

**The Programme of Matica Crnogorska  
MONTENEGRO  
ON ITS EUROPEAN PATH**

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PUBLISHER

**Matica crnogorska  
Podgorica**

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ITS EUROPEAN PATH**



**MATICA**  
crnogorska

**Podgorica**  
**2014**



It has been fifteen years since the programme of Matica Crnogorska, titled *Montenegro Facing the Challenges of Future*, was presented to the public, a programme, which was dedicated to the historical challenges that Montenegro faced after the disintegration of Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Matica Crnogorska, assessing political and social circumstances at the time, as opposed to the ruling politics, unambiguously stated that the future of Montenegro depended on its constitutional status and the ability to manage its own destiny. Relying on historical experience and contemporary facts, Matica tied its identity and cultural mission to the international recognition of the Montenegrin state. Considering the position of Montenegro in quasi – federal union with Serbia ruinous for the overall development of Montenegro, Matica dedicated itself to preservation of a Montenegrin identity and renewal of the Montenegrin state.

Affirmation of Montenegrin national and cultural identity and support to preservation and development of a multiethnic and multicultural society was and still is the focus fulcrum of Matica's activities. While the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was being viciously

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The Programme *Montenegro on its European path*, adopted by the Assembly of Matica Crnogorska on 22 May 2013 in Cetinje.

destroyed, Matica saw perspective for Montenegro in the implementation of peaceful and independent state politics, integrated in the democratic international community, and devoted to the ideas of a just society, the rule of law, market economics and affirmation of individual and collective rights. Matica used to be, and still is, a supporter of facing the causes and consequences of the disintegration of Yugoslavia, which involves political, legal and moral responsibility for the crimes and suffering inflicted on the citizens and peoples of former Yugoslavia. At the same time, Matica maintains the position that cooperation and integration are necessary between the post-Yugoslav states and people, who for a long time, shared a common destiny, lived in one state and took part in one of the leading anti-fascist movements in the world during the Second World War.

The years behind us confirmed the argumentation and visionary foundations of the contemporary program of Matica. International and national political circumstances, as well as successfully followed pro independent politics, despite depressing internal divisions, made it possible for Montenegro to make a decisive historical breakthrough: on the 21<sup>st</sup> of May in 2006, following a democratically conducted referendum, Montenegro regained its independence and quickly gained international recognition. In late 2007, the Constitution of an independent and democratic state with a republican form of government was adopted. This created the conditions for systemic transformation of Montenegrin society and the construction of a democratic, legal and sovereign state. Sovereignty and the upcoming European integration expose Montenegro

to new social challenges. The ability of the elite to run the transformation processes of the society is of crucial importance for the place of Montenegro in Europe and the world, and for development of patriotism that will be built not solely on the past, but rather on the satisfaction with present life and good prospects for the future.

After gaining independence, the Montenegrin state policy has achieved significant results in foreign policy and considerable progress in Euro-Atlantic integration. There are numerous inherited and acquired problems, plenty of unfinished tasks and a lot of reasons for a critical review of the Montenegrin reality. Because of all of that, Matica does not accept glossing over or relativising the actual state and social problems. Modern Montenegro needs a development policy, which rests on a transforming vision appropriate for the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Such a policy must be concentrated on creating a stable and democratic civil state and dynamic pluralist society in which individuals and people will feel fulfilled and free.

Matica today, twenty years after its foundation, is an independent cultural organisation, as declared by a special Law as an institution of national interest, which should be an encouraging fact in terms of identity and state prospective of Montenegro. That is one more reason for Matica, motivated by a genuine care for the future of Montenegro, to disclose a new **Programme**.



## **I. COMMITMENT TO THE VISION**

In the century that commenced with uncertain world wide political, cultural and economic changes, small countries have no chance to survive if they do not build a respectable identity and steady values. That is why it is necessary for Montenegro to break with the inherited inferior cultural and political mentality, as well as creation of an institutional framework, which will provide support to a free, ethical, educated and diligent citizen that will create a society of security, solidarity, and prosperity. In such a Montenegro, Montenegrin people, together with other nations, will be able to develop their potential and enjoy the status of a free and progressive political nation. Matica remains devoted to the affirmation of a state policy, which will enable Montenegro to find the balance between its individualism and globalization, sustainable development, market and social justice, individual and collective identity. Because of that, the future of Montenegro is inconceivable without creation of a humane political, business, cultural and scientific elite that will be committed to the nations interests and development of a just society.

Montenegro has many emigrants who are scattered around the world due to different historical circumstances. Montenegro is permanently indebted to Montenegrin expatriates of all religions and nationalities for their massive support for Montenegrin independence and

participation in the state-building referendum. Their emotion and dedication to Montenegro deserves special attention by the homeland for nurturing the belonging to the motherland and inclusion of their intellectual, economic and moral potential in the development of Montenegro and promotion of Montenegrin identity in the world. Therefore, Matica will always remain a supporter of close and strong ties with the emigrants, but also a promoter of such an organization of the executive power, which must always have in its focus and the Montenegrin multi ethnic emigrants.

