



REPORT ON
ONLINE VIOLENCE AGAINST
WOMEN IN POLITICS IN MONTENEGRO



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INTRODUCTION

1.

The dawn of the Internet era and the rapid advancement of information technology have fundamentally reshaped the paradigm of communication. In such a digital environment, traditional media are facing challenges and gradually losing their former influence, giving way to new media, with a particular emphasis on social networks. While it is evident that internet communication brings numerous advantages, we must not overlook the other side of technological progress, which has brought a series of negative trends.

Social media, as one of the most prominent forms of digital communication, has become a platform where narratives aiming to discourage individuals engaged in public discourse are often promoted, with women being particularly vulnerable. The issue of misogyny and sexism in the media and on social networks is not merely a local concern but manifests globally. This form of discrimination against women is not only an attack on their right to freedom of expression but also directly undermines the fundamental principles of gender equality and democracy. Sexist comments, stereotypes, and insults directed at women on the internet and in the media often isolate them and create a sense of insecurity. This atmosphere of fear can lead to self-censorship among women, limiting their willingness to actively participate in public dialogue. Even worse, such sexist content often reinforces existing gender inequalities, deepening the entrenched problem of gender discrimination.

Confronted with these challenges, nations worldwide must meticulously deliberate on how to address the adverse facets of digital communication while concurrently fostering a more inclusive and equitable approach to the public domain, with a distinct emphasis on shielding women from online harassment and discrimination.

Gender equality in Montenegro has yet to attain a satisfactory threshold and remains a focal point of numerous challenges encountered by women within the nation. The issue of gender equality permeates various strata of society, spanning from the economic to the political realm, necessitating a comprehensive analysis to grasp its ramifications fully. This report centers on dissecting hate speech, online violence, and sexism aimed at women involved in politics, journalism, activism, and analogous public endeavors in Montenegro. It emanates from the initiative "Contribution to the Increase of Female Political Activism in Montenegro," financially endorsed by the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights of Montenegro.

The primary objective of this report is to underscore the inadequacy of protection afforded to women in politics within the digital sphere, where they are subject to daily risks of hate speech, retaliatory pornography, and other forms of digital violence. To combat this issue effectively, systemic measures are requisite to engender a more secure online milieu. CeMI staunchly advocates for the combat against hate speech and online violence in media and social networks, with a pivotal emphasis on augmenting awareness regarding these phenomena, educating the populace on the deleterious repercussions of hate speech, sexism, and digital violence, and instituting pertinent regulations to counteract such manifestations of discrimination. This requires bolstering legislation and regulations safeguarding women's rights in cyberspace and media, alongside promoting affirmative

and inclusive depictions of women in media outlets to fortify gender equality and democratic principles throughout Montenegro.

Given the absence of legal oversight on social media platforms, the arena for online violence against women remains pronounced, with the ramifications of such activities frequently evading accountability. Through the utilization of the CrowdTangle platform for social media monitoring, CeMI has been able to pinpoint numerous Facebook pages systematically disseminating inappropriate content targeting women actively engaged in Montenegro's public and political sphere, often through meme-based formats. These concerted endeavors are aimed at discrediting and intimidating women, potentially leading to their disengagement from Montenegro's public-political domain.

In the subsequent sections of this report, intricate analyses of specific instances of online violence, hate speech, and sexism directed at women actively participating in Montenegro's public-political realm will be presented. Additionally, meticulous recommendations will be formulated within this report, aimed at mitigating these adverse phenomena and fostering a more secure digital environment for women. These recommendations will be derived from the comprehensive analysis of collected data and research findings, with a focus on offering tangible solutions to address this significant societal challenge.

GENDER EQUALITY IN MONTENEGRO

2.

Since 2019, Montenegro has joined the group of countries conducting a comprehensive assessment of gender equality at the national level - the Gender Equality Index, based on a unique methodology developed by the European Institute for Gender Equality.

According to data from Monstat, the overall level of gender equality in Montenegro for the year 2023 stands at 59.3, which is lower than the average among the 27 EU member states, where the equality index is 68.6.¹ The greatest inequality is found in the economic domain (lower index value by 20.7 index points compared to the EU average), while the smallest inequality exists in the health domain (0.8 index points lower compared to the EU average).

The domain of violence is not included in the calculation of the equality index because it pertains only to women, and due to a lack of valid information in this area.

Montenegro faces a low level of gender equality; hence, in line with the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2025, the main strategic goal has been defined – **to increase the level of gender equality by 2025.**

¹[https://www.monstat.org/uploads/files/demografija/rodnaavnopravnost/Indeks%20rodne%20ravnopravnosti%20MNE%20\(2\)_25.7.pdf](https://www.monstat.org/uploads/files/demografija/rodnaavnopravnost/Indeks%20rodne%20ravnopravnosti%20MNE%20(2)_25.7.pdf)

3.

INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GENDER EQUALITY POLICY

Montenegro boasts several institutional mechanisms dedicated to the execution of gender equality policy, including: (1) **the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights;** (2) **the Committee on Gender Equality of the Montenegrin Parliament;** (3) **the Institution of the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro;** and (4) **the National Council for Gender Equality.**

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

4.

For women to actively participate in the country's political life, it's imperative to establish an adequate legal framework that enables their equal participation in politics while ensuring the protection of their rights. While each country enacts laws tailored to its specific social and political context, it's essential to consider international standards and principles during the drafting process to guarantee equality and fairness in the political arena. This approach fosters the creation of an inclusive political environment conducive to women's active engagement in politics. Despite Montenegro having adopted and ratified numerous documents aimed at fostering gender equality and enhancing policies for equal opportunities between men and women, the level of gender parity has yet to reach satisfactory levels.

4.1. NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN MONTENEGRO: CONSTITUTION AND LAWS

At the national level, Montenegro's Constitution guarantees equality between men and women, as well as freedom of expression, which must not be exploited to incite hatred or discrimination. Alongside the Constitution, Montenegro has enacted the Law on Gender Equality (2007), the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination (2011), and the Law on the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms (2007).

The Constitution of Montenegro, adopted in 2007, incorporates the principle of gender equality, affirming the state's commitment to ensuring parity between women and men and fostering policies of equal opportunity (Article 18).

The Law on Gender Equality, enacted in 2007, regulates the means of ensuring and realizing rights based on gender equality, in accordance with international acts and universally accepted principles of international law, as well as measures for eliminating discrimination based on gender and creating equal opportunities for the participation of women and men, as well as individuals of different gender identities, in all areas of social life (Article 1).² Amendments to the law were made in 2015 when the revised Law on Amendments and Supplements to the Law on Gender Equality was adopted ("Official Gazette of Montenegro", No. 35/2015). The law specifies that issues of direct and indirect discrimination based on gender fall within the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman. Additionally, the law, among other things, defines that gender equality, besides men and women, also includes individuals of different gender identities. It is important to note that this law has expanded the set of sanctions related to gender-based discrimination, including sanctions for failure to comply with obligations related to the use of gender-sensitive language, education of employees on gender equality, putting women at a disadvantage due to pregnancy and motherhood, and reporting on the implementation of gender equality.

