PROGRAM OF PRIORITIES
Democratic Party of Socialists of Montenegro

June 2015
The commitment to the interests of citizens and the state, as well as a realistic perception of developments in the society, have allowed our party to provide the right answers to historical challenges that we faced in recent decades. Contribution to the preservation of peace and the strengthening of multi-ethnic harmony and tolerance in times of war in our region – is the historical legacy of DPS. The leading role in the peaceful reconstruction of the country 88 years after its violent abolition, is the greatest and most lasting political achievement of our party.

DPS has been given a historical role to bear the burden of responsibility for the construction of a new social system and the new values, in a renovated independent state; to find a formula for suppression of historical deception, the inherited and new divisions; to overcome poverty and backwardness, for richer and freer life that relies on its own human, economic and natural resources; to contribute to the restoration of confidence, and personal, civil and national dignity.

On the basis of such modern political architecture at the beginning of the 21st century, it is possible to provide a geographically and population-wise small Balkan country, such as Montenegro, with a safer place in the new regional, European and global trends.
Building its profile on the principles of the modern European left, with full respect for Montenegrin specifics and traditional values, as well as the state policy experience of modern small states, DPS has a responsibility to continuously contribute to the creation of a political and overall social climate conducive to strengthening entrepreneurial mentality and business; accelerating economic growth and creating new goods; building effective state institutions and democratic civil society worthy of modern European civilization.

DPS must reaffirm its strength by uncompromising commitment to strict compliance with the constitutional principles of separation of powers in order to neutralize the voluntarism and abuse that lead to systematic deviations and threaten the collapse of state institutions and jeopardizing national interests. The legislative, executive and judicial authorities are to work on the principles of balance, recognition, competence and mutual control and coordination, not on taking over each other’s jurisdiction.

Special obligation of our Party is to promote the program commitments, without imposing formal party obligations to individuals and community groups, ready to work on these values to contribute to the construction and development of the modern state of Montenegro. Our party organs at all levels of leadership and membership must find an adequate response to the social problems
generated by social inequality in Montenegrin society. At the same time, care should be taken not to jeopardize the environment for the development of business and entrepreneurship in accordance with market principles of economic development. The policy success in Montenegrin conditions will be measured by the subtle art of harmonizing competitive mechanisms to encourage growth that is needed to overcome centuries of backwardness in economic development, with sufficiently sensitive mechanisms of a socially responsible state. In an integrated society that we seek, we must have competitive products, services and growth rates that will guarantee more intensive levels of economic development, but also the responsibility that we always have to carefully cultivate a sense of social equality in society.

It is linked to our aspirations to build a society that provides equal opportunities for all citizens and the dignity and quality of life of our people, a society with developed market economy, which has a solidarity legacy and strives for equitable distribution of resources for the benefit of all.

We believe in the power of politics to change and improve society. That is why we want to carry on the building of an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable society in which we will create the institutional conditions for faster economic growth that is sustainable and that is not at the expense of future generations.
In achieving these goals, DPS is ready to responsibly cooperate with all political entities in Montenegro who sincerely strive for these values. On the basis of the electoral will of the citizens, as well as their approval of key policy commitments, we are ready to expand the coalition capacity of our party and share responsibility for the management of the processes of social development of Montenegro.

This requires realistic policies and the policies that involve prospects that will make Montenegro even better country to live in. In that way we will save our largest potential and the most precious pledge for the future - the young generation, which will see an opportunity and a clear prospect for the high quality life for themselves in their own country, and because of that:

1) WE WANT MONTENEGRO IN THE EU AND THE NATO

EU membership is a key goal of national policy. The negotiation process remains the main driver of reforms and improvement of standards of the citizens of Montenegro. It is a policy that sets the pace of internal reforms in Montenegro, bearing in mind that the EU's enlargement strategy is now additionally focused on the rule of law, economic governance and public administration reform. Membership in the EU is the framework for the realization
of deep and comprehensive reforms in order to overcome the historical, economic and democratic backwardness of society. The negotiating process itself contributes to a better life for citizens. Hardly a day goes by in Montenegro without an activity that is devoted to the further harmonization with the European system of values, at the legislative level, in the field of standardization, towards the increasing accessibility of EU funds or related to the concrete and practical results of all these processes.

