sufficient financing, of qualified personnel, of sufficiently smooth and trustful cooperation with the state authorities, of practical cooperation and harmonisation across the country. In certain fields, training of new experts is insufficient and not available in the country. There is an urgent need for archaeologists, archivists, restorers and craftsmen in traditional sectors.

It is worth a remark that the Open Society Fund (Soros Foundation) has fulfilled an important task during the period of transition on the Balkans in general and in Montenegro in particular. This resource of finance and skill is, to the regret of the experts, no longer available.

Some of our interlocutors thought that the state system in general was obsolete. There was a lack of a National Cultural Policy, of priorities, of aims and of a methodology in approaching problems and possible solutions.

We were confronted with repeated remarks concerning the Serb Orthodox Church in Montenegro: Many of the churches, listed as national monuments were abandoned during communist times and now deteriorate. The Church authorities seem neither to recognise nor to observe the laws and regulations concerning cultural heritage conservation, by, for instance, putting protected buildings and estates on the commercial market or by transforming buildings in shape and use in inappropriate ways. The Church seems to claim not to be subjected to state regulations but benefiting from extraterritorial rights. As we did not learn anything about legal relations between the state and the Church, we cannot exclude that agreements between them are needed.

Concerning the field of archaeology we were astonished to learn that the Centre for Archaeological Research has no premises of its own (the hire charge for the rented offices repeatedly not having been paid in time by the state, eviction was imminent) and no adequate technical equipment. This is highly regrettable as Montenegro could be qualified a European treasure house of archaeology and historical sites. The budget of this Centre seems totally insufficient compared to the enormous task. None of the archaeological sites is open to the public, the Centre being incapable of changing this. Furthermore, we were told that existing NGOs are unable or not willing to take on responsibilities.

We heard from the director of the Republic Institute for Protection of Nature that roughly 25% of the state territory should be protected (in fact only 7,6% are presently protected areas) and we suggest to the government and the authorities concerned to refer to the new European Landscape Convention in order to develop a policy and an approach towards managing this problem. The Council of Europe could certainly offer some assistance.

From the perspective of the Republic Institute for Protection of Cultural Monuments, privatisation in the country came in a rush with insufficient legal protection. Tourism, although at present underdeveloped, will possibly create a great problem with regard to the protection of cultural heritage.

Concerning the field of Libraries we learned that the National Library has fairly good contacts to partners abroad, seeking exchange of experience in modern technologies and of ongoing professional training and qualification, of application of international standards and conventions. Relations between the national and municipal libraries need improvement as well as better cooperation through networking.

The Natural History Museum lacks usable space, the location being under construction. One wants to develop international cooperation for better presentation of exhibits and for exchange of experts. We learned with satisfaction that the museum publishes a scientific magazine and is planning this yearly periodical as a CD-ROM on nature conservation and promotion, starting before the end of the year 2003 (we recommend that they link up with the nature conservation service of the Council of Europe and consult NATUROPA, a Council of Europe publication, of which a special edition on southeast Europe could be envisaged).

In our meeting in Kotor with the directors of the Regional Institute for Protection of Cultural Monuments, the Maritime Museum of Montenegro, the History Archive of Kotor, NGO Exeditio, NGO Centre for Care and Presentation of Archives and the Croatian Civil Association we learned:

Kotor, hosting 40% of the immovable and 62% if the movable heritage of Montenegro, had tremendously suffered in the 1979 earthquake, is UNESCO World Heritage and was put on their list of Endangered Heritage. A progress report will be delivered in February 2004 and a management plan should be drawn up by early 2005.

Major problems must be seen in the field of tourism: according to research findings only 7% of the tourists show an interest in culture and only 4% of preservation costs can be covered by revenues from tourism. Mass tourism is considered to be a great danger for the preservation of the cultural heritage. Cooperation with local authorities is in need of improvement, as is the engagement of NGOs.

The Historic Archive of Kotor seems understaffed (only five employees for “1000m of archive material” – in comparison to 77 employees in the State Archive in Cetinje).

There is insufficient coordination in urban planning and new construction. The heritage authorities are not involved or consulted, cooperation between the neighbouring municipalities practically non-existent.

