

ŽENE U MIROVNIM PROCESIMA
ROMKINJE

FROM FORMAL OBLIGATION

TO ACTUAL PROGRESS

IMPROVING DATA COLLECTION AND
RESEARCH ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN
THROUGH IMPLEMENTATION OF GREVIO
GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS IN BOSNIA AND
HERZEGOVINA

FORMALNE OBAVEZE DO STVARNOG NAPRETKA
ŽENE I SA TIN VADIT I NETOM
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IMPROVING DATA COLLECTION AND RESEARCH ON VIOLENCE AGAINST
WOMEN THROUGH IMPLEMENTATION OF GREVIO GROUP
RECOMMENDATIONS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

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CONTEXT

By ratifying and entering into force the Council of Europe Convention on Prevention and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention) without reservations, Bosnia and Herzegovina committed to: "a) protect women from all forms of violence, preventing, processing and eliminating violence against women and domestic violence, b) contributing to the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and promoting substantial equality between women and men, c) developing a comprehensive framework of policies and measures for protection and assistance to all victims of violence against women and domestic violence, d) improvement of international cooperation on eliminating violence against women and domestic violence, e) providing support and assistance to organizations and internal bodies to cooperate effectively toward adopting a comprehensive approach to eliminating violence against women and domestic violence." ¹ The Istanbul Convention established a monitoring mechanism through forming a Group of Experts on Activities against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO)² and the Committee of Parties to the Convention³, monitoring and communication procedures with member states and civil society organizations, and the preparation of reports with findings and recommendations to member states.

Bosnia and Herzegovina submitted [the first report](#) on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in February 2020. GREVIO received both [the Alternative Report of NGOs in BiH](#) and its [Addendum](#). The first [Report of the GREVIO Group](#) on the assessment of legislative and other measures on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the [Recommendations of the Committee of Parties of the Istanbul Convention](#) were published at the end of 2022. Bosnia and Herzegovina was invited to submit a report to the Committee of the Parties on the measures taken to implement the Committee's recommendations, by 4 December, 2025, as well as to implement the conclusions and recommendations of the GREVIO Group.

*This document focuses on the recommendations of GREVIO within **Chapter II - Integrated Policies and Data Collection**, namely Article 11 of the Istanbul Convention, which regulates **the obligation of parties to collect disaggregated relevant statistical data at regular time intervals** and to support research on cases of all forms of violence covered by the scope of the Convention. The document presents a summary of the findings of the Baseline GREVIO Report to Bosnia and Herzegovina, recommendations to BiH authorities toward data collection and research, the summary analysis of current situation, as well as recommendations for improvement of data collection and their transparency, with the aim of strengthening the systemic response to violence against women and domestic violence through the application of international standards.*

¹ Art. 1, paragraph 1, item ae of the Istanbul Convention

² Ibid, art. 66

³ Ibid, art. 67

GREVIO'S RECOMMENDATIONS ON DATA COLLECTION AND RESEARCH


SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

GREVIO Baseline Report to Bosnia and Herzegovina emphasizes that **development of public policies on various forms of violence against women and domestic violence requires evidence based policy making - systematically collected comparable data from all administrative sources on all forms of violence covered by the scope of the Istanbul Convention.**

GREVIO welcomes the strategic commitment of the government institutions of RS and FBiH expressed in the strategies for protection against domestic violence toward collecting data on domestic violence, as well as the *Committee for Monitoring Implementation of the Istanbul Convention and Cases of Femicide in BiH*, which was established at the state level of BiH.

GREVIO states that apart from the data on domestic violence collected by RS and FBiH government institutions, **official statistics are collected only for physical violence, murder and criminal acts of sexual violence/rape.** Data for other forms of violence against women, such as **stalking, sexual harassment, female genital mutilation, forced abortion, and forced marriage are not available.**

The GREVIO Baseline Report states that statistical data on violence against women and domestic violence are collected by the RS and FBiH statistical bureaus and that the BiH Agency for Statistics compiles these data and publishes them in annual bulletins. Official data are disaggregated by the gender of the perpetrator and the victim, but not by the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim, as well as by age, and therefore do




not show a complete picture of the experiences of violence to which the victims were exposed. It is not possible to monitor the number of reports by victims and the number of open investigations in cases of violence/criminal offences, nor to monitor cases in all stages of police and judicial procedures and actions.

GREVIO also states that ***the data base managed by the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina (HJPC BiH) through the Court Management System (CMS)*** is currently the most complete source of data on all forms of violence against women. The first database within the CMS system enables the monitoring of investigative actions by prosecutor's offices and, among other things, contains the number of open investigations according to the type of criminal offense, as well as the sex of the perpetrator and the injured party/victim, but not their mutual relationship. Another database within the CMS contains data maintained by the courts, and enables the monitoring of various stages of court proceedings, and contains data on the number of convictions and the type of sanctions for criminal offences. The CMS database is not publicly available and does not contain the data provided by the police. Due to that, it is not possible to track path of criminal cases from report to conviction. CMS database depends on the quality of data entered into the database by judges and prosecutors.