Aware of the weight and volume of these operations, as well as the fact that they take place at several levels and concern all sectors of society, in the period of coming closer to the membership in the coming years, the focus will constantly be on the quality of compliance. It means on the responsibility – as a new quality of contemporary Montenegrin society. Therefore, Montenegro is not chasing deadlines; it does not attempt to implement reforms via shortcuts or to only superficially touch the European standards. Integration into the EU is primarily a mechanism to improve the lives of all our citizens. We believe that in the next four years we will be able to complete the negotiations and sign the accession treaty to the European Union. Especially because there is majority support for European integration in our society. Not burdened by its party superiority, DPS is ready to capitalize on this fact in order to facilitate overcoming the political divisions in Montenegro. European integration can be an important stimulus for the internal integration of the Montenegrin society.
By joining the EU Montenegro will not only build new values and become part of a broader community on the European continent – membership also means the confirmation of statehood of our country. Taking a place at the table presently occupied by 28 member states will mean that Montenegro has completed the restoration of its statehood and sovereignty. The fact that we will be accepted as an equal member of that community can only mean that we have achieved historic goals that were aspired to by many generations in Montenegro.

DPS will, as they were since the establishment of a political dialogue with the EU, and throughout increasingly demanding stages of the integration process, be a driving force in fulfilling the obligations in all negotiating chapters. The activities of DPS will focus on: constant improvement of life for citizens, strengthening of the cohesion of Montenegrin society and long-term positioning of Montenegro as an equal member of the Union.

We strongly believe in what we do and we are ready to continue to bear a key responsibility because Montenegro is currently undergoing the most intensive period of reform in the life of a country, which has to prepare it for future tasks, challenges and obligations of the EU membership. We are aware that we have no right to mistakes, because we are creating a community that will be within the European Union to cultivate the sovereignty and statehood of our country, the identity of
which will be equal to the identities of the other member states and which will, from the date of membership, will be exposed to excellent opportunities. That is Montenegro in which we want to live and we want to leave to future generations. Advanced, legally secure, connected to the rest of Europe, in every respect. At the same time proud of its past, valuing its authenticity, its tangible and intangible cultural wealth. That is Montenegro, which will be able to retain and educate future generations that will be a firm guarantee of its permanent and certain European future.

Montenegro’s membership in NATO is a strategic goal of the state policy that contributes to the stability and security of the country and the preservation of its integrity and sovereignty. That is a prerequisite for the achievement of other strategic objectives: the society with the rule of law, democracy and developed economy. Democratic institutions, the rule of law, market economy and stability are necessary preconditions for any country that wishes to become a member of NATO.

Through the party structures, the public should be given clearer explanations that joining NATO Montenegro will get the best framework for the prevention of potential security threats, challenges and risks; for the strengthening of its defence capabilities and the creation of a strong and long-term security system. Stable political and social system, which is part of the European and wider integration, represents a favourable
environment for business, as well as a guarantee for attracting foreign investment and accelerating the economic growth. Membership in the Alliance provides the possibility of equal participation in decision-making, which in geopolitical terms raises the importance of small countries, such as Montenegro.

NATO membership entails implementing a series of reforms in some very important areas, ranging from the strengthening of institutions, the judiciary, mechanisms for the rule of law to the reforms in the field of defence and security. DPS, as the leading party, has a special responsibility to encourage its members and the whole society to fulfil the obligations on the clearly marked road for Montenegro, based on the decisions of the NATO Summit in the United States and Wales.

With the opening of intensified and focused talks with Montenegro, began a process that has a defined schedule, the time frame, the tasks and the defined goal. Members have committed to assess the progress of Montenegro before the end of 2015 and decide on sending an invitation for membership, which would be the first instance in the history of NATO to do it between two regular summits. One of the key tasks is also to strengthen the public support for our strategic objective, in which the bodies and the leadership of the Party at all levels have a special role and responsibility. First of all, within our party membership, but also within our society at large.
Montenegro’s entry into NATO is imperative and it will be a measure of the success of our policy. By the end of 2015, we must be engaged in the implementation of the remaining tasks in the four areas in order to meet the criteria to receive an invitation for membership. These are: the rule of law, reform of the security sector, public support, and the reform of the defence system. All available resources must be engaged to that end and coordination of activities of the competent state institutions must be strengthened.