In this century, Montenegro has to rid itself of its destructive historical heritage, solve open self-determination questions, focus on the wise use of available resources and create a righteous and attractive state, free of poverty and all forms of discrimination. Following these goals, Matica remains devoted to the modern interpretation of a Montenegrin national and cultural identity as a state-building component of a modern Montenegro. At the same time, Matica is determined to preserve its autonomy and reject loyalty to any political party, whereas, as a historically based Montenegrin independent institution, it remains faithful to the gathering of thinking and free citizens, committed to emancipation, humane and just social ideas. Having in mind the historical experience and contemporary contradictions, Matica in the new Programme is permanently committed to building a civil, democratic and multi ethnic, prosperous and peaceful state, which will be considered by the citizens of all nationalities and religions, as their homeland, and which will be wisely built and taken care of by Montenegrins, respecting the heritage vows and understanding the time that is to come.

## II. UNDERSTANDING THE PAST

Montenegro's heritage is based on the long history of states, civilisations and cultures that existed on its territory. Dramatic events that occurred in the Mediterranean and Europe, exposure of Duklja, Zeta, and Montenegro to the aspirations of powerful conquerors, left traces in the historical remembrance on political, ethical, religious and cultural conflicts and permeations. Historical excess, which burdens Montenegrin modernity requires an understanding of the past, critical confrontation with events and past times, as well as building a multinational and multi cultural society, which is not going to be a prisoner of past times. The heritage that was leading us towards universal values should be affirmed.

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Montenegro is a political and cultural community with a millennium long statehood tradition. Since the foundation of the independent state of Duklja in the mid 11<sup>th</sup> century, until the most recent renewal of the independence in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Montenegro, despite periods of shorter or longer occupation, always managed to reconstitute its independence. Having in mind the size and the population, the Montenegrin experience in maintaining a statehood idea is quite rare in history. Parts of the territory of the present day Montenegro, during certain periods, were under the influence of foreign cultures and civilizations. Those entities aspired to unite with the free

Montenegro. During a century of statehood, an authentic nation formed in Montenegro that shared a common system of values, history, language and culture. The small Montenegrin population, fighting for its ethnic and state survival, exists as a specific socio-historical phenomenon and survives as a relatively isolated political and cultural community until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. After the Congress of Berlin and the creation of an internationally recognized national state, Montenegro takes on the characteristics of multiethnic and multi-religious society. Since then, Montenegro began to build a community of citizens belonging to leading religions in this part of the world, resulting over time in the development of inter-ethnic and inter-religious tolerance, creation of institutions according to European standards and legitimate cultural diversity.

During the reign of king Nikola, the Montenegrin identity, despite his undoubted statesmanship contributions, was subordinate to dynastic interests, which led to the subsequent disappearance of the Montenegrin state and a national awareness crisis among Montenegrins. By the end of the World War I, due to international circumstances, the political interests of the great powers related to the hegemonic ambitions of the Serbian Court, Montenegro, contrary to international law and its own judicial system, was annexed by the Kingdom of Serbia. The state, the dynasty and the church are abolished, while the Montenegrin nation is considered non-existent. Between the two world wars, Montenegro belongs to the most backward parts of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, and supporters of Montenegrin political independence are constantly exposed to state terror and suffering. Only during World War II Montenegro renews its statehood

and clearly articulates the Montenegrin national idea. Montenegro becomes one of six republics within Socialist Yugoslavia, and the Montenegrin people are one of the constituent Yugoslav nationalities. Anti-fascist liberation of the epic heroism of Montenegrin partisans led by communists represents an illustrious period of recent Montenegrin history, guided by the spirit of a multacentennial tradition of freedom.

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From 1945 to 1992 Montenegro continuously functions as a republic within the Yugoslav federation. The Montenegrin nation is affirmed as an equal factor among Yugoslav nations. Under the communist rule, Montenegro becomes a modern republic and experiences vast economic growth, as well as undisputed social and cultural prosperity. The whole of the Montenegrin identity question in the Yugoslav time remains incomplete, while the need for sovereign decision making develops insufficiently and belatedly as well as the readiness to eliminate, using its own potentials, any form of dependency from the wider state community and negative paternalistic influences from Serbia. Communists were negligent towards the Montenegrin language and church, so the Montenegrin identity was just partially revitalised. The Christian Orthodox church in Montenegro continues to exist as a part of the Serbian church organisation. The language issue is considered to be solved within the framework of Serbian-Croatian convention, which marginalises the Montenegrin identity through the name of the official language.

During the dissolution of SFR Yugoslavia, ruling Montenegrin politics represented a faceless political subject acting on the orders from official Belgrade.

Showing no resistance to different forms of Greater Serbian chauvinism and assimilation politics, the government in Podgorica, with the direct support of the Montenegrin Unitarians, contributed to the creation of a political climate that for a long time stymied the creation of an independent state. It created a political and social environment that was destroying Montenegrin economic and cultural potentials, generating an inferior and dependent political community. Montenegro became the only former Yugoslav republic in which a majority of the population led by the ruling elite for many years resisted its own political sovereignty and national dignity. The pro-independence, peaceful, multiethnic and democratic minority defended the integrity, dignity and honour of Montenegro. Only during political and security confrontations with the Belgrade regime, a critical mass of citizens is created in Montenegro and they reject the existing quasi federal model and support a sovereign state policy.

Time has shown that the Montenegrin political community, since the dissolution of Yugoslavia and introduction of a multiparty system, has no consensus on crucial social and state issues. Montenegrin political divisions for the past two decades have the characteristics of destructive disagreements slowing down the creation of a prosperous society. The consequences of post-Yugoslav divisions had and still have a negative effect for the Montenegrin identity and state integrity, because in the background there was a constant denial of the Montenegrin nation and its heritage and a hegemonic approach to Montenegro by the official and unofficial political and social structures in Serbia.