² The Law on Gender Equality, 2007

A significant step forward in achieving full gender equality is the **Law on Prohibition of Discrimination** (2010), which prohibits discrimination, among other things, based on gender (Article 2).³ Anyone who considers themselves a victim of discrimination can file a complaint with the courts of Montenegro or with the Ombudsman/Human Rights and Freedoms Protector.

The **Law on the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms**⁴ stipulates that the ombudsman is an institutional mechanism for protection against discrimination. With the consent of the discriminated individual, the ombudsman acts and takes measures to protect against discrimination, in accordance with this law and the special law regulating the prohibition of discrimination (Article 27).

4.2. THE INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN MONTENEGRO

Montenegro has committed to adhering to international standards in achieving gender equality, emphasizing several key documents that underpin its gender equality policy.

In 2006, Montenegro both signed and ratified (1) **the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**, along with its Optional Protocol. This convention binds member states, pursuant to Articles 7 and 8, to adopt both general and specific measures ensuring women's equal rights to suffrage, candidacy, holding public office, and representation at the international level. Additionally, Montenegro has ratified the General Declaration on Women's Human Rights, (2) **the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**, and the (3) **Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence**, commonly known as the **Istanbul Convention**, all serving as foundational principles guiding Montenegro's gender equality policies.

The CEDAW convention delineates the concept of discrimination against women comprehensively. It mandates signatory states to denounce and eradicate all forms of discrimination against women, ensure women's unimpeded development, and meet their needs through requisite measures. Furthermore, it encourages states to implement special measures to promote gender equality and requires them to address biases and stereotypes stemming from societal and traditional norms (Articles 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5). To monitor compliance with the Convention, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women has been established.

The first international instrument explicitly addressing violence against women is **the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVAW)** from 1993, which emerged as an extension of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), explicitly articulating the strengthening and enhancement of this convention as one of its objectives. The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women from 1993 delineates state obligations in eradicating violence against women, stipulating that states must: "act diligently to prevent, investigate, and penalize acts of violence against women in accordance with domestic legislation, regardless of whether these acts are perpetrated by state actors or private individuals" (Article 4(c)).

³ The Law on Prohibition of Discrimination, 'Official Gazette of Montenegro', (No. 46/2010)

⁴ The Law on the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro 'Official Gazette of Montenegro', No. 042/11)

The **Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence**, colloquially known as the Istanbul Convention, stands as one of the paramount international documents in the fight against gender-based violence, adopted by Montenegro in 2011. This convention addresses a broad spectrum of violence against women. Its significance lies in acknowledging that violence against women transcends the private realm, constituting a matter of human rights and public health. The convention compels signatory states to undertake a gamut of legislative and practical measures to prevent violence, safeguard victims, and prosecute offenders. Despite the absence of explicit terms like “digital violence,” the Istanbul Convention’s provisions are sufficiently expansive to encompass various forms of violence women may encounter online.

The implementation of the Istanbul Convention is overseen by the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO). Pertinent to the theme of this report, it is noteworthy that in 2021, GREVIO endorsed a General Recommendation on the Digital Dimension of Violence against Women,⁵ recognizing and acknowledging the gendered nature of violence facilitated by technology. In the same year, GREVIO adopted General Recommendation No. 1 on the Digital Dimension of Violence against Women, delving into the issue of digital violence in greater detail. This recommendation underscores the importance of identifying and addressing specific manifestations of digital violence, such as online harassment, cyberstalking, and unauthorized dissemination of intimate imagery. GREVIO also evaluates member states’ responses to the challenges of gender-based violence. In the latest report for Montenegro, concerning digital violence, Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)11 on preventing and combating sexism⁶ assumes particular relevance, alongside accompanying Guidelines for Preventing and Combating Sexism. These documents underscore the necessity of education and heightened awareness regarding the deleterious effects of sexism in the digital sphere, as well as the imperative for inter-state collaboration in combating this issue.

This recommendation directly addresses the issue of sexist behavior and hate speech online, urging member states to take concrete actions in defining and penalizing such occurrences. It recognizes that while the internet serves as a platform for exchanging ideas and information, it also serves as a medium through which sexist, offensive, and violent content can proliferate. Consequently, the recommendation underscores the imperative for member states to enact specific legislative measures to define and penalize sexist hate speech. This entails extending these measures to encompass all media forms and establishing clear protocols for reporting, recording, and penalizing such occurrences, aiming to foster an environment where all forms of sexism are unequivocally identified and suitably addressed, both within the public and private sectors.

Beyond efforts directed at defining and penalizing sexism, governments are encouraged to engage in preventative measures by mobilizing relevant stakeholders, including governmental and non-governmental entities, educational institutions, and media outlets, to implement effective policies, laws, and programs geared toward combatting sexism.

A pivotal aspect of the recommendation is the necessity for monitoring and tracking progress in implementing these measures. Member states are called upon to provide regular updates to the Council of Europe regarding the measures taken and the progress

⁵ 1680acf4da (coe.int)

⁶ <https://rm.coe.int/translation-preporuka-se-12-06-2019-/1680968597>

achieved. Furthermore, the importance of raising awareness about these measures is underscored, which involves translating and disseminating the recommendation and its supplementary materials to pertinent governmental bodies and other stakeholders.

The EU Parliament has called for a European directive to combat gender-based cyber violence and ensure harmonization at national and EU level, with the aim of criminalizing gender-based cyber violence and calling for an extension of the list of “EU crimes” to officially recognize that **gender-based violence** is particularly serious a crime with a cross-border dimension.⁷

It is also important to mention the **Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime**, known as the Budapest Convention,⁸ which represents the foundation in the international fight against cybercrime. Adopted in 2001, this convention is the first international agreement dealing with Internet and computer crime and sets the standard for member countries in terms of legislative measures and international cooperation. The Budapest Convention covers a wide range of crimes, including fraud and identity theft, and issues such as the collection of evidence in electronic form, victim protection and privacy rights.

The first additional protocol of the convention,⁹ adopted in 2003, focuses on criminal acts of a racist and xenophobic nature committed via the Internet. This protocol represents an important step in the fight against hate speech and discrimination on the Internet, and provides a legal framework for their suppression. **The second additional protocol**,¹⁰ adopted in 2021, aims to improve international cooperation in the collection of electronic evidence. This protocol is particularly important due to the growing need for effective responses to the challenges posed by cybercrime, which includes digital violence.