There is a strong need for information on “best practices” on the European level. The central government should develop initiatives and make funds available for NGOs. We mentioned existing European cultural networks like Europa Nostra or EFAH that should be consulted.

5.2. Fine arts

In a discussion with deans and teachers of some institutions of arts education in the Academy of Fine Arts in Cetinje, we were informed that new legislation had been adopted some two months ago, but one was still waiting for regulations to start application mainly in the curriculum field. The teachers solicited the government to include artists in international exchange programmes.

The Fine Arts Association, a NGO, has 250 individual members, 80% of whom are graduates from the Fine Arts Academy. The transition from a governmental to a non-governmental organisation created problems, mainly as the financing by the state was stopped and alternative resources could not be found. The financial situation, social security and the status of the artist in the country are at risk. There is a lack of studios/workplaces for artists.

There are 25 galleries in Montenegro, 15 of them being members of the Association of Private Galleries of Montenegro. The galleries have no economic security, the market not being adequately developed.

The Association of Art Historians (NGO) manages to find a basic financing through sponsoring from the business world. Their project to publish a “History of the Arts in Montenegro” still lacks funding; a support from the government cannot be expected. Their website was sponsored by benefactors in London (UK).

The Cetinje Biennale was presented to us with a certain pride. It started in 1991 with an international participation from three countries. In its 2002 edition, 51% of the participants were from Montenegro, 49% from abroad. 70% of funding comes from the government, 30% from foreign resources. The organisers see the Cetinje Biennale as a useful platform for the development of fine arts in the country. More foreign funding would be highly appreciated. There is a strong wish to intensify the relations to artists and associations abroad. The problem of how to bridge the time span between the biennales through continuous work has still to be solved.

The representative of the Secretariat for Culture of the Municipality of Podgorica mentioned a strategy plan for cultural development in his city, which should be made available also in English. It was claimed that a special part was dedicated to trans-sectorial and multi-ethnic activities and to a plan for creating workspace for artists.

We heard repeated complaints about the political sector (parliament and government) showing no interest in the arts and cultural questions in general.

5.3. Music

Montenegro with its longstanding and strong music traditions has no symphony orchestra, apart from a multipurpose orchestra, linked to the radio/TV station RTV, which consists just of 25 permanent and 12 part time musicians (25 years ago, we were told with a certain nostalgia, the organisation had a staff of 250 – a full size orchestra, mixed choir, children’s choir).

Music (instrumental) training is almost exclusively in the hands of a semi-private initiative (the “School for Talents”, only for strings), which has been working since 1992 with 15 teachers, their salaries being paid from state funds, and about 45 students.

The “Union of Music Schools” created master classes, wants to organise an international competition for flute, but needs funds, space, equipment and contacts.

There is official school for ballet, 4 years of lower grades, within the Center for music and ballet “Vasa Pavić” and the NGO “Ballo” offering trainings for ballerinas who finished that

school, because there is no school on higher level. It was said that there was no market or employment perspective for this field, as there is neither an opera nor a ballet ensemble in Montenegro.

5.4. Cinematography

Film production has practically ceased to exist. One example of a recent feature film production by the organisation MAPA was given. In earlier times there had been well-equipped studios and a fully functioning structure. Montenegro with its varied landscape is an excellent area for outdoor shooting.

At present there are just eight cinemas in the country (compared to 25 in 1978) with poor and outdated technical equipment. Just two of them are functioning independently; the six others, situated within cultural centres, are financially supported through public funds.

A strong guild for cinema needed to be created. There is an initiative “50 Cinemas for Montenegro” and one would want to participate in the Herceg Novi Film Festival. An association of young filmmakers exists having 145 members.

A significant aspect is the competition through the new media, mainly TV and the video market; in addition, piracy damages the sector. There is no tax exemption for cultural productions, no government financing, nor backing through guarantees for production, promotion and distribution.

5.5. Theatre

The National Report states that there are two national theatres: the Royal Theatre *Zetski Dom* in Cetinje and the National Theatre in Podgorica. The representative of the Royal Theatre *Zetski Dom*, Director, Mr Ljubo Durković, was present on that meeting.

