

Country of the Week: Montenegro

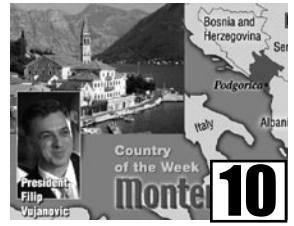
Montenegro's dark forests inspired the country's name.

BASIC

This week we are exploring a tiny country called Montenegro — *MONN-teh-NEGG-roe*. Montenegro's name means "black mountain." From the picture here, you can see what some of the landscape in Montenegro looks like. **Do you understand how it got its name?** Montenegro is small — it is smaller than the state of Connecticut. It is in the southeastern part of Europe, next to the Adriatic Sea. The country also borders Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia, and Albania. Montenegro's capital city is called Podgorica — *PAWD-gawr-*

eet-sah. People in Montenegro are called Montenegrins. **M o s t**

Montenegrins speak the Serbian language, and most belong to a Christian religion called Eastern Orthodox. Pictured is Montenegro's president, Filip Vujanovic — *Fee-Leep Voo-YAH-no-vihtch*. He has been president since 2003, although Montenegro did not become a truly independent country until 2006. **NEXT**



GENERAL

This week we are exploring the tiny country of Montenegro — *MONN-teh-NEGG-roe*. The name Montenegro means "black mountain." **From the picture you see here, can you see how they came up with this name?** A mountain range called the Dinaric Alps runs through Montenegro, and these mountains are covered with dark forests.

Montenegro is a small country — slightly smaller than the state of Connecticut. Its population is about 680,000 people. The capital city of Montenegro is called Podgorica — *PAWD-gawr-eet-sah*. **Who can guess what continent Montenegro is on?** (*Europe.*) Montenegro is in the southeastern part of Europe. It borders the

Adriatic Sea. It also borders the countries of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, and Serbia. Montenegro has a special connection with Serbia, which we'll learn more about shortly.

People who live in Montenegro are called Montenegrins. The official language of Montenegro is Serbian, but some people also speak the Montenegrin language. About three-quarters of Montenegrins are Christians, and belong to a religion called the Eastern Orthodox Church. The man you see here is Montenegro's president, Filip Vujanovic — *Fee-Leep Voo-YAH-no-vihtch*. He has been president since 2003, although Montenegro did not become a truly independent country until 2006. **NEXT**

ADVANCED

This week, we will explore the tiny country of Montenegro — *MONN-teh-NEGG-roe* — a name that means "black mountain." The name refers to the forested, mountainous landscape of Montenegro, which contains some of the roughest terrain in Europe. Montenegro lies in a region of Europe called the Balkans, which covers much of the southeastern part of the continent. The country borders Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and Albania. **Who knows which sea Montenegro borders?** (*The Adriatic.*)

Montenegro is slightly smaller than the state of Connecticut. Its population is roughly 680,000 people. The capital city is Podgorica — *PAWD-gawr-eet-sah* — a city of 136,000. The city was bombarded during World War Two, and after the war it was re-named Titograd, one of several towns

re-named after Yugoslavia's communist dictator. The city returned to its original name in 1992. **How do you think these events affected the people of the city?** Pictured is Montenegro's president, Filip Vujanovic — *Fee-Leep Voo-YAH-no-vihtch*.

Citizens of Montenegro are called Montenegrins. The country's official language, and the one most Montenegrins speak, is a Serbian dialect. Ethnically, about 43 percent of the population is Montenegrin, and about 32 percent is Serbian. Muslims make up about 17 percent of the population, although they include ethnic Albanian, Bosnian, and Montenegrin Muslims. Three-quarters of Montenegrins are Eastern Orthodox Christians. **NEXT**

Country of the Week: Montenegro (cont'd)

Montenegro was united with Serbia for 14 years.

BASIC

Here you see the picture of Montenegro's first and only king, Nicholas I. He ruled the country from 1910 to 1918. He was also a poet who wrote the country's national anthem. After World War One, Montenegro joined with several other countries that became a larger country called Yugoslavia. This country fell apart in the 1990s, and a new country was formed called Serbia and Montenegro. Tiny Montenegro got the help of the larger country of Serbia, and Serbia got easy use of the Adriatic Sea. **Why would it help a country to be next to the sea?** *(It makes it much easier to ship products*

in and out of the country.)

In 2006, the people of Montenegro held a vote called a referendum, on whether they should stay united with Serbia, or become independent. Just over half the people voted for independence. In June 2006, the government of Montenegro declared its independence. The other picture here shows a Montenegrin newspaper on that day. **How would you have voted? Why?** END



GENERAL

Here you see a picture of Montenegro's King Nicholas I, who ruled the country from 1910 to 1918. He was also a poet who wrote his country's national anthem. In 1919, Montenegro became part of a larger country, which was later named Yugoslavia. **Have you ever heard of Yugoslavia?** This country no longer exists – it split apart in the 1990s, during a series of civil wars. Montenegro was part of Yugoslavia until 1992. Then it split from Yugoslavia and united with Serbia, forming a country called “Serbia and Montenegro.” **Why would two countries band together like this?** *(It allows them to share military and other resources.)* Together, Serbia and Montenegro made up an area that is a little bigger than the state of Kentucky, with about 10.5 million people.

In 2006, the citizens of Montenegro got to vote on whether or not to stay united with Serbia. This special election was called a referendum. The referendum passed by only about 2,300 votes. Independence was strongly opposed by ethnic Serbs, who make up about a third of the population, and there were fears that protests and unrest would occur. But the new country remained mostly peaceful. On June 3rd, 2006, the government of Montenegro declared its independence. Later that month, it became the newest member of the United Nations. The other picture here shows a newspaper the day after the elections. **What do you think the headlines might say? If you lived in Montenegro, do you think you would have voted for or against independence?** Why? END

ADVANCED

The picture on the left is Montenegro's King Nicholas I, who ruled from 1910 to 1918. After World War One, Montenegro joined with the Kingdom of Serbia and other areas to form the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. This area was to become the country called Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia was an unstable country, made up of numerous ethnic groups and led by brutal dictator Slobodan Milosevic. Bloody civil war broke out in the 1990s, and Yugoslavia fell apart. Serbia and Montenegro decided to unite and form a loose federation, and this federation was officially recognized in 2003. Each one elected its leaders separately, but the two shared resources in an umbrella government located in Belgrade, Serbia's capital. **What do you think each gained from this partnership?** Serbia

and Montenegro was about the size of Kentucky, with 10.5 million people.

In May 2006, Montenegrins voted in a referendum on whether or not to remain in the federation. The vote for independence passed by only about 2,300 votes. Independence was strongly opposed by ethnic Serbs, and there were fears that protests and unrest would occur. But the new country remained mostly peaceful. On June 3rd, 2006, the Parliament of Montenegro declared its independence, and on June 28th, the country became the 192nd member of the United Nations. The other photo here shows a Montenegrin newspaper following the referendum. **Do you understand why ethnic Serbs would be against independence? Do you think the voters made the right choice?** END