

Pursuant to Article 95, item 3 of the Constitution of Montenegro, I hereby pass the following

Decree
Promulgating the Law on Adult Education

I hereby promulgate **the Law on Adult Education**, adopted by the 28th convocation of the Parliament of Montenegro at the first session of the First regular (spring) sitting in 2025, on 19th May 2025.

No: 009/25-992/2-01
Podgorica, 20th May 2025

The President of Montenegro,
Jakov Milatović, m.p.

Pursuant to Article 82, paragraph 1, item 2, and Amendment IV, paragraph 1 of the Constitution of Montenegro, the Parliament of Montenegro, 28th convocation, at the first session of the First regular (spring) sitting in 2025, on 19th May 2025, passed the following

LAW ON ADULT EDUCATION

The Law was published in the "Official Gazette of Montenegro", No. 51/2025 of 27th May 2025, and entered into force on 4th June 2025.

I. BASIC PROVISIONS

Subject Matter

Article 1

This Law shall regulate the education and learning of adults who, by their own choice, participate in education, training, or learning to improve their knowledge, skills, and competences, or to acquire an appropriate qualification for a more successful life, work, and personal development.

Adults

Article 2

An adult, within the meaning of this Law, is a person over the age of 15 who meets the requirements for enrollment in an adult education programme.

Exceptionally, notwithstanding paragraph 1 of this Article, persons under the age of 15 who do not have the status of a student may also be enrolled in adult elementary education programmes.

Single Education System

Article 3

Adult education is part of Montenegro's single education system.

Objectives

Article 4

Adult education aims to:

1. ensure at least elementary education and the first qualification for all citizens;
2. raise the level of education and functional literacy of citizens;
3. provide retraining, additional training, qualification, and upskilling of both the unemployed and the employed for the labour market;
4. enable education and the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and competences aligned with an individual's personal abilities and age, through contemporary forms of education and learning;
5. ensure continuous professional development;
6. include the most vulnerable population groups through various forms of education and learning to support their integration;
7. invest in human resources development;
8. promote the significance of lifelong learning;
9. raise the level of knowledge, skills, and competences in the areas of civic democracy and environmental protection.

Principles

Article 5

Adult education is based on the following principles:

- 1) lifelong learning;
- 2) accessibility and freedom of choice in education under equal conditions for all citizens in compliance with their possibilities and needs;
- 3) the interconnection between work and education;
- 4) equal value of educational standards in both formal and non-formal education;
- 5) quality assurance and quality improvement;
- 6) acknowledging specific qualities of adults in the education and learning process;
- 7) acknowledging andragogical science and profession, and the application of modern technologies;
- 8) transparency.

Equality

Article 6

Adults shall not be directly or indirectly restricted in accessing education on the grounds of: sex, race, marital status, skin colour, language, religion, political or other beliefs, national, ethnic or other origin, affiliation with a national community, property status, disability, or any other similar ground, status, or circumstance.

Use of Gender-Sensitive Language

Article 7

All masculine-gender terms used in this Law to refer to natural persons shall be understood to include the feminine gender.

Definition of Terms

Article 8

The terms used in this Law shall have the following meanings:

1. **Lifelong learning** refers to learning throughout an individual's entire life, aimed at acquiring and improving knowledge, skills, and competences across all areas of life, including personal, civic, and societal levels, for the purpose of employability;
2. **Key competences** are the combination of knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed for personal fulfillment, a healthy and sustainable lifestyle, employability, active citizenship, and social inclusion. (These include: literacy competence, multilingual competence, mathematical competence, and competence in science, technology, and engineering, digital competence, interpersonal, social, and learning-to-learn competence, active citizenship, entrepreneurial competence, cultural awareness, and expression;
3. **National vocational qualification** is a qualification acquired in accordance with a specific law;
4. **Micro-qualification** means the acquired knowledge, skills, and competences that a learner gains based on one or more learning outcomes by this Law, and which is recognised in the process of obtaining a vocational qualification;
5. **Initial qualification** refers to education and training for entering the labour market after completing compulsory elementary education;
6. **Specialisation** represents education or training within the same occupation aimed at acquiring specific expert knowledge and advanced vocational skills;
7. **Professional development of the employees** implies various forms of education and workplace learning for employees, including the development of key competences, to enhance job performance;
8. **Andragogical qualification of the staff delivering education programmes** signifies didactic and methodological training for working with adult learners, acquired through a specialised programme.

II. TYPES AND PROGRAMMES OF EDUCATION

Types of Education and Learning

Article 9

Adult education shall be conducted through the following types:

- 1) formal education;
- 2) non-formal education;
- 3) informal learning;
- 4) self-directed learning.

