



Information gathering template prepared for the Global Education Monitoring Report 2021 - Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia - Inclusion and education: All means all.

Montenegro

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Introduction

The template for the Profiles was a survey designed to collect information from countries in order to collect structured information to be used as the basis for the GEM Regional Report analysis work.

The survey respondents were specifically requested to not focus exclusively on children with disabilities, but include information on all of the groups considered to be vulnerable to exclusion or at risk of being marginalised, stereotyped or subject to discrimination, including for reasons such as gender, location, poverty, ethnicity, language, beliefs and religion, migration or displacement status, sexual orientation or gender identity expression.

The overall goal for the Profile was that the information provided in relation to each country identifies:

1. challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for the implementation of inclusion in education policies;
2. the ways in which countries monitor inclusion and exclusion in education (at individual and system levels);
3. challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for supporting inclusion in education created by sectors other than education and arrangements needed to co-ordinate work among government sectors, tiers of government and with other stakeholders to overcome overlapping dimensions of exclusion;
4. key policy solutions that are being implemented and key drivers of policy change.

The Profile begins with background information on the people completing the template.

The next section provides a short descriptive overview of the country's system of inclusive education.

This is followed by main sections presenting quantitative and qualitative data linked to each of the seven themes for the report:

1. laws and policies;
2. governance and finance;
3. data;
4. curricula, learning materials and assessment;
5. teachers and support personnel;
6. schools;
7. communities, parents and students.

Each section begins with a key guiding question (marked in italic text) that frames the overall information provided. This is followed by the specific questions on the main issues for the topic that should be answered.

Sections 1 and 2 focus on information relating to legislation and policies.

Section 3 focuses upon available data and the aims and procedures for data collection.

Sections 4 to 7 focus on information relating to policies and policy implementation in practice.

The information provided focuses on compulsory education (i.e. potentially -pre-primary, primary and lower secondary, and possibly upper secondary education). Only specific issues related to inclusion in early childhood education and post-compulsory education were considered when necessary.

Survey reply and respondents

Has the information in this profile been discussed with and validated by a government representative?

No / Yes

If yes, who and what is their professional capacity, role?

Partly. Due to specific time schedule of the execution of this report, during which cities and consequently institutions were in the state of lock down due to COVID-19 pandemic, we did not have a chance to validate the whole report with government representatives. Part of it has been validated.

Which other people have been key informants? What is their professional role?

- Mirjana Popović, MSc; Director of the Public Institution Resource Centre for children and Youth “Podgorica”.
- Vignette Sava Kovačević, MSc – primary school teacher at elementary school “Oktoih”; Podgorica

The main challenge for the preparation of the profile was:

Our main challenge was not being able to access information system of the Ministry of Education of Montenegro – MEIS. MEIS represents a rich data platform that can provide researchers with limitless opportunities for learning. Access is provided through the third person, with limited capacities to respond to requests and willingness to provide information.

Also, Montenegrin strategy on inclusion does not collectively target all groups vulnerable to exclusion. Rather it is spread among couple of different strategies. Which makes it difficult to collect data for the same time frame, summarise and make conclusions.

The 5 most informative sources on inclusion in education (academic papers, policy reviews, evaluation studies etc.) for the country published since 2015:

1. MONTENEGRO 2019 – 2025 Inclusive Educational Strategy [national strategy for Inclusive education \(2019-2025\) MNE](#)
2. 2019 EC progress report for Montenegro available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-montenegro-report.pdf>
3. Social Integration of Roma in Montenegro, NGO Monitoring Report for 2016, available at <https://www.mladiromi.me/2014-07-21-09-36-07/dokumenta/category/3-publikacije>
1. Alternative Report on Completion of Action Plan for Implementation of Strategy for Protection of Persons with Disabilities Against Discrimination and Promotion of Equality, available at <http://umhcg.com/en/publikacije/>
2. Pisa 2015 Results and Education Policy Recommendations, UNICEF Country Office in Montenegro, 2019, available at: <https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/media/8686/file/MNE-media-MNEpublication501.pdf>
3. Special/Alternative reports of the Protector for Human Rights and Freedoms in Montenegro available at: https://www.ombudsman.co.me/Posebni_lzvjestaji.html

If internal, non-public or working documents were used, please add a note here.

We were advised by a large number of educational practitioners to heavily use resources related to Inclusive education available at School platform. Even though resources, which are public, sometimes lack an author or a reference, they do very vividly represent the practise and the state of inclusive education in Montenegro.

<http://www.skolskiportal.edu.me/Pages/Inkluzivnoobrazovanje.aspx>

Country system overview

Educational policy is created at the central level. Ministry of Education is responsible for the overall educational policy. Public **financing** of the up-to-the-university education is carried out entirely from the central level, with some contribution from the local self-governments. Allocation for education from GDP is around 4.5%.

Educational providers: Education and upbringing is provided in preschool institution, school, educational center, resource center, by adult education provider, universities, faculties, academy of art and upper secondary non tertiary schools, all of which can be public or private.

The education system of Montenegro consists of pre-school education, primary education, general secondary education, upper secondary vocational education, upper secondary non tertiary education and higher education.

- **Primary education** is compulsory and it's free for all children aged 6 to 15 years. It lasts for nine years divided into three cycles, which means that in Montenegro primary and lower secondary education are organized as a single structure system.

Quality Assurance (QA): QA of the educational work in the institution is done internally and externally. Internal quality assessment is performed by the institution itself. External assessment is carried out by the responsible public bodies or authorized agencies. Ministry of Education regulates methodology for both internal and external evaluation.

Education of Children with Special Educational Needs

Education of children with special educational needs (SEN children) is part of a single educational system and it is compulsory from the moment of identifying a special education need of a child. Education of SEN children is carried out in preschool institution, institutions of primary and secondary general and vocational education, as well as in resource centre. This type of education is provided for a specific level of education which corresponds to SEN children physical, intellectual, emotional and social development. Space, equipment and teaching material must be adapted to SEN children and there is obligation for schools to provide adequate educational conditions.

The Montenegrin education system sees **inclusive education in mainstream schools** as the first choice and an imperative for children with special needs in education – this is illustrated by the steady rising trend of children in these institutions.

Goal of inclusive education strategy is -To provide access and quality inclusive education at all levels for children with special needs in education.

Guiding principal is: To promote, safeguard and ensure full and equal participation of all children with special needs in education through inclusive education without discrimination or exclusion, and based on their equality with others.

At the core of this principle lies the aspiration to develop an equity-based society in which all children with special educational needs have access and participate in the educational process together with all their peers.

Local referral panels propose the programme, expert assistance, staff, spatial, material and other conditions for each child with special needs in education. Individual Development/Education Programmes (IDEPs) serve as the basis for working with children with special needs in education. The Individual Transition Plan-1 (ITP-1) serves to facilitate the transition of students with special needs in education from elementary to secondary school. The aim is to consider the child's abilities and skills.

These Resource Centre in Montenegro supports inclusive education by following means: providing advice and expertise; teacher training and training of expert assistants to work with children with special needs in education; use of sign language; preparation, adaptation, design and training on the use of specialized textbooks (in Braille and in DAISY format) and other specialized teaching aids.

Seven mainstream schools have formed integrated classes, where children with special needs in education also attend some lessons together with their peers from mainstream classes. Schools with integrated classes were identified as Resource Centre satellite units. Consultations and advisory sessions on how to adjust the rooms and

the teaching process are organized for the local community schools, as well as workshops promoting inclusive principles, culture, policy, practices, values, etc.

Schools hire teaching assistants to help the children with special needs in education, as technical support during the academic year.

A number of positive measures have been implemented, notably the appointment of Roma education mediators, with 18 mediators hired from the 2018/19 school year. A system for identification of early dropout risks is now in place and a protocol for prevention and action upon early school leaving has been adopted.

The Ministry of Education has taken over from the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights the obligation to provide free textbooks for children of the Roma and Egyptian population from the 4th to the 9th grade.¹

External support programs were mostly provided by the UNICEF Country Office in Montenegro, Save the Children and Council of Europe.

UNICEF is supporting the development of quality and evidence-based policies aimed at improving the overall quality of education, such as the National PISA 2015 Report which sets out the directions for tackling the most pressing issues preventing pupils from developing the skills and competences needed for success in school and in the labour market.

UNICEF has initiated and supported the introduction of a programme to develop the social and emotional skills of pupils, in line with the latest scientific knowledge on their crucial importance for academic achievement, career success and overall wellbeing.

(ii) Are there specific features of the compulsory education system that impact on inclusion that should be kept in mind when reading the country response?

Area	Yes/No	Description of the feature
Early tracking of learners into a particular educational pathway	YES	Early Intervention System. Montenegrin institutions (education, health and social) work together in order to secure early intervention system. Resource centres in particular are involved and support reaching set developmental goals. In Montenegro Early Warning System exists. In order to create an effective and system-based intervention for drop-out prevention, UNICEF supported the development of an Early Warning System integrated within the Ministry of Education's Information System. The Early Warning System has a set of predefined indicators/thresholds, which, when reached, send a warning to schools and teachers to take action and provide support to pupils at risk of dropping out. The Early Warning System is currently being piloted in 20 primary and secondary schools.
'Double-shift' patterns to the school day (i.e. learners attend for either a morning or afternoon session)	YES	In most urban schools teaching is organised in double shift model due to limited infrastructural possibilities and high number of learners/pupils.
Grade retention	YES	In the first four grade learners cannot fail and repeat while rest five grades (5 to 9 grade) legally it is possible.
Multiple languages of instruction	YES	Teaching in Montenegro is organised in Montenegrin/Serbian/Bosnian/Croatian language for all students. In Montenegro education is also provided in Albanian language as well as in English language in some special international classes.

¹ Annual report of the Ministry of Education (12) 30 June 2018

Policies on access to compulsory education in local schools	No	
(others ...)	NA	

More comprehensive information can be found on Montenegro's profile at EURYDICE on National educational system

https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/montenegro_en

(iii) In the country's system which groups are considered to be vulnerable to exclusion from education? Who has identified these groups as being vulnerable to exclusion?

Most vulnerable groups to the exclusions are (with no right order):

- Children with special educational needs
- Children from Roma and Egyptian community
- Children from rural communities with low socio-economic status

In the governmental report on education these groups are mostly identified as the most vulnerable ones, and for all of them some measures were planned or undertaken in order to minimize the exclusion.

Montenegrin government recognises vulnerable groups in education and use one form of support - the right to free-of-charge primary school textbooks. This is the entitlement of: "children without parental care; children whose parent/guardian is a family cash allowance beneficiary; children with SEN; children in residential care; children in foster care; and children from the Roma and Egyptian communities" (General Law, Article 34).

(iv) Please provide a brief (maximum 1 page) narrative overview of the historical development of inclusion of vulnerable groups in education in the country.

Legal provisions concerning accessibility of education have lately improved considerably. Thus, the 2002 General Law mentions it only in the context of school availability: "With proper regional distribution of establishments throughout the territory of the Republic, citizens are provided with equal access to education." The current provisions, based on the amended 2017 Law on Primary Education, define accessibility of education as the absence of any types of obstacles or barriers, thus putting in place the assumptions for full inclusiveness: "Primary education shall be accessible to all persons and may not be restricted, directly or indirectly, on any grounds: sex, race, colour, language, religion, marital status, political or other beliefs, national, ethnic or other background, financial standing, disability or any other similar ground, position or circumstance."

Considerable progress has been made regarding inclusiveness. Eighteen years ago (in 2002), the Law on Education of Children with SEN was adopted, replacing the 1992 Law on Special Education. With the entry into force of this law, new services have been put in place to ease access to education (specialized and outreach services within the BfES, the Orientation Commission for Children with Special Educational Needs, teaching assistants), parents are more substantially involved in their children's "orientation", and the language in official use has been changed to reflect policy commitment towards greater inclusiveness. Special schools have been transformed into Resource Centres, whose role is to provide support to mainstream schools and teachers in educating children with SEN. Some students still attend Resource Centres or are on residential care in such centres. Their numbers are dwindling each year, illustrating the commitment to include all children in mainstream schools and education, while the strengthening of the Resource Centres' capacities to support this process and to be actively engaged in it is currently under way. Children with SEN enroll in mainstream preschools and schools and attend regular teaching following adapted curricula (in line with their Individual Development and Education Programme or IDEP), delivered by preschool and school teachers and other school-based experts trained to work with children with SEN (disability experts mostly). Full inclusiveness became mandatory with the amendments to the 2015 law, giving additional legal backing to the

increasing trend of having children with SEN in mainstream education, which came as a result of systemic reforms, the MoEd's commitment, targeted policies and campaigns.

The Inclusive Education Strategy (2008-2013) draws on best international practice and domestic intensive and extensive experience in order to provide quality and accessible education for children with special educational needs in accordance with their interests, opportunities and needs. Based on the analysis of the implementation of the measures of this Strategy, the Inclusive Education Strategy (2014-2018) was adopted, focusing on early development, access and continuity of education, support at all levels, training and professional development of staff, monitoring and evaluation of children's educational and developmental achievements.

The 2019–2025 Inclusive Education Strategy sets the directions for the further development of education of children with special education needs. The 2019–2025 Inclusive Education Strategy will contribute to children and young people with special needs in education obtaining equal rights and to mastering, in a continuous and quality manner, the competences for life and efficient professional performance in line with their individual abilities.

Roma integration is a priority at the EU level and an integral part of Montenegro's accession negotiations. Roma and Egyptians (RE) are not explicitly recognised as national minorities in Montenegro. The Constitution and the Law on Minority Rights and Freedoms stipulate the right of national minority groups to participate in decision-making. Additionally, Election Law grants minorities representation in the Parliament and municipal assemblies. However, these do not refer to RE community.

In addition to more general documents such as the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination, there are special laws and policies (in particular concerning social inclusion) tackling RE issues. Montenegro was a participating member of 2005-2015 Decade of Roma Inclusion, and its commitment was formalized with the National Action Plan. Three Strategies for the Social Inclusion of RE have also been adopted by the Government (1st for the period 2008-2012, 2nd for the period 2012-2016 and the third covering period 2016-2020) and are implemented through annual Action Plans.. The third and the current Strategy, which complies with the EU framework is based on the following key principles:

- equality - members of RE community should have equal opportunities in all social areas as it is the case with the majority population;
- non-discrimination - all measures of the Strategy should contribute to reducing the risks of unfair treatment of RE community;
- desegregation - the Strategy aims to prevent the risk of spatial isolation of RE;
- affirmative action.

Section 1: Laws and Policies

What is the framework of legislation, policy and guidelines for supporting the development of an inclusive education system?

1.1 Have international/UN conventions/declarations to protect the rights of groups who are potentially vulnerable to discrimination and exclusion been integrated into national and/or regional law?

Convention/declaration on ²	Law ³	Comments
Child rights (UNCRC)	Law on Social and Child Protection ⁴ ; Family Law ⁵ ; The Law on Prohibition of Discrimination ⁶ ; The Law on Prohibition of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities ⁷	Montenegro ratified UNCRC in 2006. The Law on Social and Child Protection was amended in 2017. New provisions 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); Amended Family Law introduced important provisions which 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 prohibits discrimination against a child on any grounds; The Law on Prohibition of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities 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.

² The Constitution of Montenegro, Article 9, prescribes “The ratified and published international agreements and generally accepted rules of international law shall make an integral part of the internal legal order, shall have the supremacy over the national legislation and shall be directly applicable when they regulate the relations differently from the internal legislation”, available in Montenegrin language at: <http://www.skupstina.me/index.php/me/ustav-crne-gore>

³ Please note that only laws which are relevant from the aspect of inclusion in education have been indicated in the table.

⁴ 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, available in Montenegrin language at: <https://www.csrcg.me/index.php/propisi/zakoni>

⁵ Family Law, Official Gazette of Montenegro no 1/07, 53/16, available in Montenegrin language at: <https://www.csrcg.me/index.php/propisi/zakoni>

⁶ Law on Prohibition of Discrimination, Official Gazette of Montenegro no 46/10, 40/11 – oth.law, 18/14, 42/17, available in Montenegrin language at: <https://www.paragraf.me/propisi-crnegore/zakon-o-zabrani-diskriminacije.html>

⁷ Law on Prohibition of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities, Official Gazette of Montenegro no 35/15 & 44/15 – corr, available in Montenegrin language at:

<http://www.skolskiportal.edu.me/Inkluzivno%20obrazovanje/Zakon%20o%20zabrani%20diskriminacije%20lica%20sa%20invaliditetom.pdf>

Disability (UNCRPD)	The Law on Prohibition of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities;	Montenegro ratified UNCRPD in 2009, however the national legislation still has not been fully complied with the Convention. ⁸
Gender (Convention on discrimination against women CEDAW)	Law on Gender Equality ⁹	Montenegro ratified CEDAW in 2006.
Ethnicity or language (UN Declaration on Rights of persons belonging to National, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities)		
Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities	Law on Minority Rights ¹⁰	Ratified in 2006.

1.2 Provide an overview of general education legislation impacting on the inclusion of learners from vulnerable groups:

Name and link	Year and status (enacted, under preparation etc.)	Description of key content
General Law on Education and Upbringing available at: https://www.paragraf.me/propisi-crnegore/opstizakon-o-obrazovanju-i-vaspitanju.html	Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro 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 ¹¹ , 39/13, 44/13 – corr, 47/17	General Law on Education and Upbringing is the umbrella law on education. It regulates the organization and conditions for performing educational work in pre-school, primary and general secondary education, vocational education, special needs education and education of adults. When it comes to inclusion the Law defines that purpose of the education (Article 2) is to provide opportunities for the comprehensive development of the individual, regardless of gender, age, disability, social and cultural background, national and religious affiliation, and physical and psychological constitution. The Law also generally defines the role and responsibilities of each actor involved in inclusion of children with special educational needs.
Law on Primary Education and Upbringing available at: https://www.paragraf.me/propisi-crnegore/zakon-o-osnovnom-obrazovanju-i-vaspitanju.html	Official Gazette of Montenegro 64/02, 49/07, 45/10, 40/11, 39/13 and 47/17	The law regulates conditions and organisation of primary education in Montenegro. It was amended in 2017. New provisions define accessibility of education as the absence of any types of obstacles or barriers, thus putting in place the assumptions for full inclusiveness: “Primary education shall be accessible to all persons and may not be restricted, directly or indirectly, on any grounds: sex, race, colour, language, religion, marital status, political or other beliefs, national, ethnic or other background, financial standing, disability or any other similar ground, position or circumstance.” (Article 2a)

⁸ 2019 EC progress report for Montenegro available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-montenegro-report.pdf>

⁹ Law on Gender Equality, Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro no 46/07 and Official Gazette of Montenegro nos 73/10, 40/11, and 35/15, available in Montenegrin language at: <http://www.mmp.gov.me/biblioteka/zakoni>

¹⁰ Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro, No. 031/06, 051/06, 038/07, Official Gazette of Montenegro, No. 002/11, 008/11, 031/17 available in Montenegrin language at <http://www.mmp.gov.me/biblioteka/zakoni>

¹¹ Constitutional Court

		<p>Term –children with special educational needs- refer to (Article 11): children with developmental disabilities (physical, intellectual, sensory disabilities, and children with combined disabilities), children with developmental difficulties (behavioural disorders, children with severe chronic diseases, children with long-term illnesses and other children with learning difficulties and other difficulties caused by emotional, social, linguistic and cultural barriers).</p>
<p>The Law on the Education of Children with Special Educational Needs available at: http://www.mps.gov.me/biblioteka/zakoni</p>	<p>Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro” no. 80/2004, Official Gazette of Montenegro” nos. 45/2010 and 47/2017</p>	<p>The law specifies the conditions, scope and manner of providing education to children with special educational needs. 2017 amendments include regulations related to: anti-discrimination provisions, specifying the term children with special educational needs¹², programmes, roles of resource centres and schools with special classes, special education teachers they engage, concretization of individual development and education programmes, introduction of an individual transition plan and the process of engaging teaching assistants is envisioned in a new manner.</p> <p>The objectives of education of children with special educational needs, as prescribed by the Article 7 of the law include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - providing equal education opportunities for all children; - providing adequate conditions that allow for the optimum development; - timely guidance and inclusion into adequate programmes of education; - individual approach; - maintaining balance between physical, intellectual, emotional and social development; - including parents in the process of habilitation, rehabilitation and education; - continuity of programmes of education; - coherence and complexity of education; - organising education as close as possible to the place of residence; - providing adequate educational technology; - providing technical assistance for children with special educational needs. <p>According to the law, the premises, equipment and teaching resources of preschool institutions and schools must be adapted for children with special educational needs, in line with the educational programme. To carry out education of children with special educational needs, schools are obliged to provide adequate educational technologies, as part of additional teaching resources (bigger font, Braille alphabet, etc.). In order</p>

¹² Article 4 of the Law on Education of Children with Special Educational Needs: “the term ‘children with special educational needs’ includes children with disabilities, children with developmental, physical, intellectual, sensory disabilities, children with combined disabilities and autism-spectrum disorders, developmental difficulties, speech/language difficulties, behavioural disorders, children with severe chronic diseases, children with long-term illnesses and other children with learning difficulties and other difficulties caused by emotional, social, linguistic and cultural barriers.