These data are disaggregated by sex of the perpetrator and the injured party/victim, not according to their mutual relationship. The data are presented only by groups of criminal acts, not by individual criminal acts, which also prevents their further analysis and use in terms of defining measures within the public policies.

The GREVIO report states that the HJPC BiH maintains disaggregated data on criminal offenses at all jurisdictional levels, including murders. However, these data are not classified by the gender of the victim or the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator. The RS and FBiH statistical bureaus and the judiciary collects data on murders classified by the sex of the victim and the perpetrator, but not by their mutual relationship. GREVIO states that these shortcomings ***make it impossible for government institutions to systematically and comprehensively analyze the number of femicides in Bosnia and Herzegovina.***

Data on ***protection orders imposed by the courts in connection with violence against women*** do not contain information on the violation of those measures, the sanctions imposed in case of violation of the measures, and the number of cases that resulted in revictimization or murdering of the victims of violence. GREVIO points out that these data are extremely important in order to assess whether protection orders are really effective in preventing further harm to victims of violence. Data on the number of decisions on custody/visitation/residence of children that specifically took into account reports of domestic violence are not recorded/available.



The GREVIO Baseline Report indicates that in the Republika Srpska, apart from data on domestic violence collected from the sectors of health and social protection and education, no comparable data are collected for other severe forms of violence against women. In the BiH Federation, no data on domestic violence or any other form of violence against women are collected within the health sector. The Baseline Report also emphasizes that *the Rulebook on the Content of Records and Reporting on Domestic Violence* has been adopted in the Brčko District of BiH, but that data on social protection is not available.

Although NGOs, as well as municipal, cantonal and entity public institutions that provide social protection services keep some relevant statistics, there is no single database on cases in which the service was refused and for what reasons.

Government institutions in BiH ***do not collect disaggregated data on to the number of asylum requests based on gender based persecution and their outcomes***, since only basic data are available on the expression of interest in seeking asylum and obtaining international protection, and they are disaggregated by sex.

GREVIO welcomes the publication of ***population surveys in the period 2013-2018 in BiH***, which focus on violence against women and domestic violence and cover the territory of RS and FBiH. The Report emphasizes that the goal of Article 11, Paragraph 2 of the Istanbul Convention is conducting population surveys that include all forms of violence against women covered by the scope of the Convention, and that data on forced marriages, forced sterilizations, forced abortions and female genital mutilation are not included in these surveys, although cases of these forms of violence have been observed.

GREVIO points out that many ***research projects in BiH in the field of violence against women and domestic violence*** are carried out by NGOs, with the financial support of international organizations, while government institutions in BiH insufficiently perceive researches as a strategic priority or support them financially. Most research focuses on domestic violence and only partially addresses other forms of violence against women. Public policies do not rely on expertise and research findings, and research is not conducted to assess the impact and level of implementation of existing policies in the field of combating violence against women. Special focus is given on lack of research targeting important area of harmful impact on children who witness domestic violence.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF GREVIO

GREVIO urges that the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina regularly and systematically collect administrative data on all forms of violence against women in all phases of the criminal justice process (from reporting, investigation, to the opening of criminal proceedings and its conclusion), which are disaggregated by gender and age of the victim and the perpetrator, on the entire territory of BiH. Such data should be collected by all administrative sectors, including the police, prosecutor's offices, centers for social work/social protection services, the public health sector and other relevant public services, with the aim of analyzing the pathway of cases through the criminal justice system, levels of convictions, disappearance of cases in the stages of proceedings, the level of recidivism in conducting criminal offenses in this area, as well as identifying gaps in the institutional response. GREVIO further encourages the authorities of BiH to train and raise the awareness of the staff working in these administrations about the importance of submitting the requested data to those in charge of collecting and analyzing it.

In addition, it is necessary to collect the following data:

- a. The number of protective measures imposed in the context of civil proceedings and the number of protective measures imposed in the context of criminal proceedings, their violation, and sanctions imposed for violation of measures in cases of all forms of violence against women and the number of cases in which a woman was exposed to revictimization or murder despite such measures;*
- b. Number of decisions on custody/visitation/residence of children that took into account reports of domestic violence in the urgent procedure;*
- c. Number of cases in which women victims of violence requested and received compensation from the perpetrator of violence or the state for criminal offences covered by the scope of Istanbul Convention;*
- d. The number of victims of war related sexual violence who requested, obtained or were denied the status of civilian victims of war and who exercised rights from such status, including receiving compensation.*

Regarding Asylum Procedures:

GREVIO encourages the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to introduce a data collection system that will record asylum applications based on gender based persecution, the basis of the persecution being considered, and the outcome of the application.