We learn from the National Report that the City Theatre in Podgorica does not have its own premises; the same applies to the City Theatre in Nikšić.

Two or three more theatres exist in the country, without their own premises, performing on a professional level with ad-hoc ensembles. From some side-talks we retain that the entire field of theatre deserved more attention, be it from the political side, be it from the public. Structurally the National Theatre in Podgorica seems to hold quite a locked-up position (“autistic”) with little communication with the general theatre milieu in the country. The Royal Theatre in Cetinje needed, we are told, fundamental repairs and renovation of the premises, the building being almost a danger for spectators.

Independent theatre groups cannot receive continuous funding, private funding being almost impossible to find.

5.6. Publishing / periodicals

We learned that, due to the ongoing transition period, competition between public and private publishing-houses remains a big problem. Our interlocutors jointly claimed state monopolies to be abolished. Private publishers of periodicals, like Matica, Ars or Mobil Art, complain about the lack of public funding and of regulations related to tax reductions. The market in Montenegro is too small; there is a lack of translators and of communication. Attempts are being undertaken to cooperate with partners in Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia through joint publications (common language), however, custom and tax barriers form obstacles.

An initiative (taken from previous experiences in other countries) of the daily newspaper Vijesti seems worth mentioning here: For a fixed period of time this paper publishes once a week books (printed by the way in Barcelona, Spain!) of 20th century authors, sold with the newspaper at a retail prize of 2,99 EURO. The print run is 40.000 copies and so successful that it is called "Event of the Year". It is appropriate to mention that often the print run of a book is far below 1000, the average being at 500 copies. Book prices are too high, the market is too small, there is no proper bookstore chain in the country, so, the publishers directly manage sales. One claims a total tax exemption - like for basic food products.

5.7. International cooperation

The expert group learned from the deputy director of the Republic Institute for International Cultural, Educational and Technical Cooperation that the state and the cultural milieu have not yet fully recovered from the period of sanctions and isolation, which had marked the last decade of the 20th century. The Institute tries to catch up by subsidising and helping develop international contacts for Montenegrin individual artists and groups. At present there exists about 30 bilateral cooperation agreements on governmental level. The Institute handles a budget of almost 500.000 EURO, 300.000 EURO of which for project funding. It operates numerous projects, amongst others a cultural festival of Serbia and Montenegro to be held in 2005 in Germany. The share of tasks and responsibilities between the Institute and the Ministry of Culture needs to be revised, we were told.

5.8. Regional activities

Representatives of the city of Nikšić provided some insight into local cultural work. Here again the National Report was unknown to most of our interlocutors, including the Mayor. He stressed that the financial situation of the city of Nikšić, as well as that of all institutions was extremely poor. According to him there was no national policy for culture, a statement confirmed by the National Report. Cities are entitled to national budgetary support, however, we were told, that the government does not fulfil its obligations regularly enough. Thus, the city had to rely on its own completely insufficient funds for culture.

Relations between the Capital and the "Province" seem to be burdened by some imbalance. Some details were supplied: 20.000 EURO were allocated to Podgorica for participating in the book fair in Belgrade, only 1.000 EURO to Nikšić. The National Theatre in Podgorica had a staff of 200 with 25 actors on permanent contracts; the theatre of Nikšić had a staff of just 7 with the actors contracted temporarily. The national government owed subsidies to the

Nikšić cultural centre. Though salaries could be paid, contributions for programmes came in only partly and with delay, subsidies for electricity, maintenance, stationary etc. not arriving at all. The overall deficit of the Centre threatened its existence.

The premises of the City Theatre being unusable, performances take place in the house of the trade union. Subsidies for programme work in 2003 amounted to 5.000 EURO instead of 50.000 EURO promised by the government.

Some NGOs, like "Akord" and "Zahumlje", try to compensate the unsatisfactory situation of the official institutions by activities for children - we heard of an interesting initiative of concerts against drug abuse -, running an amateur theatre, a ballet school, a music studio.