		<p>to provide students, i.e. children with special educational needs with adequate care, the number of students in a class has been reduced by 10%, as compared to the number established by law.</p> <p>Resource centres, at which children with special educational needs receive education according to special educational programmes, also provide assistance and support to inclusive education through: advisory and professional work, trainings of teachers and professional associates for work with children with special educational needs, use of sign language, preparation, adaptation, designing, use of special textbooks (in Braille, in Digital Accessible Information System – Daisy format) and other specialised teaching resources.</p>
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1.3 Provide an overview of education policy or guidelines impacting on inclusion of learners from vulnerable groups:

Name and link	Year and status (enacted, under preparation etc.)	Description of key content
<p>Strategy for Inclusive Education in Montenegro (2019-2025)</p> <p>https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/media/7876/file/MNE-media-MNEpublication312.pdf</p>	Adopted in 2019	<p>The Strategy for Inclusive Education in Montenegro (2019-2025) is an umbrella document regarding the inclusive education in Montenegro.</p> <p>The document continues on with the implementation of measures from the Strategy for Inclusive Education covering the period from 2014 to 2018 and relies on the binding international principles, standards and recommendations of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.</p>

1.4 Please describe any specific plans and strategies designed to support inclusion in education (e.g. national strategy on migrant learners):

Name and link	Year and status (approved, under preparation etc.)	Description of the focus
<p>The Strategy for Exercising the Rights of the Child 2019-2023</p> <p>https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/media/11026/file/MNE-media-MNEpublication331.pdf</p>	Adopted in 2019	<p>The Strategy 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 UNCRC and its optional protocols.</p>

The National Strategy for Sustainable Development by 2030 http://www.mrs.gov.me/biblioteka/strategije	Adopted in 2016	The National Strategy for Sustainable Development by 2030 within the strategic goal of 'improving the human resources and strengthening social inclusion', the following measure has been defined: provision of inclusive and quality education and the promotion of opportunities. Within the strategic goal of 'supporting the values, standards and behavioural patterns important for the sustainability of the society', the measure of stimulating employability and social inclusion has been defined.
The Strategy for the Social Inclusion of Roma and Egyptians 2016-2020 https://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/docs/6/the-strategy-for-social-inclusion-of-roma-and-egyptians-in-montenegro-2016--2020--montenegro	Adopted in 2016	Key and the overall objective of the Strategy is the social inclusion of Roma and Egyptians by improving their socio-economic position. The strategy defines seven key areas: housing, education, health care, employment, legal status, social status and family care, culture, language, and identity.
The Strategy for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities from Discrimination and the Promotion of Equality 2017- 2021 ¹³ http://www.mmp.gov.me/biblioteka/strategije	Adopted in 2016	Strategy for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities from Discrimination and Promotion of Equality, with its strategic objective being in the field of education and vocational training of enabling inclusive education at all levels for all students.
2016-2020 Strategy for Integration of Persons with Disabilities in Montenegro	Adopted in 2016	2016-2020 Strategy for Integration of Persons with Disabilities in Montenegro, with the following strategic objective in education: securing the right to education without discrimination and an inclusive education system for all at all levels, as well as lifelong learning aimed at the full development of human potential, dignity and self-worth, through participation in the general education system, with reasonable adaptations corresponding to individual needs.

1.5 Is there a definition of inclusion in education?

No

¹³ The Strategy for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities from Discrimination and the Promotion of Equality 2017- 2021 in Montenegrin language is available at: <http://www.mmp.gov.me/biblioteka/strategije>

No definition of –inclusion in education- was provided in analysed documents. However, the Strategy for Inclusive Education in Montenegro (2019-2025) refers to UNCESO’s definition of the inclusive education¹⁴.

1.6 Is there a definition of vulnerable groups?

Yes

If yes, please provide the definition and give the official source:

Montenegrin legislative educational framework does not provide unique definition of vulnerable groups. However, the Law on Primary Education and Upbringing, Article 34, defines vulnerable groups partially through description of groups who are entitled to free textbooks: “children without parental care; children whose parent/guardian is beneficiary of welfare assistance; children with special educational needs; children in residential care; children in foster care; and children from the Roma and Egyptian communities”.

On the other hand the Law on Social and Child Protection¹⁵ (Article 4) defined groups who need particular protection:

1) a child: without parental care; whose parent is incapable of taking care of him; with disabilities; with behavioural problems; who uses alcohol, drugs or other illicit substances; who is a victim of abuse, neglect, domestic violence or exploitation, or is at risk of becoming a victim; who is a victim of trafficking in human beings; whose parents do not agree on the manner of exercising the parental right; who finds himself outside from the place of residence without the supervision of a parent, adoptive parent or guardian; pregnant without family support and adequate living conditions; single parent with a child and without family support and adequate living conditions; who needs an adequate form of social protection due to special circumstances and social risk.

1a) a young person: who was a child without parental care; who needs an adequate form of social protection due to special circumstances and social risk.

2) An adult or old person: with disability; who uses alcohol, drugs or other illicit substances; who is a victim of neglect, abuse, exploitation and violence in the family or who is at risk of becoming a victim; victim of trafficking in human beings; who is homeless; who is pregnant and without family support and adequate living conditions; who is a single parent with a child and without parental support and adequate living conditions; who needs an adequate form of social protection due to special circumstances and social risk.

If no, please give further information:

1.7 Is there a definition of special educational needs?

Yes

If yes, please provide the definition and give the official source:

According to the Law on Education of Children with Special Educational Needs the term ‘children with special educational needs’ includes children with disabilities, children with developmental, physical, intellectual, sensory disabilities, children with combined disabilities and autism-spectrum disorders, developmental difficulties, speech/language difficulties, behavioural disorders, children with severe chronic diseases, children with long-term illnesses and other children with learning difficulties and other difficulties caused by emotional, social, linguistic and cultural barriers.

If no, please give further information:

¹⁴ Inclusive Education is inclusion and teaching of all children in formal and non-formal learning environments without regard to gender, physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic, cultural, religious or other characteristics ” UNESCO, 2015.

¹⁵ 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, available in Montenegrin language at: <https://www.csrcg.me/index.php/propisi/zakoni>

1.8 Please provide information on any future developments planned for inclusion in education.

The Strategy for Inclusive Education in Montenegro (2019-2025) in the upcoming period will focus on the accomplishment of the three main tasks:

- Task 1: Ensure and implement accessibility and equity of education for all children alongside their peers through the necessary cross-sector support;
- Task 2: Ensure and implement equal and continuous inclusive education through successful cooperation within and between sectors and transition from one level of education to the next;
- Task 3: Support and improve the quality of inclusive education through strengthening school policies, culture and practice.

The recommendations on which Montenegro should pay special attention in the future period are:

- Improve the collaboration of the healthcare, child and social protection and education sectors with the aim of coordinated service delivery for the timely development of children with special needs in education and psycho-social- financial support to the families;
- Improve the cooperation of relevant public actors, partners and civil society and the development of monitoring and coordination mechanisms and records.
- Ensure the participation of all children with special needs in education in the education system, along with adequate support and collaboration among the local-level social and child protection services;
- Revise the work of the local referral panels for the sake of maximum consistency, accountability and uniformity based on the human-rights model;
- Promote early involvement and learning for children with special needs in education, continuity of schooling, further development and practice of individual transition across education levels with particular emphasis on a cross-sector approach;
- Develop a culture of inclusive accountability and the active role of teachers and expert assistants working with children with special needs in education;
- Continuously work to upgrade the teaching process, conditions, environment for the achievements of children with special needs in education, coordination and monitoring of the roles of assistants;
- Continuously promote the inclusive process so that children with special needs in education can receive education together with their peers and with the participation and empowerment of their parents;
- Improve the services provided by the Resource Centres for inclusive education, strengthen the new functions of integrated classes, modernize and specify the work of mobile teams;
- Work to improve accessibility and the level of equipment in schools;
- Continuously enhance the literature related to inclusive education and develop specialized didactic and teaching tools.

1.9 Please provide information on any reports, evaluations and/or reviews of legislation and/or policy relating to inclusion in education, since 2015. This could include official and parallel reports on UNCRPD etc.

- Social Integration of Roma in Montenegro, NGO Monitoring Report for 2016, available at <https://www.mladiromi.me/2014-07-21-09-36-07/dokumenta/category/3-publikacije>
- Alternative Report on Completion of Action Plan for Implementation of Strategy for Protection of Persons with Disabilities Against Discrimination and Promotion of Equality, available at <http://umhcg.com/en/publikacije/>

1.10 What are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hindrances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to laws and policies in the country?

The overall access and quality of child and social protection services and of inclusive education for children with disabilities should be improved, together with the nationwide early detection, intervention and rehabilitation services. Effective implementation of fundamental rights policies on gender equality, children and Roma rights, and rights of persons with disabilities, by securing sufficient budget allocation for implementation, improving the capacity of relevant institutions as well as inter-institutional coordination should be enabled. ¹⁶

Additionally, current legislation does not specify/define vulnerable groups thus some groups of children/young (rural children; and children living in remote areas) are often neglected not only from the point of view of quality education, but also the security of the school environment and anti-discriminatory practices.

Challenges have been also indicated in the section 1.8.

¹⁶ EC progress report for Montenegro available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-montenegro-report.pdf>

Section 2: Governance and Finance

How far are inclusive principles underpinning policies at national and local levels effectively supported by governance and financing mechanisms?

2.1 Is there formal collaboration across ministries on inclusion in education?

Yes

If yes, in which areas does this take place and who is involved?

Area	Yes/No	Description: what mechanism, who is involved and how
Policy development, implementation and coordination	Yes	2019 – 2025 Inclusive Education Strategy of Montenegro ¹⁷ is a joint effort and work of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Ministry of Health, Bureau for Education, the Vocational Education and Training Centre, representatives of educational institutions and NGO sector. Action plan for the Strategy has been developed and it covers period from 2019 to 2025. Implementation of activities is divided among ministries and other institutions. Leading institutions and organizations responsible for the implementation of the specific activities have been defined. ¹⁸
Identification of needs / referral for services	No information available	
Data sharing	No information available	
Monitoring and evaluation	Yes	Information is available on the planned steps - after the three-year period of implementation of the 2019 – 2025 Inclusive Education Strategy an external evaluation should be carried out. The evaluation should provide a cross-section of the situation, achievements and insight into the dynamics and current status of implementation. Upon the adoption of the Strategy a team for monitoring its performance has been established. This activity is coordinated by the Ministry of Education. The team meets quarterly. ¹⁹ Please note that no information on the team composition, its tasks or responsibilities were available at the time of the research on the website of the Ministry of Education.
Quality assurance and accountability	No information available	

If no, please give further information:

¹⁷ Please note that this umbrella document is newly adopted and that full report on the activities of the Ministry of Education for 2019 has not been published yet.

¹⁸ Action Plan in English language is enclosed with the Strategy and available in English language at: <https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/media/7876/file/MNE-media-MNEpublication312.pdf>

¹⁹ Information from the Report on Implementation of the 2019 – 2025 Inclusive Education Strategy, prepared by the Ministry of Education and available in Montenegrin language at: <http://www.gov.me/biblioteka/izviestaji?pagerIndex=1>

2.2 Are there shared responsibilities between central and local governments on inclusion in education?

Yes

If yes, in which areas does this take place and who is involved?

Area	Yes/No	Description: who is involved and how
Policy development, implementation and coordination	No information available	
Identification of needs / referral for services	Yes	Referral of children with special educational needs is done on the basis of a decision passed by a body of local authority in charge of education, following the proposal of the commission for referral of children with special educational needs which is composed of: paediatrician and doctors of adequate specialty, psychologist, school counsellor, special education teacher of certain specialty and social worker. The parent and the teacher, or preschool teacher of the child being referred take part in the work of the commission. As the basis for the referral, particularly focusing on the process of acquiring and adopting skills and knowledge necessary for everyday life, the Commission assess the child's level of development, the potential for learning and the adoption of knowledge standards, personal characteristics, obstacles and aggravating factors of the environment. The commissions is composed of a paediatrician, psychologist, school counsellor, social worker and special education teacher, and it suggests programmes, professional assistance, staff, spatial, material and other conditions regarding each child with special educational needs.
Data sharing	Yes	The Ministry of Education keeps records on the basis of the provided information on the referral decisions.
Monitoring and evaluation	No information available	
Quality assurance and accountability	No information available	

If no, please give further information:

2.3 Are non-governmental organisations and/or associations involved in governance processes?

No information available

If yes, please the describe their involvement:

If no, please give further information:

There was no information available that NGOs are included in the governance process. In generally, cooperation with NGOs in Montenegro is mostly done on a project-based level rather than long term commitment of the authorities to include them in decision making and governance process.

2.4 Are there any accountability mechanisms to promote the inclusion of learners from vulnerable groups?

Yes

If yes, what is the focus of the mechanisms?

Area	Yes/No	Description of the focus/actors involved (e.g. state/non state)
Appeal process for rights violations	Yes	<p>The Ministry of Education supervises the implementation of the General Law on Education and Upbringing.</p> <p>The appeal on the violation of any children’s right can be submitted to the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro.</p> <p>Additionally, 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.</p>
School inspection	Yes	School inspection supervises the work of schools.
Other quality assurance processes (e.g. standards for teaching, support services etc)	Yes	<p>Quality assurance and quality improvement is carried out in accordance with the General Law on Education and secondary legislation that define the field of evaluation as well as the methodology for its implementation.</p> <p>The assessment of quality of educational work is done both internally (self-evaluation) and externally.</p> <p>Educational institutions themselves carry out quality assurance and quality improvement of educational work (self-evaluation), annually for individual areas and biennially altogether. Quality assurance and quality improvement of institutions’ educational work (external quality assessment and quality assurance) are performed by the Bureau for Education Services and Centre for Vocational Education, at least every four years.</p> <p>The self-evaluation process creates the basis for each teacher to recognise their own strengths and weaknesses, to compare their performance with others, to recognise opportunities for improvement, to set goals aimed at their own development. Internal quality assessment of institution’s educational work is done by expert bodies, as well as other bodies and entities within the institution, in line with its statute and the annual work plan. The institution prepares internal assessment report on the quality of educational work biennially and delivers it to the Bureau for Education Services.</p> <p>External quality assessment of educational work at institutions can be either regular or extraordinary. Regular quality assessment of institution’s educational work is done at least once in four years. Extraordinary quality assessment of institution’s educational work is carried out as needed, as well as following the reasoned request of the parent council. External quality assessment of institution’s educational work is carried out by educational supervisors, as well as by authorised advisers and external associates.</p>
Monitoring and evaluation (e.g. data collection on attendance,	Yes	The assessment of quality of educational work at an institution is done both internally and externally in

<p>participation, achievement, funding)</p>	<p>accordance with the General Law on Education and the Rulebook on the content, form and manner of evaluating the quality of educational work at institutions.</p> <p>The Rulebook on the content, form and manner of quality assessment of educational work at institutions prescribes the content, forms and manner of quality assessment of educational work at preschool institutions, primary schools, gymnasiums, vocational schools, educational centres, resource centres, adult education providers and boarding homes for pupils.</p> <p>The quality of educational work is assessed with regard to the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowledge and skills achievement of children, students and learners (hereinafter: students) according to educational knowledge standards • quality of teaching and learning • ethos of the institution (spirit of the community and atmosphere at the institution, preserving and promoting human rights, natural and social environment, multi-ethnicity and diversity) • governance and management of the institution, organisation and performance of educational work • support that the institution provides to students (supplementary, additional classes, additional assistance to students with special educational needs, competitions, etc.) • staff, material and technical, as well as safety conditions of the institution's work • cooperation with parents, other institutions and the local community and social partners • other contents important for evaluating the quality of educational work at institutions. <p>Internal quality assessment</p> <p>The purpose of evaluation and self-evaluation of teachers' work is the improvement of educational work at schools. The self-evaluation process creates the basis for each teacher to recognise their own strengths and weaknesses, to compare their achievements with others, to recognise opportunities for improvement, to set goals for their own development.</p> <p>Internal quality assessment of institution's educational work (self-evaluation) is done by expert bodies, as well as by other bodies and entities within the institution, in line with its statute and the annual work plan. The institution prepares internal assessment report on the quality of educational work biannually and delivers it to the Bureau for Education Services.</p> <p>Internal evaluation procedures are intended for teachers, administrations and professional services at schools, and are used to measure, assess and improve the quality of educational work of teachers at schools.</p> <p>Quality of teachers' work at schools is evaluated through six areas:</p>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional knowledge and skills of teachers • Supporting student development • Planning and preparing classes • Implementing contemporary teaching/learning process at school • Monitoring, evaluating and assessing student progression, and • Communication and cooperation. <p>Each of the defined areas of teachers' educational work quality is differentiated and precisely described by particular sub-areas with set indicators - indicators of quality of teachers' work at schools. Instruments, scales of self/assessment and checklists have been designed on the basis of these indicators, which are used for self-evaluation and/or evaluation of teachers' educational work at schools.</p> <p>External quality assessment</p> <p>External quality assessment of educational work at institutions can be either regular or extraordinary. Regular quality assessment of educational work at an institution is carried out at least once in four years. Extraordinary quality assessment of educational work at an institution is carried out as needed, as well as following the reasoned request of the parents' council.</p> <p>External quality assessment of educational work at an institution is carried out by educational supervisors, as well as by authorised counsellors and external associates. Supervisors assess the quality of educational work on the basis of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • direct monitoring of teaching and other forms of educational work; • insight into the implementation of the annual plan and programme of the institution's work; • insight into the students' achievement of knowledge standards; • insight into the results of external knowledge assessment; • insight into the implementation of subject programmes and extracurricular activities; • conversations with head, teachers, students, parents and other persons involved in the educational process; • insight into the electronic database of statistical data that the institution regularly updates during the classification period; • analysis of questionnaires for students, employees and parents; • other actions that are deemed necessary. <p>At the request, the institution is obliged to provide or prepare information, documents or other materials necessary for determining the quality of educational work within ten days from the date of receiving the request.</p>
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	<p>The quality is assessed according to the defined quality indicators. The assessment of educational work quality is expressed in the following manner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • failed to meet • mostly met • met • mostly successful • successful • very successful. <p>The report on the assessed quality of educational work includes quality assessment, explanations and recommendations along with the proposed measures that the institution should take in order to improve the quality of educational work for each key area.</p> <p>Based on the report, the head of the institution adopts a plan for improving the quality of educational work of the institution. The plan for improving the quality of educational work of the institution is then submitted to the Bureau for Education Services.</p> <p>The Bureau for Education Services prepares annual report on the assessment of educational work quality at institutions and delivers it to the Ministry of Education and the National Council for Education. The Annual Report is published on the website of the Bureau for Education Services.</p> <p>The Methodology for quality assurance and quality improvement of educational work at institutions (self-evaluation and evaluation) is prescribed by the Ministry, on the proposal of the Bureau for Education Services and the Centre for Vocational Education.</p> <p>The methodology for external evaluation of educational work defines key areas that are analysed by the supervisory service, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School/institution governance and management; • Staff, material, technical and safety conditions of the school's/institution's work; • Ethos of the school/institution; • Support that school/institution provides to its students; • Cooperation of school/institution with parents, other institutions and the local community; • Teaching and learning (by subjects); • Students' achievement of knowledge and skills according to educational standards. <p>For each of these areas there are defined indicators serving as the main determinants to evaluate a particular key area in terms of quality.</p> <p>The area of school/institution governance and management includes the following indicators: annual plan and its implementation; development programme; work of professional bodies; process of internal evaluation of work; quality improvement plan; pedagogical and instructive work</p>
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	<p>of heads and associates; work of the school/governing board; pedagogical records and documentation.</p> <p>The area of staff, material, technical and safety conditions of the school's/institution's work includes the following indicators: professional representation; being equipped with teaching resources and having adequate premises; professional development of employees; spatial and technical conditions and adequate premises; being equipped with computers; using available resources; safety conditions (technical and normative); sanitary and hygienic conditions.</p> <p>The area of ethos of the school/institution includes the following indicators: respect of house rules; interpersonal relations; interpersonal relations between teachers and students; aesthetic arrangement of space; promotion and role in the community; impact of incentive measures.</p> <p>The area of support that school/institution provides to its students includes the following indicators: support for students who are lagging behind with the material; support for talented students; support for students with developmental disabilities; extra-curricular activities/compulsory elective contents; rights and obligations of students; protection and safety of students; implementation of educational and preventive programmes; work of the Student Parliament; professional orientation.</p> <p>The area of cooperation of school/institution with parents, other institutions and the local community includes the following indicators: cooperation with parents; activities of parents' council; cooperation with other institutions and the local community; involvement of parents in educational process.</p> <p>The area of teaching and learning (by subjects) includes the following indicators: organisation of teaching/learning in a class; lesson planning; written preparations for classes; use of teaching materials; assessment; conditions for work that may be affected by the teacher; work of teaching staff; remedial classes; additional classes.</p> <p>The area of students' achievement of knowledge and skills according to educational standards includes the following indicators: results at knowledge assessment and external knowledge assessment; achievements at each classification period of the ongoing year; achievements of students at higher levels of competition; achievements of students at school competitions; educational achievements; achievement of students with special needs; achievements by the classification periods and at the end of the previous year.</p>
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If no, please give further information:

2.5 Please describe the general mechanisms for funding schools. Give details on: which institutions provide funding; what they provide; how they provide it and to whom, which mechanisms they use to allocate resources; and their respective roles and responsibilities.

