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## NOTICE TO MEDIA

After nearly four years since the adoption of the Law on Free Access to Information, the Montenegrin state institutions continue to invest significant effort in obstructing law enforcement, then in providing information about their work. Although progress is evident in relation to the beginning of the implementation, institutions are still reluctant to provide information that may indicate the existence of corruption or other violations of the law.

In the past four years, only MANS submitted over 21,000 requests for information to most of the state institutions of which every fourth request encountered silence of administration and the unwillingness of institutions to provide the requested information. Other problems in access to information held by government bodies such as the cost of access, manner of insight into information and disregard of legal terms and court decisions in this area, and still are the most common excuses used to not to provide required information.

State institutions that are still leading inadequate implementation of the Law are primarily Police Directorate, Ministry of Finance and the former Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Welfare which submitted most of the information only after the complaints and claims before the court. After them, the institutions also rarely correspond to the requirements for information as the Privatization Council and the Ministry of Education and Science.

On the other hand, institutions that had been most responsive in respect of the right to free access to information are Directorate for Anti-Corruption Initiative, Employment Biro, the Supreme Court and the Commission for conflict of interest, and the Parliament of Montenegro, but only after changing the Secretary General of this institutions.

However, the absence of political remain the greatest obstacle for adequate and full implementation of the Law, bearing in mind that free access to information is globally recognized as one of the most effective mechanisms for combating corruption.

Although the adoption of the law should mark an increase transparency of state institutions, so far very little has been done in Montenegro to change the practice of key decisions being reached far from the public eye, while the application of the law itself is still largely conditioned by perception of the majority of high level state officials that they do not need to response to citizens whose tax is financing their work.

International Freedom of Information Day that is celebrated around the world, MANS will mark through a series of public performances in 11 Montenegrin municipalities, during which MANS will inform citizens about importance of law and explain how to use the rights it guarantees.

During the performance of MANS will enable citizens to directly submit a request for information to the authorities of their municipalities. Performances will be organized in Podgorica, Cetinje, Danilovgrad, Niksic, Kolasin, Mojkovac, Bijelo Polje, Berane, Kotor, Herceg Novi and Bar.

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Free Access to Information