During the early nineties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a division in supporters and opponents of the Greater Serbian

warmongering policy came to the foreground. Domestic adherents of Belgrade politics, with its undisputed stronghold in the electorate, emerged as the winners, drawing Montenegro into a process of multiple destructive acts with consequences that will have a long-term effect. Only in the late nineties, there is a political conflict with official Serbia, after which the process of self-awareness and independence begins. A division between a pro independence majority and persistent pro Union minority politics was created. That division was solved through a democratic state-creation referendum in May 2006. In spite of discriminatory decision-making imposed by the European Union, the citizens vote for Montenegrin independence at the referendum and after 88 years the renewed Montenegrin state is created as a civic, multiethnic and multi-religious political community.

### **III. CHALLENGES OF CONTEMPORARY MONTENEGRO**

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#### **1. Euro-Atlantic Choice**

For the first time in the recent history Montenegro firmly chooses a pro western foreign policy, which practically means membership of NATO and the EU and political affiliation with the most developed part of the world. That strategic state orientation, in the current international and regional frameworks, presents an optimal political choice. The heritage of the nineties still has a political influence in the region, while the ideologies of militant chauvinism that caused and fuelled the war did not give up their goals. The decision of Montenegro to build itself as a civic society, a community of free people, as a necessary condition assumes stability in the region and elimination of the danger of new wars. Euro-Atlantic integration is the Montenegrin choice; it will create a framework for the smooth construction of its democratic and civic future. There must be no compromise about it with those forces in the society that want to revive foreign nationalism. Keeping in mind our past, as well as historical consequences of mythomaniac and naïve political alignment, current Euro-Atlantic state goals deserve support and they will permanently affect the political, economic and cultural profile of future Montenegro. Montenegro has no open questions with its neighbours or territorial or other aspirations and has met all

conditions to exist peacefully. In that sense, it is of crucial importance to preserve and develop Montenegrin national and cultural identity, self-awareness and self respect, a multiethnic and multi-religious character of the civil state of Montenegro.

## **2. Challenging the State**

A large problem for modern day Montenegro is the still present disloyalty to the state from pro-Serbian political parties, that directly affect its consolidation and has a negative impact on the development of democracy and indispensable institutional reform. Former Unionists, and the present leading opposition to the Montenegrin government, are still committed to the defeated hegemonic political idea and a cultural model that denies the Montenegrin state, its national and spiritual distinctiveness. The national consensus for implementation of the conditions for Montenegrin accession to the EU, are abused by the opposition with blackmail that leads to challenging the independence. *Spiritus movens* of the Greater Serbia politics in Montenegro became the Serbian Orthodox Church, which acts as a tool of the Greater Serbia policy in the region and as a clerical-nationalist, anti-Montenegrin organisation. For the further political, economic and social development of Montenegro it is of crucial importance to unmask the ideas and interpretation of the goals of the Montenegrin Greater Serbia concept and marginalizing it on a political level. In order to create a democratic environment it is necessary to constitute state-building and autonomous oppositional political forces that will stand for a progressive alternative to the

ruling parties. Montenegro needs a democratic political system in which, by the will of its citizens, there will be a shift in the government, but all will be committed to the Montenegrin state and cultural interests.

### **3. Partocratic Democracy**

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The Montenegrin political scene is dominated by political forces that resist changes necessary for the development of civil democracy and a free civil society. For twenty years now, one political party (DPS) has had the biggest impact, alone or in coalition governments (mainly with the SDP and ethnic minority parties), and it represents an example of a transitional post-communist party that has coalesced with the state apparatus and has a distinct political and institutional monopoly. Taking into account the total capacities and skills in politics and leadership, the ruling parties are superior to the opposition that lacks progressive political vision and basically works against Montenegro not the government. Current Montenegrin political practice as a whole is an obstacle for breaking with the entrenched partocratic political model. Its important feature is a care about personal, leadership, and party interests, which marginalizes the common interest. That is why the internal party reforms are of great importance for the development of the Montenegrin democracy.

### **4. Disordered State and Immature Society**

National and local administration, judicial, health and education system in terms of the quality, personnel and organisation are below European standards and levels

that enable more rapid state and social development. The administration is an example of a redundant, inefficient and insufficiently competent bureaucracy. The most serious problem is the slow implementation of the legal state and the rule of law. Law enforcement and good professional practice is of vital importance for the governing of the state and the creation of a just society. Legislative policy must not be reduced to an uncritical copying of European regulations and adoption of confusing and poorly written laws.

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Montenegrin society has lost the traditional values, without an adequate affirmation of the contemporary human values and human rights. The political class ignores the importance of moral education and ethical examples. Irresponsible and immoral exercise of public functions and the lack of sanctions just encourage the opinion of a “rotten” society where everything is possible. Corruption in the public sector is an old and unsolved problem. At the same time, the process of getting a job in the public sector has often been influenced by party interests, which influences the development of a dependent and inactive mentality and undermines public affairs.

The media community is below the level of professional, free, and responsible journalism needed in democratic societies. The Montenegrin media is often turned into a weapon for political and business conflicts, which discredits their public role. Lack of principles and good intentions, as well as a decrease in the level of professionalism made them destructive and counterproductive for the creation of a positive climate for social development and projecting its perspective. The power of media is reality,

and therefore the focus should be to expand the freedom of the information space which serves democracy and public interest. The media is obliged to highlight social deviations, but also to respect institutions and not to act as their substitute. That is why it is necessary to support media reforms in accordance with good European practices, as well as preventing interference of the centres of business and political power in editorial policy. An educated and humanistically oriented cadre is key for the development of media as a common good.