Funding mechanisms	Description of who, what, to whom and how
<p>In accordance with the General Law on Education, education is funded from:</p> <p>Public revenues (budget of Montenegro and municipality);</p> <p>Founders' resources;</p> <p>Tuition fees at private institutions;</p> <p>Fees paid by parents;</p> <p>Property income (lease);</p> <p>Funds from selling services and products;</p> <p>Donations, sponsorships and legacies;</p> <p>and</p> <p>Other sources.</p>	<p>The budget of the Ministry of Education, which is part of the Budget of Montenegro and is adopted by the Parliament of Montenegro on an annual basis, determines the amount of funds for the education sector.</p> <p>An institution which is funded from public revenues cannot request form students or learners co-payment for covering the costs of education (teaching and extracurricular activities). In post-secondary vocational education, it is possible to define the amount of co-payment for the costs of practical education amounting to maximum 20% of per student cost for the same programme conducted at a public institution.</p> <p>A public institution, which is part of the network of institutions, can obtain funds from the budget of Montenegro for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gross salaries and other personal earnings of employees; • on-going investment maintenance; • investing in institutions; • material costs and expenditures for electrical energy; • continuing professional development of teachers; • supplementary primary education of citizens of Montenegro temporarily working abroad; • basic education for adults; • external evaluation of student knowledge which is prescribed by law (testing students' knowledge at the end of the third cycle, exit exam and other exams); • scholarships for talented students; • scholarships for scarce qualifications; • student competitions; • experimental teaching; • accommodation and meals for pupils staying at dormitories or at institutes for children with special needs; • subsidising textbooks with small circulation and textbooks necessary for education of national, or ethnic groups; • cost of meals for children at preschool institutions whose parents are social welfare beneficiaries in accordance with special regulations; • costs of staying and meals of a single parent's child, or solely costs of staying, at a preschool institution in the amount of 50% of the price for stay and meals in accordance with a special regulation; • costs of medical, i.e. sanitary and hygienic examination of teachers, or employees in accordance with law and a special regulation; • training and development of principals, and for the work of expert councils; • developmental, advisory and research work in education; • development of information system; • subsidising the resolution of housing issues of the institution's employees; • other obligations determined by law; • partial allowance for student transport. <p>Besides this, the Government allocates special funds for education system through the Capital Budget. A significant amount of funds within the capital budget is allocated for the improvement of school infrastructure.</p>

	<p>Preschool institutions, primary schools, gymnasiums and vocational schools as well as institutions for education of children with special educational needs - resource centres, adult education institutions, pupils' or pupil and students' dorms and education centres, acquire funds from the budget of Montenegro for one school year based on the per-student cost price for a particular educational programme, the number of pupils i.e. children, the coefficient of the programme group in which the educational programme has been classified, and other criteria typical for the educational programme, institution and the specific field. The Rulebook on norms and standards for obtaining funds from public revenues by institutions implementing publicly-valid educational programmes prescribes standards and criteria for forming classes and groups, organising advisory services, library, administrative, accounting and technical services and the evaluation of material costs.</p> <p>For funding the needs of ongoing investment maintenance, investments at institutions and material costs and expenditures for electrical energy at public institutions from the network of institutions founded by municipalities, funds are provided from the municipal budget.</p> <p>For funding public institutions that are not part of the network of institutions, and the founder is the municipality, funds are provided from the municipal budget.</p> <p>An institution may acquire funds from the municipal budget for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • material costs (hygiene maintenance, pest control and disinfection, telephone and postal services, internet); • investments at institutions founded by municipalities; • insurance of facilities of the institution; • compulsory medical and sanitary examination of teachers and children, i.e. pupils; • transportation of primary school pupils; • fire protection; • tax and other charges prescribed by the local government; • use of utility services and utilities; • land tax and communal fee on business signs. <p>A public institution cannot be funded by political parties.</p>
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2.6 Do schools have flexibility to use funding allocations to support the inclusion of learners from vulnerable groups?

Yes

If yes, please describe the flexibility:

There is no legal obstacle in using the funding allocations to support the inclusion of learners from vulnerable groups. However, this is rarely applied in practice. Schools can be funded from property income (lease), funds from selling services and products, sponsorships and legacies, donations which can be used to support the inclusion of learners from vulnerable groups especially when it comes to equipping classrooms, purchase of didactic material and etc. However, in practice the schools use this option only on a project-based level i.e. applying for funds to national and international donor community. There is no systematic approach in securing long term sustainability of this practice.

If no, please give further information:

2.7 Please describe the specific mechanisms for funding the inclusion of vulnerable learners and their families in education (e.g. benefits, cash transfers, scholarships). Give details on: which institutions provide funding; what they provide; how they provide it and to whom, which mechanisms they use to allocate resources; and their respective roles and responsibilities.

Funding mechanisms	Description of the who, what, to whom and how
Free textbook	Ministry of Education in cooperation with other relevant Ministries (Ministry for Human and Minority Rights and Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare) provide free textbooks to: children without parental care; children whose parent/guardian is beneficiary of welfare assistance; children with special educational needs; children in residential care; children in foster care; and children from the Roma and Egyptian communities.
Providing transportation to schools	Ministry of Education provides transport for children from the Roma and Egyptian communities.
Winter and summer camps	Ministry of Education organises winter and summer camps for the best students of Roma and Egyptian population of 7th, 8th and 9th grades.

2.8 Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) on any recent reports, evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 of funding and resourcing relating to inclusive education.

No reports other than those already indicated were available.

2.9 Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to governance and finance issues in the country?

The major challenges when it comes to governance for inclusion in education are shared responsibilities of several ministries without coherent approach and mutual coordination.

When it comes to children with disabilities Analysis of the System Response and Support for Children with Disabilities in Montenegro conducted by UNICEF, at the request of Council on the Rights of the Child showed that Montenegro needs: consolidated statistics on children with disabilities, better cross-sector cooperation, the development of foster care for children with disabilities, improvement of the quality of inclusive education, health and social care for children with disabilities and their access to the justice system (<https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/en/stories/equal-opportunities-every-child>)

The financial resources for the implementation of the inclusion in education are allocated from the state budget, budget of municipalities, EU funds and other donor funds.

Financial allocations for specific activities from the state budget are divided between different ministries although Ministry of Education is the lead authority (e.g. Ministry for Human and Minority Rights provides textbooks for children from Roma and Egyptian communities, while social welfare benefits provided Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare). Local authorities support the implementation of inclusive education through provision of free textbooks for the first or three first grades of primary school, transport to/from schools, etc. It should be noted that practice differs from one municipality to another and there is unified approach. Additionally, inclusion of education is supported through infrastructure projects as well as project and initiatives of CSOs funded by national and international donors.

Currently there is no information of funds spent in total on an annual basis for the inclusion in education. The financial reports of the institutions both on national and local level are not available in citizen friendly manner and can only be interpreted by experts.

Section 3: Data

What data on inclusion in education is available to understand if progress is being made towards equitable learning opportunities for all learners?

3.1 Please indicate if the following frameworks are in place, provide a link and give a brief description of their aims and focus:

Framework	Yes / No	Description
For monitoring and evaluating the implementation of national-level inclusion in education policy	Yes	In the <u>National Strategy for Inclusive education (2019-2025) MNE</u> a section is devoted to monitoring and evaluation. Establishment of a team for monitoring the Strategy and for the development of inclusive education is envisaged. The team will have clearly defined sector-based roles and responsibilities, and will meet quarterly. After the three-year period of implementation of the Strategy, an external evaluation should be carried out, according to the plan. The evaluation should provide a cross-section of the situation, achievements and insight into the dynamics and current status of implementation. <u>In EACEA National Policy platform it is reported for Montenegro</u> that after adopting the Strategy of Inclusive Education 2019-2025, the Working Group for Monitoring has been established and it is working on the regular basis.
For quality assurance across all levels of the system (national, regional, school)	Yes	The inclusive team was set up to promote and support inclusive education at the national level. The team includes special educators and rehabilitation experts, speech therapists, psychologists, and grade teachers from schools countrywide. The regularly updated inclusive portal presents all ideas and examples of good inclusive practice, as well as relevant information: http://www.skolskiportal.edu.me/Pages/Inkluzivnoobrazovanje.aspx .
Providing guidance on the use of a range of different data sources for evaluation and self-review at different levels (national, regional, school)	Yes	School self-assessment. Self-assessment is mandatory for schools It has to be carried out each year or each two years, and the actual implementation is supported by training and a process guide. The amended General Education Law (2017) introduced student surveys regarding their everyday school life and activities as a mandatory part of the school self-assessment process. Within the self-assessment exercise, a school is obliged to carry out anonymous student surveys about curricula, teachers' work and the learning environment. Such a survey is done at least once a year and includes students of all grades with the exception of those in the first education cycle. Principals are obliged to inform the Teaching Council of the survey's findings. The survey questionnaire is prepared by the BfES or the VET Centre. Inclusion of students' views in self-assessment, through an externally developed questionnaire, that enables the comparability of data in time, provides schools with information relevant for the improvement of their work and academic performance, and primarily for improving the school climate. External evaluation is a statutory obligation of schools, and it is carried out once every four years. It is governed by the Article 17 of the General Law that reads as follows: "Quality assurance and improvement of the work of educational establishments is done at least once every four years by the Vocational Education and Training Centre (hereinafter: VET Centre) and the Bureau for Educational Services (evaluation)." The methodology for quality assurance and improvement of educational work in an establishment (self-assessment and evaluation) is set forth by the MoEd, at the proposal of the BfES and the VET Centre. The current methodology sets indicators for seven areas of school operation: 1. Management and leadership; 2. Human, spatial, technical and hygienic conditions; 3. School ethos; 4. Support provided for

		<p>students; 5. Cooperation with parents, other institutions and the community; 6. Teaching and learning; and 7. Students' knowledge and skills measured against academic standards. The indicators for each of the areas are exhaustive and focus on the tangible, measurable qualities. Any reporting following such indicators may be very informative and instructional for both teachers and schools. At the same time, this shows the major role that supervisors have to play, and the importance of aligning the criteria in reference to individual indicators. Detailed annual analysis of the education system at large is done on the sample of schools undergoing external evaluation in the given year. Published supervision reports show that external school evaluation focuses on teaching and learning and devotes a great deal of attention to administrative norms and procedures.</p> <p>The Book of Rules for the Orientation of SEN Children has been improved and harmonized with the Law, Strategy and it is more oriented to the functional assessment.</p> <p>Monitoring of the process of hiring and quality of practical support by the teacher assistants was carried out. (Source NSIE)</p>
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3.2 What data is collected on learners from vulnerable groups, how and why?

The information system of the Ministry of Education – MEIS²⁰ – contains a multitude of data for each individual employee and student from the preschool level to the secondary education level. Data on students with special educational needs is collected based on several criteria: impairment and difficulties in development, IDEP (individual developmental educational plan), the referral panel's decision, etc. Data entry instructions and criteria were developed and subsequently sent to schools and made available on school portals for the purpose of securing better records.

All data recording is mandatory and it has to be carried out by the school, while the Ministry carries out the overall analyses of data. It is important to emphasize that this is by no means done by individually naming a child. Therefore, the protection of data is provided, so that there is no possibility of causing discomfort to the child, the parent, the teacher and/or the school administration.

Also, on the school statistic portal, we can see that the data on learners from Roma and Egyptian groups as well as for foreigners is collected.

At the pre-university level, Montenegrin government defines the term special educational needs to describe children with:

- developmental disabilities (physical, intellectual, sensory, autism spectrum and combined), and
- developmental difficulties (speech and language difficulties, behavioural and learning difficulties, difficult chronic and long-term illnesses, difficulties caused by emotional, social, language and cultural deprivation).

3.3 Please provide the available data relating to all learners in the compulsory education system and where they are enrolled for their education.

Data on learner access to compulsory education	Learners	Notes	Source
(i) What is the <i>potential population</i> of learners for the compulsory	Total: 70619 Male: 36997	For the 2018 data.	http://data.uis.unesco.org/index.aspx?queryid=216#

²⁰ Montenegrin Education Information System. <https://www.meisportal.edu.me/meisindex/faces/index.jspx>

education system in the country (i.e. how many children are in the country that should, by law, be in some form of compulsory education ²¹)?	Female: 33622	For the 2019. Data is sum of two groups of population (5-9 and 10-14) Total: 79795 Male: 41399 Female: 38396	http://monstat.org/userfiles/file/publikacije/cg2019/CG%20u%20brojkama%202019_Part1_Part1.pdf
(ii) How many learners are enrolled in all forms of education (i.e. educational settings maintained by the ministry of education or by other authorities such as health, welfare or labour ministries)?	Total: 68025 Male: 35563 Female: 32462	For the 2018/2019	https://skolskastatistika.edu.me/
(iii) How many learners are out of any form of education (who by law should be in some form of education)?	Total: 880 Male: 470 Female: 410	From this number children with the Decision on Guidance are in total 30. Where female 9 and male 21.	https://www.meisportal.edu.me/
(iv) How many learners are enrolled in mainstream schools (i.e. all learners, not just those with recognised needs or from vulnerable groups)?	Total: 68025 Male: 35563 Female: 32462	For the 2018/2019	https://skolskastatistika.edu.me/
(v) How many learners are enrolled in mainstream schools and spend the majority of their time (i.e. at least 80% or 4 days of the week) in inclusive groups/classes with their peers?	Total: 643 Male: 421 Female: 222	Data for 2018/2019	https://www.meisportal.edu.me/
(vi) How many learners are enrolled in mainstream schools and spend the majority of their time (i.e. at least 80% or 4 days of the week) in separate,	Total: 77 Male: 52 Female: 25	Data for 2018/2019	https://www.meisportal.edu.me/

²¹ Compulsory education in MNE is primary education; consist of 9 grades, starting with 6 years of age finishing at 14-15 years of age.

special groups/classes, away from their peers?			
(vii) How many learners are enrolled in totally separate, special units and/or schools, away from their peers?	Total: 110 Male: 69 Female: 41	Data for 2018/2019 Sum of learners enrolled in three Resource centres in MNE	https://skolskastatistika.edu.me/

Other available data is related to Roma and Egyptian children in compulsory education, where for the school year 2018/2019 we have had the total of 1793 students, from which 936 males and 857 females, making it a 2,66 % of total Montenegrin population.

Total number of children attending school in Albanian language in Montenegro is 2620. From which 1291 females and 1329 males. Education is organized in Albanian elementary schools and in bilingual schools.

3.4 Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) on any recent reports, evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 of data collection and monitoring for inclusion in education.

Part of the conclusion from PISA 2015 Results and education policy recommendation, highlighted in the Education accessibility and inclusiveness for children with SEN, stated as follows: Another major issue is the number of school-age children, who are outside of the system, either those who have never got enrolled in the first place or those who dropped out early, before acquiring qualifications, as well as ignoring those who changed education system (i.e. continued their education abroad). It is the responsibility of the education system to monitor and prevent dropping out, particularly among vulnerable groups, and to ensure the capturing of drop out data using standardized methodology, while ensuring that such data is available and transparent.

Program of Quality education within UNICEF office in Montenegro started the initiative of Early Warning System. In order to create an effective and system-based intervention for drop-out prevention, UNICEF supported the development of an **Early Warning System** integrated within the Ministry of Education's Information System. The Early Warning System has a set of predefined indicators/thresholds, which, when reached, send a warning to schools and teachers to take action and provide support to pupils at risk of dropping out. The Early Warning System is currently being piloted in 20 primary and secondary schools.

Related to that, Conference for school principals on Early Warning signs and on the enhancement of usage of the data available in MEIS data base was held.

<http://www.mps.gov.me/pretraga/183330/Odrzano-savjetovanje-na-temu-Prevenicija-ranog-napustanje-skole-i-unapredenje-koriscenja-podataka-iz-MEIS-baze.html> and <http://www.mps.gov.me/pretraga/176393/Pocetak-pilot-projekta-Prevenicija-ranog-napustanja-skole-i-unapredenje-koriscenja-podataka-iz-MEIS-baze.html>

Educational institutions themselves carry out quality assurance and quality improvement of educational work though self-evaluation, **annually** for individual areas and **biennially** altogether.

Quality assurance and quality improvement of institutions' educational work (external quality assessment and quality assurance) are performed by the Bureau for Education Services and Centre for Vocational Education (evaluation) at least **every four years**.

The **Bureau for Education Services** is in charge of quality assurance and quality improvement of educational work at preschool education, primary and secondary general education. The **Centre for Vocational Education** is in charge of assessment and assurance of quality of educational work in the field of vocational and adult education.

Approaches and methods for quality assurance

The assessment of quality of educational work at an institution is done both internally and externally in accordance with the General Law on Education and the Rulebook on the content, form and manner of evaluating the quality of educational work at institutions.

The Rulebook on the content, form and manner of quality assessment of educational work at institutions prescribes the content, forms and manner of quality assessment of educational work at preschool institutions, primary schools, gymnasiums, vocational schools, educational centres, resource centres, adult education providers and boarding homes for pupils.

The quality of educational work is assessed with regard to the following:

- knowledge and skills obtained by children, students and learners (hereinafter: students) according to educational knowledge standards;
- quality of teaching and learning;
- ethos of the institution (spirit of the community and atmosphere at the institution, preserving and promoting human rights, natural and social environment, multi-ethnicity and diversity);
- governance and management of the institution, organisation and performance of educational work;
- support that the institution provides to students (supplementary, additional classes, additional assistance to students with special educational needs, competitions, etc.);
- staff, material and technical, as well as safety conditions of the work of institution;
- cooperation with parents, other institutions and the local community and social partners
- other contents important for evaluating the quality of educational work at institutions.
-

Internal quality assessment

The purpose of evaluation and self-evaluation of **teachers' work** is the improvement of educational work at schools. The self-evaluation process creates the basis for each teacher to recognise their own strengths and weaknesses, to compare their achievements with others, to recognise opportunities for improvement, to set goals for their own development. Internal quality assessment of **institution's educational work** (self-evaluation) is done by expert bodies, as well as by other bodies and relevant entities within the institution, in line with its statute and the annual work plan. The institution prepares internal assessment report on the quality of educational work biennially and delivers it to the Bureau for Education Services.

Institutions carrying out vocational education and adult education, deliver the internal assessment report on the quality of educational work to the Centre for Vocational Education as well.

Internal evaluation procedures are described in the publication How to Assess the Quality of Educational Work at Schools? (Indicators of quality and instruments for self/evaluation of educational work of teachers at schools).

The publication Indicators of quality and instruments for self/evaluation of educational work of teachers at schools (the Publication) is intended for teachers, administrations and professional services at schools, and is used to measure, assess and improve the quality of educational work of teachers at schools.

Starting from the teachers' competences, which represent a set comprising of their knowledge, skills and values, certain areas of teachers' action have been defined with a view to evaluating educational work.

