



Montenegro  
Statistical Office

**PRESS RELEASE**  
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## **Eurostat Director-General Visits Montenegro**

On 11 and 12 November 2024, the Director of the Statistical Office, Mr. Miroslav Pejovic, had the honor of hosting the Director-General of Eurostat, Mrs. Mariana Kotzeva, accompanied by her colleague, Mr. Lukasz Augustyniak. The meetings that the Eurostat officials participated in during their visit to Podgorica were also attended by the EU Ambassador to Montenegro, Mr. Johann Sattler.

This was the first visit of Eurostat's Director-General to Montenegro, and it aimed to support and encourage further work on closing Chapter 18: Statistics.

During her two-day visit, Director-General Kotzeva held working meetings with the management of Monstat, led by Director Pejovic. She congratulated Director Pejovic and his team for the successful implementation of the Population Census, emphasizing that this demonstrated the high level of professionalism and quality of the Statistical Office's work. The key challenge identified for the future was the need for the regular production of government finance statistics, which the Statistical Office, the Ministry of Finance, and the Central Bank of Montenegro must prioritize in order to achieve further progress in closing Chapter 18: Statistics.

During Director-General Kotzeva's meeting with the Prime Minister of Montenegro, Mr. Milojko Spajic, the Prime Minister noted the Statistical Office's contribution to the work on Montenegro's future alignment with the EU acquis. Specific plans for formalizing the further steps required to fulfill the closing benchmarks for Chapter 18: Statistics were discussed.

Director-General Kotzeva also met with the Minister of Finance, Mr. Novica Vukovic, and they emphasised the importance of further and stronger cooperation in the production of public finance statistics. Minister Vukovic affirmed his ministry's full commitment to maintaining the independence and non-political affiliation of the Statistical Office, and to providing institutional support for positioning the Statistical Office as the coordinator of the national statistical system.

Given the importance of official statistics for the European integration process, a meeting was held with the Minister of European Affairs, Mrs. Maida Gorcevic, and the Chief Negotiator, Mr. Predrag Zenovic, where it was noted that continued support and cooperation are required to accelerate work on meeting the criteria for closing Chapter 18: Statistics. In order to fulfill these obligations, the need for a significant increase in the number of Monstat staff, a permanent solution for providing adequate office space for the Statistical Office, and contributions from all of the institutions forming Montenegro's statistical system, were highlighted.

Director-General Kotzeva also visited the Central Bank of Montenegro and, in a conversation with Governor Mrs. Irena Radovic, emphasized the importance of that institution's participation in fulfilling the closing benchmarks of Chapter 18: Statistics.

Expressing satisfaction with her visit to Montenegro and its institutions, Director-General Kotzeva confirmed Eurostat's readiness to provide strong support to Montenegro and Monstat in meeting the remaining obligations in the accession process.

During her visit to Montenegro, Director-General Kotzeva spoke at the University Day of the University of Donja Gorica. In her address, she underscored the importance of education and statistical literacy, expressing her pleasure that Montenegro, through the University of Donja Gorica, has a program in the European Masters in Official Statistics that is supported by Eurostat. Director-General Kotzeva also presented the diplomas to the best students of the university.

At the University of Montenegro's Faculty of Economics, Director-General Kotzeva delivered a lecture on the topic "The Role of Trustworthy Information in a Society Driven by Technology and Marked by Disinformation". More than 150 students, distinguished professors, and intellectuals, together with employees of the Statistical Office, attended the lecture.

Director Pejovic expressed his gratitude for the visit and the support provided by Eurostat, seeing these as a strong impetus for further cooperation among the institutions in Montenegro, and he underlined Monstat's dedication to strengthening its leadership role as the coordinator of Montenegro's statistical system.

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