A public broadcasting service should serve the development of a democratic society and constitution of a national and cultural identity. A responsible and professional public radio and television service can provide quality cultural and educational programmes, developing a sense of identity and encouraging its own creativity. That is why the public radio and television service should be free from the dictates of commercialism, focused on quality and raising media standards, and take into account the interest of minority groups. Public broadcasters must pay the greatest attention to their own archives with their stored content about our past and is a significant part of cultural heritage.

The Nongovernmental sector, although important for the development of a civil society, often for political and personal reasons, is limited in achieving its stated goals, and there are no many examples of dedicated and responsible actions of NGOs in the public arena. There is an apparent danger that the NGO sector is used for the promotion of the interests of political parties and is thereby partially transformed into an alternative political scene. Montenegro needs an

NGO sector, which will contribute with its capacities to the democratic maturity of the society, creating a constructive critical environment and encouraging social pluralism.

The low political, business and civic culture requires a long-term commitment to the transformation of the Montenegrin society. Corruption, protectionism and nepotism represent entrenched social strains. A mentality formed in transitional times (protected political and business tycoons, greed, lawlessness, impunity, a philosophy of easy money, functional illiteracy, contempt for hard work, amorality and a lack of belief in virtue, etc.) creates a big obstacle on the path toward the emancipation of Montenegro. An advanced society and a democratic civil state is based on laws and social advancement of an individual toward knowledge, work, morality and personal capabilities, and that requires a fundamental change of mentality.

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## **5. Weak and Dysfunctional Education**

Spiritual progress of Montenegro is in immediate correlation with the creation of a different education system that will suit the concept of an open society, ready to face the challenges of globalisation. There must be a debate in Montenegro on the state of education at all levels. Also, there must be serious work on introduction of mandatory free secondary education. In current international circumstances, superficial or insufficient education causes a rapid lagging behind of countries with inefficient and weak school systems and limited educational potentials.

The problem of the Montenegrin education system is in a drastic discrepancy between set requirements and the

results achieved. This type of educational system is the product of a system of relations and a state of mind that has existed for more than half a century. The results of the previous reforms are weak; international research shows that the knowledge gained in our education system is at an unacceptably low level. Schools at all levels are very poorly equipped and the salaries of teachers are very low. One of the goals of an education must be that all students, after the completion of the education cycle and with the acquired knowledge, will be able to provide for themselves and their future families in their own, or a foreign country. Education must provide an opportunity for innovation, enhancement and expanding the knowledge imposed by contemporary civilisation processes. An example of the irrationality of our school system is learning foreign languages with unacceptably low general knowledge. Learning foreign languages must begin at an early age with the idea to reach fluency and master a language as end result and also to achieve bilingualism. In Europe, it is assumed that a university professor must speak English as the global language of science. Learning official languages of the European Union and other world languages should be encouraged. Without knowing these languages, Montenegrin officials will be unable to compete for influential positions in the EU administration, and without it Montenegro would not have any impact once it becomes its member.

Only educated people with an active life experience in other, different environments will be capable of guiding Montenegro out of the marginalisation that is threatening. Montenegro is small, but it does not mean that a small

country is necessarily provincial and autistically isolated. A change will start with education. The state that was Montenegro in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and what was achieved was the result of a sort of openness and a willingness to learn from the examples of others (that is how the key institutions of that time were founded). The highest level of juridisation of customary social field is undoubtedly the famous *General Property Code* for the Principality of Montenegro by Valtazar Bogišić (1888). In today's situation, having in mind the lack and a very low standard of experienced personnel at all levels (public administration, cultural and educational institutions), maximum use of the potential of the diaspora should be made. Montenegro has not done anything so far to involve expatriates in development plans and enable their return to the homeland, or to offer individuals important positions in the public administration, science, culture or economy. Matica Crnogorska has always pointed out the great importance of our emigrants. Without their participation present day Montenegro will hardly become a modern state.

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The education system in Montenegro has to provide far more true knowledge about our own history and tradition. Truths are not absolute; they should be valorised in accordance with new worldviews and facts. Life constantly confirms for us that delusions or tendentious interpretations of reality inhibit our ability to get out of the enclosure. The centres of influence that want to keep the mortgage on the truth, in order to control our future, should be delegitimised. Promising young people should be selected in high schools and their continuing

education ensured in prominent world centres, to achieve the necessary confidence needed to change our reality and habits. Education in certain regional centres should be reviewed because of the fact that they produce cadre capable only of being agents of those centres, a unilateral conductive connection that will continue to keep us in dependency. Above all, Montenegro has to develop relevant state university studies oriented toward its own being, identity and heritage and examine who and why encourages and finances study programmes that undermine its path to self-realisation and self-esteem. The present destruction and supported commercialisation of the state university must be stopped in order to raise the reputation of that institution of higher education.

Reform always means an achievable vision, loyal and educated reformers, persistence, consistency and decisive support by the state. There should be no delusions that Montenegro can build, in a short period of time, a modern educational system, because that is largely determined by the general development of the Montenegrin society. By opening up toward the modern world we can create possibilities to apply and adapt the best achievements in the educational systems of developed countries. Better use of international funds and institutions should enable young people to educate themselves in countries with a tradition of prominent universities and to engage eminent experts from abroad to come to Montenegro. The goal of educational reform must be to prepare young professionals for creative work at home and abroad and the capability to be competitive in the European job market.