The Publication clearly defines **six areas for evaluating the quality of teachers' work** at schools:

1. Professional knowledge and skills of teachers;
2. Supporting student development;
3. Planning and preparing classes;
4. Implementing contemporary teaching/learning process at school;
5. Monitoring, evaluating and assessing student progression, and;
6. Communication and cooperation.

Each of the defined areas of teachers' educational work quality is differentiated and precisely described by particular sub-areas with set indicators - indicators of quality of teachers' work at schools. Instruments, scales of self/assessment and checklists have been designed on the basis of these indicators, which are used for self-evaluation and/or evaluation of teachers' educational work at schools.

External quality assessment

External quality assessment of educational work at institutions can be either regular or extraordinary. **Regular** quality assessment of educational work at an institution is carried out at least once in four years. **Extraordinary** quality assessment of educational work at an institution is carried out as needed, as well as following the reasoned request of the parents' council.

External quality assessment of educational work at an institution is carried out by educational supervisors, as well as by authorised counsellors and external associates. The quality assessment at institutions carrying out vocational education programmes for vocational and theoretical subjects and practical education is done by supervisors appointed by the Bureau for Education Services on the proposal of the Centre for Vocational Education.

The Director of the Bureau passes a Decision appointing a team of supervisors to perform the assessment of educational work quality and appointing the head of the team.

Supervisors assess the quality of educational work on the basis of:

- direct monitoring of teaching and other forms of educational work;
- insight into the implementation of the annual plan and programme of the institution's work;
- insight into the students' achievement of knowledge standards;
- insight into the results of external knowledge assessment;
- insight into the implementation of subject programmes and extracurricular activities;
- conversations with head, teachers, students, parents and other persons involved in the educational process;
- insight into the electronic database of statistical data that the institution regularly updates during the classification period;
- analysis of questionnaires for students, employees and parents;
- other actions that are deemed necessary.

At the request of the head of the team of supervisors, the institution is obliged to provide or prepare information, documents or other materials necessary for determining the quality of educational work within ten days from the date of receiving the request.

The quality is assessed according to the defined quality indicators. The assessment of educational work quality is expressed in the following manner: failed to meet, mostly met, met, mostly successful, successful and very successful.

The report on the assessed quality of educational work includes quality assessment, explanations and recommendations along with the proposed measures that the institution should take in order to improve the quality of educational work for each key area.

Based on the report, the head of the institution adopts a plan for improving the quality of educational work of the institution. The plan for improving the quality of educational work of the institution is then submitted to the Bureau for Education Services, whereas in case of institutions carrying out vocational education programmes and adult education it is submitted to the Centre for Vocational Education as well.

The Bureau for Education Services prepares annual report on the assessment of educational work quality at institutions and delivers it to the Ministry of Education and the National Council for Education. The Annual Report is published on the website of the Bureau for Education Services.

The Methodology for quality assurance and quality improvement of educational work at institutions (self-evaluation and evaluation) is prescribed by the Ministry, at the proposal of the Bureau for Education Services and the Centre for Vocational Education.

The methodology for external evaluation of educational work defines key areas that are analysed by the supervisory service, namely:

1. School/institution governance and management;
2. Staff, material, technical and safety conditions of the school's/institution's work;
3. Ethos of the school/institution;
4. Support that school/institution provides to its students;
5. Cooperation of school/institution with parents, other institutions and the local community;
6. Teaching and learning (by subjects);
7. Students' achievement of knowledge and skills according to educational standards.

For each of these areas there are **defined indicators** serving as the main determinants to evaluate a particular key area in terms of quality.

1. The area of **school/institution governance and management** includes the following indicators: annual plan and its implementation; development programme; work of professional bodies; process of internal evaluation of work; quality improvement plan; pedagogical and instructive work of heads and associates; work of the school/governing board; pedagogical records and documentation.
2. The area of **staff, material, technical and safety conditions of the school's/institution's work** includes the following indicators: professional representation; being equipped with teaching resources and having adequate premises; professional development of employees; spatial and technical conditions and adequate premises; being equipped with computers; using available resources; safety conditions (technical and normative); sanitary and hygienic conditions.
3. The area of **ethos of the school/institution** includes the following indicators: respect of house rules; interpersonal relations; interpersonal relations between teachers and students; aesthetic arrangement of space; promotion and role in the community; impact of incentive measures.
4. The area of **support that school/institution provides to its students** includes the following indicators: support for students who are lagging behind with the material; support for talented students; support for students with developmental disabilities; extra-curricular activities/compulsory elective contents; rights and obligations of students; protection and safety of students; implementation of educational and preventive programmes; work of the Student Parliament; professional orientation.
5. The area of **cooperation of school/institution with parents, other institutions and the local community** includes the following indicators: cooperation with parents; activities of parents' council; cooperation with other institutions and the local community; involvement of parents in educational process.
6. The area of **teaching and learning (by subjects)** includes the following indicators: organisation of teaching/learning in a class; lesson planning; written preparations for classes; use of teaching materials; assessment; conditions for work that may be affected by the teacher; work of teaching staff; remedial classes; additional classes.

The area of **students' achievement of knowledge and skills according to educational standards** includes the following indicators: results at knowledge assessment and external knowledge assessment; achievements at each classification period of the ongoing year; achievements of students at higher levels of competition; achievements of students at school competitions; educational achievements; achievement of students with special needs; achievements by the classification periods and at the end of the previous year.

External evaluation reports lack an assessment of school body coherence, the orientation of the school management and teachers to the quality of academic achievements and wellbeing of children, openness and readiness of the school body for learning, the level of cooperation among teachers, etc.

Example of external evaluation report of one educational public institution is [External Evaluation - Report on Quality of Education – Resource Centre for Hearing and Speech “Dr.Peruta Ivanovic” Kotor 2017](#)

[Whole set of reports on quality of work performed in the compulsory education is available to the public at section monitoring of the official web presentation of the Bureau for Education Services of Montenegro.](#)

COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT Montenegro 2019 Report Accompanying the document Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions 2019 Communication on EU Enlargement Policy <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-montenegro-report.pdf> states that there has been an increase in the enrolment of Roma and Egyptian pupils at pre-school and compulsory levels, but not in the completion rate. Both enrolment (62%) and completion rates (34%) for compulsory education remain the lowest in the Western Balkans. A number of positive measures have been implemented, notably the appointment of Roma education mediators, with 18 mediators hired from the school year 2018/19. A system for identification of early drop-out risks is now in place and a protocol for prevention and action upon early school leaving has been adopted.

Also - The overall access and quality of child and social protection services and of inclusive education for children with disabilities should be improved, together with the nationwide early detection, intervention and rehabilitation services.

In general, challenges remain to drive reforms further, including limited institutional **capacity to review and monitor**, as well as to develop results-based and feasible medium-term plans. In the coming year, Montenegro educational institutions should in particular:

- optimize participation rates in early childhood education and minimize drop-outs, especially from vulnerable groups;
- improve the quality of education through continuous reform of primary and secondary education, teaching basic and transversal skills, focused on learning outcomes;
- improve sector governance and develop adequate monitoring and quality assurance mechanisms for education and training.

3.5 Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hindrances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to data collection issues in the country?

The Ministry of Education, through the **MEIS project (Montenegrin Education Information System)** implements the most important part of ICT usage in education. The MEIS project consist of several activities, which occurred gradually: providing all educational institutions with computer equipment, the provision of broadband, training for school-based ICT coordinators and administrative and staff, and computer training, the selection of regional ICT coordinator, and finally, the implementation of the MEIS application.

Some of the goals of introducing the MEIS application are to analyse the quality of education, faster statistics at all levels, assessment of the energy efficiency in school facilities and investment needs, establishment of a social welfare system for students, the process of teachers advanced licensing, etc.

MEIS is intended to serve teachers and management of educational institutions, as it provides the ability to generate a wide range of data in order to produce the necessary reports; Parents who can track the success of their children online from this school year; Employees of the Ministry of Education and other institutions involved in education to provide statistics necessary for strategic planning of education.

As it is showcased, the potential of MEIS is immense. Some of the challenges are related to the lack of its usability for improvement of educational policies/strategies and more sophisticated findings. Related to that, some recommendations are to:

- Adapt the MEIS system to ensure the entering of data on student achievements in PISA tests and enable linkages with other databases of other professional institutions (BfES, VET Centre, BTTA and the Examination Centre);
- Carry out systemic research. Support and regularly conduct research to monitor education quality and equity; use the findings of such research to launch specific measures to enhance education quality and equity.

Section 4: Curricula, learning materials and assessment

To what extent are curricula, learning materials and different assessment processes and procedures adapted to the principles of inclusive education?

4.1 Curriculum

a. Does the curriculum content include and represent all learners?

Partially

If yes or partially, please provide a description and available links, including to underpinning values and principles.

If no, please give further information:

Content of the Montenegrin curriculum does not represent completely all learners for the following reasons:

If the educational system is analysed from the perspective of gender component integration, the following changes have occurred: The Institute for Textbooks and Teaching Aids of Montenegro is implementing a new generation of textbooks and the textbooks that are being made for the nine-year primary school take into account the gender-sensitive language. In order to combat gender stereotypes in the curricula, the Bureau for Education Services hired an expert committee that acted in response to this area. The reason for the introduction of the new textbooks lies within the launched initiatives taken to introduce gender-sensitive language. ("Gender experts expressed their belief that gender discrimination takes place in the very process of education, through favouring 'male qualities' and defaming female ones, since the education process itself is 'man-tailored', meaning that it encourages traits which in cultural terms favour men")²²

Civic education was introduced as a new, compulsory subject for grades VI and VII of primary school. This subject examines gender issues as well as domestic violence. Also, the Bureau for Education Services produced a document: "Cross-curricular topics and areas", where a significant place is devoted to the cross-curricular area: "Health education and upbringing", which includes topics of sexual education of young people.²³

The Evaluation of the Implementation of the Strategy for Improving the Quality of Life of LGBT Persons in Montenegro 2013-2018²⁴ states that curricula and textbooks have been analysed to check whether they have discriminatory content on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity. A number of textbooks have been found to contain such content, especially in biology. In general, the rest of the content of the books was considered good teaching material, so instead of banning those books, biology teachers were provided with guidance and materials to accompany these textbooks to discuss LGBT issues with students in a non-discriminatory manner. However, there seems to be no way to monitor whether teachers use additional materials.

Therefore, it is necessary to reanalyse the existing educational content in educational institutions from the aspect of LGBTI representation and their inclusive character, in relation to the best practices of EU countries, bearing in mind that a previous similar analysis was made in 2013, and it showed major shortcomings and general lack of

²² Socio-economic status of women in Montenegro http://www.emim.org/images/publikacije/socio-ekonomski_polozej_zena_u_crnoj_gori.pdf

²³ Action plan to achieve gender equality (PAPRR) 2017-2021 with Implementation program for the period 2017-2018

²⁴ The Evaluation of the Implementation of the Strategy for Improving the Quality of Life of LGBT Persons in Montenegro 2013-2018 <http://www.mmp.gov.me/biblioteka/izvijestaji?pagerIndex=1>

representation of the mentioned population in the curriculum ('The silence approach', mainly present in our textbooks when it comes to the LGBT phenomenon, is not in line with the promoted public education goals²⁵).

The analysis should identify any shortcomings in the current curriculum and textbook contents, and consequently follow its findings with the necessary steps. ECRI's recommendation that measures to promote mutual tolerance and respect, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, should be addressed here in order to contribute to addressing the problem of mistreatment of LGBTI students in schools, and that the focus should be on teacher training and textbook revision to raise awareness of LGBT issues.²⁶

When it comes to ethnic minorities, the Roma language is still not represented in the educational program, although the initiative for making this step is present for many years.²⁷

When it comes to national minorities in Montenegro, systemic laws in the field of education have taken into account the concept of a universal constitutional guarantee for the education of minorities, at the level of the general goals and principles of education and individual provisions. Essentially, the system is focused on integrating minorities while preserving their identity.

In addition to the content included in the regular subject programs, there is an opportunity to identify specificities in terms of national culture, history, art through 20% of open content.^{28,29}

b. Does the process of curriculum development involve the participation and contribution of different stakeholders?

Yes

If yes, please provide information on stakeholder involvement.

Process of curriculum development involves participation and contribution of different stakeholders and the process itself is described below:

The educational program in Montenegro is adopted by the Ministry of Education, at the proposal of the National Council for Education.

The Government has established the National Council to make decisions on professional issues and for professional assistance in the decision-making process and the preparation of regulations in the field of education.

Members of the National Council are proposed by: 1) one-third – the Ministry and the Bureau for Education Services, from which teachers in the field of pre-school education, primary and secondary education, secondary and vocational education, adult education, high-school and university campus representatives and representatives of national minorities and other minorities in national communities; 2) one third - institutions of higher education for education of teachers, from which teachers with academic titles and scientific workers; 3) one third - the representative employers' association, the Chamber of Commerce of Montenegro, the Center, the Employment Agency of Montenegro, the representative trade union of educators, professional associations of teachers and the students' parliament.³⁰

c. Is there guidance/procedures for schools to ensure that the curriculum content takes account of all learners (e.g. using flexibility to address differences due to gender, culture, religions, the ethnicities/nations living in the country, their history and culture, differences related to disability and socio-economic background, LGBT community).

²⁵ Representation of LGBT topics in curriculum and textbooks <http://media.cgo-cce.org/2013/10/LGBTanalizaMNE.pdf>

²⁶ Strategy for Improving the Quality of Life of LGBT Persons in Montenegro 2013-2018

<http://www.zsdzcg.me/images/dokumenta/opsta%20dokumenta/Strategija%20za%20unapre%20C4%91enje%20kvaliteta%20C5%BEivota%20LGBTI%20osoba%20u%20Crnoj%20Gori%202019-2023.pdf>

²⁷ Introducing the Roma language into Montenegrin education <http://rae-portal.com/2019/11/svjetski-dan-romskog-jezika-uesti-romski-jezik-u-crnogorsko-obrazovanje/>

²⁸ Strategy for minority policy 2019- 2023 <https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/ELECTRONIC/81687/88820/F1826339876/MGO81687.pdf>

²⁹ Montenegro's fifth report on the implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages <http://www.mmp.gov.me/biblioteka/izviestaji>

³⁰ General Law on Education <https://www.paragraf.me/propisi-crnogore/opsti-zakon-o-obrazovanju-i-vaspitanju.html>

Yes

If yes, please give a description and examples of this flexibility:

Support for the professional development of teachers, professional associates employed in the education system of Montenegro is under the responsibility of the Bureau for Education Services.

Some of the teacher trainings that are conducted in order to ensure that the curriculum content takes into account all learners, are as follows: Use of assistive technology in working with children with visual, physical and combined disabilities; Respect for gender equality as an instrument of greater security in education; Individualization of teaching/learning at school; Methods and procedures for dealing with children with autism³¹; Educational work with children and youth of the RE population; Educational work with immigrant children and youth; Anti-prejudice education; Training of trainees for the work by inclusive model.

d. If individual education plans (IEPs) are used, please describe the procedure for developing (who is involved and how), what they focus on (specific curriculum areas; cross curricular competences; support strategies etc.) and how IEPs are implemented, used across the school?

IEPs are present and used in Montenegrin educational system. It is based on a dynamic assessment of the relationship between the functioning of the child (cognitive, emotional, social and physical) and the present and planned level of knowledge and skills. IEP is a compilation of the child's traits, needs and goals for the program in question. It identifies ways to support, adapt the learning process, and meet the individual needs and potential of the child. Depending on the developmental disabilities, individual abilities and needs of children, IEP enables to: modify and adapt the content of the program in question; change the methodology by which the contents of the program are implemented and supplement it with sign language, Braille, assistive technology, etc. For the preparation, implementation, monitoring and adaptation of the program, the school is formed by a team consisting of: teachers, professional associates of the school or resource centre, with the participation of parents / guardians. Cooperation, competences and responsibilities, tasks in the implementation of IEP are affirmed. The school management establishes a team for the development and monitoring of IEP, taking into account the implementation of the recommendations made by the committees (first of all, adjusting the premises, purchasing didactic tools, aids, exchanges, etc.). Teachers (classroom classes, departmental elders, subject teachers) participate in the development and implementation of IEP through regular teaching, peer and extracurricular activities; preparation of individualized work material, knowledge evaluation (regular and external), give instructions and material for working with the assistant. Professional service (educator/scholar, psychologist/scholar) participates in the development of IEP, implements child support; advises teachers and parents; assists in the development of teaching and knowledge assessment materials; determine and monitor the work of assistants, etc. A defectologist/scholar (of the school or resource centre) assesses goals and sets strategies for the student through the IEP, working directly with the child in agreement with him/her; provides consultation and instruction to parents, teachers, professional service, assistant; Designs didactic, teaching and knowledge assessment materials. Parents/guardians have the knowledge and experience that is valuable in developing an effective school work program. Parents/guardians should indicate ways of communication and management of the child's behaviour during pre-school care.³²³³

e. Are there different curricula or programmes for specific groups of learners at risk of exclusion (e.g. ethnic minorities or minority language groups)

No

If yes, please give a description of the main characteristics/organisation.

³¹Calendar of training programs organized by the Bureau of Education

http://www.zzs.gov.me/naslovna/profesionalnirazvoj/programi/Kalendar_programa_obuke_u_organizaciji_Odsjeka_za/

³² IEP form [file:///C:/Users/PC/Downloads/FINALNA%20verzija%20IROP%20PVO%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/PC/Downloads/FINALNA%20verzija%20IROP%20PVO%20(1).pdf)

³³ The 2019–2025 Inclusive Education Strategy <https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/en/reports/montenegro-inclusive-education-strategy>

If no, please give further information:

Montenegrin educational system is uniformed, and plans and programs are thus developed. For all subjects (elective and compulsory), 80% of the curriculum covers a significant portion of minority culture, language and history.

However, members of national minorities and other minorities in national communities are entitled to education in their mother tongue.

In minority areas, especially where the Albanian minority gravitates, in bilingual schools, children attending Montenegrin language classes have the opportunity to also learn Albanian, optionally as a second foreign language.

New curricula in the field of language and literature have been developed, including elements of Serbian, Bosnian and Croatian language and literature in the teaching of languages at primary and secondary schools. "Civic education" promoting human rights, democracy and multicultural society was introduced as a compulsory subject at the elementary school level and as an optional subject at the secondary school level.³⁴

However, it is important to point out that when it comes to ethnic minorities, the Roma language is still not present in the educational program, although there has been an initiative for this step for many years.³⁵

Educational program with adapted performance and additional professional assistance, that is, the educational program for children with special educational needs provides the opportunity to receive the same educational standard as the educational program of elementary, general secondary and vocational education provides, in accordance to their individual abilities.

Depending on disabilities and developmental difficulties, as well as individual preferences and needs of children, educational programs can be:

1. Modified by shortening or expanding the contents of the program in question;
2. Supplemented by modifying the syllabus and subject curriculum by introducing elective subject necessary for children with certain developmental disabilities (sign language, Braille, etc.); and
3. Adapted by changing the methods that contain the contents of the program in question.³⁶

4.2 Learning materials

a. Is there autonomy for schools and teachers to select learning material/textbooks etc?

No

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

By the General law on education³⁷ in Montenegro, textbooks and teaching aids approved in accordance with this Law shall be used in an institution that carries out publicly valid educational programs. Therefore, there is no selection process left to the schools and teachers. The textbooks are prepared on the basis of a manuscript obtained through a public competition. Primary school textbooks are issued by the executive body of the Ministry of Education - Institute for Textbooks and Teaching Aids. The Rulebook on the procedure for obtaining, evaluating, approving and preparing textbooks and teaching aids sets out in detail the process for textbooks and teaching aids used in educational institutions.

It is important to mention that all textbooks for primary education for teaching in Montenegrin are also translated into Albanian. The Albanian Language and Literature textbook is a special textbook designed for this subject.

³⁴ Strategy for minority policy 2019- 2023 <https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/ELECTRONIC/81687/88820/F1826339876/MGO81687.pdf>

³⁵ introduction of the Roma language into Montenegrin education <http://rae-portal.com/2019/11/svietski-dan-romskog-jezika-uesti-romski-jezik-u-crnogorsko-obrazovanje/>

³⁶ Law on education of children with special educational needs

<http://www.skolskiportal.edu.me/Inkluzivno%20obrazovanje/Zakon%20o%20skolovanju%20djece%20s%20posebnim%20obrazovnim%20potrebama.pdf>

³⁷ General Law on education <https://www.paragraf.me/propisi-crnegore/opsti-zakon-o-obrazovanju-i-vaspitanju.html>

b. Are there policies to ensure the availability of textbooks/materials that promote the inclusion of learners from different vulnerable groups? (e.g. resources relevant to different ethnic groups etc.)

