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**ARRS**

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## PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN MONTENEGRO

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# INTRODUCTION

- The issue of violence against women, one of the most widespread forms of human rights violations, which continues to hinder the achievement of equality, development and peace, is a global problem and Montenegro is no exception. It represents a significant public health problem with profound social, health and economic consequences for both the individuals and society as a whole.
- The aim of this presentation is to raise awareness of the problem of violence against women in Montenegro and examine possible strategies prevention strategies.



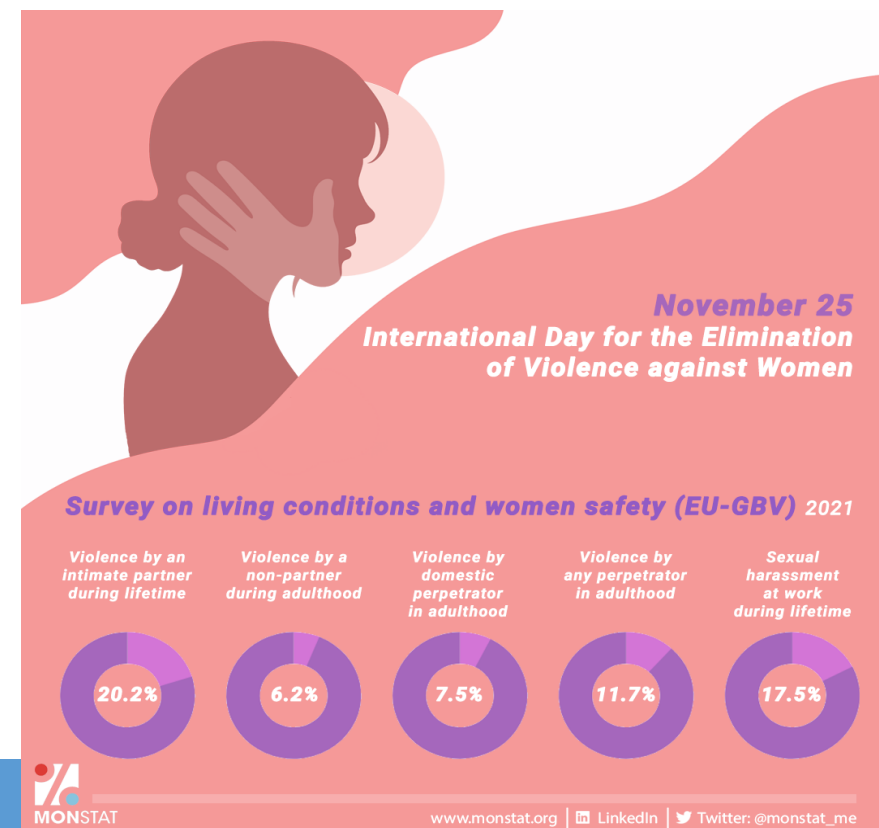
# VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN MONTENEGRO

According to a study conducted by the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund, one in three women in Montenegro has experienced some form of violence in their lifetime. The study revealed that 67% of women who experienced violence did not report it to the authorities, and only 15% of those who did report it received institutional support.

Furthermore, 42% of the most severe incidents of non-partner violence occurred in the women's home, which is much higher than the EU average of 27%.

During extensive interviews with victims of violence, it was described how women in small towns and villages were often exposed to repeated contact with perpetrators, which they were unable to avoid.

Women found it particularly difficult to distance themselves from family members who had committed violence against them.



# FORMS/CAUSES OF VIOLENCE

Violence against women in Montenegro takes many forms, including domestic violence, sexual harassment, rape, and forced marriages. Domestic violence is the most common form of violence against women in Montenegro, with a prevalence rate of 27.5%.

The causes of violence against women in Montenegro are complex and multifaceted. They include patriarchal attitudes, gender inequality, economic insecurity, and a lack of awareness of women's rights. These factors are exacerbated by social and cultural norms that support gender-based violence.



# STRATEGIC PREVENTION

Prevention of violence against women in Montenegro requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach that addresses the root causes of violence and promotes gender equality. Some effective strategies for preventing violence against women in Montenegro include:

**Raising awareness about violence against women** and its impact on individuals, families, and communities is vital for prevention. This can be done through public campaigns and educational programs.

**Education on gender equality** can play a crucial role in preventing violence against women. This approach involves educating young people about the role of gender equality in society, in order to overcome stereotypes about men and women and promote equality. This can be achieved through educational programs, workshops, and public campaigns.

**Strengthening the institutional response** to violence against women to ensure effective and timely intervention. This can involve improving laws, strengthening police capacity, ensuring adequate support for victims of violence, and promoting cooperation between relevant institutions.

**Supporting victims of violence**; Victims of violence need timely and adequate support to ensure that they feel safe and protected. This includes providing safe shelters, emotional and psychological support, and legal support if needed. In addition, it is necessary to empower women to be able to recognize and respond to violence on their own.