Along with these key documents, it is important to mention the **Strategy of the Council of Europe on Internet Governance**.¹¹ This strategy was adopted for the period 2016-2019. The overall goal of the strategy was to ensure that public policies related to the Internet are people-oriented in order to build democracy on the Internet, protect its users and ensure respect and protection of human rights on the Internet. The strategy was defined by a series of key actions and activities that strive to protect the freedom, privacy and security of Internet users and to empower and include them as actors in the dialogue on Internet governance.

⁷ Data from the official website of the European Parliament (<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/portal/hr>)

⁸ <https://rm.coe.int/1680081561>

⁹ CETS 189 - Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime, concerning the criminalisation of acts of a racist and xenophobic nature committed through computer systems (coe.int)

¹⁰ Available at: Full list - Treaty Office (coe.int)

¹¹ <https://rm.coe.int/internet-governance-strategy-2016-2019-updated-version-06-mar-2018/1680790ebe>

REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN POLITICS - CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

5.

In the historical context, women's suffrage in the political life of Montenegro was achieved through the enactment of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Montenegro in 1946, specifically in 1945 with the adoption of the Voter Registration Act, guaranteeing women the right to vote. This milestone is delineated in Article 23, paragraph 1, which states: "Every citizen of the People's Republic of Montenegro, regardless of gender, nationality, race, religion, level of education, and place of residence, who has reached the age of 18, has the right to vote and to be elected for office in state authority bodies."

However, despite witnessing a general modernization of society, strong feminist public activism, and a softening of the perception of patriarchal norms and traditional attitudes, women's participation in political life in Montenegro does not reach the desired level. Women actively involved in politics face stigmatization and are held to high standards compared to men. They often endure greater criticism and condemnation for their political views and public-political engagement. Women are underrepresented in key positions within Montenegro's political structures, they are not at the helm of political parties, and the legally mandated minimum of 30% female parliamentarians is not achieved.

The following analysis will examine the current state of women's representation in the executive and legislative branches, in order to better understand this issue.

5.1. REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY (PARLIAMENT):

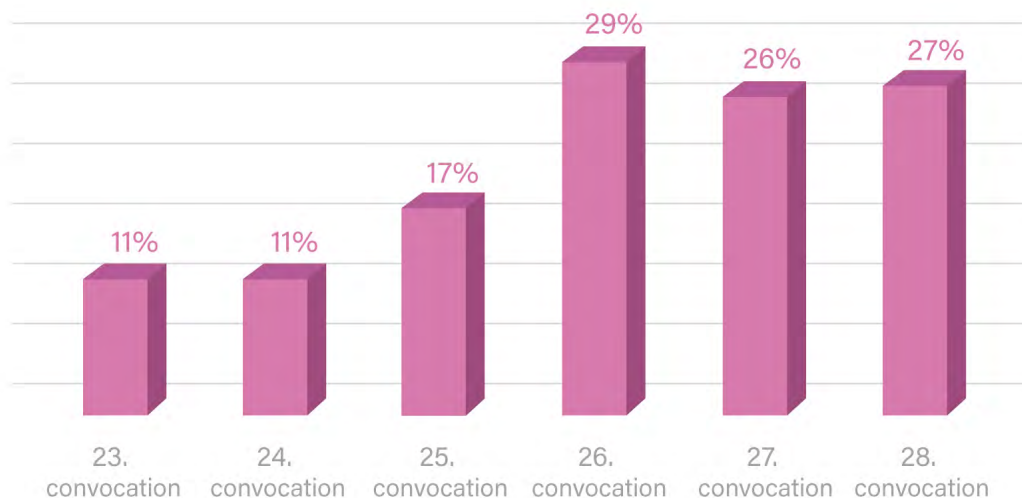
In the Montenegrin Parliament in 2015,¹² there were 14 women serving as Members of Parliament (MPs), making up 17% of the total, which is slightly higher compared to the beginning of this term (1946). However, this figure still remains the lowest percentage of female MPs in the wider region, despite women comprising slightly more than half of the population. Montenegro ranks 95th globally in terms of this percentage.

Through the provided graph, we will illustrate the number of women in the Montenegrin Parliament from the 23rd term (2006) to the current 28th term (2023-2026).

¹² Ministry of Human and Minority Rights (July, 2015). Data on participation of women in legislative, executive and judiciary authorities in Montenegro. Available at: <https://www.gov.me/cyr/dokumenta/caec0cf7-a5aa-4709-a96f-753c02280430>

Graph 1: Percentage of women in the Parliament of Montenegro from the 23rd to the 28th convocation¹³

- Percentage of women in the Parliament of Montenegro



Source: Data taken from the official website of the Parliament of Montenegro

According to the data depicted in the graph, from 2006 to 2009 (23rd term), the Parliament had 9 female MPs, constituting 11% of the total. In the 24th term (2009-2012), the percentage of female representation remained stagnant at 11%. Moving on to the 25th term (2012-2016), there were 14 female MPs (17%).

During the 26th term (2016-2020), the number of female MPs surged by 10, totaling 24 female MPs (29%), marking the highest representation of women in the Montenegrin Parliament up to that point. Further, in the 27th term (2020-2023), there were 21 female MPs (26%), and in the current 28th term (2023-2026), there are 22 female MPs, making up 27%.

However, at the onset of this term, there were 17 female MPs (20%). Due to potential alterations, such as certain MPs resigning due to incompatible functions, women have assumed the role of MPs, resulting in the current count of 22.

Nonetheless, this still falls short of adequate female representation in the Parliament, particularly considering the 2011 census data, which indicates that women constitute 50.6% of the population in Montenegro.

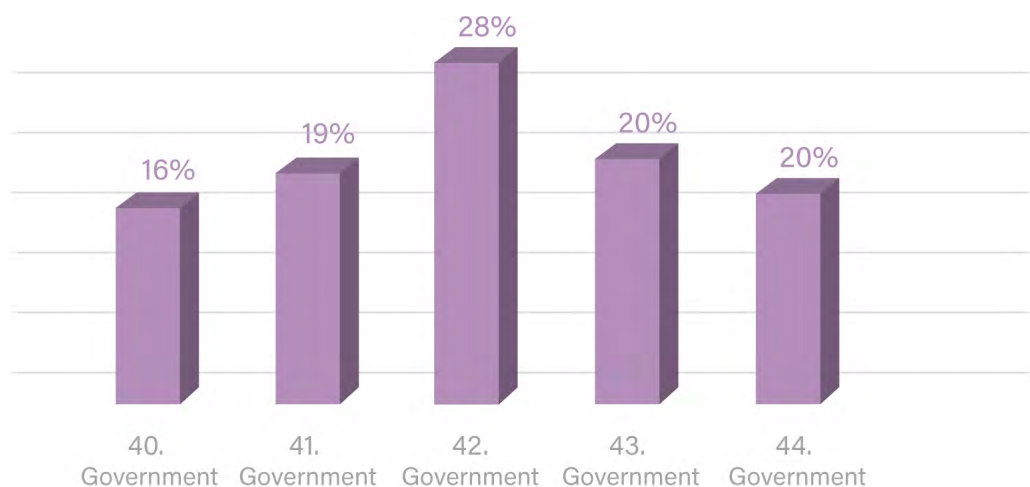
¹³ Downloaded from the official website of the Parliament of Montenegro, available at: Prethodni sazivi - Skupština Crne Gore (skupstina.me)

5.2. REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN EXECUTIVE POWER

Through the provided graph, we will illustrate the representation of women in the Government of Montenegro, spanning from the 40th Government (2012-2016) to the current 44th Government.