As a member, Montenegro would continue to be dedicated to the adoption and promotion of the values and principles of the Alliance and fulfilment of the obligations stemming from such status.

2) WE WANT MONTENEGRO – AS THE COUNTRY WITH STRONG IDENTITY

DPS considers it a priority at this stage of development of Montenegro to devote its future efforts to strengthening further the identity of the state. Just as we have until 2006 pursued a policy directed towards the restoration of independence, so now, responding to the current circumstances and requirements, we need to create a policy which will contribute to strengthening the identity of the restored state.
Montenegrin state should be the framework for all political, national, religious and other specific features. This national framework needs to have a positive impact on the development and progress of the Montenegrin society, and contribute to the harmonization of its diversities, political, religious, national and cultural. While appreciating all the differences and respecting the right to a different opinion and affiliation, DPS would like the wellbeing for the Montenegrin state to be above all our differences. Montenegro is our country and it belongs to all who live in it and who see it as their own, regardless of their political, national, religious or other affiliation.

The feeling of belonging to the state of Montenegro should be an important part of our identity, because the state is the common heritage and common good of all citizens. Therefore, the main feature of identity policy of DPS should be underlining the identity of the state of Montenegro.

Despite centuries of struggle for freedom, insufficiently strong constituent awareness has resulted in the disappearance of the Montenegrin state. Constant exposure to the policy of disputing and abolishing led to a threat to national, religious and cultural identity. Our commitment to the integration process contributes to the strengthening of the European identity of Montenegro.
National identity as a priority would not mean weakening or suppressing any national identity. On the contrary, it would mean the strengthening of all national identities that identify themselves with the Montenegrin state and its tradition. We believe that such a commitment is the most rational solution for societies, like ours, which is characterized by diversity with respect to identity and by deep political division. Positive attitude towards Montenegrin statehood is for the most of those identities the least disputable factor, which interconnects them.

Having the state identity as dominant in a multinational society reduces to a minimum the risk of domination of sizeable national identity and assimilation of a smaller by a larger one. All this contributes to the harmonization of relations between identities and a growing affection for a country that is a guarantor of such harmony, which places the interest of the state above anyone’s individual interest.

The circumstances and the time after the restoration of an independent state, in 2006, imposed on us the obligation to develop our state as a harmonious and sustainable community, and to fully build and strengthen its identity features and content. It is therefore one of the key policy orientations of DPS to work on strengthening the identity of our country in the coming period.

As a leading political factor in Montenegro, and thus the most responsible for its present and its future, DPS
will, in order to strengthen the identity of our country, work primarily on:

- promoting and preserving the national heritage of Montenegro, paying particular attention to the historical tradition that strengthens people's awareness of Montenegrin statehood;
- promoting and preserving contemporary features of identity of the state of Montenegro;
- strengthening citizens' confidence in state institutions, encouraging their responsibility and professionalism in the conduct of public affairs;
- raising awareness of the importance of the state for a stable, peaceful and prosperous life for all citizens;
- affirming cultural heritage and cultural creativity as an important identity element;
- affirming the independent Montenegrin state as the guarantor of civil, national and religious rights and freedoms, that is, as the guarantor of the traditional multi-ethnic and multi-religious harmony in Montenegro.
- In order to overcome divisions in Montenegrin society, while respecting the
highest international standards, DPS remains dedicated to the position that divisions among Orthodox believers can be overcome by taking into account historical facts and contemporary strategic national objectives, through a unique and organisationally independent Orthodox Church, which will harmonize its actions with the internationally recognized borders of the state of Montenegro.

3) WE WANT MONTENEGRO – AS THE COUNTRY WITH THE RULE OF LAW

The rule of law is the need of Montenegrin society and the need for overall quality of our life; It is the most important condition for achieving the key Montenegrin national interests. Democratic Party of Socialists has no dilemma that is the first in our priorities is to make Montenegro a place where a citizen does not have concerns about his rights and has the opportunity to contribute to the development of the family and society as a whole. The rule of law means not just institutional reforms but also a change of awareness of every individual of the necessity of respecting the principle of legality and responsibility towards their own state.
So, the rule of law is the most important prerequisite for a richer and freer future of Montenegro.