## **6. Identity Challenges**

### **6.1. The Importance of Identity Issues**

Identity as a sum of biological, social, historical, geographical, ethical, cultural, intellectual and other features of a nation and state is a collective self – awareness that homogenises the community providing a foundation and security. It is the knowledge of specifics that sets us apart from others, usually what we think we are or would like to be. Identity is intertwined myth, history, present and plans for the future. With its substance it goes beyond, what we call, a product of known objective facts, it is alive and changeable; cannot be given forever. If we ignore and forget it, it is to our own detriment. It is the root, stronghold and shelter of common existence. In the modern world identity became synonymous with the resistance to global unification. Searching for and creating a national and cultural identity is a reflection of the spirit of the time and efforts to affirm the richness of the world and its cultures in a global unity.

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The basis for survival and progress of Montenegro is a clearly formulated identity, desired by and acceptable for the majority of population. Values that are embedded within the Montenegrin identity – the ideal of freedom, inviolability of justice, right to personal integrity and freedom to speak ones mind, striving toward a moral ideal, connoting human values to social position and financial situation, awareness of moral obligation and human duty, religious and ethnic tolerance, attitude towards defence of people, the states and ones own values, respect of foreigners and their sacred institutions, awareness about our own history and long

statehood tradition, closeness of the popular and literary language and its creative confirmation, rich cultural heritage and preservation of the remnants of previous civilisations, diversity of the folk culture, established common law that codified all core values of humanity, similarity of important national customs throughout the entire region, sense of mutual ethnic closeness, brotherhood and blood kinship – easily identifiable specificities derived from centuries old existence of the Montenegrin people and state in the struggle for freedom and human dignity.

There are few nations without traces of divisions in their identity left by history. The division of our people over the name of the nationality has its roots in centuries of living on the border, in isolation and a hostile environment, and in the natural tendency to exit this situation. A crack in the identity is particularly evident from the second half of 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the Serbian cause is programmatically encouraged from the outside and manifests itself by renouncing their “own” in favour of “higher” interests. This approach was planned in European centres of powers of the time and was related to their interest during the redistribution of influence in the Balkans after the fall of the Ottoman Empire. What contributed furthermore to the situation were personal ambitions and dynastic aspirations of the Montenegrin king, but also individuals on the side who ran cultural policy and institutions, and who programmatically incorporated Montenegrin specificities into the Serbian, Slavic, Orthodox, Yugoslav and international awareness. Montenegrin cosmopolitanism, openness to others, particularly to related societies, and a readiness to help others when they were in trouble, have often been used to

fuel foreign, mainly Serbian nationalism, what ultimately resulted in compromising, and often severe destruction of Montenegrin identity.

The identities of European nations were created based on small differences and the adoption of common values. The creators of the European integralism are clear that it can survive only with due respect of differences arising from the polycentric character of the European culture. European existence has become synonymous with what is diverse, multilingual and multi dimensional. Multicultural society is the European reality, and multiculturalism is a policy striving toward equal coexistence of those cultures and their fruitful relationship. Because of all of that, and not only historical commitment and opportunity for economic prosperity, Montenegro needs European integration. It ensures the preservation of its state, national and cultural identity.

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Every nation including Montenegro, needs to have its own vision rather than blindly adapting to what comes from outside. Revisions and revalorisations of heritage and the study of ones historical path as a vertical line in time is a continuing process: we need self-knowledge if we want to be the owners of our own past. With awareness of the values and the knowledge about ourselves we will avoid the small nation complex, create an equal relationship with others, and show achievements of our spirit in the context of cultural values of other nations. There is no need to fear for our European status if we are aware of our heritage. Ascend of Montenegrin culture on the European stage will affirm what was founded on humanism and humanity. That

would boost the creative, civic and religious freedoms and annul false representations, disinformation and forgeries upon which a distorted idea was created of us and of those that benefited from it. Confirmation of the vitality of a common identity and culture will be successful as it manages to protect itself from assimilation and to affirm the core values it is based on: freedom, humanity, justice, pursuit of truth, equality, and understanding the different. Not only to affirm it in front of others, but also, in this time of the extinction and vulnerability of humanity, to reaffirm it among their own people.

## **6.2. Montenegrin Language**

The Montenegrin language is the language of the Montenegrin people. It is a part of the Stokavian system that Montenegrins share as a common heritage with Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats. Each of these peoples has its own part in this system which shows its particular historic path, self-realisation and defines national being. Naming a language after its own name is determination, a message to self and others, defining its own foundation. It is a dividing line between self-respect and inferiority (colonial consciousness and consent to extinction). Interventions in the Montenegrin language were carried out in an organised manner based on imported Montenegrin Serbianism as an ideology, which began more than a century and a half ago by various foreigners through textbooks, educational, cultural and scientific programmes and contents. They influenced to a great extent the autochthonous Montenegrin spiritual heritage, so that it was transmitted and transformed within a foreign corpus. All of that led to

degradation, mutilation and disintegration of its body, to the absurd negation of its own nation, tradition, culture and language. During the period of Romanticism, the mother tongue of the Montenegrins entered into the basics of the language of Serbs, Croats, Bosniaks and Montenegrins. As centres of influence, mainly Belgrade and Zagreb, assumed dominance in politics and culture, they imposed, by agreements in Vienna in 1850 and in Novi Sad in 1954, the conventional name of the language to be Serbo-Croatian or Croatian-Serbian. The fact that Montenegro was the last to show political will and the awareness to name the official language by its own name is a remnant of a long presence of political delusions, acceptance of guardianship and assimilation, but also a reflection of the real strength of foreign interests incorporated in our society.