The example of Nikšić and its cultural institutions seem to show insufficient interaction between institutions within the country, a lack of communication and an obvious networking problem, due to some extent to the shortage of computers and access to the World Wide Web. We were repeatedly asked to help establish international contacts to institutions working in similar fields.

A representative of the NGO "Logos" explained their work: assure stabilisation in the region by filling gaps in the field of further education for teachers, revising a survey on educational reforms in the country.

The City Theatre of Nikšić is to celebrate its 120th anniversary in 2004. Everybody hopes for solutions of the existing problems at this specific occasion.

5.9. Minority rights

The Secretary of the Ministry for Protection of Minorities' Rights gave us some information on the project of creating a Centre for the Minorities in 2004. A law on freedom and rights of national minorities has been drafted. Another law under preparation will earmark 1% of the national budget to be set aside for minorities. An agreement with Albania, Croatia and Bosnia about mutual recognition of diplomas is being worked out.

"Days of Culture of the Minorities" with "Folk Assemblies" and exhibitions were held for the first time in December 2003 and shall be held annually from now on. They were organised by the Ministry in cooperation with NGOs with special attention given to the Roma this year. We had the impression that in future years it would be advisable to integrate to a larger extent representatives of the relevant minority groups into the preparatory work and the realisation of those "Days of Culture of the Minorities" affording them a higher degree of responsibility.

The Ministry has a budget line of 200.000 EURO for funding minority activities and allots funds without a consultative body. We suggest to seek consultation from the relevant organisations and individuals and to establish an advisory board for minority related issues.

5.10. Media

The Deputy Minister referred to the high standard of legislation and regulations in the country coming up to European standards. An “improved permanent dialogue” had been created within the country and with institutions abroad. The country needed support in services (“best practices”) and in funding.

From the other partners in this meeting with media representatives we heard again the complaint that there is no approach by the government towards a coherent cultural policy.

The public TV and radio station of Montenegro suffered from insufficient funding, only 2,6 Mio. EURO being allocated instead of 8 Mio. EURO promised. Competition with private stations (like Pink TV) was a challenge and a burden.

We heard that many of the media were bankrupt or might disappear due to the withdrawal of public funding. This would not only affect the printed media, but also the electronic ones. Some said this would threaten the plurality of expression, others that many of the media concerned had lost their right to exist under the new democratic system, as they date from communist or early transition times.

6. Commentaries and Conclusions

We mentioned earlier in the report that to our surprise the National Report had not been communicated to the persons holding responsibility in the country and was consequently unknown to them. Only some of them had contributed to the Report without having had access to the final text.

The expert group got occasionally the impression that the sense of participation based on mutual recognition needed more attention. Like in other countries undergoing political and structural transition, on the one hand, many representatives of the older generation were full of hope and - many of them are now full of disappointment about promises and expectations not fulfilled, and on the other hand, the representatives of the new upcoming generation, full of energy and desire, risk to withdraw into niches or even abandon, if they are not sufficiently and appropriately acknowledged. A continuous development of mutual recognition between the state and its representatives on one side and the manifold active “cultural scene” on the other might be a fruitful step towards more effectiveness, productivity and acceptance for the benefit of all. One step might be a widely set up National Debate about culture and its development in the country within the MOSAIC project.

6.1. Lack of strategic document

In her introductory remarks to the National Report (p.4) the Minister states that “Montenegro did not have, neither have it today, a strategic document” which would define its own mid- or even long-term concept of cultural policy.

Although such a lack of conceptual planning seems not to be an exclusive speciality of Montenegro compared to other European countries, this fact remains regrettable, mainly if one takes into account the financial shortages and the problems of attribution of competence

and of the regional differentiations. Such a situation clearly requires a solid base for decision-making and a wise and most effective allocation of financial resources.

The main source of financing cultural life is the state with its budget. We do not believe, nor does our experience prove, that such a strategic paper could solve all questions and problems. But at the same time it is undeniable that some perspectives and visions can be extremely helpful on all levels in developing a somehow structured cultural life. Such a paper serves many ends: it creates a sense of transparency and may be an invitation to a larger process of participation by the relevant milieus. One might generally say that proper and adequate data and figures are needed for planning in the cultural sector. Such data serve professionals on different levels, be it in the political or in the experts' advisory sector for decision making with strategic perspectives. A strategic plan must, for sure, be based on extensive statistical material, which seems to be missing, as stated in the introductory remarks (p. 8) of the National Report.