DPS remains committed to a maximum degree to the goal of making everyone in Montenegro equal before the law. For the full respect of the principles, it is not enough to just have European laws but these laws need to be applied in an indiscriminate way and without delay.

Montenegro must provide legal security for all who live and work in it. It must be stimulating for the creative potential of the individuals, as well as for investors who can contribute to the progress of the society. An independent and accountable judiciary – is the goal that we want to accomplish. The strengthening of the judiciary must be followed by the improvement of its efficiency, because justice delayed is justice denied. However, it is not enough that justice is achieved. It needs to be seen as well. This goal is achieved by improving the transparency of the courts and prosecutors’ offices.

The social and political advancement of any society depends on its ability to combat crime, especially the most severe forms - organized crime and corruption. DPS will be committed to further strengthening of the detection and prosecution capacity with an emphasis on specialization and professionalization of the police, prosecution and judiciary, so that organized crime and corruption do not become a real threat to the institutions
and the rule of law. An important aspect of the success of countries in combating organized crime and corruption is the creation of all material, human and financial conditions for the operation of these institutions.

The aim is to develop credible institutions, which will constitute a proactive system for fighting corruption at all levels, as well as organized crime in all its forms.

DPS will, through the mechanisms of influence in the society and the state, do all to make safety and security the hallmark of modern Montenegro.

In the circle of interconnectedness and interdependence of state institutions, the rule of law also includes public administration. Only a responsible and professional public administration, with a prevailing and acting awareness of the primacy of the general over the individual or group interest, can be an efficient service that enjoys the confidence of the citizens. DPS will therefore insist on competency and accountability in order to ensure efficient and professional public administration.

In a democratic society it is not enough that all are equal before the state. It is necessary that we are all with equal opportunities in society. That is why our party will contribute to the improvement of anti-discrimination policy, especially when it comes to sensitive categories of citizens: people with disabilities, women, Roma, and people of different sexual orientation. This has been and remains at the top of our priorities.
For a country to get successfully integrated into the wider community, its society must be integrated from within. Therefore, in the implementation of international standards, we must take more account of the traditional values of Montenegrin society, the basic cell of which is a healthy family. Rights of mothers and children must be given special attention. At the same time we will strive to improve the status of our oldest citizens, as is the preservation of their dignity is an important task of a responsible society.

Freedom of the media is one of the key prerequisites of democracy. Democratic Party of Socialists initiated the decriminalization of defamation in order to foster media freedom. We will continue to contribute to the atmosphere of security for the operation of free and responsible media professionals, but also to point to cases of violation of the presumption of innocence, endangering classified information, non-observance of the right to protection of personal data, disrespect of the authority of state bodies. We will insist on the approach that European standards and democratic values apply equally for all.

DPS will continue to promote politics as an activity of responsible public speech, as a recognizable element of the traditional value system of our society.
4) WE WANT ECONOMICALLY DEVELOPED MONTENEGRO

During the last ten years, Montenegro has recorded significant economic growth, as measured by: an increase in GDP, reduction of poverty, implemented structural reforms and improved business environment. Despite significant economic progress, we cannot be satisfied with the achieved pace of economic development. Although it is the highest pace in the Western Balkans region, per capita income is about 5,500 euros only, and the unemployment rate in real terms is 14 to 15%.

The main goal of the state policy, which is predominantly guided by DPS, is to improve the quality of life of our citizens. It may be realized only through a more dynamic sustainable economic growth, which will bring higher income, more employment opportunities and lower unemployment, quality education and health care, as well as better social security. The current rate of economic growth needs to accelerate to a realistically possible level of 4 to 5% and to become sustainable in the long-term. Only in that way we can get closer to the living standards of developed European societies, part of which we want to be.