Yes

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

As mentioned above, members of national minorities and other minorities in national communities are entitled to education in their mother tongue.

Therefore, all textbooks for primary and secondary general education (gymnasium) for teaching in Montenegrin are also translated into Albanian. The Albanian Language and Literature textbook is a special textbook designed for this subject.

Regarding primary education, it is very important to point out that since the school year 2015/2016, Albanian children in the second grade have the opportunity to use Bukvar as a teaching tool for learning Albanian language and script. This textbook continues to be used throughout the current school year.

Significant support to date is also the fact that the Institute for Education has prepared the Program *Montenegrin as a non-mother tongue*. Accordingly, the Institute for Textbooks has adapted textbooks for students to whom Montenegrin is not a mother tongue, for the first, second, fourth, sixth and seventh grades of elementary school.

All adapted textbooks have been put to use in schools where desegregated education is taking place.³⁸³⁹

c. Is there guidance/procedures to help schools to make learning materials accessible for all learners? (e.g. Braille/large print for learners with visual impairment, materials in other languages).

Yes

If yes, please give a description.

Guidance/ procedures have been developed, and may be used in accordance with the appropriate program. Children with special educational needs, based on a guidance process, can acquire education through: an educational program with the provision of additional conditions and AIDS; an educational program with tailored performance and additional professional assistance; special education program (inclusive classes). The guidance procedure is explained in the answers below. Special educational needs of the child, which is determined by the IEP for each child individually, is taken as the basis for the adaptation of learning materials. According to that, the schools with the inclusive classes of children with intellectual or autism-spectrum disabilities are provided with specialized didactic tools to improve the process of inclusive teaching and to foster student interactions. The regular schools attended by the children with sight impairments are provided with specialized equipment, aids, didactic tools and stickers in Braille. Nameplates in Braille and an orientation board were put up in the Ministry of Education building. Instructions on Access to Educational Institutions and Education Process were developed and distributed to schools, as a way of raising awareness concerning the importance, relevance and necessity of architectural, physical and technological access and access to the teaching process. School principals attended a special counselling session on accessibility and it was suggested that they improve the accessibility components in their respective school's development plans. The project titled Index Leading to an Inclusive Culture in Educational Institutions was implemented in the Resource Centres and seven schools with inclusive classes. The Bureau for Education and VET Centre Methodology for assessment and evaluation of school performance covers inclusive education. Supervisors and advisers attended an initial training programme. The following handbooks were developed for the purpose of improving the practice of preschool teachers, teachers and professional associates in their work with children with special educational needs: "Individual Development/Education Programme" for the use of IDEP, "Reading and Writing Difficulties" for working with children in the process of acquiring literacy skills, "Working with Children with

³⁸ Strategy for minority policy 2019- 2023 <https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/ELECTRONIC/81687/88820/F1826339876/MGO81687.pdf>

³⁹ Strategy for social inclusion of Roma and Egyptians in Montenegro 2016 - 2020 <http://www.mmp.gov.me/biblioteka/strategije>

Autism”, and “Mastering Mathematics in Cycle I” (for students with special educational needs, etc.)⁴⁰ Instructive-educational materials for inclusive work and learning were prepared with the aim of strengthening the teaching process, professional support and improvement of inclusive practices, followed by relevant capacity-building seminars. Methodological models for improving reading literacy were developed by improving the quality of the process of mastering reading and writing in the first cycle of primary education, as well as by conducting training and performing close monitoring of the application of the models. The Guide for Working with Students with Intellectual Disabilities⁴¹ was developed. It features a description of the research, definition of intellectual disorders and description of the characteristics and needs of such children, approaches to work with them, recommendations, examples from practice, etc. Training in the use of the Guide has been conducted. Ten textbooks in DAISY format were produced (six reading books for mother tongue and four history textbooks), as a high-quality tool enabling quality teaching and learning for all children, particularly for children with special educational needs. Teams of teachers in 50 primary schools have been trained to use DAISY textbooks in their everyday teaching.⁴²⁴³

d. Is ICT used to improve access to materials for vulnerable groups?

Yes

If yes, please give a description.

The Ministry of Education is implementing the most significant part of the use of ICT in education through the MEIS (Montenegrin Education Information System) project. The MEIS project consists of a number of activities that take place gradually: equipping all educational institutions with computer equipment (over 5000 computers, in addition to computers there is also peripheral equipment), introducing broadband Internet, training school ICT coordinators, training teaching and administrative staff to work on the computer by school ICT coordinators, selecting regional ICT coordinators, and finally introducing the MEIS application.⁴⁴

When it comes to vulnerable groups, DAISY books are an example of using ICT in order to improve access. DAISY is an acronym for Digital Accessible Information System, a multimedia edition of a printed book, a combination of audio-visual text (a book as a digital data type - transferring an analogue book to digital).

The DAISY book offers a reading experience to all people who, for whatever reason, cannot read printed text.

Montenegro is the first country in the world to systematically use DAISY audio textbooks in inclusive education. There have been similar initiatives in other countries, but the difference is that in Montenegro the approach was systematic, guided by the partnership principle of educational decision-makers, those concerned with quality improvement, and immediate implementers. The collaboration developed with the intention of making audio textbooks part of regular teaching materials and introducing them to all primary schools in the country. Also, this is the first time that DAISY audiobooks will be accessible to anyone, in a way that anyone can download them from the Internet.

In addition, Girls' Day in ICT is a global initiative aimed at raising awareness among girls and young women of the importance of digital skills for a successful professional career, encouraging them to consider studies and careers in Information and Communication Technology (ICT).⁴⁵

The commemoration of this day began in 2011 at the initiative of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and has since been commemorated every year on the fourth Thursday of April.

⁴⁰ Handbook *Working with children with autism* <http://www.skolskiportal.edu.me/Inkluzivno%20obrazovanje/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

⁴¹ The Guide for Working with Students with Intellectual Disabilities

<http://www.skolskiportal.edu.me/Inkluzivno%20obrazovanje/Vodi%C4%8D%20za%20rad%20sa%20C4%91ecom%20sa%20intelektualnim%20smetnjama.pdf>

⁴² Manual for using Daisy textbooks in teaching

<http://www.skolskiportal.edu.me/Inkluzivno%20obrazovanje/Prirucnik%20za%20koriscenje%20DAISY%20udzbenika%20u%20nastavi.pdf>

⁴³ <http://www.mpin.gov.me/rubrike/obrazovanje-djece-sa-posebnim-potrebama?pagerIndex=2&alphabet=lat>

⁴⁴ <http://www.ecdlfor.me/Pages/Clanak.aspx?id=3>

⁴⁵ <http://www.mps.gov.me/rubrike/ict/198839/Medunarodni-Dan-djevojica-u-ICT-u.html>

e. Are there specific financial and practical resources available for textbooks/materials/ICT for different vulnerable groups?

Yes

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

The General Law on Education⁴⁶ provides for the subsidization of small circulation textbooks and textbooks for the education of national or ethnic groups;

It is also added that the right to free textbooks for elementary school has the pupil:

- 1) Without parental care;
- 2) Whose parent or guardian is the beneficiary of financial support for the family;
- 3) With special educational needs;
- 4) Located in social and child welfare institutions;
- 5) On family accommodation;
- 6) Roma and Egyptian (RE) populations.⁴⁷

In the previous period, the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights has regularly earmarked funds for the purchase of textbooks for grades I, II and III, which were then distributed to the Roma and Egyptian students in co-operation with the competent institutions.

4.3 Assessment

a. Is there a national/local assessment framework that includes all learners?

Yes

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

The Law on Primary Education⁴⁸ prescribes a national assessment framework. Students' knowledge and achievement at school are evaluated by descriptive expression and numerical assessment in accordance with standards. The Ministry prescribes the manner of assessment. Student assessment is done publicly in front of students.

During the classification period, students must be graded in each subject except for the first grade students during the first classification period.

The school is obliged at the end of each classification period to inform the parents in writing of the student's success with a statement of the student's achievement and his/her progress. Grades in the subjects, behaviour and general achievement are determined at the end of each classification period, except for first grade students at the end of the first classification period.

At the end of the third cycle, an external assessment of the students' knowledge of: Montenegrin or mother tongue, mathematics and one subject selected by the student from the list of compulsory subjects, which are taught in the third cycle in at least two grades, is carried out.

⁴⁶ The General Law on Education <http://www.mpin.gov.me/biblioteka/zakoni>

⁴⁷ The Law on Primary Education <http://www.mpin.gov.me/biblioteka/zakoni>

⁴⁸ The Law on Primary Education <http://www.mpin.gov.me/biblioteka/zakoni>

b. Is there guidance for teachers on how to use curriculum-based assessment to identify all learning needs in the classroom?

Yes

If yes, please give a description.

The Ministry of Education, in the regulations concerning the assessment of knowledge in primary school and the procedure for passing the professional exam, determine more closely the method of assessment.⁴⁹⁵⁰

In accordance with the aforementioned regulations, for students with special educational needs the assessment process is adapted in accordance with the decision on orientation to the appropriate educational program and the individual developmental education program.

Instructional and educational material for inclusive work and learning for children with special educational needs⁵¹ was created by the Bureau for Education. Experts on specific developmental disabilities: representatives of mainstream schools (defectologists and teachers), resource centres (defectologists) and system institutions made checklists evaluating the child's developmental achievement (according to each disability), learning outcomes, and suggesting the teaching process respond to his needs (in relation to IEP). For this purpose, general etiologically based descriptions of the disorders were used, followed by domestic manuals for children with specific disabilities, adapted reference instruments and questionnaires for individual disabilities (Oregon test, CHAT, Roadmap, development map, etc.). First, a description of the disability is provided, educational and/or developmental implications are presented, and then detailed measures are taken to implement specific methodological procedures that guide the efficiency and quality of the teaching process in relation to the disability. Namely, a parallel is made between the educational/developmental needs of the child, but also the need for teachers to respond to the needs of the child in teaching. In this way, the most common issues identified in relation to children and the needs of the teaching process. In this regard, ideas were offered to adapt both the conditions, the work material, the teaching and the assessment process. Therefore, there are instructions for intervention and/or adaptation with suggested measures of a teaching nature.

c. Is there guidance/procedures on providing access to tests/examinations when learners need additional support/reasonable adjustments? (e.g. adapted materials, extra time etc.)

Yes

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

As mentioned before, the assessment of children with special needs is determined by an individual development plan, which the school or resource centre, as a rule, is obliged to put in place for a child with special educational needs, in cooperation with the parent.

As students with special educational needs who have absorbed the content prescribed by the program are not always able to demonstrate their achievement in the usual way (test), the Examination Centre adjusts the exam technology, as well as the conditions and procedures for the examination. By adapting the exam technology, which will not compromise the validity and objectivity of the exam, it seeks to remove obstacles for the student to show the knowledge gained. Adapted exam technology should be made available to students who have special educational needs throughout their education or for a longer period of time and those who have recently undergone changes in their health status and who have medical records about this. Adaptation of exam technology includes: accessibility of exam facilities with special aids, special/custom equipment, customized exam material, exclusion from the part of the exam that a student cannot take with the help of a personal assistant due to the type and degree of developmental disability (e.g. listening for deaf children)), extended exam time, etc. Adaptations to

⁴⁹ Regulation on procedure of assessment of students' knowledge at the end of the educational cycle <http://www.iccg.co.me/1/index.php?lang=sr>

⁵⁰ Regulation on the method of grading students in primary school <http://www.mpin.gov.me/biblioteka/pravilnici>

⁵¹ Instructional and educational material for inclusive work and learning for children with special educational needs

<http://www.skolskiportal.edu.me/Inkluzivno%20obrazovanje/Instruktivno-edukativni%20materijal%20za%20inkluzivni%20rad%20i%20u%20C4%8Denje%20C4%91ece%20s%20posebnim%20obrazovnim%20potrebama%20.pdf>

exam technology depend on the type of exam and the type and degree of disability or mental health of the student. An individual list of adjustments to the test technology should be made for each exam and each student. It is also necessary to check that the student knows how to use the special equipment that has been suggested. An individual list of adjustments to the test technology should be made for each exam and each student.⁵²

d. Are there specific arrangements and/or formal procedures to support the assessment of the specific needs of learners who need additional support in their learning? (e.g. those with disabilities)

Yes

If yes, please give a description, including clear information on the focus of needs identification procedures and who is involved in the procedures (learners, parents, professionals):

As mentioned previously, the Ministry of Education, in the regulations concerning the assessment of knowledge in primary school and the procedure for passing the professional exam, determine more closely the method of assessment.⁵³⁵⁴

In accordance with the aforementioned regulations, for students with special educational needs the assessment process is adapted in accordance with the decision on orientation to the appropriate educational program and the individual developmental education program.

The parent or guardian of a child with special educational needs has the right to participate in the choice of education program, in accordance with Law on education of children with special educational needs.⁵⁵ A parent, or a child with special educational needs, has the right, during schooling, to change the program of upbringing and education in accordance with the law.

The process of directing children with special educational needs into an appropriate educational program is defined by Regulation on the method, conditions and procedure for the guidance of children with special educational needs⁵⁶. The request can be submitted by: parent, primary health care institution, educational institution, social work centre or local government body responsible for education, with notification to parents.

A proposal for guidance to an appropriate educational program and institution to which a child with a special educational need is included is provided by the Commission for the guidance of children with special educational needs on the basis of preserved abilities and special educational needs. The work of the committee involves the parent and teacher, that is, the teacher of the child being directed. The Commission assesses the child's level of development, learning potential and adoption of knowledge standards, personal traits, and obstacles and hindering environmental factors.

e. Is ICT used in the assessment of vulnerable groups?

Yes

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

At the Ministry of Education, all data on students is collected through MEIS web application.

MEIS (Montenegrin Education Information System) is a web application introduced gradually since the school year 2010/11. One part of the application is used in the assessment field. Each teacher enters grades for their subject for the students they teach. Teachers and the school administration have access to reports directly from the system.

⁵² Work program of the Examination Centre for 2020

<http://www.iccg.co.me/1/images/dok/publikacije/29.01.2020/PROGRAM%20RADA%20ISPITNOG%20CENTRA%202020.pdf>

⁵³ Regulation on procedure of assessment of students' knowledge at the end of the educational cycle <http://www.iccg.co.me/1/index.php?lang=sr>

⁵⁴ Regulation on the method of grading students in primary school <http://www.mpin.gov.me/biblioteka/pravilnici>

⁵⁵ Law on the education of children with special educational needs <http://www.mpin.gov.me/biblioteka/zakoni>

⁵⁶ Regulation on the method, conditions and procedure for the guidance of children with special educational needs <http://www.mps.gov.me/biblioteka/pravilnici?pagerIndex=1>

Information on students with special education needs are collected by based on several criteria: disability and developmental disabilities, IROP, routing solution, etc. All data is necessary, and the Ministry of Education analyses them only at the overall level, not individually per child. Thus, secrecy of the data is ensured and there is no possibility of causing embarrassment to the child, parent, teacher or the school administration.⁵⁷

There is information on how ICT is used in adapting access to textbooks and learning materials, as well as in modifying the curriculum for students with special educational needs (Daisy textbooks, Using 21st Century Technology for the Promotion of Early Communication, Education and Social Inclusion of Children with Disabilities⁵⁸, and other mentioned in previous answers). When it comes to the specific process of assessment it is important to emphasize that it is determined by the IEP for each child individually, following the existing regulations.

4.4 Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) on any recent reports, studies, evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 relating to issues around curricula, learning materials and assessment processes.

When it comes to the educational program and learning materials, there are not many reports that have been made in the last 5 years that track the progress made in this regard.

However, the documents concerning the rights of minorities in Montenegro as well as of children with special educational needs also contain parts concerning education in terms of curriculum, textbooks / learning materials and assessment processes. The main conclusions of these are given below:

Montenegro's Fifth Report on the Implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages⁵⁹: The report, in the section on education, discusses achievements in the past period concerning the education of minorities in Montenegro, as well as reforms that are yet to come, in accordance with the Law on Minority Rights and Freedoms. It was stated that as far as promoting mutual understanding and tolerance between all language groups in the country, especially in relation to minority and regional languages, they are reflected in the field of education in compulsory and optional subjects for both primary and secondary schools. The official language used in the teaching is called Montenegrin-Serbian, Bosnian, Croatian language and literature; and 20% of the open curriculum can be used for history, culture, tradition, language, etc. of minorities in those areas of the state where they live. Compulsory subjects that study and promote mutual understanding and tolerance in primary school are: civic education, history, geography and mother tongue;

Multiculturalism is, in addition, an immanent part of the study of music culture and foreign languages, compulsory and elective subjects: English, French, Italian, German, Spanish, Russian and Turkish. Essentially, the system is focused on integrating minorities while preserving their identities. Emphasis is placed on curriculum that includes topics in the fields of mother tongue and literature, history, art and culture of minorities and other content that promotes mutual tolerance and coexistence.

Montenegro inclusive education strategy 2019- 2025⁶⁰ by key achievements of inclusive education states the following: Individual Development/Education Programmes (IDEPs) serve as the basis for working with children with special needs in education; The schools with the largest numbers of children with intellectual or autism-spectrum disabilities are provided with specialized didactic tools to improve the process of inclusive teaching and to foster student interactions.; numerous documents were developed for the purpose of improving the practice of preschool teachers, teachers and professional associates in their work with children with special educational needs

Report on the Implementation of the Strategy for Social Inclusion of Roma and Egyptians in Montenegro 2016 - 2020 for 2017⁶¹:

⁵⁷ Recording data for children with special educational needs in MEIS

<http://www.skolskiportal.edu.me/Idenje%20za%20rjevanje%20dilema%20izazova/UPUTSTVO%20za%20unos%20u%20MEIS%202017.pdf>

⁵⁸ Using 21st Century Technology for the Promotion of Early Communication, Education and Social Inclusion of Children with Disabilities

<http://www.skolskiportal.edu.me/Inkluzivno%20obrazovanje/AAC%20i%20Rana%20intervencija.pdf>

⁵⁹ Montenegro's Fifth Report on the Implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages <http://www.mmp.gov.me/biblioteka/izvijestaji>

⁶⁰ Montenegro inclusive education strategy 2019- 2025 <https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/media/7876/file/MNE-media-MNEpublication312.pdf>

⁶¹ Report on the Implementation of the Strategy for Social Inclusion of Roma and Egyptians in Montenegro 2016 - 2020 for 2017

<http://www.mmp.gov.me/biblioteka/izvijestaji>

Sets of textbooks for children of Roma and Egyptian populations of grades I, II and III were provided by the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, and provided by the Ministry of Education for Roma and Egyptian students of grades IV through IX.

Also, various additional accredited vocational training programs for teachers are being implemented, as well as other programs / activities, carefully developed for the same purpose, which enable the right to education of Roma and Egyptian children living in Camp Konik.

Report on the development and protection of the rights of minority people in 2018⁶²:

Schools are required to include, as part of the open curriculum, 20% of teaching content created by teachers, parents and schools in collaboration with the local community, which significantly contributes to the right to study the specificities of the language, culture, history and other specificities of minority peoples, or the environment in which school works. One of the most important activities in the previous year was the following: At the initiative of the Ministry of Education, four one-day trainings on the topic of integrative teaching were implemented, within which topics related to the realization of 20% of the open part of the curriculum were implemented.

4.5 Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hindrances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to curricula, learning materials and assessment processes in the country?

Regarding the curriculum, the main obstacle to be overcome in the coming period is the fact that it does not represent all learners in Montenegro. Taking into account the numerous initiatives concerning the introduction of the Roma language into the education system of Montenegro, it is evident that there is a need for this, but there are still no concrete results. In addition, the representation of the LGBT population in the curriculum in textbooks remains questionable. According to the results of studies done in the past, textbooks and curricula kept silent about the LGBT population and even contain discriminatory content on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity thus, according to some organizations, their rights were not respected. There are no recent results on this topic.

Also, according to teachers and school staff, the availability and accessibility of funds, as well as greater financial resources for adapted learning material for children with special educational needs should be provided.

Greater attention should be paid to clearer assessment procedures for children with special educational needs who are included in the adapted education program in mainstream schools.

The use of ICT in inclusive education shows signs of progress over the past years, and what was emphasized particularly recently are teacher trainings.

When it comes to the opportunities, it is important to emphasize the progress it had been made so far when it comes to textbooks and national minorities- in recent years, the quality of textbooks in Albanian has been improved. Also, teaching is provided to children who are members of national minorities in their mother tongue.