Graph 2: Percentage of women in the Government of Montenegro from the 40th to the 44th Government.

- Percentage of Women in the Government of Montenegro



Source: Official website of the Government of Montenegro and the Parliament of Montenegro

Based on the presented data, in the 40th Government, the representation of women amounts to 16%, equivalent to three female ministers.

The 41st Government had four female ministers, representing 19% in percentage terms. The 42nd Government also had four female ministers, accounting for 28%. Both the 43rd and 44th Governments also had four female ministers, making up 20% each. However, there is a difference in the percentages.

Table No. 1:

GOVERNMENT	NUMBER OF GOVERNMENT MEMBERS	% OF WOMEN
40. The government of Milo Djukanovic (2012-2016)	18	16% (3 female ministers)
41. The government of Dusko Markovic (2016-2020)	21	19% (4 female ministers)
42. The government of Zdravko Krivokapic (2020-2022)	14	28% (4 female ministers)
43. The government of Dritan Abazovic (2022-2023)	20	20% (4 female ministers)
44. The government of Milojko Spajic (2023 -)	23	17% (4 female ministers)

It is worth noting that women have predominantly held positions that align with traditional gender roles. These positions include Minister of Education, Science, and Innovation; Minister of Labor and Social Welfare; Minister of Culture and Media; Minister of Public Administration, and others.

Since 2012, only two women have served as Minister of Defense. They are Milica Pejanovic- Djuricic (2012) and Olivera Injac (2020).

CONCEPTUAL DEFINITIONS

6.

In order to understand the content of this report, it is necessary to understand key concepts, such as (1) hate speech; (2) sexism; (3) digital violence.

Hate speech is defined by the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination (LPD) from 2014, in line with the Council of Europe's recommendation. According to Article 9a of the LPD, hate speech encompasses "any expression of ideas, statements, information, or opinions that propagate, incite, or justify discrimination, hatred, or violence against an individual or group due to personal characteristics, xenophobia, racial animosity, anti-Semitism, or other forms of intolerance, including expressions of nationalism, discrimination, and hostility towards minorities." Additionally, Article 7 of the LPD addresses unwanted verbal conduct aimed at undermining an individual's or group's dignity, and fostering a hostile and demeaning environment, thereby recognizing harassment and discrimination.

In cases of repeated and extensive discrimination, Article 20 of the LPD acknowledges severe forms of discrimination, including the dissemination of discriminatory content via public media or the presentation of such material and symbols in public spaces.

The Criminal Code of Montenegro, in Article 168 (Endangerment of Safety), penalizes threats to life stemming from hatred as an act endangering an individual's security. Moreover, Articles 370(1) (Incitement to Ethnic, Racial, and Religious Hatred) and 443(3) (Racial and Other Discrimination) of the Criminal Code prosecute public incitement to violence and hatred, as well as the dissemination of hatred and intolerance. Additionally, Article 19 of the Law on Public Order and Peace outlines a misdemeanor for insults based on national, racial, or religious origin, ethnic origin, or other attributes, whether through speech, writing, or any other means.

Sexism - According to the Council of Europe's Recommendation on Preventing and Combating Sexism CM/REC (2019), sexism is defined as "any act, gesture, visual representation, spoken or written word, practice, or behavior based on the idea that a person or group of persons is inferior because of their gender, occurring in the public or private sphere, whether online or offline, with the purpose or consequence of: (1) violating the essential dignity or rights of an individual or group of individuals; or (2) causing physical, sexual, psychological, or socio-economic harm or suffering to an individual or group of individuals; or (3) creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or offensive environment; or (4) posing obstacles to the autonomy and full realization of the human rights of an individual or group of individuals; or (5) maintaining and reinforcing gender stereotypes.

Gender-based violence against women encompasses violence targeted at women because of their gender, or that disproportionately affects women. (Istanbul Convention, Article 3).

There are **different forms of online violence**: (1) cyberstalking; (2) cyberbullying; (3) doxing; (4) non-consensual pornography and (5) trolling.

7. ANALYSIS OF ONLINE VIOLENCE

7.1. METHODOLOGY

During the implementation of the project, the Center for Monitoring and Research (CeMI) conducted social media monitoring to track the occurrence of gender-based disinformation and violence in the online environment. The monitoring focused on analyzing content on Facebook, considering that this social network is widely used among citizens of Montenegro. The presented results in this section are based on data and analyses obtained through the CrowdTangle platform, which provides access to public information on Facebook.

In order to collect relevant data and form a valid sample, the monitoring was conducted from January 2022 to January 2023. Due to the unpredictability of events leading to attacks on women in politics, certain examples in this report include information collected outside of the specified timeframe. This approach was applied to provide a comprehensive and clear picture of the situation, taking into account the specific events characterizing attacks on women.

Through the CrowdTangle platform, social media monitoring on Facebook included inappropriate content such as inappropriate comments, insults, content, reactions, and more. During the monitoring period, the observed activities were monitored on 114 pages, including: government institutions (15);¹⁴ media/portals (44); meme pages (18); NGOs/Civil Society Organizations (23); and political parties (14). It is important to note that CeMI conducted monitoring of profiles of government institutions, NGOs, and political parties not with the assumption that these profiles actively promote content that incites violence against women in politics, but with the aim of monitoring and analyzing public reactions of these actors to hate speech directed towards women in politics in Montenegro.