In order to create the preconditions for a dynamic and sustainable economic growth, it is necessary to build a supportive institutional framework that will include the following pillars of development:
- Strengthening of fiscal power and financial stability;
- Improvement of infrastructure;
- Creation of a competitive economy by implementing structural reforms and improving the business environment;
- Valorisation of natural resources, particularly in the sectors of industry, tourism, agriculture and energy.

1) Montenegro is to be fiscally strong and financially stable country, which includes:

- Sound public finances - a balanced budget and a reduction of public debt. In this context, it is important to solve the fiscal problems of local governments;
- The definition of credible fiscal rules and uncompromisingly efficient administration that will be applied indiscriminately;
- Rational and efficient government spending, with lower current expenditures and increased space for productive capital projects;
- Zero tolerance for “grey” economy in order to create fair conditions for market competition;
- Competitive tax system that is consistent, predictable and focused on the lower taxation
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- of labour and income, and higher taxation of consumption and wealth;
- Administrative capacity and mechanisms for the efficient and productive use of EU funds.

The economic crisis, in a relatively small and open economy, highlighted the critical role of a stable and sound financial system. Financial stability means, first and foremost, healthy and active banking sector, and the further development of capital market, insurance market and other non-banking products. This system with economic interests and financial power, through its active participation in the improvement of the institutional framework, needs to support investment in the private and public sector and thus contribute to the intensification of economic growth and competitiveness of the economy.

2) High-quality infrastructure is key to the efficient and effective use of resources and the development of a competitive economy. The quality and extensiveness of infrastructure significantly affect the economic growth and reduction of poverty and inequality. Overall, the infrastructure essentially determines the quality of life.

In recent years, much has been achieved in terms of quality and development of transport and municipal infrastructure. However, insufficient infrastructure is
still a constraint for economic development. Greater investments are needed, and to achieve them in the short term, in addition to the investment of public funds, it is necessary to further promote models of public-private partnerships and concessions.

In order to use the limited public resources productively and to support them by European funds, it is necessary to design a strategic program of priority large-scale investments in “connective” (transport, energy, IT, knowledge), “hard” and “soft” infrastructure. Notable priority projects include the Bar-Boljare highway, Adriatic-Ionic speedway, Ionian-Adriatic Pipeline (IAP), modernization of the (Port of) Bar-Belgrade railway and construction of the undersea power cable between Montenegro and Italy. The implementation of these projects would make Montenegro better connected to international markets and position it as an energy hub in the region.

3) A dynamic and sustainable economic growth is achieved by economies that are competitive. Competitiveness implies the ability to produce, distribute and service products and services in international trade.

To increase the competitiveness of the Montenegrin economy, it is necessary to continue structural reforms and improvements to the business environment, including:
reforming pension and social system, to
make them safe and sustainable. The social
system should be clear and transparent, in the
function of those who are in absolute need,
and must not demotivate work activity;

- getting labour market free of regulation that
restricts the creation of new jobs;

- matching the educational systems with
requirements of the market, putting an
emphasis on useful knowledge, skills,
creativity and innovation;

- improving the health system. In cooperation
with the private sector, the government
should provide better and cheaper
healthcare. Quality health care is crucial to
improving the quality of life, but also for the
country’s competitiveness and productivity;

- reforming the public administration to be
more streamlined, more efficient and provide
better services for citizens and businesses.

Favourable business environment requires well-
established rules, which clearly define property rights
and reduce the costs of resolving disputes, increase
the predictability of economic relations and provide
contractors additional protection from abuse. It is
important to continuously remove obstacles to business,
create an atmosphere for new family, small and medium
enterprises. Legislative amendments are needed, but also the change in the mentality, behaviour and attitude of decision makers and the overall administration towards the business.

The business environment needs to be improved particularly with respect to:

- protection of property rights and more efficient operation of cadastre services;
- cost of utilities and other fees at the local level;
- efficiency in contract enforcement;
- tax burden levels.

Although we are achieving continued progress in the creation and issuance of technical documentation (construction and other permits), there is still room for optimization of procedures and costs, on which we will work intensively in the coming period. This will increase the competitiveness of our business environment, along with the use of additional measures, such as optimization of tax and other burdens.

Regarding the business environment, it is particularly important to remove obstacles to the implementation of major projects initiated and planned by the private sector.