Regarding Population Surveys:

GREVIO calls on the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to, at regular intervals, conduct population surveys on the prevalence of forms of violence covered by the scope of Istanbul Convention that have not been the subject of research so far, including forms of violence that affect particularly marginalized groups of women. In addition, GREVIO encourages authorities to ensure the application of harmonized and comparable methodologies to ensure comparability of results.

Regarding Research:

GREVIO encourages the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to step up efforts to support research, including financial support:

- a. About all forms of violence against women, including those forms that are currently not investigated, as well as the impact that witnessing violence in the family has on children;*
- b. Research that evaluates existing policies and legislative measures, and assesses their level of implementation.*

GREVIO recommendations regarding data collection and research are further emphasized through **the Recommendations of the Committee of the Parties of the Istanbul Convention (recommendation no. 6)**.

THE CURRENT SITUATION ON DATA COLLECTION ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Current criminal legislation in BiH is not harmonized in terms of recognition of acts of violence against women and domestic violence covered by the scope Istanbul Convention. Amendments to the RS Criminal Code from 2017 introduced the criminal offenses of *Stalking, Sexual Blackmail, Sexual Harassment, Forced Sterilization and Female Genital Mutilation*. The FBiH Criminal Code and the Criminal Code of the BiH Brčko District do not recognize these criminal acts. Domestic violence in BiH Brčko District is still double normed, as a criminal offense and as a minor offence. As a result, official statistical data is not collected for criminal offences of violence against women that are not yet recognized by law. The available official data for domestic violence in

the BiH Brčko District indicate a small number of cases that are registered as a criminal offense⁴, which may indicate that the majority of reported cases are processed through minor offence proceedings that entail lighter penalties.

Bosnia and Herzegovina have no common database on all forms of violence against women and domestic violence at the state level. There is the lack of **clear methodology as well as legal, administrative and political obstacles** for developing a joint system for data collection and analysis. Data collection on various forms of violence against women covered by the scope of the Istanbul Convention by public institutions that process cases of violence and provide support and assistance to victims of violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina remains **incomplete and inconsistent**.

Different public institutions use their own methodology and forms to collect data on cases of violence, which makes it impossible to compare data and consistently monitor the state and response of institutions in response to violence against women and domestic violence, as well as their use in the context of defining measures and activities within public policies. Data collected within public institutions are only partially publicly available, through periodic publication.

Data collected within the CMS system managed by the HJPC BiH for the judicial response to criminal offenses in this area are not publicly available. The HJPC BiH maintains and publicly publishes on an annual level data on **the structure of crime in BiH**,⁵ from which it is possible to monitor the situation of individual criminal acts recognized by the criminal legislation in BiH, including criminal acts recognized as acts in which women appear as predominant victims, from the reporting of the criminal offence to the imposing sanctions. However, *these data do not provide insight into the structure of perpetrators and victims of violence, their gender, age, mutual relationship and other characteristics.*

Data on the pathway of cases of violence against women and domestic violence through the system are only partially publicly available. For example, the RS Ministry of Family, Youth and Sports collects and publishes data from public institutions in the RS that are recognized as subjects of protection against domestic violence (police, prosecutor's offices, courts, centers for social work, health and educational institutions). The data is collected on a semi-annual basis and is available on the website of the Ministry. The data, among other things, contain information on the number and type of emergency protection orders and protection orders

⁴ Data on the structure of crime for 2022. in the database maintained by the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina, they indicate that only 16 reports of domestic violence were received in Brčko District.

⁵ High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina, annual reviews of crime structure, available at: <https://vstv.pravosudje.ba/vstvyfo/B/141/kategorije-vijesti/1198/1363/114475>

proposed by the individual public institutions that are recognized as subjects of protection from domestic violence, and number of measures imposed by the courts, as well as the gender and age structure of the persons to whom they were imposed. Data on the number of violated protection orders and imposed sanctions due to violation of protection orders are not available within these records.

The FBiH Gender Center also collects data that includes domestic violence, sexual violence and other forms of gender based violence. These data are collected from the HJPC BiH, and used for the purpose of planning, and reporting to other government bodies and bodies for monitoring international obligations (CEDAW, GREVIO) through state reports, and are available based on the request. An electronic database for domestic violence has also been established for the territory of the FBiH.

No information is available on whether the collected data on violence against women and domestic violence are systematically compared and analyzed in a way that would enable their use in the context of planning measures aimed at improving the actions of public institutions in the chain of protection.