We read (p. 12f) of the intention to establish a "Centre for Cultural Research and Development of Montenegro". Possibly such a centre could carry out such strategic work based on reliable material.

In any case, Montenegro needs

- a well structured collection of continuous systematic information on cultural activities in the entire country
- a collection and appropriate dissemination of "best practices", based on international experience, for cultural management (in an extensive sense) and practical artistic work
- a tool available to artists, cultural operators and decision makers on how to establish international cooperation and exchange of special know-how.

If such a strategic paper will be approved by the government as a whole and by Parliament, it may also fix some positions towards other ministries, especially the Ministry of Finance.

Such a strategic paper should certainly propose links towards the educational and economic sectors. The Ministry of Culture might be well advised to establish a strategic partnership with other ministries as well as with intellectuals, with economic forces and with the entire NGO sector.

We want to stress that the political structure of culture and its integration into the general outlines of policies in Montenegro be debated on different levels, mainly within the national government. A general strategic plan for cultural development might be a helpful tool. Cross-ministerial cooperation should be strengthened (see our remarks related to "Young Creative Industries"). We believe that a planning group consisting of experts in the matter and politicians ("think tank") vested with high competence could be helpful.

6.2. An Arts Council for Montenegro?

Although Montenegro is a country with a rather small population, its geographical extension is quite large. We learned of regional disproportions as to the cultural structures and activities from north to south, as well as with respect to the urban and the rural populations.

Evidently, the regional authorities and the personalities holding responsibilities in the cultural field on all levels should be integrated in a general process of reflection on cultural structures. Political differences should not be an obstacle for a free and open debate.

Without wanting to over-emphasise our observations in talks with representatives in Nikšić, as this was the only city where we learned about some aspects of the regional or municipal structure, we could not help but seeing at several points that difficulties on the municipal level resulted - at least partly - from the party political differences between central government and local authorities.

Bearing in mind that, within a period of just ten years the country has seen seven ministers of culture, we wonder if, in order to minimise political differences and problems, it was imaginable and advisable to create a "National Arts Council of Montenegro", possibly based on models of other countries, like for instance the United Kingdom. Such an exercise would mean to confer to such a body - in which governmental authorities would be represented next to other expert members - certain tasks of political guidance, arts development and financing including supervision of the functioning of institutions. One could speculate about advantages and disadvantages of such a structure but it seems at least evident that an Arts Council would be more independent from everyday political questions and, above all, from the outcome of political elections.

An Arts Council might guarantee more stability and continuity, which would help the cultural community as well as the political decision makers. We could imagine that the "Centre for Cultural Research and Development" mentioned above (see also National Report p. 12 f) could possibly be the nucleus for such an Arts Council. We could equally imagine that the commissions acting in different fields (see National Report p. 12, - unfortunately time did not allow to make us more familiar with these bodies -) could be a step towards something like an Arts Council.

6.3. Financing the arts

We were confronted with varying figures as to financing or the partition of the budget on national and regional levels. We cannot judge if there are real structural deficiencies. If so, we would recommend that more detailed data be established. We believe that the government authorities would be well advised if they tried to work out new resources for funding culture, taking into account that the possibilities within the state budget are - and most possibly will remain - rather limited.

To this aim, legislation related to taxation and tax exemptions should be considered for the cultural field. Models from other countries should be examined. Sponsorship can only be developed by offering incentives to possible donors. Special tax rates should apply for the production in the cultural and culture related sectors, like publishing of books and periodicals.

6.4. Professional training

We gained the impression from talks with many cultural actors that training in the cultural sector needs improvement and possibly a new structural approach. A high degree of professionalism is absolutely essential in a country on the way of developing new structures with more independence from the state and thereby with a need of higher effectiveness and responsibility. This goes for the fields of administration, accountancy, press and public relations, marketing, sponsoring/fundraising.