**Partnerships and collaboration**; Preventing violence against women requires collaboration between different sectors of society, including government, non-governmental organizations, media, and the private sector. Partnerships and collaboration enable better coordination of activities, exchange of knowledge and resources, and increase efficiency.

# DEKLARATION OF UNITED NATIONS



- The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993) is the first international document that addresses the issue of violence against women through the lens of gender inequality and discrimination against women. This document defines violence against women as the manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women that have led to discrimination and domination of women by men, and the hindrance of women's full advancement.
- The Declaration identifies the most significant forms of violence against women, pointing out that violence can be physical, sexual, and psychological. Violence occurs within families and can include hitting, sexual abuse of female children, violence associated with dowry, marital rape, and genital mutilation. Violence can also occur within the broader community, including rape, sexual abuse, and sexual harassment in the workplace. Violence can also be committed or sanctioned by the state, wherever it occurs.

# FEMICIDE



- The term "femicide" refers to the killing of women. In a narrower sense, it refers to murders where the main motive is hatred towards women or the intention to use terror to maintain or establish a subordinate position for women in patriarchal societies. Like many countries in Western Europe, Montenegro does not have the term "femicide" in its criminal code.

Through monitoring media reporting on femicide cases, the Center for Women's Rights in Montenegro has collected information on 2 cases of women's murder in Montenegro in 2021. According to the reports, the victims were aged 19 and 36, and both murders occurred in urban areas.

- In both cases, the victims were killed in their own homes, despite having previously reported violence to public institutions.



# THE CASE OF Š.B. AND I.DJ.

- This case is a tragic example of the failures of institutions to adequately respond to reports of domestic violence. A 19-year-old victim was killed by her partner in the yard of her home on September 30, 2021. A month prior to her murder, the victim had sought protection from the authorities by filing a complaint against the accused with the police. In her complaint, she stated that the accused had entered her home violently, threatening to kill her in front of her younger siblings. She also stated that she felt threatened and afraid for her life due to his behavior.
- The police department issued a statement that information was gathered from both the victim and the accused in official premises of the Public Security Center in Podgorica, based on this complaint. The duty prosecutor at the Basic State Prosecutor's Office in Podgorica stated that there were no elements of a criminal offense in this particular case.
- The death of nineteen-year-old S.B. should be the final warning to institutions that it is necessary to respond to reports of threats and violence.

## Analysis of the institutions' actions in this case

- It appears that there were a number of shortcomings on the part of the police, the state prosecutor's office, and the Court of Misdemeanors in this case.
- The police did not obtain information about the history of violence in this case, nor did they interview witnesses. The real risk to the victim's safety was not adequately assessed, nor was the victim provided with all necessary information about her rights. In the report sent to the court, the police did not propose the imposition of protective measures in accordance with the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence.
- Without conducting a security assessment of the suspect's identity and without access to the criminal records of the individual, the state prosecutor's office concluded that there were no elements of a criminal offense. Additionally, no request was made for the collection of other evidence.
- The Court of Misdemeanors issued an acquittal without informing the victim, and the victim never received a written decision from the Court.



# Who should women victims of violence turn to for help?

Women who are victims of violence in Montenegro can seek protection from :  
 the Police Administration as well as from non-governmental organizations such as the SOS phone for women and children victims of violence in Nikšić, Safe House for Women, SOS phone for women and children victims of violence in Podgorica, Center for Women's Rights and Center for Roma Initiatives.

SOS PHONE		SOS PHONE		SOS PHONE		NUMBER OF WOMAN WHO		The number of woman who have	
NIKŠIĆ		ULCINJ		PODGORICA		Requested help		Asked for help	
2009.	91	2009.	249	2009.	267	2009.	39		
2010.	109	2010.	397	2010.	271	2010.	47		
2011.	117	2011.	584	2011.	306	2011. <sup>104</sup>	82		

# CONCLUSION:

Preventing violence against women in Montenegro requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach that addresses the root causes of violence and promotes gender equality.

It is important to work on raising awareness about violence against women, educating on gender equality, strengthening institutional responses, providing support to victims of violence, and developing partnerships and collaborations between different sectors of society.

Only through these measures, Montenegro can address this serious problem and ensure safety and protection for all women.



# Literature

- The European Commission's (2020). Progress Report on Montenegro, particularly Chapter 23 which addresses the judiciary and topics such as violence against women and gender equality.
- The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe's (OSCE) report on the implementation of the Action Plan for Gender Equality in Montenegro for the period 2018-2020.
- The NGO "SOS telephone for women and children victims of violence,, (2020). Report on the situation with violence against women in Montenegro.Podgorica.
- Ministry for Human and Minority Rights of Montenegro:  
<https://www.gov.me/naslovna/ministarstva/mzsr>
- United Nations Population Fund: <https://www.unfpa.org/>
- European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights: <https://fra.europa.eu/en>



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
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