7.2. EXAMPLES OF ONLINE HARRASMENT TARGETING WOMEN IN MONTENEGRO'S PUBLIC-POLITICAL SPHERE

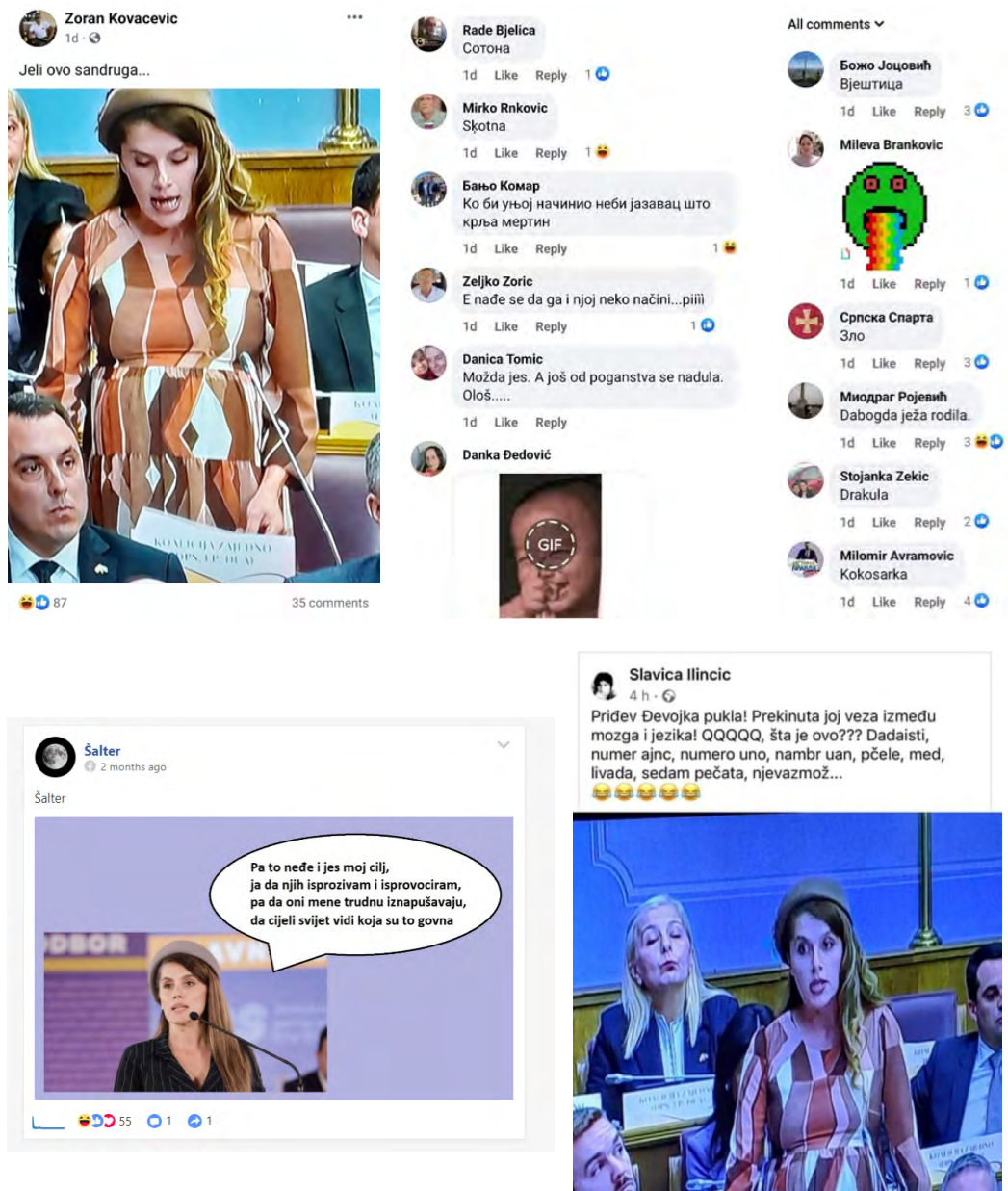
7.2.1. EXAMPLE NO. 1:

HATE SPEECH TOWARDS MP ALEKSANDRA VUKOVIC KUC

Mrs. Aleksandra Vukovic Kuc, an MP from the Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS), is confronting systematic online violence and hate speech due to her political positions. There are numerous instances of hate speech directed at MP Vukovic Kuc, and this report will particularly delve into the most recent incident, which unfolded during her pregnancy. Specifically, on October 30, 2023, Vukovic Kuc addressed the Montenegrin Parliament, expressing her stance on the appointment of Mr. Andrija Mandic as the new president of the Montenegrin parliament. In her speech, she highlighted Mr. Mandic's refusal to acknowledge Montenegro as an independent state, his support for Russian aggression against Ukraine, and his denial of the Srebrenica genocide. Subsequent to this address, there was a negative social media campaign (conducted by meme pages and private profiles) aimed at the parliamentarian, accompanied by a slew of inappropriate comments that not only criticized her political beliefs but also intruded into her personal life and pregnancy.

¹⁴ Agency for Electronic Media of Montenegro; European Union in Montenegro; Media Institute of Montenegro; Media Syndicate of Montenegro; Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Public Administration of Montenegro; Ministry of Culture and Media of Montenegro; Ministry of Defense of Montenegro; Ministry of Justice of Montenegro; Ministry of Education, Science and Innovations of Montenegro; Ministry of Internal Affairs of Montenegro; Parliament of Montenegro; Government of Montenegro; Police Department of Montenegro.

Images 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5:



The online violence against MP Vukovic Kuc has been strongly condemned by representatives of certain political parties (DPS, Civic Movement URA, Liberal Party), numerous non-governmental organizations, while none of the parliamentarians from the parliamentary majority have reacted or publicly condemned these attacks.

Images 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11:

Vuković: Najoštrije osuđujem uvrede upućene poslanici Vuković Kuč, svjedočimo izlivima mizoginije i govora mržnje

Potpredsjednica Građanskog pokreta URA Milena Vuković najoštrije je osudila uvrede upućene na društvenim mrežama poslanici Aleksandri Vuković Kuč i istakla da nažalost ponovo kao društvo svidjedoćimo izlivima mizoginije, govora mržnje i diskriminacije prema ženama koje se bave politikom.

Portali Analitici
Londra

"Političke, vjerske, nacionalne ili bilo koje druge razlike nikako ne bi smjele biti povod za širenje govora mržnje, a naročito ne prema ženama, majkama, ćerkama, bakama, koje su oduvijek imale značajnu ulogu u mnogobrojnom društvu i njegovom razvoju. Mizoginiji prosto ne smije biti mjesta na našoj javnoj sceni" poručila je Vuković.

Sloboda govora se, kaže ona, završava tamo gdje počinje da ugrožava drugoga.

"Zato pozivam sve građanke i građane da javni prostor ne koriste na način koji nije primjeren ni mnogo nerazvijenim državama. Naše društvo uz sve razlike mora njegovati kulturu dijaloga i poštovanja prema drugima i drugačijima kako bi išlo naprijed" zaključila je Vuković.



← **Post**



Danijel Živković
@danijel_cg

Sramni komentari na račun kolegice [@AVposlanica](#) koji su se pojavili na društvenim mrežama nakon njenog nastupa u Skupštini Crne Gore, na najbolji način opisuju stanje u kojem se nalazi crnogorsko društvo. Napad na buduću majku, ćerku, sestru i prije svega - (1/2)

7:38 PM · Nov 1, 2023 · 9,027 Views

[Portal Analiza](#) / [Politika](#) / Željezničari: Stranim komentari na račun Vuković-Kežić opisuju stanje u kojem se nalazi oragonsko društvo

Živković: Sramni komentari na račun Vuković-Kuč opisuju stanje u kojem se nalazi crnogorsko društvo

Sramni komentari na račun kolegice Aleksandre Vuković-Kuč koji su se pojavili na društvenim mrežama nakon njenog nastupa u Skupštini Crne Gore, na najbolji način opisuju stanje u kojem se nalazi crnogorsko društvo, ponučio je v.d. predsjednika Demokratske partije socijalista (DPS) Danijel Živković.