Great efforts and progress have been made in adapting teaching materials and textbooks to children with special educational needs, and particular success has been achieved with Daisy books. Additionally, numerous guidelines and manuals were created in order to help teachers adjust the curriculum to children with special educational needs. Many trainings have been conducted on the topic of IEP design. New innovative teaching techniques for children with special educational needs are being worked on, reflecting the opportunity for advancement of inclusive education in the country.

Also, the use of ICT in inclusive education shows signs of progress over the past years, and what was emphasized particularly recently are teacher trainings.

At the end, according to schools and resource centres, the biggest challenge we face in the field of inclusive education is the actual implementation of existing regulations and strategies and planned measures and avoiding leaving everything on paper alone.

⁶² Report on the development and protection of the rights of minority people in 2018 <http://www.mmp.gov.me/biblioteka/izvijestaji>

Section 5: Teachers and support personnel

How are staff in schools prepared to accommodate students of all abilities and backgrounds, in terms of their initial training, continuing professional development and their attitudes to inclusion?

5.1 Please list type of staff, their numbers and required level of education for the position in different type of educational institutions

Type of staff	Number	Required education	Comment
Mainstream schools			
Teachers	4654	NQF : IV ⁶³ , V, VI, VII1,VII2,VIII	
Pedagogues	92	VII1 and VII2	
Psychologists	40	VII1and VII2	
Teacher Assistants for children with special educational needs	330	VI1 NQF	Including the necessary training before starting the work.
Teacher Assistants for Roma children	18	M	Including the necessary training before starting the work.
Special schools (3 resource centres in MNE)			
Teachers	51	V, VI ,VII1, VII2	
Defectologist – special education teacher	29	VI, VII1 and VII2	
BSc Speech Pathologist	10	VII1 and VII2	One works in Resource Centre and in Daily centres in local community.
Surdologist	6	VII1	
Pedagogue	1	VII1	
Psychologist	2	VII1	
Oligophrenologist	2	VII1	
Social worker	2	VII1 and VII2	
Physiotherapist	1	VII	
Physiotherapist technician	1	V	
ICT specialist	1	VII1	
Pre-school Teacher	13	VII1	
Care taker	11	IV,III	
Other institutions offering education if they exist (i.e. children's homes, young offenders institutions etc).			
NA			
Teachers			
Professional staff (psychologists, pedagogues, social pedagogues, speech and other types of therapists)			

⁶³Montenegro has implemented a process of the referencing of the Montenegrin Qualifications Framework to the EQF in 2014. The Montenegrin Qualifications Framework is connected to and aligned with the European Framework, and thus indirectly with the National Qualifications Frameworks of other European countries.

Montenegrin qualification framework available on: <http://www.mpin.gov.me/ResourceManager/FileDownload.aspx?rId=223671&rType=2>

Teacher Assistants (specify role and add rows as required)			
Others (please specify and add rows as required)			

5.2 Please indicate if education/training on inclusion in education is available for the following groups of professionals.

Type of staff	Yes	No	No information	If yes please state if pre- or in-service, mandatory or optional, who provides education/training and summary of content
Head teachers/School directors		NO		
Teachers	YES			<p><i>For pre-service see answer in 5.4</i></p> <p>All teachers can choose from 30 teacher training programs accredited by the National Council for Education, in the Catalogue of Teacher Training Programs, specifically tackling inclusive education.</p> <p>In-service trainings are provided by the national educational institutions as well as external actors such as international and national organisations and individuals. All trainings are optional. Teachers chose and create their own an individual plan for professional development. IPDP are mandatory for reviewing your teacher licence. But there is no requirement that inclusion need to be one of selected trainings.</p> <p>It is mandatory for school to create conditions for pupil with special educational needs to obtain education. It's up to school to decide what needs to be done.</p>
Teacher Assistants	YES			It is mandatory for teacher assistant to finish assigned training on inclusive education before starting the work.
Professional Staff			/	No information
Inspectors			/	No information
Teacher Trainers	YES			Accredited programs in the national Catalogue for professional development of teachers are open to all teachers as well as Teacher Trainers. Optional but recommended.

a. If you answered no to any of the above, please provide further information:

Head teachers/ School principals do go through special training before starting the position but for now module or segment on inclusive education **is not added**. Even though initiative was filed from Resource Centre.

5.3 Is education and training of teachers aligned with national policy goals on inclusive education?

v Yes

If yes, please give a description.

Bureau for Education Services within the Ministry of Education, on the two year basis, accredits and publishes Catalogue for Teacher Training Programs. National Educational Council, while examining proposed teacher training

programs from in-house actors (Educational actors within educational system) and external providers, guide assessment process using the latest Inclusive Education Strategy's priorities and other relevant policies.

Resource centres play an important role in educating children with special needs as well as for training of teachers engaged in mainstream primary school educational system. There are three resource centres in Montenegro: PI (Public Institution) Resource Centre for Hearing and Speech "Dr Peruta Ivanovic", Kotor; PI Resource Centre for Children and Adults with Intellectual Disabilities and Autism "1 June", Podgorica; and PI Resource Centre "Podgorica" for Physical and Sight Impairments. These centers support inclusive education by the following means: providing advice and expertise; teacher training and training of expert assistants to work with children with special needs in education; use of sign language; preparation, adaptation, design and training on the use of specialized textbooks (in Braille and in DAISY format) and other specialized teaching aids.

Moreover, Bureau for Education Services organises and coordinates the work of mobile teams comprising of psychologists, special education teachers from mainstream schools and resource centres. The teams visit schools as support for inclusive education focusing on the preparation of Individual Development and Education Programme (IDEP), methodological guidance, adaptation of instruction, advisory and instructive work with parents, individual work with children, etc.

If no, please give further information:

5.4 With respect to the main initial teacher education programmes, describe how inclusion in education is addressed in it (i.e. requirement for number of academic credits under European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), subjects and topics covered, focus etc).

There are 3 study programs at the Faculty of Philosophy in Montenegro which as part of their programs have compulsory and optional subject Inclusive Education: On the study program for Pedagogy there are two subjects: Special Pedagogy as a compulsory subject and Inclusive Education as an optional subject. Study program - Preschool education has compulsory subjects: Fundamentals of Inclusive Education (III semester), Methodology of Inclusive Education and Development Problems in Inclusive Education (VII semester). Study program for Teachers in the first circle of education has compulsory subjects within its programs; Special Pedagogy and Special Work Methodology. At the study program for education of Pedagogues, the name of the subject is still Special Pedagogy, even though it collides with the concept of inclusion, this course also takes one semester and there is two semesters in the study of the Teachers Education program.

There is no faculty for the education of teachers for work with children with disabilities in Montenegro or for the education of professionals in rehabilitation and education. No college for the education of staff for work with children with special needs (speech therapist, defectologist ...).

Nevertheless, University of Montenegro with Faculty of Philosophy within Tempus program created a **Master program on Inclusive education**. The wider objective of the project was to develop an inclusive concept at the university level: by developing a Curriculum of new master study program, sensitizing university staff for the full affirmation of the inclusive paradigm in higher education and the entire educational system. This program has 60ECTS.

5.5 Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) on any recent reports, evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 relating to initial teacher education and/or professional development issues.

Some of the very future forward conclusions and recommendations can be found in the report Education for life: Key Competences for the 21st Century Competencies in Montenegrin Curricula:

- **Socio-emotional competencies must make up part of regular teaching and mandatory subjects.** They are disregarded in the training of teachers-to-be (almost lacking in the pre-service teacher training curricula, almost not learned at all, and even less is being said regarding the methods for developing them in learners), as well as in the school curricula;

- **The curricula of university study programmes must have defined aims and objectives**, not only outcomes, as it is currently the case with the University of Montenegro's *Prospectus*;

- **KC21⁶⁴ must make up part of the teacher training curricula.** Firstly, KC21 must *make up part of the contents* being learned. Students must encounter the KC21 concept and understand its relevance in today's living and working conditions and the influence of social, cultural and economic factors on education. Secondly, through their pre-service teacher training, students must have the opportunity *to develop their own KC21*, they must be embedded in learning subject-specific contents.

UNICEF Montenegro, Education for Life: Key Competencies for the 21st Century in Montenegrin Curricula, Podgorica, UNICEF, 2017.

https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/sites/unicef.org.montenegro/files/2019-01/Education_for_life_Key_21st_century_competencies_in_curricula_in_Montenegro_Executive_summary_.pdf

Professional development of all staff employed in education is the responsibility of the Department for Continuing Professional Development under the Bureau for Education Services. Its goals are: (1) the creation and organisation of programmes for continuing professional development of teachers (all levels of schooling: preschool, primary and secondary), expert associates, principals and deputy principals; (2) the creation of a system of promotion related to professional development and (3) continuous cooperation with faculties that deliver teacher education.

The Bureau for Education Services trains staff in schools and prepares educational programmes, catalogues and manuals for primary education, general secondary education and general education subjects in vocational secondary schools, publishing these as a rolling programme.

- Lalović, Z, Impact on the Professional Development of Teachers and External Evaluation and Improvement of School Performance, Podgorica, Bureau for Educational Services, 2015.

Lalović points out some of the crucial recommendations from the teacher's perspective:

- To better educate teachers about the criteria for supervision (to know what supervisors are going to expect, what is the quality work of teachers in the school, etc.);
- When evaluating and/or commenting the work of teachers with equal care, one should consider the positives, at least as much as the negative aspects of teacher's work (highlight what is good, and only then, if necessary, indicate what needs to be improved);
- When commenting or giving remarks on teacher's work, instead of general statements, it is better to offer alternatives, concrete solutions, examples of good practices and the similar;
- To ensure that teachers feel more supported and counselled than supervised ;
- To constantly strengthen teachers' capacities for self-evaluation of their own work;
- To consider in general a strategy of the impact of supervision on the quality of work of teachers.

While in the publication on the assessment of the professional development needs for leaders/school principals/head teachers, same author set the indicators for quality of work in the field of encouraging professional development of employees:

- Understands the ways of professional development of teachers and provides equal conditions for professional development;
- Ensures that the professional development activities of employees take place at the school level in accordance with the school plan;

⁶⁴ Key competences for the 21st (KC21) is a construct already widely written about in the previous century (e.g. Delor, 1996). Different terms are encountered in literature: *transferable knowledge, key skills, core skills, soft skills, generic skills, deeper learning, college and career readiness, student-centered learning, next-generation learning, new basic skills, higher-order thinking*, but the most comprehensive is the *twenty-first-century skills*

- Supports the organization of professional development activities where new ideas are presented and discussed so that the exchange of good practice becomes part of the institution's culture;
- Is able to support teachers in their work and encourage their motivation;
- Is able to set an example for employees with their expertise and dedication to the job;
- Improves his/her interpersonal skills;
- Is able to monitor the laws on introduction of changes in the educational work, to resolve and monitor them.

Indicator can be used for general and self-assessment and evaluation grading once performance in inclusion from never, rarely, sometimes but not very often, usually or quite often.

Lalović, Z., *Assessing the Professional Development Needs for Leaders of Educational Institutions*, Podgorica, Bureau for Educational Services, 2016.

It is worth mentioning as well that Roma language, through the ratification of the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages, has been recognized by the Government of Montenegro as a separate minority language.

Specifically, Roma as a minority language is not represented as a mother tongue in educational institutions due to the fact that there is currently **no qualified teaching staff** capable of teaching in Roma language.

More information to be found in the FIFTH REPORT OF MONTENEGRO ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN CHARTER ON REGIONAL OR MINORITY LANGUAGES

<http://www.minmanj.gov.me/biblioteka/izvjestaji?alphabet=lat>

Part of the conclusion from PISA 2015 Results and education policy recommendation also with no constrains highlights **Pre-service teacher training**. It emphasizes the necessity to establish cooperation with teacher training departments to review current pre-service teacher training curricula and their alignment with the reform policies. Teacher training departments need to be encouraged, without interfering in their autonomy, to improve current curricula and to ensure their alignment with the ongoing reform concepts.

5.6 Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hindrances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to teachers and support personnel in the country?

- Continuous professional development. Analyse the professional development needs for the key actors at the school level (teachers, other school-level experts and principals), to be able to better use the proclaimed schools' and teacher' autonomy to:
 - (a) align teaching and learning with student interests;
 - (b) align teaching and learning with the particular local features, and;
 - (c) continuously monitor and improve school quality.
- Continuous monitoring of teaching and learning quality at the school level. In cooperation with teachers, school-based expert services and principals, ensure continuous monitoring and assessment of the teaching, learning and assessment quality, and to what level students are being engaged in higher cognitive activities. Particular attention should be focused on the attainment of learning outcomes and endeavours made to identify early on those students that are in need of additional support to be able to make progress and keep pace with the others.
- Improve teachers' and principals' competencies through cooperation. Monitor the application of standards of competencies for teachers and principals based on the main monitoring findings; develop professional intra-school cooperation models; it should ensure proper support for teachers and principals in achieving standards of competencies.

- Monitoring and improving school-level discipline. Monitor the school climate, particularly regarding truancy and tardiness, to respond promptly to frequent tardiness and truancy.
- Reinforce the school's role in upbringing. Envisage some activities in annual work plans and plans for extra-curricular activities in order to reinforce the school's role in upbringing, support students in developing their social and emotional competencies; monitor and evaluate the impacts of such activities to inform future planning exercises.
- Collaboration with other schools. Link with other schools to exchange good practices in the delivery of new curricula and improve teaching and learning quality.
- Pre-service teacher training. Review the current pre-service teacher training curricula and assess their alignment with the standards of competencies for teachers and the new role that teachers play within reform policies. Based on this review's findings, where needed, revise the existing pre-service teacher training curricula. Based on the existing analysis of the current programmes, it is clear that the focus in initial teacher education should be much more on supporting higher-order thinking, such as cognitive activities related to deeper processing of the content, hypothetical and critical thinking or problem solving.

In the course of teacher training, emphasis should be placed on the teaching methods and on modern approaches to supporting the learning of all children in the classroom, including children with educational needs. It is necessary to introduce the principles and practices of inclusive education during pre-service and in-service teacher training. Teacher training programmes must be analysed and evaluated to estimate if they reflect inclusive principles and practices. In order to generate a stimulating environment and inclusive practices that meet the psychological, physical, socio-emotional and educational needs of each child with special needs in education, educational institutions need to utilize their staff and technical resources more effectively. The teaching staff should deliver quality and professional teaching, and expert assistants should provide support to children, both individually and in class.

The resource centres, schools with integrated classes and expert assistants need to be further empowered so that they support teachers, children with special needs in education and their parents. In relation to this, see the Inclusive Education Strategy / 2019 – 2025.

For children with special educational needs, kindergartens and schools engage teaching assistants as technical support, and there are about 330 assistants in the educational institutions in Montenegro in school year 2019/2020. The scope of the support provided by teaching assistant under the supervision of teachers, professional service and school principal is determined by IDEP and class schedule, as it clearly defines the conditions, scope and manner of the service provision. In accordance with IDEP, one assistant is responsible for several students, making sure not to bring child into a segregation situation.

Teacher standards published by the Bureau for Education Services (Our School: Standards for Teacher Improvement) unifies the criteria which must be met to qualify for professional promotion within the teaching profession. Continuous improvement is an obligatory part of every teacher's job and is embedded in the professional development system. Standards for teachers' vocations include the following levels: Teacher with experience (T) Teacher mentor (M) Teacher advisor (C) Teacher senior advisor (HC) Teacher researcher (R) These have direct influence on the teachers' status (in terms of salaries and other benefits) According to the Grantee Collective Agreement for the field of education (Official Gazette of Montenegro 10/16), the coefficients for calculating the salary of teachers are increased for the acquired titles as follows: for the teacher-mentor - 0.30; for teacher-advisor - 0,50; for teacher-senior advisor - 0.70 and for teacher-researcher - 0, 80. By now in Montenegro we have 405 Teacher - Mentors, 243 Teacher – Advisors, 125 Teacher - Senior Advisors and 24 Teacher – Researchers.

Hence, the position of teachers through the legal framework, national policy and strategy, is quite clear at the policy level. Yet in the curricular and social dimensions of education, where moves towards including more 'knowledge and skills for life' within the curriculum would be practically useful for children with need for additional support, these needs and desirable moves are not recognised. This system of career progression does not specifically encourage development of inclusive education competences by teachers. Rather, this is considered as one of an equally-important set of skills and competences needed for a reformed education system teacher.

Section 6: Schools

How does the work of schools, school management and leadership impact on access, participation and provision of equitable opportunities for all learners?

6.1 Who is excluded from attending any form of school?

Please give reasons for this group being excluded from attending school and describe any form of alternative provision made for them?

According to the Article 2a of the Law on Education and Upbringing⁶⁵, primary education and upbringing is available to all persons and cannot be directly or indirectly limited on the basis of: sex, race, skin colour, language, marital status, political or other convictions, national, ethnic or other origin, financial situation, disability or on other basis, position or circumstances in accordance with the special law.

Primary education and upbringing is implemented in primary school, resource centre and educational centre.

Despite the above-mentioned Law, there are children who do not attend compulsory primary education. According to data of the research conducted by the Ministry in 2016, 76% of Roma children enroll in primary school. In other words, every fourth child of Roma and Egyptian nationality does not enroll in primary school, although enrollment in primary school is compulsory according to the Law. On the other hand, a special problem is leaving primary school which with majority of population almost does not exist.

Data show that over 11 % of Roma children leave school (boys 9,4% and girls 13,8%). That means that after the drop-out, out of the overall number of Roma and Egyptian children, about 68% of them in relation to the overall number of children of that age finish primary education. Data available in Strategy for social inclusion of Roma and Egyptians from 2016 to 2020⁶⁶.

Basic instrument by means of which it is intended to increase degree of enrolment and to decrease drop-outs of school is introduction of the profession "Associate in social inclusion for Roma and Egyptians in the field of education" (hereinafter: Associate) to the standard system. The key objective of the associate is to provide constant communication between Roma and Egyptian community and education system. EU Recommendations as well as the practice of some countries (Portugal, Sweden and Romania) which have implemented NRIS indicate that Roma and Egyptian mediators in education have a significant role in achieving the foreseen objectives.

This objective will be achieved by implementing the following measures and instruments through the social inclusion action plan roma and egyptian 2017 - 2020⁶⁷:

- Instrument/measure 2.1.1: Introduction and strengthening of Associate in social inclusion of Roma and Egyptians to the field of education
- Instrument/measure 2.1.2: Providing free textbooks for children of Roma and Egyptian population
- Instrument/measure 2.1.3: Increase of enrolment degree of Roma and Egyptian population members in high schools, with a special emphasis on girls.

⁶⁵ Law on Education and Upbringing: <https://www.paragraf.me/propisi-crnegore/zakon-o-osnovnom-obrazovanju-i-vaspitanju.html>

⁶⁶ Strategy for social inclusion of Roma and Egyptians from 2016 to 2020 .
https://www.google.com/search?q=Strategijom+za+socijalnu+inkluziju+Roma+i+Egip%C4%87ana+2016-2020&rlz=1C1GCEA_enME893ME893&oq=Strategijom+za+socijalnu+inkluziju+Roma+i+Egip%C4%87ana+2016-2020&aqs=chrome..69i57.1602j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8

⁶⁷ Action plan roma and egyptian 2017 - 2020 <http://uom.me/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Model-LAP-a-za-socijalnu-inkluziju-Roma-i-Egip%C4%87ana-2017-2020.pdf>

- Instrument/measure 2.1.4: Increase of enrolment degree of Roma and Egyptian population members in higher education institutions, with a special emphasis on Roma and Egyptian women.

Individual cases were recorded where parents due to lack of understanding and dissatisfaction with the educational system, opt for homeschooling because of the introversion of a child. The right to education from home is also recognized by the Law on Education and Upbringing⁶⁸, Article 37.

Media article about one particular case.⁶⁹

6.2 Are there issues around the over- and under-representation of different vulnerable groups in different school settings?

Yes

If yes, please give a description and provide any data/evidence that is available

At the end of 2019, Elementary school "Božidar Vuković Podgoričanin" was the school with the highest number of enrolled pupils of Roma population, 500 of them. The reason for this is because members of Roma population live pretty much isolated in the specific part of the town and enrolment is carried out in schools close to that local community. The highest number is enrolled in that school exactly because the school is close to the Roma settlement.

If no, please give further information:

6.3 Please give details on the main admissions criteria for schools.

a. Highlight any issues with the national policies.

By the Primary Education Law⁷⁰, enrolment of children is carried out during April every year, based on the medical examination. For enrolment of children in school, headmaster appoints the commission. For the enrolment in the first grade, in schools where there are conditions for that, the testing is carried out.