In the past decade, Montenegro was the regional leader
in attracting foreign investment, resulting in major investment projects, some of which have been completed, and some are under implementation. These projects have set Montenegro as an attractive destination on the world tourist map. Also, we must learn lessons from the past experience in this area with a number of domestic and foreign investors. There were cases when we regretted that some of them came and did business with us, because they proved to be unsound partners, but there were also cases when some of the investors regretted that they had their own business located in Montenegro, faced with major barriers endangering their business. We will ask for increased accountability and the highest level of professionalism of civil servants at all levels, in order to guarantee legal certainty to investors and the protection of their rights.

4) The natural resources that Montenegro has in the sectors of energy, tourism and health food production, belong to the attractive and fast-growing industries globally. We have a historic opportunity to put our natural resources to use for purposes of the economic development by utilizing them on the market principles. In doing so, it is essential that their utilization be for the benefit of the present and future generations.

Energy is recognized as a great development opportunity, but also large infrastructural constraint to investment and growth of SMEs. An important project of regional
energy connectivity through submarine cable, which is being smoothly carried out, means greater attractiveness of energy resources, especially renewable energy. In the long term, energy will become an important export industry for Montenegro. The main objectives in the field of energy are: to ensure energy supply security; to develop a competitive energy market and provide sustainable energy development, which is based on accelerated, but rational use of energy resources while respecting the principles of environmental protection; to encourage energy efficiency and greater use of renewable energy sources. Energy development is of particular importance for increasing the competitiveness and export capacity of the Montenegrin economy.

In addition, the forthcoming signing of the contract for the concession for exploration and production of hydrocarbons will create conditions for the development of entirely new industries in Montenegro. We expect that, in the period from 2015 to 2020, all the planned explorations in the allocated blocks will be completed and it will be known whether areas which we believe are very promising contain commercial hydrocarbon reserves. There is a strong possibility that Montenegro become a producer of hydrocarbons by 2020.

Processing industry in recent years has been characterized by the restructuring of large systems, such as the Steel Plant, the Podgorica Aluminium Plant, Bauxite Mine of
Niksic, Coal Mine. In the coming period, it is expected that investments in the manufacturing sector, including the wood processing sector and food production, will continue and create new jobs, and increase production and exports.

Montenegro has been recognized as one of the fastest growing tourist destinations. In addition to the direct impact on GDP growth and increased employment, tourism has significant positive effects on other sectors (transport, agriculture, telecommunications, etc.). Further intensive development of tourism in Montenegro depends on eliminating its strong seasonality, which is why we will work to enhance transport accessibility of Montenegro, as well as improve infrastructure, primarily in the municipal sector. Our goal is to make Montenegro a high quality tourist destination with a diverse offering, and enhanced existing and a number of new luxury hotels and resorts. We will pay special attention to creating conditions for the use of unexploited tourist potential of the north, with the vision of the development of modern winter ski tourism, and the valorisation of specific natural resources. First of all, we will work on the promotion of tourism and attracting interest in foreign and domestic investments in the Montenegrin national parks, strictly taking into account the principles of good stewardship of protected areas.
The development of agriculture and processing industry in Montenegro is linked with the concept of sustainable development and sustainable management of natural resources. At the same time, great attention will be paid to the development of organic (natural or biological) farming as a powerful factor increasing competitiveness. Montenegro’s accession to EU requires even greater liberalization and the continuation of reforms in agriculture. Increase in the quality of agricultural products, increase in competitiveness and creation of new markets for Montenegrin agricultural producers will contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of Montenegrin citizens. In the field of agriculture we will focus on measures and activities that will create conditions for the growth of agricultural output and a higher share of agriculture in gross domestic product of Montenegro. The objectives of rural development measures include: improving living conditions in rural areas, as well as the standard of living of agricultural producers; providing the necessary investment in infrastructure and improving production processes; increasing the competitiveness of domestic producers; improving processing facilities, as well as preserving traditional products.

Agricultural producers in Montenegro do not sufficiently use modern technology. The need for better use of resources, raising the quality of products, building brands and geographical origin in the field of agriculture, will
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require the introduction of new technologies for farming, irrigation, production and packaging.