Portal Analysis



Predsjednik Liberalne partije Vatroslav Belan uputio je poruku podrške poslanici DPS-a Aleksandri Vuković Kuč u njenoj borbi protiv mizoginije, neostvarenih i frustriranih šovinista.

"Poslanica Vuković, sve njene kolegice i sve slobodne i hrabre žene u Crnoj Gori nisu same", naveo je Belan u objavi na twitteru, podsjećajući da su slobodne i hrabre žene sačuvala Crnu Goru i da će ih biti sve više.



Centar za monitoring i istraživanje - CeMI

2 November 2023 ·

 #CeMI javno osuđuje mizogene napade i govor mržnje usmjeren prema poslanici Aleksandri Vuković Kuč, koji se od strane pojedinaca širi putem društvenih mreža.

!! #CeMI javno osuđuje svaku vrstu trivijalizacije ovakvih online napada i diskreditacije pojedinaca.

!! #CeMi apeluje na to da govor mržnje i mizoginiji napadi na žene koje javno izražavaju svoje mišljenje nijesu vrsta kritike, kao što se navodi na portalu Borba.me, već su vrsta sve učestalijeg govora mržnje i online nasilja prema ženama.

!! #CeMI apeluje na promovisanje otvorenog, fer i konstruktivnog dijaloga u društvu i podržava napore usmerene na suzbijanje online nasilja, govora mržnje i diskriminacije kako bi se doprinijelo razvoju zdravog demokratskog društva.

10:00



facebook



Radosav Vrbica

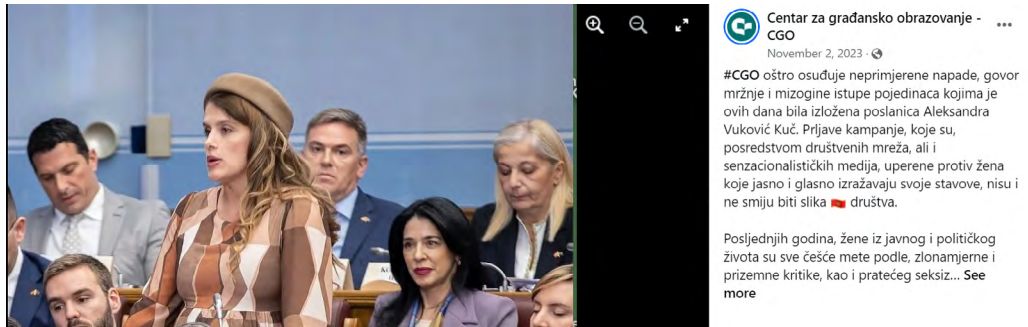
1 d • 

Došao sam samo da pitam...

Ko će da zaštiti ovu ženu od ovakvih komentara i treba li s ovakvim polusvijetom da se mirimo? Objava je strica predsjednika opštine Nikšić. Kaje li se Andrija Mandić i zbog toga što mu je ovakvo biračko tijelo?



Images 12 and 13:



7.2.2. EXAMPLE NO. 2:

HATE SPEECH TOWARDS FORMER MP DRAGINJA VUKSANOVIC STANKOVIC

Another instance of misogynistic attacks and the propagation of hate speech is directed towards the former MP of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), Ms. Draginja Vuksanovic Stankovic, primarily due to her political engagement and ideology.

For years, she has been vehemently opposing the dissemination of Serbian nationalist ideology, and as a result, she has become a target of insults, threats, and hate speech on social media, orchestrated by meme pages and anonymous individuals.

The latest blow to the ethics and morality of Ms. Vuksanovic Stankovic comes from the hypocritical actions of Serbian Radical Party leader and convicted war criminal Vojislav Seselj. In November 2023, Seselj published a book titled "Montenegrin Wh*** Draginja Vuksanovic," which represents a grossly offensive attack on the character and integrity of the former parliamentarian.

This follows Seselj's previous insults directed at Montenegrin women, including Ms. Vuksanovic Stankovic, in response to her condemnation of his speech on Happy TV in January 2022, where he insulted the people of Cetinje. In response to his derogatory remarks, the Agency for Electronic Media (AEM) took action by temporarily banning the broadcast of certain content from Happy TV in Montenegro, citing hate speech and discrimination against members of the Montenegrin nationality.

Despite this, Seselj persists in his overtly sexist rhetoric, continuing to attack the morals and integrity of the former parliamentarian. Vojislav Seselj discussed his book on the Serbian television channel TV Happy.

Image 14 and 15: Offensive book by Vojislav Seselj, which constitutes a brutal insult to the morals and integrity of former MP Ms. Draginja Vuksanovic Stankovic



The release of this book has faced condemnation primarily from the President of Montenegro, Mr. Jakov Milatovic, as well as from certain members of the Government, political parties (URA, DPS, LP), and the NGO sector.

Images 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21:



foto: URA

Potpredsjednica URE Milena Vuković najoštrije je osudila sramotne uvrede prema bivšoj poslanici Skupštine Crne Gore Draginji Vuksanović Stanković upućene od Vojislava Šešelja. „Uvijek moramo osuditi mizogine i seksističke istupe u javnom životu ukoliko želimo društvo jednakih šansi za žene i miškarce. Sloboda govora ne smije da ugrožava drugoga, a pogotovo

POLITIKA CRNA GORA

Injac: Uprkos razlikama sa Draginjom, osuđujem Šešeljevu mizoginu publikaciju

On nov 12, 2023

Share      

3

Gradonačelnica Glavnog grada Olivera Injac kazala je da „na ovakav govor mržnje i uvrede, žene u Crnoj Gori ne smiju ostati nijeme“.

Ona je ovo kazala komentarišući najnoviju knjigu prof. dr Vojislava Šešelja naslovljenu Montenegrska ku' veštija Draginja Vuksanović.



POLITIKA

Đeka osudio govor mržnje prema Vuksanović Stanković: Šešelj mora snositi odgovornost za svoje riječi i postupke

© 13/11/2023 11:32 Izvor: CDM



Vijesti VIJESTI Forbes SPORT SVIJET LIFESTYLE TV VIJESTI KULTUR

POLITIKA DRUŠTVO EKONOMIJA CRNA HRONIKA AUTO



Vujović, Foto: Ministarstvo kulture i naslijeđa

N. V.

13.11.2023, 07:08h

Najoštrije osuđujem seksističke i mizogine uvrede na račun bivše poslanice Skupštine Crne Gore Draginje Vuksanović Stanković, saopštila je ministarka kulture i medija Tamara Vujović.