Formal Education

Article 10

Formal education is an organised process of education conducted according to a publicly recognised educational programme or a part of that programme (module, learning unit and similar), based on which a level of education is acquired, i.e. one or several professional qualifications, in compliance with this Law and laws regulating those areas of education.

Non-Formal education

Article 11

Non-formal education is an organised and structured process of acquiring knowledge, skills, and competences necessary for life and work, aimed at enhancing personal and professional abilities.

Informal Learning

Article 12

Informal learning is the process of acquiring knowledge, skills, and competences through everyday experiences and other educational influences, occurring without specific intent or an organised objective.

Self-Directed Learning

Article 13

Self-directed learning represents a higher level of self-development, based on an individual's ability and skills to independently organise the learning process outside institutional frameworks and without assistance from others.

Adaptation of Educational Programmes

Article 14

Publicly recognised educational programmes for elementary, general secondary, and vocational education shall be adapted for adults in terms of volume, organisation, and duration, in accordance with the law.

Programmes of Non-Formal Education

Article 15

Non-formal education shall be acquired through adult education programmes (hereinafter: education programmes).

Education programmes shall include programmes for acquiring:

- 1) National vocational qualifications;

- 2) Micro-qualifications;
- 3) Knowledge and skills for professional development, specialisation, and performing specific work tasks in the workplace (workplace learning);
- 4) Other qualifications;
- 5) Key competences;
- 6) Knowledge and skills for personal and social development: civic democracy, environmental protection, sustainable development, family life, successful social integration, improving quality of life, health education, social skills, third age (senior learning), working with persons with special needs, and similar.

The education programmes referred to in paragraph 2, points 1, 2, and 5 of this Article shall be adopted by the competent council.

The education programmes referred to in paragraph 2, points 3 and 6 of this Article shall be adopted by the entities implementing the programmes.

The education programme referred to in paragraph 2, point 4 of this Article shall be adopted in accordance with special regulations.

Prior to determining the proposals of education programmes under paragraph 2, points 1, 2, and 5 of this Article, the Centre for Vocational Education (hereinafter: the Centre) shall obtain the opinions of the competent state administration authorities, the Employment Agency of Montenegro (hereinafter: the Employment Agency), the Chamber of Economy of Montenegro, and representative employers' associations and representative trade union organisations (hereinafter: the associations).

Content of Education Programmes

Article 16

The education programme referred to in Article 15, paragraph 2, points 1, 2, and 5 of this Law shall include: title, objectives, enrollment requirements, duration, learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, and competences), progression and completion requirements, assessment methods, facilities, an indicative list of equipment and teaching materials required for its implementation, programme providers, links with other qualifications, career opportunities, and other relevant elements.

The development of education programmes under paragraph 1 of this Article shall be carried out in accordance with the guidelines (methodology) issued by the National Education Council, upon the proposal of the Centre.

Pilot Programme

Article 17

Prior to the adoption of an education programme, and for the purpose of introducing organisational changes at an employer, implementing modern technologies, etc., pilot programmes with clearly defined learning outcomes may be implemented.

The pilot programme shall be implemented by a legal entity.

Upon completion of the pilot programme, the pilot programme provider shall issue a certificate of attendance.

The implementation of the pilot programme shall be monitored by the Centre.

The legal entity referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article shall be designated by the state administration authority responsible for education (hereinafter: the Ministry), upon the proposal of the Centre.

Practical Training Implementation

Article 18

Education programmes involving practical training may be conducted either at an employer's premises or with another education provider.

When practical training is conducted at facilities not belonging to the education provider, the mutual rights and obligations between the education provider and the employer hosting the practical training shall be regulated by a contract, and the mutual rights of the learners and the employer shall be governed by a practical training agreement.

Workplace Training

Article 19

An employer may organise various forms of employee training and professional development to adapt to market demands, changes, and new technological or work processes.

In the cases referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, the employer shall issue a certificate to the employee upon completion of the training and professional development.

Certification issued by Education Providers

Article 20

Upon completion of an education programme, the education provider shall issue the learner a certificate of attendance for the programme or part of the programme.

Announcement of Education Programmes

Article 21

The education provider shall publicly announce education programmes through appropriate channels (publications, website, etc.).

Staff Delivering the Education Programmes

Article 22

Adult education shall be delivered by teachers, teaching associates, vocational training instructors, lecturers, programme leaders, and other qualified staff (hereinafter: providers), in accordance with the law governing the relevant field of education, the educational programme, or the adult education programme.

Instructors and trainers engaged by licensed education organisations must hold andragogical qualifications as stipulated by this Law.

Andragogical Training Article 23

Andragogical training shall be acquired upon completion of an andragogical training programme, which shall be adopted by the competent council upon the proposal of the Centre.

The Centre shall organise andragogical training upon request by candidates.

Upon completion of the training, the Centre shall issue the candidate a certificate of andragogical qualification.