Basic economic characteristic of Montenegro is openness. The foundations of such openness are: the euro, free capital flows, free trade agreements and double taxation avoidance agreements. Montenegro must remain open for investment, capital, missing workforce and new technology.

We can make Montenegro the best destination for business start-ups and business in this part of Europe. This will allow growing levels of income, new opportunities for high-quality and better-paying jobs, what will all together mean an increase in overall quality of life for the largest number of citizens.

5) WE WANT MONTENEGRO – AS THE KNOWLEDGE BASED SOCIETY

Knowledge and learning are key to development and progress of society and the individual of free and creative spirit. By investing in education, and caring for its high quality and the development of scientific and research activities, with full commitment to new generations, we will respond to the challenges of the present time and prepare Montenegro for the social and economic challenges in the future.
Knowledge and skills, intellectual and scientific potential must be the foundation of our competitiveness. DPS recognizes an obligation and a responsibility for improving the situation in education, as a matter of priority, as well as for increasing the institutional capacity of Montenegro - the knowledge based society.

**Pre-school Education**

Investing in pre-school education is considered to be most cost-effective investment to improve the lives of individuals, due to the fact that it represents an educational platform for the formation of personality and aptitude for lifelong learning and training.

It is therefore necessary that this education be directed to the intensive development and education of children, not only to care during their stay in pre-school institutions. That goes together with equal access for all ages up to six years, as well as children belonging to vulnerable groups - Roma and Egyptian nationality, poor children and children with disabilities. DPS will advocate the recognition of models of private-public partnership in the construction of pre-school education facilities.

DPS is committed to increasing the number of children who go through the program of pre-school education.

To achieve the above, relevant infrastructure and increase in physical capacity is needed. Although over the recent
years, we have raised the quality of preschool education and constructed new facilities that significantly increased the number of kindergartens, we will advocate continuing this trend in the coming years.

We will pay special attention to equal access to preschool education in the northern and southern part of the country, where we are witnessing the overloading of existing facilities. We believe that every child should be provided the conditions for unhindered growth and will use systematic efforts to increase the awareness of parents about the benefits and importance of pre-school education.

The state guarantees the rights of the child, as a basic human right, and we in the DPS are determined to ensure that every child enjoys their rights fully and freely – for the benefit of the family and society in general.

**Primary Education**

Schools are not just centres of education but also of social communion. Therefore, each segment of education must be covered in accordance with the needs of students, starting with the learning environment and pedagogical approaches to work with the student to the professional and effective continuing education.

The direction of our policy is to continue with the reform of the education system whose ultimate goal is
a high quality, differentiated and accessible primary education. It allows each child to realize smoothly his/her development potential and guaranteed right to a quality life and work, and responsible participation in the life of the society.

The focus of further reforms that we want to carry out will be: the investment in teaching staff, bigger focus on gifted students, the individual approach and work in smaller classes and with greater equality among students, as well as with the use of modern technology in the teaching process. This approach will lead to better learning and skills development, which will lead students to clearer decisions about their future paths. The student must be a challenge, not a problem.

Therefore, investment in teachers means investing in their professional development, the acquisition of innovative methods of work, to improve the quality and attractiveness of their theoretical and practical work. Not neglecting, to top it all, an equally important goal – to improve the living standards of teachers and lecturers.

**Secondary and Vocational Education**

Learning is a complex process that allows the perception and understanding of the world in which we live.

The system of primary and secondary education must lead to the affirmation of knowledge, but even more, it
Program can be directed to support the strategic development needs of Montenegro. It is very important that the school or the schooling system listens to the demands of the economy and society, and not just domestic. School programs must reflect modern trends in business so that students would not gain inapplicable knowledge and skills. Intensive communication and cooperation with business entities on various grounds is an imperative imposed on modern schools and colleges.

Equally important segment of secondary education are vocational schools. Bearing in mind that these schools form a significant percentage of the labour supply in the labour market, a series of activities should be taken for their promotion and improvement.

It is necessary to make further efforts to build a high quality system of vocational education.

We need to restore the dignity of the high school vocational diploma.