Slike: Vlada Crne Gore

Podgorica, (MINA) – Ministar prostornog planiranja, urbanizma i državne imovine, Janko Odović, najoštrije je osudio govor mržnje i mizoginiju čija je meta bivša poslanica Socijaldemokratske partije Draginja Vuksanović Stanković i poručio da crnogorsko društvo ne smije ostati nijemo na takve napade.

Odović je na društvenoj mreži X, povodom publikacije koju je objavio Vojislav Šešelj, naveo da sloboda izražavanja nikada ne smije biti zloupotrijebljena u svrhu širenja mržnje.

„Crnogorsko društvo ne smije ostati nijemo na ovakve napade i ne smijemo dozvoliti da retrogradni pojedinci na ovaj način blate bilo koga i truju naš javni prostor“, poručio je Odović.

Naslovna • Vijesti • Politika

Milatović: Postupak Šešelja nevjerovatna gadost političkog marginalca

„Potpuna podrška, bez obzira na političko neslaganje koje imam sa gospodom Vuksanović Stanković. Ona je žena, građanka, uvažena profesorica i neko čija je ličnost povrijeđena“, kazao je Milatović

41890 pregleda 267 reakcija 71 komentar (a)

Images 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26:

Mladi Evrope sad: Osuđujemo Šešeljev mizogini napad na Vuksanović-Stanković

Pridružujemo se osudama mizoginog napada na prof. dr Vuksanović-Stanković od strane marginalnog srbijanskog političara Vojislava Šešelja, poznatog trovača javnog prostora i promotera najprimitivnijih vrijednosti, saopštili su mladi PES-a.



Rubrika: POLITIKA

DPS: Mandić i Marković otvoreno podržali Šešelja

Iz te partije ističu da je, namjerno prećutkujući ogavni uredak Šešelja, osobe koja decenijama sije zlo na ovim prostorima, Andrija Mandić praktično aminovao napisano

Aktuelno | 14.11.2023 16:20



portalzeta.me

Kaluđerović o Šešeljevoj knjizi: Osobe bez srama napadaju žene - Portal Zeta

Свиђа ми се Коментар Подели

и још 6

Најрелевантнији ▾



Zlatko Popovic

Ne napadaju zene ..nego zenu

1 h Свиђа ми се Одговори



Markovic Aleksandar

Podrska za Seselja.

DPS Demokratska partija slobode Crne Gore

Društvo slobode



Zakaži sastanak

Postani član

DPS: Šešeljevo zlo kulminiralo kroz sramotnu publikaciju, Draginja Vuksanović Stanković je heroína Crne Gore

"Slučaj Draginje Vuksanović-Stanković ne smije se svesti na pojedinačni seksizam i mizogeni nastup"

Zeković: Izdvajam mišljenje, reakcija crnogorske Vlade u slučaju Šešeljeve knjige nije adekvatna

We are still witnessing numerous inappropriate content directed towards the former parliamentarian and leader of the SDP, Draginja Vuksanovic Stankovic. Consequently, we have selected some examples of spreading hate speech on social media:

Images 27 and 28: Inappropriate photo directed to Ms. Draginja Vuksanovic Stankovic



Images 29 and 30: Screenshot of hate speech expressed through comments on Facebook



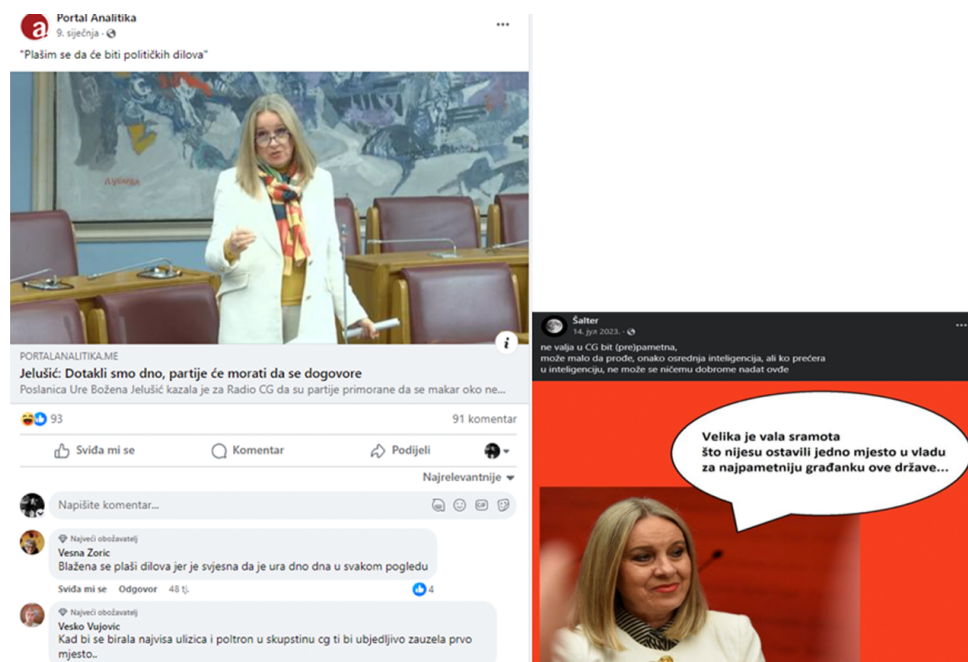
7.2.3. EXAMPLE NO. 3:

HATE SPEECH TOWARDS BOZENA JELUSIC AND SUADA ZORONJIC

Ms. Bozena Jelusic and Ms. Suada Zoronjic have been confronted with a wave of hate speech and misogyny sparked by an article published on the "Aktuelno" portal. The article titled "The Departure of Political Prostitution Starlets" was published during the submission of electoral lists for parliamentary elections. The article was prompted by the absence of the Civic Movement URA MPs, Bozena Jelusic and Suada Zoronjic, from the electoral list.

The article has elicited numerous reactions and public condemnations, prompting Mr. Jelusic to announce legal action. The incident highlights the increasingly prevalent verbal violence against women, particularly those in the public-political sphere in Montenegro, who are always expected to perform at a higher standard than their male counterparts. What is even more distressing is the apparent lack of an end in sight to such practices. Certain media outlets, for various reasons, deem it acceptable to publish scandalous and inappropriate articles not only to demean women but also to promote gender-based stereotypes and prejudices in order to fuel hate speech towards women in general. The Aktuelno portal has labeled MP Bozena Jelusic as the "champion of unparalleled hypocrisy," and MP Suada Zoronjic as "perpetually restrained."

Images 31, 32, 33, 34 and 35: Examples of hate speech directed to Ms. Bozena Jelusic





Svetlana Samardžić @svetlana_sesa · Jan 4, 2023



Replying to @GrunaStramen_

Jelusicka licemjer br.1 🤢🤢🤢



46



Svi na glavu @Negosto1 · Jun 6, 2023



E kakav je bidon ova **Jelusicka** na Reflektor:)



138



8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report focuses on the grave social issue of online violence and hate speech, posing a significant threat to gender equality, freedom of expression, and democratic principles in Montenegro.