We suggest that efforts be undertaken, for instance in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, which might develop curricula and training courses to bring forth capable cultural managers and to give guidance to cultural organisations and institutions on different levels for structures, functioning, programming, marketing and management of cultural institutions.

6.5. NGOs

The years of transition in Montenegro created a fundamental change in cultural structures. Many of the state institutions were transformed into Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), mostly supported financially by the state. Such NGOs exist at an arm's length distance and are not subjected to state instructions. From a traditional viewpoint, this might be regarded as a burden, but it is evident that institutions that function as NGOs are likely to work with a higher sense of responsibility and effectiveness. NGOs and those working within them deserve an advance of confidence and trust. Government authorities should develop a more positive and dynamic attitude towards the NGOs working in culture. The Council of Europe could be approached, as there is positive experience available from the MOSAIC and STAGE projects.

Particular efforts should be made towards the development of tourism, a cultural tourism that is compatible with the needs of conservation and protection of cultural and natural heritage. Again, this would be a task for a trustful cross-ministerial cooperation with inclusion of experts within the country.

Cultural institutions, be they governmental or non-governmental, need better technical equipment. Internet access is indispensable for proper functioning of all institutions. At the same time it opens the doors towards international communication with the experts' world.

The government should make a more proactive approach towards the Council of Europe seeking support in many fields: cultural and natural heritage, nature conservation, transition from state regulated economy to market economy, management training for NGOs, conservation of, and access to, archives.

6.6. Final remark

In concluding our observations and impressions we express our conviction that Montenegro has all potential and assets for a good development in the cultural sector. The country and its people can rely on a very strong cultural tradition, on a valuable cultural heritage, on a

creative artists' scene and on a most dedicated population. We saw, indeed, a strong desire to go forward and to become partners on the international level, especially within Europe.

The “General Objectives of the Ministry of Culture”, as set out on p. 7 of the National Report and the enumeration of actions and measures to be tackled in the different fields are clearly recognised and defined.

With an investment of good will and best skill from all sides plus some additional financial, support major, structural and organisational needs can be met.

7. Recommendations

1. Hold a national debate on culture in the country on a large basis, inviting representatives of all sectors, all organisations, all NGOs to participate. Possibly continue this national debate at regular intervals.
2. Commission a group of experts to work out a strategy plan for the cultural development of the country, based on the results of the national debate, the National Report, the Experts' Report and other relevant documents.
3. Make use of programs and recommendations of the Council of Europe, the European Union and UNESCO as well as of other countries at a similar stage of development (mainly neighbouring countries).
4. Assure a tighter coordination within the national government by establishing inter-ministerial working groups, including the Ministries of Culture, Education, Science and Technology, Economy, Labour, Social Affairs, Tourism, Civil Service, Minorities' Rights, Foreign Affairs. Examine the possibilities of inter-sectorial cooperation to develop the field of “Young Creative Industries” (e.g. fashion, design, architecture) and the special role of the arts within them. Improve interregional contacts and cooperation.
5. Activate the Centre for Cultural Research and Development and vest it with well-defined tasks, so that it might act as a permanent planning group and “think tank” for the government.
6. Establish a reliable statistical database of all sectors and all levels of cultural activities in the country.
7. See with the other competent ministries (school and university education) that the education in arts and culture be strengthened. Take into consideration the impact of the new media on the young. At the same time make use of the possibilities of these new media for the development of action plans. Educate and develop the cultural activists and the public for the future.
8. Develop and offer special training programs for cultural workers/managers at all levels and include modern technologies. Open access to global communication via the Internet.
9. Develop action plans for recognition, safeguard and work of ethnic, religious and cultural minorities and for a structured inter-cultural cooperation.