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Important and essential tasks in the field of language policy have been completed from the renewal of independence until today. It has been confirmed that the state is the best framework for the implementation of strategic interests of the nation, its culture and self-esteem. It is clear that the determination of identity depends foremost on the perception of ones own tradition and heritage. Matica will support further scientific research and valorisation of the Montenegrin language, its introduction into the educational system, public and state administration, courts, public media, cultural and scientific institutions. It will encourage and support the study of the Montenegrin language among emigrants and consolidation of the research with those in Montenegro. Using its intellectual resources and the branch network, Matica will support the essence of the language policy in Montenegro and confront

intentions to thwart the implementation of Montenegrin linguistic specificities.

Amending the Law on General Education in agreement with the opposition, the government disavowed all previous efforts for implementation of the standardised Montenegrin language. In the teaching process there will be no official language. The Montenegrin language has been unconstitutionally reduced to the level of one of the languages that are in official use.

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### **6.3. Montenegrin Church**

One of the foundations for understanding Montenegrin identity is the character and role of the Montenegrin Orthodox Church in the past and relationship of Montenegrins toward ideas of Christianity and religion. Understanding the classical Montenegro, the culture of humanity throughout its history and respect between people, regardless of religion and nation, placing a free man at the centre of history, have not been sufficiently promoted and explored. The Montenegrin Orthodox Church was one of the rare churches not to succumb to earthly benefits and desire to rule the people. As the Western Church had its own archbishopric in Duklja, so Constantinople supported some dioceses. The reality of coexistence of Eastern and Western churches on the territory of modern Montenegro has a long tradition that resulted in rarely recognized examples. The Serbian church organisation, with the ideology of St. Sava which, through a decision of the state, subjugated the Montenegrin Orthodox Church during the twenties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, was a tool of the invasive and

unitary Greater Serbia politics. In the socialist Montenegro, that issue was marginalised due to unwillingness of the government to face it. With the same intent and open help from the homeland, the Serbian Church operates today in independent Montenegro, takes away its property and openly undermines its institutions. Montenegro is a unique example among orthodox churches where a foreign church has a leading role in questions related to the faith and openly interferes with state affairs. Those actions are illegal as they are the last element of occupation from 1918.

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The state of Montenegro must legally return to the state ownership all church buildings, property and valuables which were appropriated by the Serbian Orthodox Church and enable the Montenegrin Orthodox Church to use them. A historical symbol of Montenegrin freedom, the Monastery of Cetinje, the seat of the state for centuries, must become a cultural-historical monument of the first category under the protection of the state and have an open door for all visitors, regardless of their religion or nationality.

## **IV. WHAT IS THE FUTURE WE LONG FOR**

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### **1. Legitimate State Community**

State policy must create conditions for a break with the historical legacy that undermines the Montenegrin state. Montenegro should be accepted by the overwhelming majority of its citizens as their only homeland whose overall progress would make their lives better and happier. The philosophy of a “spare state” and the repeatedly demonstrated willingness of Montenegrins to easily lose everything that their ancestors gained in the past and left to them must become an irrevocable past. Only a legitimate state simultaneously based on the Montenegrin national identity and a multiethnic cultural model, a community of free people, has chances to survive in the global world and to transform itself in the political society of limited state sovereignty in the European Union (this includes also an affiliation with the European identity and values on which European political, cultural and economic space is based).

The ruling government and cultural policy may only be successful if it relies on the idea of nation building, dedicated to the creation of a stable civil democracy, affirmation of the Montenegrin people, its tradition and a multiethnic Montenegro. The future of Montenegro lies in the creation of a liberal-democratic society, ready

to condemn the faults and award the virtues, in the building of a state, which will have a definite patriotic legitimacy. Such a state, no matter how small, will be a respected political actor in the community of European states. To the extent it manages to ensure a political cohesion in terms of understanding and formulation of the state and national interest, Montenegro will be a community that can endure as a subject in a globalised world.

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The ethics of the political class must be changed, which implies support to those that are ready to demonstrate, through their own example, that they are worthy of exercising a public function. Responsible, clever, and patriotic politicians, with immaculate property records and no involvement in criminal affairs, are prerequisites for the creation of a political system, which would not be an obstacle to a peaceful shift of power and development of a stable democracy. Montenegro must create sustainable and capable public institutions, establish the rule of law based on an independent and professional judiciary and make each public function challenging and responsible. A functional and capable state apparatus adequate for the economic power of Montenegro is a precondition for the overall social development. A responsible state must be based on the understanding of the cybernetic 21<sup>st</sup> century, of the global political, economic and cultural multipolarity, commitment to the community of knowledge and information efficiency.

## **2. Innovative society**

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Montenegro needs a strategically defined futuristic educational policy. Understanding of global processes, the weakening but not disappearance of small states, international integralistic processes with dynamic innovation development models at the core require an abandonment of anachronistic political views. New Montenegrin politics focused on the future involves changing the existing legislation, re-valuing the present institutional educational-scientific framework, redefining the management policy in the domain of scientific activities and permanently solve the problems of funding scientific research. Montenegro needs a state policy that will encourage competition in the market of knowledge and, at the same time, politics which will be based on the preservation and development of concepts of respectable public education and a long-term networking model of general interest, academic and professional resources and an innovative business sector.