The education system, as guided by the European Commission for the period until 2020, is being converted from the current theory-based to work-based education system. Preference for practices and practical work in the European education area suggests a full partnership of the economy, society, labour market and educational institutions. DPS will support this partnership as strategically important.
Consequently, there will be a growing trend of small and medium entrepreneurship, start-up companies, more employment, improved quality of life, social inclusion and cohesion and stronger institutional capacity, which is the goal of our policy.

In order to effectively oppose segregation, we stand for comprehensive schools that would provide common training for children from different backgrounds and with different origin, with special attention to children belonging to vulnerable groups.

**Higher Education**

Higher education has a strong educational, scientific research and social development role. Therefore, we believe that higher education institutions should provide the conditions for a thorough study of the specialized areas, while offering general education, which can serve as a base for non-formal education and lifelong learning programs.

Terms and profile of studies have to be harmonized with the quality standard of higher education, but also with the labour market needs and directions of development of the country. We will pay special attention to promoting programs of natural and technical sciences by granting scholarships to students and researchers, and providing jobs for graduates. Incentives for innovation of education in the field of agriculture, tourism, energy and environmental protection, will also cover research.
Guaranteeing freedom of research is the responsibility of the state. DPS is committed to stimulating interdisciplinary research and multi-scientific studies through the development of scientific research base at the university, and encouragement of individual and institutional international cooperation. In this regard, it is important to work on joint projects and research centres, establishing a meaningful connection between the University and the community and the business community.

DPS aims at financial development investment for the improvement of laboratories and infrastructure, which would create conditions for quality education and research. The result we want to achieve is better competitiveness and reputation of Montenegro internationally.

The dynamic development of knowledge which we witness in today’s time has made the learning a lifelong process. DPS is committed to providing real opportunities for all adults to further develop skills and competencies by expanding professional skills and free search for knowledge. This refers to the professional trainings that echo the new invention trends, and the higher professional qualifications in later years of life.

DPS promotes further general, cultural and political education, allowing all generations to be in line with time and progress at the same pace as the developed world. Modules of lifelong learning, as well as distance learning
thanking to information technology, are preferred forms of modern education.

Namely, it is clear that only the participation and activation of human resources can improve the institutional capacity of the Montenegrin state. Therefore, all the things that cause the commercialization of knowledge and manipulation of higher education diplomas, must be clearly identified and severely sanctioned.

In the service of creating a new quality of knowledge, and taking into account the strategic needs of the Montenegrin labour market, a special role is played by the University of Montenegro as the most important and most responsible factor.

DPS considers it necessary to pay particular attention to the design of enrolment policies - as a form of taking and sharing responsibilities for the sustainability of higher education institutions and the situation in the labour market.

In this regard, the creation of a system of learning outcomes, as stipulated by the new Law on Higher Education, will result in better control of the quality of knowledge and direct insight of employers in available staff at the higher education market. Also, it will enable the strategic involvement of employers, as interested parties, in the creation of curricula and study programs.
The coordination of relevant ministries, the Council for Higher Education and University – is supported by DPS who sees these measures as a new phase of work on the interconnection of the Higher Education Strategy with the Strategy of Economic Development of Montenegro, with a new responsibility for labour market developments. Universities are there to redefine social values collapsed during the transitional social turmoil. The concentration of intellectual, social and creative capital will create the best workplaces. Our country has recognized that and will promote investment in higher education - in the knowledge based society and knowledge based economy.

Progress in the political, social and economic reforms that we advocate must be visible, and the results in the next four years measurable.
WE UNDERTAKE TO:

• strengthen the identity of the state of Montenegro, at the same time affirming the Montenegrin identity, as well as other national identities, which identify themselves with the Montenegrin state;

• finalize Montenegro’s negotiations for the signature of the Treaty of Accession to the European Union;

• make Montenegro a full member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO);

• provide full legal security in Montenegro for all who live and work in it;

• start and finish key projects in the field of tourism, transport, energy and municipal infrastructure;

• professionalize and debureaucratize public administration that will be a service for citizens;

• create the conditions for smooth business development and attracting foreign investment;

• create conditions for better living standards in the long run through increasing the competitiveness of the economic system;

• modernize the educational system, make it accessible to the general population and harmonize it with the need to achieve economic growth.