Instances of online violence against women in the public-political sphere starkly illustrate the seriousness of this problem. Women in Montenegro endure persistent attacks, insults, threats, and degradation online due to their political activism and public expression of their views. Such violence and hate speech not only constrain their ability to freely voice their opinions but also foster an environment of fear and hostility, potentially discouraging other women from participating in public-political discourse. This issue extends beyond local concerns and reflects broader global challenges pertaining to gender equality and democracy.

It is disconcerting that responses to hate speech against women often lack consistency, as exemplified by the case of MP Vukovic Kuc, wherein representatives of the parliamentary majority failed to publicly address or condemn the hate speech. CEDEM asserts that greater societal attention is required for this issue in Montenegro. A systematic response must be developed, and cooperation between the government, media, regulatory bodies, and non-governmental organizations must be strengthened to halt the escalating online violence directed at women and dissenters in general.

8.1. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- It is necessary to implement education programs on gender equality and political participation in order to break gender stereotypes and raise awareness of the importance of women's inclusion in political processes;
- It is necessary to adopt laws that clearly define what constitutes online violence and ensure adequate legal mechanisms for the protection of victims and the sanctioning of perpetrators;
- Increasing the visibility of women in politics: Through targeted media campaigns, public debates and promoting positive examples of female leaders, the active participation of women in political life should be encouraged in order to create a more inclusive political space;
- Increasing quotas for women's participation in politics to ensure greater representation of women in political decision-making;
- Change in media reporting: The media should actively work on providing objective information about violence against women in politics, avoiding sensationalism;
- It is necessary to establish cooperation with international organizations and partners for the exchange of best practices and support in the implementation of effective strategies to combat online violence against women in politics;
- Continuous promotion of policies that support gender equality and ensure the protection of women in the political space, through active lobbying and support of relevant legal initiatives.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS:

9.

Bots are software entities programmed to operate autonomously on the internet, often simulating human behavior on social media platforms. This makes it challenging for users on the other end of the network to ascertain whether the account is managed by a human or is automated. The term also encompasses individuals who create fictitious profiles on social media to promote their own viewpoints and interests while targeting those with whom they disagree.

Cyber violence encompasses any form of violence perpetrated using digital technologies, such as the sending of malicious messages. It constitutes a broad category that includes various types of internet-based harassment, but typically refers to a sustained and pervasive pattern of harmful or threatening online messages sent with the intent to cause harm to someone.

Cyberstalking involves using the internet and digital technologies to spy on and harass another individual. It represents a particularly severe form of internet-based harassment that can escalate to threats of physical harm against the target. It may include monitoring, false accusations, threats, and often extends to offline stalking. It is a criminal offense and can result in restraining orders and even imprisonment for the perpetrator.

Deepfakes are digitally altered images and videos that use artificial intelligence to combine real original material with synthesized content, creating hyper-realistic depictions of individuals saying or doing things that never occurred.

Disinformation refers to false or misleading information created or shared with the intention to cause harm or benefit to the perpetrator. The intent to cause harm can be directed towards an individual, group, or institution.

Doxing involves the act of publicly revealing sensitive or personal information about someone without their consent, aiming to embarrass or humiliate them. It ranges from sharing personal photos or documents of public figures to disclosing private messages of an individual in an online group without their permission. The key element is the lack of consent from the victim.

Outing also encompasses a form of online shaming. Influence campaigns are organized actions undertaken by state or non-state actors to influence domestic or foreign public opinion, often to achieve strategic or geopolitical objectives. These campaigns increasingly employ a range of disinformation tactics to manipulate public opinion and undermine the integrity of the information environment.

Excluding is the deliberate act of leaving someone out. It occurs in instances of personal bullying but is also utilized online to target and harass victims.

Junk news involves the dissemination of propaganda and ideologically extreme, hyper-partisan, or conspiratorial political news and information under the guise of providing

credible information. It encompasses news publications comprising easily verifiable false content or commentaries presented as factual news. Commercially driven clickbait—i.e., money-driven, highly shared content with low journalistic production standards—represents a vast and mostly unexplored media ecosystem.

Computer propaganda involves the use of algorithms, automation, and human curation to intentionally distribute deceptive information across social media networks.

Computational propaganda entails learning from and mimicking real people to manipulate public opinion on various platforms and device networks.

Coordinated inauthentic behavior occurs when individuals or groups act collectively to mislead others about their identities and activities. The crucial aspect here is the organized and deceptive behavior of the actors rather than the substance of the content they share.

Impersonation when someone creates a fake profile in the name of another person or hacks into their account. A cyberbully pretends to be their victim online and tarnishes the victim's reputation.

Masquerading occurs when a bully creates a fictional online profile or identity solely to harass someone over the internet. This could involve creating a fake email account, a fake profile on social media, and adopting a new identity and photos to deceive the victim. In these cases, the bully is someone the victim knows well.

Meme pages are impersonal profiles created on social media to convey specific messages in a satirical and humorous manner, through parody, joke, or some form of social, political, or other critique. Specifically, a meme denotes content based on a single concept (most commonly an image with text or video) that a user modifies and shares in the online space without altering the underlying structure and recognizability of that content. Unauthentic actors are individuals or organizations that act to mislead others about their identities and activities.

Revenge pornography involves the unauthorized sharing of content via the internet, as well as threats to share explicit sexual content to embarrass and humiliate victims.

Misinformation is false information shared without the intention of causing harm or injustice. In some cases, actors may unintentionally share misinformation thinking it's true.

Deception is similar to doxing, with an added element of deception. In these situations, the perpetrator will befriend their target and gain their trust. Once the perpetrator gains the trust of their target, they abuse that trust by sharing the victim's secrets and private information with third parties.

Dissing/Denigration refers to the act of spreading cruel information about their target through public posts or private messages to destroy their reputation or relationships with others. In these situations, the bully tends to have a personal relationship with the victim, either as an acquaintance or as a friend.

“Roasting” is a type of online bullying that involves posting or directly sending insults and curses to their target. “Roasting” is similar to trolling but is typically a more direct attack on the victim to provoke an online argument.

Trolling involves deliberately disrupting communication occurring over the internet. This includes intentionally spreading false information, fueling unreasoned debates, insulting on any basis, and other forms of provocation to elicit reactions and comments from people. Internet trolls are individual users of internet platforms who deliberately harass, provoke, or intimidate others, often to divert attention and undermine harmony. Trolls can act as individuals and in this capacity spread hate speech. Trolls can also be involved in coordinated inauthentic behavior.

Malinformation is accurate information shared with the intention of causing harm or benefit to the perpetrator, often involving the publication of private data in public.

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