In the recent years there has been a discussion about compulsory vaccination of children for 10 infectious diseases. During 2018, the Ministry of Health⁷¹ gave the proposal to introduce the Article to the Law on protection of population⁷² by which the enrolment in kindergartens and schools is conditioned by the vaccination, in other words the children who are not vaccinated cannot be enrolled in kindergarten and primary school. The proposal caused reactions of wider public and protector of human rights and freedoms also reacted. He emphasised that the right of children to stay in kindergartens and schools cannot be conditioned by previous vaccination, since the right to health and education of children is guaranteed by the Constitution of Montenegro, as well as international convention.

Currently, vaccination is not a precondition for enrolment in kindergartens and schools, but it is the obligation of parents. Fines, for parents who do not vaccinate their children range from 1000 to 2000 EUR. According to the last

⁶⁸ Law on Education and Upbringing: <https://www.paragraf.me/propisi-crnegore/zakon-o-osnovnom-obrazovanju-i-vaspitanju.html>

⁶⁹ She wakes up in Podgorica and studies in the US: <https://www.vijesti.me/vijesti/drustvo/budi-se-u-podgorici-a-skoluje-u-sad>

⁷⁰ Primary Education Law: <https://www.paragraf.me/propisi-crnegore/zakon-o-osnovnom-obrazovanju-i-vaspitanju.html>

⁷¹ Ministry of Health <http://www.mzdravlja.gov.me/ministarstvo>

⁷² Law on protection of population from infectious diseases:

https://www.google.com/search?q=zakon+o+zastiti+stanovnistva+od+zaraznih+bolesti+crna+gora&rlz=1C1GCEA_enME832ME841&oq=zakon+o+zastiti+stanovnistva+od+zaraznih+bolesti&aqs=chrome.0.0j69i57j0l6.14353j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8

data of the Institute for Public Health⁷³, 8000 children ages from three to five did not receive obligatory MMR vaccine. In the past two years, Administration for Inspection Affairs filed more than 177 criminal charges against parents who did not vaccinate their children according to the calendar of the compulsory immunization, while the courts imposed 150 fines in the value of 15 000 EUR, and other 27 received a warning.

Since school year 2018/2019, territorial approach while enrolling children in schools has been reintroduced, which means that children who live close to schools will have priority when enrolling. Article 35 of the Law on primary education⁷⁴ which prescribes that “the authority of public administration competent for affairs of civil registry is obliged to submit to school, by the end of February every year, the list of children grown up for school from the neighbourhood belonging to area of school.” Despite of the law provision, parents not rarely gain information that school capacities are filled and that their child cannot be tested for the enrolment in that school and that the children who were in kindergartens close to school have priority. Parents are forced to look for schools which have enough space for enrolment although those schools are not in their residential area.

b. Where schools set their own admissions criteria, please outline any impact on inclusion.

Criteria for enrolment in primary school are the same for all. The Ministry of education designed the questionnaire for all schools with the consent of Agency for protection of personal⁷⁵ data in order to avoid discussion about whether questions in questionnaires are justified or not. Children are tested at schools by Raven’s progressive matrices in colours, and commission consists of a psychologist, pedagogue and teacher.

6.4 Please provide information on the different forms of support that are available to learners in schools.

a. Inclusive pedagogy, personalised learning and universal design approaches

Yes

If yes, please give a description.

Individualised approaches to learning. Obligation to create IROP (individual development of education plan) for every pupil with special educational needs, then creation of ITP (individual transition plan) for transition from primary to high school, as well as ITP1 for enrolment in faculty and ITP2 for entering the labour market.

Methods and didactic instruments applied in class are individualised, there is a possibility of adjustment of teaching contents. Assistive technology whose application rests on the principles of concreteness and individuality is also applied. There is also application of daisy form.

If no, please give further information:

b. counselling and mentoring possibilities

Yes

If yes, please give a description.

In every educational institution there is a pedagogical and psychological or professional service (pedagogue, psychologist, social worker, defectologist, speech therapist). Professional persons conduct the process of

⁷³ Institute for Public Health <https://www.ijzcg.me/>

⁷⁴ Law on primary education and upbringing: <https://www.paragraf.me/propisi-crnegore/zakon-o-osnovnom-obrazovanju-i-vaspitanju.html>

⁷⁵ Agency for protection of personal <http://www.azlp.me/me/agencija>

mentorship and counselling, they work both with educators and teachers and directly with children and parents. Apart from that, there is a mobile service at the national level in the Bureau for Education Services within which experts from resource centres are engaged and they can also be included in counselling work and mentorships of different forms..

c. input from specialist teachers/therapists

Yes

If yes, please give a description.

Extraordinary. They are a part of the inclusion team, team for creation of IROP and other forms needed for inclusive approach to teaching. They directly provide children with professional help, not only children with special educational needs, but all children in relation to challenges they are facing in the process of learning. They do this through workshops, but also through individual treatments, there is also support to parents as well as to colleagues.

d. input from learning support assistants

No No information available Yes

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

We recognize teaching assistant who is actually just a form of technical support. Teaching assistant is recommended for children with less severe and severe physical disabilities, with moderate mental disorders, children without sight, with the most severe and complete hearing loss, with less severe to severe speech impediments and with autism, in compliance with decision on orientation and individual program. Teaching assistant performs technical assistance, as a rule, as a volunteer work, in compliance with a special law. This support is currently being implemented as a project through the Program of public works of the Employment Bureau (assistance in the house, personal assistance, teaching assistant), both by educational institutions and NGOs. Work of assistant is coordinated by a teacher and monitored by professional service, school management and service provider. More information at School portal⁷⁶.

e. availability of ICT / assistive technology

Yes

If yes, please give a description.

Assistive technology is especially used in working with children with special educational needs. In Resource Centres there are Assistant Technology Cabinets within which assistive resources are made. Resource centre experts advise, evaluate and participate in the development of assistive resources for each individual child, respecting the principle of individualism and concreteness.

Montenegro is the first country in the world to systematically use DAISY textbooks in inclusive education. These are textbooks in audio-visual DAISY format that are intended for their children but are of particular use to students who have difficulty reading the printed text. Primary school children today have reading-books from grade IV through grade IX in DAISY format, as well as history textbooks. Teams of teachers in 70 primary schools in Montenegro are trained to use Daisy textbooks.

It is important to say that all institutions have computer equipment (over 5000 computers, printers, projectors, scanners, etc.), internet connection: in 173 institutions this is implemented through ADSL, while in 60 institutions it

⁷⁶ School portal .

<http://www.skolskiportal.edu.me/Inkluzivno%20obrazovanje/Uputstvo%20za%20usmjeravanje%20%C4%91ece%20sa%20posebnim%20obrazovnim%20potrebama.pdf>

is implemented via satellite connection. In primary and secondary schools there are school (local) ICT coordinators, some 9000 operators (all employees record data in IS).⁷⁷

f. Please describe any other forms of support available.

Early intervention program implemented at resource centres for children from 0 to 6 years. The program emphasizes the individual work of professionals with the child, as well as on comprehensive support for parents and the whole family through counselling, workshops, individual work with parents and siblings of a child with disabilities.

6.5 Please give a description of the strategies in place for practically supporting mainstream school staff teams to increase their capacity to be inclusive and to improve access, participation and achievement for all learners.

No strategy was found during the research. However, Teachers' professional development is the continuous acquisition, expansion and deepening of knowledge and skills relevant to improving the quality of teaching, learning and achievement of students. Until recently, it was mostly through the organization of seminars offered outside the school.

There is no strategy information, but there are various manuals regarding support for upgrading knowledge and skills. Also, a series of trainings on this topic is being implemented, supported by various foundations and NGOs. The Bureau for Education Services has also issued a CATALOG OF THE TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM for the 2019/2020 school year, and 2020/21, and it is to be found on the website⁷⁸:

The link also has a directory of teacher training programs for 2020, some of them also about inclusive education.⁷⁹

6.6 Please provide information regarding school buildings and infrastructure.

a. Are there schools that face infrastructure issues that are barriers to inclusion?

Yes

If yes, please give a description and provide information on what barriers, how they are monitored and any data/evidence that is available.

All schools in Montenegro are not adapted for children with disabilities. One hundred and seven education institutions adapted physical access for children with physical disabilities, with toilets adapted in 62 institutions, lifts in nine of them and an access platform in one. The schools with the largest numbers of children with intellectual or autism-spectrum disabilities are provided with specialized didactic tools to improve the process of inclusive teaching and to foster student interactions. The schools attended by the children with sight impairments are provided with specialized equipment, aids, didactic tools and stickers in Braille. Nameplates in Braille and an orientation board were put up in the Ministry of Education⁸⁰ building. Instructions on Access to Educational Institutions and Education Process were developed and distributed to schools, as a way of raising awareness concerning the importance, relevance and necessity of architectural, physical and technological access and access to the teaching process. School principals attended a special counselling session on accessibility and it was suggested that they improve the accessibility components in their respective school's development plans.⁸¹

⁷⁷ ICT in education <http://www.ecdlfor.me/Pages/Clanak.aspx?id=3>

⁷⁸ Catalog of the teachers' professional training program: <http://www.zzs.gov.me/title/professionaldevelopment/programs/>

⁷⁹ training program calendar

http://www.zzs.gov.me/naslovna/profesionalnirazvoj/programi/Kalendar_programa_obuke_u_organizaciji_Odsjeka_za_/

⁸⁰ Ministry of education <http://www.mpin.gov.me/ministarstvo>

⁸¹ Montenegro Inclusive education strategy (2019-2025) <https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/media/7876/file/MNE-media-MNEpublication312.pdf>

b. Are there strategies and/or initiatives to improve school buildings and infrastructure?

✓ Yes

If yes, please describe the strategies, their aim and focus.

Strategy	Description of the focus
<p>Proposal of Strategy for development of elementary education with an action plan⁸² (2012-2017)</p> <p>There is no other information regarding the adoption of this strategy</p>	<p>Improving school infrastructure</p> <p>Thirteen (13) new primary schools have been built between 2003th and 2017th and eighteen (18) new facilities of the regional establishments. Since 2007, one hundred (100) school facilities have been adapted and reconstructed. Since 2003, more than € 3,300,000.00 was invested in the renovation of school furniture.</p> <p>Improving the school infrastructure in the past has also improved the system central heating, electricity (cheaper energy, LPG and light heating oil) in 14 school. New and renovated existing boiler rooms were built in 11 larger school buildings in the north of Montenegro.</p> <p>Funds for realization of all the mentioned investment investments in school facilities they were provided by: the Capital Budget of Montenegro, loans provided by the Government (World Bank loan, Hungarian Government loan), current budget of the Ministry of Education and by donor funds (Government and donor agreements): Caritas - Luxembourg, Government Japan, CMSR - Slovenia, Tika - Turkey et al.</p> <p>All schools are required to provide access ramps for students with special educational needs, so a number of primary schools have already done (17 in Podgorica).</p> <p>In the coming period, funds should be provided and efforts should be made to make all educational institutions accessible to all students, and in some schools also need to provide elevators.</p>
<p>Initiatives are initiated by individuals, political parties, business sector. One part was also funded by the Ministry of Economy through the Energy Efficiency Program.</p>	<p>Media article⁸³</p>

6.7 Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) from any recent reports, systematic evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 of the school system, potentially drawing on information from school inspections and / or school self-review work.

⁸² Strategy for development of elementary education with an action plan
<http://www.mps.gov.me/biblioteka/strategije?alphabet=lat%3Fquery%3DUnesite+pojam%3A&sortDirection=Asc&pageIndex=2&AccessibilityFontSize=150>

⁸³ Ministry of Economy <http://www.mek.gov.me/vijesti/169994/Saopstenje-U-adaptaciju-skola-i-bolnica-u-Crnoj-Gori-ulozeno-skoro-27-miliona-eura.html>
<https://www.monitor.co.me/renoviranje-kola-u-okviru-programa-energetske-efikasnosti-asovi-pod-skelama/>
 Individual donors <https://volimpodgoricu.me/2019/08/26/podgorica-poznati-biznismen-ulozio-180-000-u-obnovu-osnovne-skole-milorad-musa-burzan/>
 political parties <https://www.vijesti.me/vijesti/drustvo/renovirana-osnovna-skola-u-savnickom-selu-slatina>

- In 2015, a research⁸⁴ was carried out on the development of assistance models in teaching for children with disabilities

The survey included 133 schools/kindergartens. Data show that there are examples of schools with over 1,600 students, whereas an average number of students is 1,200. It is interesting to note that the school recognizes that they have a total number of 1,833 children with special educational needs, regardless of whether they have undergone the guidance procedure, and that 801 children have a guidance decision. A striking fact is the presence of professional associates in schools: pedagogues (65%), psychologists (40%), speech therapists (18%), defectologists (14%). The Individual Developmental Educational Program (hereinafter referred to as IDEP) but it was found to be missing in 18% of cases. The data obtained show that additional aids were provided in 15, assistive technology in 12, Braille textbooks in three, tactile guides for movement in one institution. Interestingly, peer capacity is not used in 41% of institutions. There is a lack of involvement of a school psychologist in 62%, a pedagogue in 39%, a specialist educator/speech therapist, a defectologist in 72% of cases. The research is on the link:

-A report on the implementation of inclusive education for 2019⁸⁵ has been prepared, a total of 25 activities have been completed, and another 6 are ongoing. The European Commission's Progress Report for 2018⁸⁶ states, among other things, that there is a good level of preparedness in the field of education and that some progress has been made. Montenegro has performed better than the EU average when it comes to early school leaving, where our share has decreased from 5.4% in 2017 to 4.6% in 2018. Also, it was stated that the number of children with special needs included in mainstream education has increased, and that children of the RE population have better access to education, but that a commitment to continue to work on further schooling facilitation for vulnerable groups remains.

-Annual report on quality of work educational institutions from 2015 to 2019⁸⁷

-Quality assurance report for Primary school "Djoko Prelevic"⁸⁸:

-Reports on the quality of work of educational institutions – Primary schools⁸⁹:

6.9 Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to schools in the country?

- There has been an increase in the enrolment of Roma and Egyptian students in pre-school education and compulsory education, but the rate of completion of these levels of education has not increased. Both the enrolment rate (62%) and the completion rate (34%) remain the lowest in the Western Balkans. A number of positive measures have been implemented, notably the placement of Roma mediators in education, with 18 mediators hired since the school year 2018/19. A system for determining the risk of early school leaving exists and a protocol for prevention and action in case of early school leaving has been adopted.

⁸⁴ Research - Development of assistance models in teaching for children with disabilities
<http://www.skolskiportal.edu.me/Iskluzivno%20obrazovanje/Istrazivanje%20asistenti.pdf>

⁸⁵ implementation of inclusive education for 2019:

https://www.google.com/search?q=IZVJE%C5%A0TAJ+O+SPROVO%C4%90ENJU+STRATEGIJE+INKLUZIVNOG+OBRAZOVANJA+U+CRNOJ+GORI+2019-2025+za+2019.+godinu&rlz=1C1GCEA_enME832ME841&oq=IZVJE%C5%A0TAJ+O+SPROVO%C4%90ENJU+STRATEGIJE+INKLUZIVNOG+OBRAZOVANJA+U+CRNOJ+GORI+2019-2025+za+2019.+godinu&aqs=chrome..69i57.1171j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8

⁸⁶ European Commission Report for Montenegro for 2018 and 2019: <https://www.eu.me/mn/pregovori-o-pristupanju/dokumenti-pregovori/category/57-izvjestaji-o-napretku#>

⁸⁷ Annual report on quality of work educational institutions from 2015 to 2019 <http://www.zzs.gov.me/naslovna/nadzor>

⁸⁸ Quality assurance report for Primary school "Djoko Prelevic" :

https://www.google.com/search?q=Izvj%C5%A1taj+o+utvr%C4%91ivanju+kvaliteta+JU+O%C5%A0+%E2%80%9E%C4%90oko+Prelevi%C4%87+...&rlz=1C1GCEA_enME832ME841&oq=Izvj%C5%A1taj+o+utvr%C4%91ivanju+kvaliteta+JU+O%C5%A0+%E2%80%9E%C4%90oko+Prelevi%C4%87+...&aqs=chrome..69i57.750j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8

⁸⁹ Reports on the quality of work of educational institutions – Primary schools :

http://www.zzs.gov.me/naslovna/nadzor/izvjestaji/osnovne_skole/

The employment of Roma assistants will be continued because practice has shown that their work is useful in terms of connecting family and school and the regularity of school attendance and, consequently, better school outcomes from Roma children.

- The need to gain a greater degree of understanding of the need to provide equal access to facilities and to raise awareness of the importance of making the education process equally accessible to all has been clearly stated in the Inclusive Education Strategy 2014 - 2018.⁹⁰

In order to fully respect human rights, the Strategy under the Task 2 defines that “children with special educational needs should be given access and continuity of quality education that will enable them to live and work independently”.

Therefore, the Inclusive Education Strategy 2014-2018⁹¹ recommends that educational institutions should be made accessible in accordance with existing regulations. Some schools are still not adapted for their children. The Inclusive Education Strategy states that 107 educational institutions have adapted access to children with physical disabilities, as well as toilets in 62 institutions. There are elevators in nine establishments and a platform is set up in one.

At the 54th session of the Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms⁹², deputy of Protector Human Rights and Freedom of Montenegro emphasized that children with special needs educational needs have included in regular education with individually custom program. However, it is still questionable the quality of determination and implementation of these programs, providing conditions for implementation of the proposed program, following one particular program, degree the education the child is really gaining and the teacher's ability to maintain a good quality teaching unit.

Educational institutions in Montenegro are still not architectural adapted for children with disabilities who are due to the inaccessibility of school facilities denied equal treatment and excluded from full participation in the educational process. It is necessary to provide equal access to education in accordance with national regulations with recommended international standards for each student.

She pointed out to the example of when children – who are members of a student's parliament of elementary school filed a complaint alleging impossibility pursuing equal education for their two friends which use a wheelchair and which the parents carry upstairs to accompany cabinet teaching. The school tried to find a solution with private donations and local government help, but the Ministry in charge recommended the so-called "Reasonable adaptation", - that mean that teacher should organized classes in classroom on the ground floor.

⁹⁰Inclusive Education Strategy 2014 – 2018:

https://www.google.com/search?q=strategija+inkluzivnog+obrazovanja+iz+2014+do+2018&rlz=1C1GCEA_enME832ME841&oq=strategija+inkluzivnog+obrazovanja+iz+2014+do+2018&aqs=chrome..69i57j18586j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8

⁹¹ montenegro inclusive education strategy 2019 - 2025 <https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/media/7876/file/MNE-media-MNEpublication312.pdf>

⁹² Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms http://www.skupstina.me/index.php/me/radna-tijela/odbor-za-ljudska-prava-i-slobode/item/4215-odrzana-54-sjednica-odbora-za-ljudska-prava-i-slobode?fbclid=IwAR3fa7v1OHYq_G4VlovhmunczH9V6v9G7-oMwISIDGVmH5S1jtNIBoXb0PU

Section 7: Communities, parents and students

How far does the wider school community support learners to access and benefit from education opportunities?

7.1 Have there been any campaigns to raise awareness of inclusion in education at national or local level?

Yes

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

There is a large number of organizations in Montenegro dealing with the issue of raising awareness of inclusive education in Montenegro. Some of the activities will be mentioned below:

Every year, Ministry of Education, in cooperation with the Ministry of Human and Minority rights, Bureau for Education Services and NGOs dealing with issues related to RE population, organizes a campaign which encourages enrolment to the first grade of elementary school.⁹³

In addition, various activities are being carried out for other vulnerable groups such as: a lecture entitled 'Inclusive Education - Learning and Socializing' in cooperation with the Institute for Social and Education Policy, Youth Policy Implementation Council Danilovgrad and Paraplegic Association of Cetinje within the field the work of the Institute and the Council - Promotion and protection of human rights of persons with disabilities;⁹⁴ Support inclusive education and training for the daily lives of children and young people with disabilities. The project is implemented by the PI Day Care Centre for Children and Youth with Disabilities and Developmental Difficulties in Pljevlja and the Elementary School "Dimitrije Tucović"⁹⁵. CEDEM, in partnership with the Pedagogical Centre of Montenegro and the NGO "Children" from Rožaje, started implementing the project "Building Social Inclusion Through Education"⁹⁶, followed by numerous activities of organizations: Children of Montenegro, Walk with Us - Phiren Amenca, Young Roma, Parents, Association of Youth with Disabilities and many more.