- 10.** Find ways to improve cooperation between the arts community and the economic/business world in the country. Develop the appreciation of a mutual interest of all sides (the “corporate identity” aspect) to fund the arts in different ways (financial and in-kind-support). Fight for special tax regulations with regard to donations for the arts.
- 11.** Strengthen the role of NGOs. Acknowledge and give incentive for voluntary work. Shape civil society and the sense of responsibility of every citizen for the development of the country.
- 12.** Strengthen the role of regional and local authorities. See to it that the system of financing the work of regional and local institutions as well as NGOs be more reliable and stable.
- 13.** See to it that tourism gains more importance and that investments be made in order to develop sustainable cultural tourism.
- 14.** See to it that special financial resources be activated for the maintenance of objects of cultural heritage, for instance through additional tax revenues from cultural tourism.
- 15.** Initiate the dialogue between artists and cultural organisations with partners abroad in order to bring the country closer to Europe and benefit from international development.
- 16.** Consider the establishment of a National Arts Council (possibly with similar councils on regional and local levels) with an extended field of competence and responsibilities.

APPENDIX 1 – List of contacts and interview partners

CETINJE

Directors and associates of cultural institutions from Cetinje and Podgorica under jurisdiction of the Ministry of Culture

1. National Museum of Montenegro
Director, Mr Petar Ćuković

2. Republic Institute for Protection of Cultural Monuments
Director, Mr Slobodan Mitrović

3. Central National Library *Durđe Crnojević*
Director, Mr Ćedo Drašković

4. State Archive
Director, Mr Stevan Radunović

5. Centre for Archaeological Research of Montenegro
Director, Ms Mitra Cerović

6. Republic Institute for Protection of Nature
Director, Mr Zlatko Bulić

7. Natural History Museum of Montenegro
Director, Mr Ondrej Vizi

Deans and collaborators of the Faculties of Arts of the University of Montenegro

1. Academy of Fine Arts
Dean, Mr Pavle Pejović, and Vice Dean, Ms Nataša Đurović

2. Academy of Music
Dean, Mr Senad Gačević

3. Faculty of Drama Arts
Dean, Mr Nenad Vuković, and Professor of the Faculty of Drama Arts, Mr Siniša Jelušić

4. Ministry of Education and Science of Montenegro
Counsellor within the Ministry, Mr Radosav Atos Milošević

PODGORICA**Ministry of Culture of Montenegro**

Minister of Culture, Ms Vesna Kilibarda
Secretary of the Ministry, Mr Tomo Miljic

Representatives of institutions, associations and NGOs active in the field of fine arts

1. Centre for Contemporary Arts
Director, Mr Dragan Radovanović and Historian of Arts, Ms Dragica Miljić
2. Municipality of Podgorica, Department for Culture
Assistant of Secretary for Culture, Ms Vesna Janković,
3. Association of Fine Artists of Montenegro, NGO
Vice President, Mr Mikica Raičević
4. Association of Historian of Arts of Montenegro, NGO
Vice President, Mr Aleksandar Čilikov
5. Association of Private Galleries of Montenegro, NGO
President, Mr Branko Kovačević
6. Biennial of Cetinje, NGO
Director, Ms Gordana Stevović
7. Public Enterprise Museums and Galleries of Podgorica
Director, Ms Lenka Bulatović
8. Public Enterprise Art Colony-Danilovgrad
Director, Ms Vesna Jovović

Representatives of institutions, associations and NGOs active in the field of music

1. Association of Composers of Montenegro, NGO
Member of the Board, Mr Zlatko Baban
2. Music Schools Union
President, Mr Ilija Dapčević
3. Festival *KotorArt*, NGO
Director, Ms Liliana Radović
4. NGO *Ballo*
President, Ms Tamara Vujošević Mandić
5. Orchestra of RTV of Montenegro
Representative of Orchestra, Mr Milan Vuković

6. School for Talents *Andre Navarra*
Director, Mr Aleksa Asanović

7. Ministry of Culture of Montenegro
Independent Adviser for Music, Ms Dobriła Popović, contact at the Ministry of Culture of Montenegro

Representatives of institutions, associations and NGOs active in the field of cinematography

1. Film Library of Montenegro
Director, Mr Gojko Kastratović

2. Association of Film Workers, NGO
Director, Ms Marija Perović and, Member of the Presidency of the Association, Mr Branko Baletić

3. Film festival in Herceg Novi
Programme Director, Mr Zoran Živković

4. Association of Cinemas
Representative of the Association, Mr Miodrag Popović

5. Ministry of Culture of Montenegro
Independent Adviser for Film, Mr Draško Đurović, contact at the Ministry of Culture of Montenegro