As an exception to paragraph 3 of this Article, the Centre shall issue a certificate of andragogical qualification to persons elected to academic positions at higher education institutions, upon their request.

The method of conducting andragogical training, as well as the form and content of the certificate referred to in paragraph 3 of this Article, shall be prescribed by the Ministry.

III. LEARNERS Status of Learners Article 24

A learner shall be enrolled in an education programme under the conditions and procedures prescribed by the programme itself and relevant regulations.

An adult enrolled in a programme under paragraph 1 of this Article shall acquire the status of a learner.

Adults with special educational needs (including those with learning difficulties or other challenges caused by emotional, social, language, or cultural barriers; persons with disabilities; immigrants; etc.) shall be included in the education programme that are adapted in terms of conditions, content, and delivery methods, in accordance with this Law and special regulations.

Public Announcement Article 25

An adult education provider shall be obliged to publicly announce a notice containing:

- 1) the name and type of the education programme;
- 2) the requirements for enrollment in the education programme;
- 3) the number of learners;

- 4) the method of programme delivery, its duration, and the conditions for its completion;
- 5) the amount of tuition fee per learner and the funding source;
- 6) the location where the programme will be delivered.

Enrollment of learners shall be carried out based on the notice referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article.

Rights of Learners

Article 26

A learner is entitled to professional and high-quality education and training, delivered in accordance with the approved education programme and relevant laws.

The mutual rights and obligations of the education provider and the learner shall be defined by contract.

An employed learner is entitled to educational leave of up to seven days or reduced working hours, or adjusted work schedules, depending on the complexity and duration of the education programme, in compliance with labour laws and employer policies.

The mutual rights and obligations between the employed learner and the employer shall be regulated by contract (including location of education, duration of education, compensation, and other relevant terms).

Specific Aspects of Organising Adult Education

Article 27

The organisation of instruction for certain courses or fields, progress and manner of assessment of knowledge, skills, and competences shall be adapted to the specific characteristics and needs, and learners' abilities in accordance with andragogical principles, the education programme, and this Law.

IV. ADULT EDUCATION PROVIDERS

Education Provider

Article 28

Adult education providers may include: schools, specialised adult education organisations, driving schools, residential care institutions for persons with special educational needs, and other legal entities holding a valid operating licence in accordance with the law.

The education provider must notify the Centre about the education programme implementation plan and schedule no later than three days prior to commencement.

Assessment and Validation of Knowledge

Article 29

Adults may, for the purpose of acquiring a national vocational qualification or its part, key competences, or micro-qualifications, have their knowledge, skills, and

competences assessed, validated, or certified, regardless of how they were acquired, in accordance with special regulations governing national vocational qualifications.

Upon request by a learner, the education provider may conduct an internal assessment of their knowledge, skills, and competences, after which they shall issue a certificate.

The certificate referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article shall not constitute a public document.

Publicly Recognised Adult Education **Article 30**

Publicly recognised adult education refers to education acquired through adapted publicly approved curricula of elementary and secondary education (or their components), or education programmes for obtaining national vocational qualifications (or partial qualifications), key competences, or micro-qualifications.

Education completed under paragraph 1 of this Article shall constitute formally recognised education and be certified by an official public document, in accordance with special regulations.

Andragogical Records and Documentation **Article 31**

Adult education providers shall maintain andragogical records and documentation, including enrollment records (master register), records of learners, education programme documentation, certificates and official documents, activity logs, and other relevant documentation.

The content, maintenance procedures, and storage requirements for the andragogical records and documentation specified in paragraph 1 shall be prescribed by the Ministry.

V. ADULT EDUCATION PLAN **Education Plan** **Article 32**

Public interest in adult education shall be established through a four-year adult education plan (hereinafter: the Education Plan).

The Education Plan shall be adopted by the Government of Montenegro, based on a proposal from the Ministry.

In preparing the Education Plan, the Ministry shall obtain opinions from the Employment Agency, the Chamber of Economy of Montenegro, relevant professional associations, competent local self-government authorities, and interested state administration bodies.

The Government of Montenegro shall approve a progress report on implemented activities from the Education Plan, based on a Ministry proposal.

Content of the Education Plan

Article 33

The Education Plan shall:

- 1) establish priority areas for adult education;
- 2) define infrastructure activities required for delivering adult education;
- 3) outline the estimated budget required for its implementation and specify the responsible state authorities for executing the Plan;
- 4) determine education programmes and their implementation timeline.

Report on Implemented Activities by Local Self-Government Units

Article 34

To adopt and monitor the implementation of the Education Plan, local self-government units shall submit their planned educational activities for the following year and a report on implemented activities for the ongoing year to the Centre by December 31 of the current year.