Unlike a number of bad examples from the past, when the Montenegrin government was a hostage of retrograde and inferior political standpoints, it is possible to build the future of Montenegro by defining a state policy, which would involve a constant commitment to an accelerated development of research projects appropriate to real developmental needs. A clear, realistic, persistent, and stable development policy is a response to the temptations brought on by a future of the growing globalised world. In this sense, the state policy must be comparable with international standards, not only to avoid the provincial traps and harmful political demagoguery, but to truly

build the criteria for an educational policy, which is ready to measure its achievements by the international competitiveness of the Montenegrin state.

If we want a liberal-democratic society, and a free men in it, then we must strive to build a school system that will focus on the educational environment within which it is possible to encourage and develop creativity, truthfulness and critical discernment of students.

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An essential shift in the educational system and in society as a whole, will occur only when awareness of the humanistic character of every true education program is reaffirmed, and when it is understood that the perception of education only in the context of economy is wrong and short-sighted, and that it is an affirmation of a destructive point of view that man is only of value as a function of production. Without basic knowledge about the areas of spirit, virtue, good and duties of a man as a free being, an individual is separated from his essence and becomes an instrument of diverse interests and object of manipulations. Favouring materialism, technical standard, instinctual pleasures, offering bad examples as role models, have already led to a point where the values of mind and humanity are regarded with misunderstanding and contempt, which enables amorality to suppress humanity.

### **3. Sustainable development**

By investing in entrepreneurial awareness, development of work ethics and creation of a diversified economy strategically designed for the long term which would

be capable of coping with foreign competition and the inevitable economic crises, the Montenegrin economy could transform itself into a sustainable political and economic system. An economy based on the concept of sustainable development (development that meets the present needs without prejudicing the prospects of future generations and their needs, applying policies of protection and improvement of environment – a constitutional model of an ecological state), a comprehensive education system, continuous education of employees and practical scientific research projects, opens opportunities for social transformation and constant improvement of the quality of life. The long-term priority of the state policy must be the creation of conditions for optimal employment, preservation of key resources in state ownership, development of entrepreneurship, reduction of administration and optimal transportation connections within the national boundaries.

It is necessary to eliminate the dependency on the public sector, develop a business culture and promote diligence and work ethic. In Montenegro, it is necessary to develop a real economy, marginalise laziness and the smuggling mentality and reject the monopolistic and speculative economic pattern built around the predatory schemes of stock exchanges and corporate capitalism. Montenegro needs an “army” of hard working people that will create real economic values according to familiar rules, in the free and open market and protected by the rule of law.

Montenegrin economy, burdened by a dramatic foreign-trade deficit and internal debts, requires a radical

transformation. Diversification of industries (eco-tourism, investment in the maritime fleet, expansion of the sources of energy, strengthening of agriculture, intellectual work and information services, telecommunications, development of the transport and utility infrastructure, stimulating different types of production, etc.), state ownership of important national resources, continuous support to small and medium enterprises and development of entrepreneurial awareness – are conditions for creating a sustainable and profitable economy. State commitment to reduce budget users, to institute a well designed educational and scientific research system, to form an institutional framework for entrepreneurship, the development and competition on the free market and introduction of tax incentives, is the only way to implement a fair and legal economic system in Montenegro.

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#### **4. Social balance**

After the disintegration of Yugoslavia, Montenegrin society experienced a social collapse, so that today more than a half of its population is economically deprived or poor, middle class is downgraded to the level of a lower western class, the newly formed market business class and better paid workers are insufficient to fill the void created by the decline of the middle class, while a small number of “winners” during the transition period (so called tycoons, a part of the establishment and members of political class, privileged businessmen, ideological and political profiteers, higher level criminals), in an undeserved and illegal way, gained enormous wealth and significant real property. For these reasons, in the

obviously poor Montenegro, policies committed to socially balanced society becomes a priority national task. The status of Montenegro as a welfare state is based on solidarity as an important characteristic of the Montenegrin mentality and tradition.

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Regardless of the organisation of health services and insurance models, the country must strive toward implementation of an encompassing healthcare system for all citizens. Equality of opportunities can be achieved from equal starting positions, affirming the quality, which contributes to the constant renewal of vital forces of society and its functions.

That fact requires, instead of the façade of social democracy and present predatory capitalism, creation of political and trade union organisations willing to take over the responsibility for building a just state and the permanent elimination of poverty. The Montenegrin economy, besides undoubted improvement in the past several years (predominantly on account of foreign donations and investments in the sale of public and private resources) is badly structured and offers no real possibility to support public budgets and so become a mainstay of a solid standard of life and faster development of society. An economy based solely on tourism, an underdeveloped energy sector and agricultural economy, as well as on the ravaged remains of the socialist industry, can not be an economic foundation for social development, optimal employment and better life of citizens.

## **5. Preservation of Heritage**

Located at the cross roads of different civilisations, which over a long chronological period rotated through and bordered on its territory, today's Montenegro, as a multiethnic community of peoples, religions, languages and cultural traditions, inherits rich tangible and intangible heritage. The tangible heritage involves urban and rural areas, archaeological sites, sacral and secular cultural monuments, museum artefacts, books, films and archival funds. The intangible cultural heritage includes social traditions, customs and practices, aesthetic and spiritual beliefs, artistic expressions, language and oral creativity, performing arts (traditional music and dance), handicrafts and other types of human activities that are passed down through generations in this area.