It is important to mention that the efforts of the Ministry of Education and the Government of Montenegro, as well as those of the civil-society sector, have been appreciated and supported by international organizations, first of all UNICEF, as well as Save the Children and the Council of Europe.

7.2 Does legislation/policy support parental involvement in schools?

Yes

If yes, please give a description.

The General law on Education⁹⁷ prescribes the organization of the Parents' Council for the purpose of organized pursuit of the interests of the parents. The council consists of parents of children from different educational groups, that is, parents of students of different grades, who are elected at a parental meeting. Also, as stated in the previous answers, the regulations define the role of parents in guiding a child with special educational needs into the educational system. Parents' Council: 1) elects parents' representatives to the school or board of directors; 2) give opinion on the proposal of the annual work plan of the institution; 3) reviews the report on the work of the institution; 3a) participates in the process of proposing elective courses; 3b) gives opinion on the program of organization of the students' excursion; 3c) reviews internal and external reports on establishing the quality of the educational work of the institution; 4) reviews parents and students complaints regarding educational work.

The Ministry of Education has created a parent portal⁹⁸ that allows parents to monitor their child's grades, absences and behaviour. The portal also allows parents to communicate with the homeroom teacher and provides

⁹³<http://www.mpin.gov.me/vijesti/184114/U-cetiri-opstine-promovisan-upis-u-prvi-razred-osnovne-skole-djece-RE-populacije.html?alphabet=lat>

⁹⁴<http://nvoisop.com/inkluzivno-obrazovanje-ucimo-i-druzimo-se-zajedno/>

⁹⁵<http://dnevnicecentarpv.me/ipa/>

⁹⁶<http://www.cedem.me/ostala-istraivanja/send/31-ostala-istraivanja/859-istraivanje->

⁹⁷ General Law on education <http://www.mpin.gov.me/biblioteka/zakoni>

⁹⁸ Collaboration with Parents www.ocjene.edu.me

information on scheduled parental meetings as well as other notifications. Part of a portal labelled Collaboration with Parents is intended to inform you about the dates of parental meetings, planned trips, excursions and similar general information. Part of the portal labelled Contact is planned for communication of the parent and the homeroom teacher, so that the parent can ask homeroom teacher a question, which will be answered by e-mail.⁹⁹

7.3 Does legislation/policy support collaboration between schools and stakeholders in their local communities (e.g. services/employers)?

Yes

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

Cooperation with the local community has been promoted as a tool for promoting inclusive education through the Montenegro inclusive education strategy 2019- 2025 and the Law on the Education of Children with Special Educational Needs. It is emphasized that the system should provide continuous support and expert assistance, and a stimulating and non-restrictive environment for optimal development and education; it should make services accessible, cherish participation and self-reliance and create an environment for full participation, the development of potentials and of personality, having in mind that early childhood development is key to a fulfilling and productive life for every child.¹⁰⁰

When it comes to elementary schools, there is not too much information regarding regulation on cooperation with local communities. Most of the examples that exist are about secondary education and industry, all with the aim of better preparation for the labour market.

In addition, cooperation with stakeholders in local communities can be regulated by school statutes for each school individually.

7.4 Does legislation/policy support the development of learning communities in local/regional areas e.g. support for schools to work together; involvement with universities, support services to provide research evidence and development of innovative practice?

Yes

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

When it comes to the local level there are no policies available related to development of learning communities. However, there are some examples that showcase that the cooperation exists, such as project Index to Inclusive Culture in Education institutions in Montenegro. The project was implemented in cooperation of the Ministry of Education with Save the children BiH, which included networking of primary schools and resource centers. Resource center professionals have put a new role in full function: supporting schools, giving practical advice and demonstrating how to deal with a student, conducting training and lectures, working with a child, and more. Schools as branch offices of the resource center become a point of contact in the community. They focused on consultations, counselling regarding space adjustment, teaching process.¹⁰¹

When it comes to involvement with universities, support services to provide research evidence and development of innovative practice there are available information on its development by developing cooperation with the countries of the region.

For example, the Ministry of Education has signed cooperation agreements with the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Republic of Slovakia which will, among other things, provide mutual annual scholarships,

⁹⁹ <http://www.mps.gov.me/vijesti/143252/Portal-zaroditelje-www-ocijene-edu-me.html>

¹⁰⁰ Montenegro inclusive education strategy 2019- 2025 <https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/en/reports/montenegro-inclusive-education-strategy>

¹⁰¹ <http://www.skolskiportal.edu.me/Inkluzivno%20obrazovanje/Informativni%20materijal%20Indeks%20Inkluzivnosti%20i%20ekspoziture.pdf>

direct cooperation between institutions of primary, secondary and higher education, exchange of teaching staff, students and students, as well as more substantial scientific and technological cooperation. The agreements reached will enable new joint research projects and increase the mobility of researchers.

Additionally, the following agreements were signed: Agreement with the Republic of Azerbaijan in the field of education; Agreement with the Republic of Albania in the field of education; Agreement on cooperation with Ukraine in the fields of politics, youth, physical education and sports; Agreement on cooperation with the Republic of Poland in the field of culture, education and science; Memorandum of Understanding in the field of education with the Republic of Turkey; Agreement with the Federal Republic of Germany on the sending of professional staff; Administrative agreement with the Republic of France on the promotion of French language teaching in Montenegro; Agreement on cooperation with the Republic of Macedonia in the field of education; Protocol on cooperation with the Republic of Slovenia in the field of education.¹⁰²

Montenegro is also a member of the Central European Initiative, which is regional in character and has 17 member countries. However, this concerns higher education and CEI will support cooperation between higher education institutions through seminars, workshops and summer schools.¹⁰³

In addition, there are a number of signed agreements and projects that have been launched that are aimed at networking of institutions of education, mobility programs and exchange of good practice programs, but are mostly related to higher education.

7.5 Does legislation/policy set out a role for NGOs, DPOs, or other organisations representing vulnerable groups?

Yes

If yes, please describe the role. Specify which non-governmental actors are particularly active in inclusion in education and how they operate.

Government support to non-governmental organisations is defined in the Law on Non-Governmental organisations.¹⁰⁴ It states that State will provide funding for programmes and projects of public interest in amount of minimum 0.3% of annual current budget. Additionally, 0.1% of annual current budget will be allocated for programs and projects of non-governmental organisations in the area of protecting people with disabilities.

Each Ministry has the obligation of identifying key priorities within their scope of work and after all of the ministries have done so, the final allocations for each ministry are agreed. It is important to mention that current system provides CSOs with the possibility to participate in the process of identifying key policy areas for the ministerial analysis. Therefore, there is state obligation to fund projects of NGOs in different areas, including education and social inclusion.

CSOs participate in the allocation of resources by applying to public calls for funding published by ministries.

In addition, CSOs participate in the allocation of funds on local level, through public calls published by local authorities. They are significantly lower, but some of the municipalities have recognized social inclusion and care about specific vulnerable groups as main priorities that have advantage in relation to other topics.

One of the Ministry of Education open calls that NGOs can participate in and contribute to improving the quality of inclusive education is the Public Inclusion in Action open call for financing NGO projects / programs in the field of institutional and non-institutional education - support for inclusive education. The target group is children with special educational needs whose developmental and educational opportunities need to be fulfilled and satisfied through quality education, their parents, as well as the general public.¹⁰⁵

In this regard, it is also important to mention that state authorities are obliged to include NGOs in the process of development of legal and strategic documents. This is defined by the Regulation on the election of CSO

¹⁰² All available on: <http://www.mpin.gov.me/rubrike/medjunarodni-programi-mobilnosti-studenata/86355/8474.html>

¹⁰³ Index to Inclusive Culture in Education institutions in Montenegro <http://www.mpin.gov.me/rubrike/medjunarodni-programi-mobilnosti-studenata/86355/8474.html>

¹⁰⁴ Law on Non-Governmental organisations <https://www.paragraf.me/propisi-crnegore/zakon-o-nevlatinim-organizacijama.html>

¹⁰⁵ <http://www.mpin.gov.me/rubrike/saradnja-NVO/222423/JAVNI-KONKURS-INKLUZIJA-NA-DJELU.html>

representatives to the working bodies of the state administration and the conduct of public debates in the preparation of laws and strategies. The regulation implies two obligations when it comes to CSOs. First, public authorities are obliged to publish a public call for the representatives of the CSOs to take part in the working groups, and second, they are obliged to consult the draft document with the interested public, including CSOs. These are obligatory process for all of the areas, except for those that may be related to state security and safety, therefore, decision makers in the area of education are obliged to include CSOs in the process of decision making.¹⁰⁶

Accordingly, in the past period, the Ministry of Education has issued a Public Invitation to NGOs to nominate representatives to the working group for amendments to the Regulation on the Method, Conditions and Procedure for Guidance of Children with Special Education needs¹⁰⁷, as well as a public call for the nomination of representatives in the working body to monitor the implementation of the Inclusive Education Strategy. However, the Ministry of Education has issued a notice that no candidates have applied for the invitation.¹⁰⁸

When it comes to NGOs who are particularly active, a member of the Working Group on Elaboration of the Strategy for Inclusive Education (2013-2017) was a representative of the NGO Association of Parents of Children and Youth with Disabilities "Staze", and in the drafting of the Law on Amendments to the Law on elementary education - representatives of the NGO Roditelji.¹⁰⁹

Other information is not available.

7.6 Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) from any recent reports, systematic evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 of parental and wider community involvement in the work of schools.

On this topic, there are no significant reports that have been produced in the past period, but the following is an overview of the reports in which the issue of parental and wider community involvement is addressed:

In the Implementation report on Montenegro inclusive education strategy 2019- 2025¹¹⁰ were given some of the recommendation for greater involvement of all actors of society: it is necessary to network the activities of individual departments: services within the framework of health, social and child protection, but also NGOs with the education system. More specifically, it is necessary to continue strengthening and / or developing and improving the services that exist or are lacking. At the same time, develop the collaboration of these services so that all children receive equal opportunities and developmental conditions.

Report on the Implementation of the Strategy for Social Inclusion of Roma and Egyptians in Montenegro 2016 - 2020 for 2017¹¹¹ lists activities that have been carried out in the aforementioned period concerning inclusive education, such as:

The Ministry of Education, the Bureau of Education and the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights conducted a raising awareness campaign for Roma population. The campaign team visited the Roma and Egyptian settlements in Podgorica, Niksic, Berane and Herceg Novi. Discussions were held with parents about the importance of education for their children, flyers were distributed, providing a detailed explanation of the first grade enrollment process. The flyers were printed in Montenegrin, Albanian and Roma languages. As in previous years, textbook kits for children of Roma and Egyptian populations were provided at the beginning of the school year.

In order to create a sustainable system of education for parents, the Center for Vocational Education organized a workshop "Preparation and realization of educational workshops with parents of Roma and Egyptian population" for

¹⁰⁶ Regulation on the election of CSO representatives to the working bodies of the state administration and the conduct of public debates in the preparation of laws and strategies <http://www.mrt.gov.me/pretraga/189093/Uredba-o-izboru-predstavnika-nevladinih-organizacija-u-radna-tijela-organa-drzavne-uprave-i-sprovodenju-javne-rasprave-u-priprem.html>

¹⁰⁷ <http://www.mpin.gov.me/rubrike/saradnja-NVO/199544/JAVNI-POZIV-NVO-ZA-PREDLAGANJE-PREDSTAVNIKA-CE-U-RADNOJ-GRUPI-ZA-IZMJENE-I-DOPUNE-PRAVILNIKA-O-NACINU-USLOVIMA-I-POSTUPKU-ZA-USM.html>

¹⁰⁸ <http://www.mpin.gov.me/rubrike/saradnja-NVO/196283/Obavjestavamo-da-na-Javni-poziv-za-predlaganje-predstavnika-ce-u-radnom-tijelu-za-pracenje-implementacije-Strategije-inkluzivnog.html>

¹⁰⁹ <http://www.mpin.gov.me/biblioteka/odluke>

¹¹⁰ Implementation report on Montenegro inclusive education strategy 2019- 2025 <http://www.mpin.gov.me/biblioteka/izvijestaji>

¹¹¹ Report on the Implementation of the Strategy for Social Inclusion of Roma and Egyptians in Montenegro 2016 - 2020 for 2017 <http://www.mpin.gov.me/biblioteka/izvijestaji>

representatives of twelve primary schools. The workshop for preparation and realization of introductory workshops with parents of Roma and Egyptian population was attended by 21 participants.

In Evaluation of the Implementation of the Strategy for Improving the Quality of Life of LGBT Persons in Montenegro 2013–2018¹¹² is pointed out that the cooperation between the Ministry and LGBT organizations was very close. They collaborated on the development of training materials and courses, and disseminated them within the school system. The Ministry successfully assisted LGBT organizations in providing access to schools and teachers for the benefit of all. However, the main recommendation in the field of education is still to structurally involve young LGBT people in the design and implementation of measures, assessing their needs, experiences and opinions.

Montenegro Inclusive Education Strategy¹¹³ emphasizes some of the activities done by NGOs together with the community:

Together with the NGO Special Olympics, kindergartens are implementing the Young Athletes' Programme, with the activities gathering children with and without intellectual disabilities.

Numerous activities by the civil sector provided considerable help in raising the quality of inclusive education. They were particularly visible in support services, working with children with special needs in education and their parents, improvements to the teaching process, developing services and ensuring access across all levels (within and outside institutions). It is important to mention that the efforts of the Ministry of Education and the Government of Montenegro, as well as those of the civil-society sector, have been appreciated and supported by international organizations, first of all UNICEF, as well as Save the Children and the Council of Europe.

However, one of the main recommendations of the Strategy is to improve the cooperation of relevant public entities, partners and civil society and develop monitoring and coordination mechanisms.

7.7 Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to communities, parents and students in the country?

What characterizes inclusive education is the need to involve wider communities and all structures of society in order to achieve the intended goals. The previous replies highlighted the efforts and activities undertaken by various non-governmental organizations in order to raise awareness in this field but also to increase the capacity of actors of importance.

Also, it was pointed out that parents have a concrete role in the education system as well as that is important to keep them informed on all reforms. However, according to organizations dealing with inclusive education, further work is needed to build greater confidence of CSOs and the wider society in government institutions, as well as to improve communication channels. An example of lack of trust can be seen in the examples cited above where there were no NGOs reported to participate in working groups for drafting laws and strategies in the field of inclusive education.

What should also be worked on is greater transparency and openness of institutions for cooperation in all fields, not only in raising awareness of the importance of inclusive education.

Opportunities can also be seen in the capacities of CSOs as organizations working with a large number of people in the field as well as government institutions working to improve legislation in the field of education, and room for further progress in better networking of all sectors relevant to this field.

¹¹² Evaluation of the Implementation of the Strategy for Improving the Quality of Life of LGBT Persons in Montenegro 2013–2018 <http://www.mpin.gov.me/biblioteka/izvjestaji>

¹¹³ Montenegro inclusive education strategy 2019- 2025 <https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/en/reports/montenegro-inclusive-education-strategy>

Vignette

DAISY textbooks

The primary objective of preparing DAISY textbooks (DAISY is an acronym for Digital Accessible Information System, a digitally accessible information format that allows easy recording of written material, containing audio and visual messages) is to contribute to the improvement of inclusive education in Montenegro. The process of producing DAISY textbooks involves adapting printed textbooks in Montenegrin language to DAISY audio-visual format. In order to achieve the goals of providing textbooks for students with visual impairments and those with no residual vision, as well as for all other students with learning disabilities (dyslexia, dysgraphia ...), ten textbooks have been created so far during the DAISY format textbook project (reading-books from 4th to 9th grade of elementary school and History for grades 6, 7, 8 and 9). The DAISY textbook implementation project included 50 schools and the Resource Centre for Children and Youth “Podgorica” in Podgorica. Teacher training and teaching practice have shown that DAISY textbooks are adequate and relevant for all students, not just for those with special educational needs. The project is supported by the UNICEF Office in Montenegro.

DAISY playback software is available for download here: [Setup-amis-U.S.English.zip](#)

With the support of UNICEF, the Ministry of Education, in cooperation with the Institute for Textbooks and Teaching Aids, the Resource Centre for Children and Youth ‘Podgorica’, the Bureau for Education Services, and the School of Dramatic Arts, initiated the production of DAISY textbooks in 2014. This was done in order to make learning materials accessible to students with various disabilities, such as impaired vision and dyslexia, and at the same time to enable them to study alongside their peers to create an inclusive educational environment. The project started in 25 schools and was expanded to 70 by 2019. Some 35,000 students can benefit from the use of DAISY textbooks in schools, including an estimated number of 500 children with disabilities. The project itself was launched in 2013.

So far, 6 mother tongue reading books and 4 history textbooks have been recorded in DAISY format. In addition to this content, at the resource center (on the initiative of the resource center employees), poetry and prose for children have been recorded for use in teaching within their institution.

The DAISY format, being an audio format, is extremely important as a new and non-specific teaching tool, useful not only for children with special educational needs (visual impairments), but in general for all children because it presents educational content in an interesting, interactive way. The textbooks have visual and audio options whereby text can be enlarged, and each word is highlighted as it is spoken by the narrator, enabling children with disabilities – such as those who have impaired vision or dyslexia or dysgraphia – to follow more easily. The books are generally used at a class level via a classroom computer and a display screen so that all children with and without disabilities can learn together. The children can also use their own devices and review the DAISY textbooks at home.

The training program by the Bureau for Education Services for teachers on the use of DAISY format in schools is accredited and it has found its place in the Training Catalog for 2019/20 and 2020/21.

Challenges are as follows: Teachers being used to traditional way of teaching, the technical unpreparedness of schools, the loss of enthusiasm to continue recording additional textbooks upon termination of project funding.

It is a project that has received important international awards. *The initiative to introduce DAISY textbooks into inclusive education in Montenegro has been identified, among 75 innovative projects and practices globally, as one of the best innovative practices in the field of inclusive education at this year’s Zero Project 2020 Conference, an international summit on inclusive education and communication technologies, which gathers several hundred experts in this area from across the globe.* Every year, Zero Project identifies and globally promotes the most innovative policies and practices for improving the lives of persons with disabilities.

Montenegro is the first country in the world to start to use DAISY textbooks systematically in its inclusive education system. The textbooks are in the audio-visual DAISY format and are intended for all children, but are especially

beneficial for students who have difficulty reading printed texts. So far, these textbooks are in use in 50 primary schools throughout the country.

We have no information on how much DAISY textbooks are actually being used in the teaching. What we do know is that 366 teachers were trained to use DAISY, according to the Ministry of Education. Resource center experts, who are members of the mobile service, always advise on the need to use this format in teaching during consultative and professional work.

What learners say about DAISY textbooks and their effect on learning:

Thanks to DAISY textbooks – modern audiovisual books – Radovan is now able to learn faster and easier. Radovan Krivokapic is an eighth-grade student at Elementary School “Mileva Lajović-Lalatović” in Niksic. Even to this day, he can still recollect the poem *Little Red Riding Hood in a Taxi* by poet Dragan Radulović, which he memorized in the fourth grade. Radovan says that he finds the voices of actors reading the poems and stories particularly interesting. *‘It is much easier now. I can listen to a poem or a text several times.’*

DAISY textbooks have been produced in Montenegro in cooperation with the School of Dramatic Arts in Cetinje, whose teachers and students have for years volunteered their participation in the production of the books. ‘This project was very important for me, because I had the chance to directly meet the beneficiaries of my work, and even more importantly, because the importance and purpose of DAISY textbooks was realized by both them and myself. There are very few things in the world that make sense, but this definitely does!’ points out Maja Stojanovic, who, as a drama student, participated in the production of DAISY textbooks.

Radovan’s mother, Sanja Krivokapic, underlines that, thanks to the DAISY textbooks, he is now much more independent in the learning process.

‘Anyone can use the DAISY textbook. In this way, children are becoming better listeners, learning by heart is now easier, and they are also learning proper pronunciation faster and better. The sensation of a text is totally different because it is not the teacher but rather an actor in the role of narrator.’
Dijana Rondović, teacher

With the support of UNICEF, the Ministry of Education, in cooperation with the Institute for Textbooks and Teaching Aids, Resource Centre for Children and Youth ‘Podgorica’, the Bureau for Education, and the School of Dramatic Arts, initiated the production of DAISY textbooks four years ago. Today, children in primary schools are able to learn from DAISY language textbooks, grades IV – IX, as well as from history textbooks in the same format.

Video promotional material is available on:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqKCm38Ect4_Up75QYDd5GA