Annual Adult Education Plan

Article 35

Based on the Education Plan, the Ministry shall adopt an annual adult education plan specifying activities, responsible parties, and required resources for implementation, upon proposal by the Centre.

The annual plan under paragraph 1 of this Article, along with the implementation report of the previous year's annual plan, shall be passed up to 31 January for the ongoing year.

Implementation of the Education Plan

Article 36

In implementing the Education Plan, the competent state administration authority shall:

- 1) publish calls for proposals for relevant education programmes;
- 2) monitor programme implementation and take necessary measures to ensure their implementation;
- 3) allocate funding for education programmes and supporting infrastructure activities;
- 4) perform other tasks specified in the Education Plan.

Based on the published call, the competent state administration authority shall issue a decision on the selection of education providers.

Pursuant to the decision under paragraph 2, a contract shall be concluded specifying the mutual rights and obligations between the state administration authority and the education provider.

Costs of Education

Article 37

Adults shall not bear education costs for elementary education programmes.

Adults shall not share financial responsibility for education programmes funded from public revenues when such programmes are included in the annual education plan, including initial qualification training, retraining programmes, upgrading qualifications, specialisation programmes, professional development courses, or key competences acquisition programmes.

Content of the Contract

Article 38

The provisions of the law regulating educational activities under concession agreements shall apply accordingly to the content of contracts referred to in Article 36, paragraph 3 of this Law, the monitoring of contractual obligations fulfillment, and the rights of learners.

Role of the Chamber of Economy of Montenegro and Professional Associations

Article 39

The Chamber of Economy of Montenegro and relevant professional associations shall:

- 1) organise various forms of employee training and professional development (consultations, conferences, trade fairs, etc.);
- 2) propose work-based education programmes for employee upskilling and specialisation;
- 3) recommend priority areas for qualification development;
- 4) nominate members for occupational standard development working groups;
- 5) provide expert opinions to the competent council on adult training and qualification programmes;
- 6) recommend employers who meet the requirements for delivering the practical component of education programmes, and supervising workplace training after programme completion;
- 7) maintain a register of employers authorised for practical training;
- 8) provide relevant data on employers qualified to host practical training upon request by the competent state authority or the Centre.

VI. SUPERVISION
Supervision over the Implementation of the Law
Article 40

The Ministry shall supervise the implementation of this Law.

VII. PENAL PROVISIONS
Penalties for Violations
Article 41

A legal entity - an education provider shall be fined between 500 and 20,000 euros for the following violations:

- 1) providing non-formal education not in accordance with approved adult education programmes (Article 15);
- 2) employing unqualified personnel (teachers, instructors, lecturers, or other professionals) to deliver adult education programmes contrary to relevant laws and approved educational programmes (Article 22, paragraph 1);
- 3) failing to ensure education implementers engaged by licensed providers possess andragogical qualifications as required by this Law (Article 22, paragraph 2);
- 4) not establishing mutual rights and obligations with learners through a formal contract (Article 26, paragraph 2);
- 5) operating as a school, specialised adult education organisation, driving school, residential care institution for persons with special educational needs, or other legal entity providing education services without a valid licence as required by law (Article 28, paragraph 1);
- 6) failing to maintain andragogical records and documentation in the manner prescribed by Article 31 of this Law;
- 7) charging adults for education costs related to acquiring elementary education (Article 37, paragraph 1);
- 8) requiring adults to share in education costs for programmes financed from public revenues (including initial qualification training, retraining programmes, qualification upgrading, specialisation programmes, professional development courses, or key competences acquisition programmes) that are included in the annual education plan (Article 37, paragraph 2).

For the violations under paragraph 1 of this Article, the person responsible within the legal entity - education provider shall also be fined an amount between 300 and 2,000 euros.

VIII. TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS
Adoption of Secondary Legislation
Article 42

Secondary legislation for the implementation of this Law shall be harmonised with this Law within six months of its entry into force.

Until the adoption of regulations under paragraph 1 of this Article, the regulations in force before this Law enters into force shall apply, provided they are not in conflict with this Law.

Harmonisation Article 43

Education providers shall align their organisation, operations, and general acts with this Law within one year of its entry into force.

Until the adoption of general acts under paragraph 1 of this Article, existing acts shall remain applicable provided they do not conflict with this Law.

Repeal of Existing Legislation Article 44

Upon the entry into force of this Law, the Adult Education Law ("Official Gazette of Montenegro", No. 20/11 and 47/17) shall cease to be valid.

Entry into Force Article 45

This Law shall enter into force on the eighth day following its publication in the "Official Gazette of Montenegro".

Reference No.: 26-1/25-14/4

EPA - Registered Parliamentary Act: No.: 482 XXVIII

Podgorica, 19th May 2025

The Parliament of Montenegro 28th Convocation

President of the Parliament,
Andrija Mandić, m.p.