Representatives of institutions, associations and NGOs active in the field of publishing and periodicals

1. Association of Writers of Montenegro, NGO
President, Mr Čedo Vukićević

2. Association of Independent Writers of Montenegro, NGO
President, Mr Milorad Popović

3. Publishing company *Obod*
Director, Mr Vasko Janković

4. *Mobil Art*- magazine for culture, art and social issues
Chief Editor, Mr Slobodan Milatović

5. *Matica* – magazine for social issues, science and culture
Chief Editor, Mr Marko Špadijer

6. Magazine *Almanah*
Chief Editor, Mr Šerbo Rastoder

Representatives of theatres in Montenegro and relevant associations

1. Royal Theatre *Zetski Dom* – Cetinje

Director, Mr Ljubo Đurković

2. City Theatre of Podgorica

Director, Mr Zoran Šoškić

3. Faculty of Drama Arts

Assistant, Mr Janko Ljumović

4. *Mobil Art*- magazine for culture, art and social issues

Chief Editor, Mr Slobodan Milatović, Theatre Director, contact at the previous meeting

Meeting in the Republic Institute for International Cultural, Educational and Technical Cooperation

Deputy Director, Ms Tatjana Sekulić,

Independent Advisor for Bilateral Cultural Cooperation, Ms Olivera Eraković,

Independent Advisor for Multilateral Cultural Cooperation, Ms Slavica Perović

Council of Europe, Secretariat Office in Montenegro

Head of Office, Mr Ristovski

Ministry for Protection of Minorities' Rights

Secretary of the Ministry for Protection of Minorities' Rights, Mr Orhan Šahmanović

Media representatives

1. National TV and Radio of Montenegro

Director, Mr Miodrag Vučinić

2. Daily newspaper *Vijesti*

Cultural Editor, Mr Balša Brković

3. Association of Independent Printing Media of Montenegro MONTPRESS

Director, Mr Igor Milošević

4. Association of Independent Electronic Media of Montenegro UNEM

Coordinator, Mr Ranko Vujović

5. Broadcasting Agency of Montenegro

Director, Mr Abaz Beli Džafić

6. Ministry of Culture of Montenegro

Deputy Minister of Culture for Media, Mr Željko Rutović and associate Ms Borka Vuković, contact at the Ministry of Culture of Montenegro

KOTOR

Directors of cultural institutions in Kotor under jurisdiction of the Ministry of Culture and representatives of NGOs from that area

1. Regional Institute for Protection of Cultural Monuments
Director, Mr Ilija Lalošević, and Architect – Conservator, Ms Zorana Milošević
2. Maritime Museum of Montenegro
Director, Ms Mileva Vujošević
3. History Archive of Kotor
Chief of Department, Ms Jelena Antović
4. NGO Expeditio
President, Mr Stevan Kordić and member of the Board of Directors, Mr Boro Vukšić
5. Croatian Civil Association
Representative of the Association, Mr Milenko Pasinović
6. NGO Centre for Care and Presentation of Archives
President, Ms Snežana Pejović
7. Ministry of Culture of Montenegro
Independent Adviser for protection of cultural monuments, Ms Lidija Ljesar, contact at the Ministry of Culture of Montenegro

NIKŠIĆ

Meeting with Mayor and representatives of cultural institutions in Nikšić

1. Municipality of Nikšić
Mayor of Nikšić, Mr Labud Šljukić, Vice President for Culture, Ms Olivera Đurović and Secretary for Culture, Mr Lazar Tripković
2. City Theatre of Nikšić
Director, Ms Zorica Zeković and Art Director, Mr Slaviša Čurović
3. Centre for Culture of Nikšić
Director, Mr Drago Bakrač
4. Cultural Association *Zahumlje*
Director, Ms Violeta Vukosavljević
5. NGO *Anderva* (Fortifications of Niksic)
Director, Mr Ratko Tadić

6. NGO *Akord*

President, Mr Dragan Knežević

7. NGO *Logos*

President, Mr Relja V. Dragnić