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Attention should be focused on the management of heritage (cultural and natural). Montenegro is inexcusably late primarily in developing a common awareness about the cultural heritage perceived in the synergy with the landscape and its natural framework.

Adequate protection, valorisation, reconstruction and promotion of cultural heritage, ensures a sense of identity and continuity of certain social communities and promotes mutual respect for cultural diversity as an internationally recognized human right. Preserving traces of distinctiveness reduces the risk to be unnoticed in the global processes; it contributes to the equal development of the territory, improves economic activity related to tourism and fosters a multicultural society. To

this end, it is necessary to carry out the identification of the level of protection, valorisation, reconstruction and promotion of cultural heritage at the level of state, local communities, NGOs and private initiatives, constantly improving the area of legislation and the heritage documentation database, to create conditions for the application of development solutions.

It is imperative to prevent the ongoing devastation of cultural heritage, or more broadly speaking, the cultural landscape as a result of uncontrolled and inadequate urban and spatial planning in general. It is obvious that cultural heritage in the Montenegrin society is still perceived as obstacle to development rather than a resource. Thus, due to the inconsistency of the policies for protection of heritage and social-economic development strategies, there is a ruthless devastation of those layers of the heritage that are and are not “protected”, destruction of the Mediterranean landscape, distortion of typical urban and rural areas, masterpieces of vernacular building that have never been adequately documented, which would keep them from oblivion and in the memories of future generations.

To date, Montenegro has not shown the necessary, adequate and comprehensive care for its cultural heritage. Even today, we do not have schools with well designed scholarship programme for experts in this field, despite the predictions that the area for jobs in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, instead of production, will see increase exclusively in the area of services, ideas, information, culture, entertainment and tourism. In this area there is no scientific

research, it exists only in the sphere of personal enthusiasm, and it is hard to sustain it without an adequate university support.

## **6. Stable, tolerant and vital identity**

Small nations that managed to preserve their identity and create national states in difficult times, must constantly worry about their political and cultural survival and development in changed international conditions (dominance of the liberal democracy and global capitalism). Although they have chosen a multiparty democracy and civil political system, transitional state entities still consider the question of national self-determination politically relevant, which is obvious in their everyday political life.

The Montenegrin nation is slowly recovering from historical failures that brought it to the brink of extinction. In that regard, the opportunity to explicitly emphasise the nation-building, historical and libertarian role of Montenegrin people was missed with the first Constitution of independent Montenegro, apart from clear appreciation of the multiethnic character of the contemporary Montenegrin society. Therefore, an adequate constitutional naming of the Montenegrin people (nation), as a collective warranty for survival and development of Montenegro, should be the subject of the first revision of the Constitution. Montenegrins, as a historical state-building nation, should link their survival and development to the progress of civil democracy, strengthen a unique multiethnic and multi-religious society, and affirm cultural identity through the concept of society and building the state in the community of European nations.

Independent Montenegro suffers from an incomplete identity and absence of a cultural model that provides durability and vitality of its society. Matica urges all institutions – from schools, through media and Montenegrin emigrant organisations, to the Parliament, to commit to understanding and foundation of Montenegrin identity. For the future of Montenegro, it is of crucial importance to create an institutional framework which will relativise destructive appropriations and external impacts, especially with regards to Greater Serbia pretensions. This involves institutional application of the Montenegrin language, which has already begun, revalorisation of Montenegrin history and tradition on the basis of new knowledge, reaffirmation and economic sustainability of the Montenegrin Orthodox Church, consolidation and cultural self-awakening of the Montenegrin nation and a parallel development of multiethnic and multicultural society (protection of minorities' identity).

Matica Crnogorska emphasizes the commitment to building a secular state and society. Appreciating the principle of freedom of religion and separation of church and state, we advocate for the influence of religious community within a framework of a modern civil community and constitutional norms. Every attempt of church communities to undermine the secular state and society, spur conflicts on a religious basis, and demonstrate hostility toward the Montenegrin state, we consider as completely illegitimate and unconstitutional actions and provocations going beyond the scope of law.

Matica is committed to full freedom of creativity and expression of group and national specificities. Through

respect and improvement of traditionally good international relations, Montenegro should build a modern multicultural society. Montenegro has been exposed for many years to external influences of aggressive Balkan nationalism and internal xenophobic and chauvinistic outbursts inciting centrifugal forces that destroy Montenegrin state and spiritual unity. Because of that, Matica Crnogorska will confront every form of particularist nationalism, especially attempts of chauvinising Montenegrins as the majority of the people and their placement in a hostile attitude towards others.

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Identity politics must be particularly focused on the protection and valorisation of cultural heritage, constant investment in domestic artistic projects and artists, involvement of our culture in European networks and increasing criteria in valorisation of artistic achievements.

Matica Crnogorska believes that universalistic demands of respect for individual human and civil rights deriving from the spirit of liberal political philosophy should be harmonised with the need for a clear definition of the vital interest of the protection and promotion of Montenegrin national and cultural identity.

We see Montenegro as the home of all citizens and the people who live in it, a country that represents a shelter for them, where they feel the attention and solidarity of others, and a pride because they belong to a community of free people guided by principles of justice.

**The Programme of Matica crnogorska – MONTENEGRO ON ITS EUROPEAN PATH/** publisher: Matica crnogorska/  
for the Publisher: Marko Špadijer/ Editors: Rade Bojović and Novica Samardžić/ Translation: Milena Filipović/ Printing: Grafo Bale/  
Circulation: 1000