Data on cases of femicide (gender related murders of women) are not publicly available by public institutions, except for data that are periodically published through statistical bulletins at the state and entity levels. These data are incomplete, because apart from the sex of the victim, they do not indicate the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim, nor other data that would enable a more detailed analysis of cases through the identification of institutional measures in the period prior the femicide. NGOs collect and analyze data on cases of femicide based on independent monitoring of media reporting, through monitoring of criminal proceedings of gender based violence, and collection of data on measures taken by institutions in individual cases of violence that preceded femicide. Reports and analysis of NGOs in BiH are not regular, due to insufficient financial support and resources that would enable continuous monitoring and reporting. At the initiative of the BiH Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, the Agency for Gender Equality, the HJPC BiH started recording data on the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator in cases of murders of women.⁶ This data is not publicly available.

Systemic data on various forms of violence against women and domestic violence to which marginalized groups of women are exposed, such as women with disabilities, women in rural areas, Roma women, and other categories are only partially collected and analyzed. For example, within the data that the RS Ministry of Family, Youth and Sports collects from centers for social work, there is a category in which data on

⁶ Public Statement of the Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of the Istanbul Convention and Cases of Femicide in BiH on the occasion of the femicide in Gradačac, August 11, 2023. <https://arsbih.gov.ba/saopstenja-odbora-za-pracenje-provedbe-i-izvijestavanje-po-istanbulskoj-konvenciji-i-femicidu-u-bosni-i-hercegovini-povodom-femicida-u-gradaccu/>

vulnerable groups of women victims of violence should be collected ⁷, however this section remains without data. As part of the data collection for domestic violence led by the RS Ministry of Family, Youth and Sports, as well as the data collection led by the FBiH Gender Center, data on the disability of victims of violence is collected. There is a lack of data on the ethnicity of the victims of violence or other characteristics, apart from disability, that would enable the comparison of data and their use for planning measures to improve the actions of public institutions in providing support to vulnerable groups of women, and prosecuting perpetrators, including subjects of protection against violence against women and domestic violence.

There are no publicly available data or analysis of the impact of domestic violence on children who witness violence. As part of the data for domestic violence collected by the RS Ministry of Family, Youth and Sports, data are collected by public institutions (centers for social work and educational institutions) on the number of measures taken in cases that a child has been identified as a victim of domestic violence. As part of the form that collects data from health institutions, data is collected on the number of actions taken to help a child that witnessed violence, and the number consulted experts outside the institution. Although important, these data do not allow analysis of the impact of domestic violence on children who witness violence.

Population surveys on all forms of violence against women and domestic violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina are not conducted on a regular basis. The BiH Gender Equality Agency, with the support of UN Women in UNFPA in BiH, conducted such a survey in 2013,⁸ while the OSCE conducted the survey in 2018.⁹ The first survey does not contain specific data on the different forms, characteristics and impact of violence to which vulnerable groups of women are exposed, while the second survey mentions Roma women, women with disabilities, women refugees and displaced persons, migrant women, women from rural areas, single mothers, however without clear data.

Research by public institutions that assess the impact of measures within public policies on the prevention and suppression of various forms of violence against women and domestic violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the impact of witnessing domestic violence on children, are not available. NGOs carry out independent monitoring of certain areas of systemic response to these forms of violence and publish analysis that are used in public advocacy processes to improve the actions of institutions

⁷ The description of the rubric is "other important personal characteristics of the victim that are not listed, for example: national minorities, sexual orientation, pregnant women and others (the number of victims who are additionally vulnerable and potentially discriminated against multiple times due to some personal characteristics or affiliation).

⁸ Prevalence and characteristics of violence against women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Agency for Gender Equality BiH, 2013, https://arsbih.gov.ba/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/studija_prevalenca.pdf


⁹ Research on violence against women in Bosnia and Herzegovina - Well-being and well-being of women, OSCE, 2018, https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/f/7/439724_0.pdf

and alternative reporting of international bodies that monitor the implementation of mandatory standards in this area (GREVIO, CEDAW).¹⁰ These analysis are not available on a regular basis and depend on the available financial support, and resources of the organizations.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR URGENT ACTION TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION ON DATA COLLECTION AND RESEARCH

- **Establish a framework methodology at the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina** in order to systematically collect and disaggregate official data on all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence and femicide in BiH, taking into account the basic parameters recommended by bodies that monitor the implementation of the mandatory international standards in BiH (GREVIO, CEDAW). This data should include sex, age, ethnicity, disability, type of violence and relationship between perpetrator and victim and be publicly available on a regular basis;
- **Harmonize and/or establish (where they do not exist) methodologies and systems for collecting comparable data by public institutions** that come into contact with victims and perpetrators within public institutions, with the objective of systematically collecting and disaggregating official data on all forms of violence against women, including and domestic violence and femicide **in the Republika Srpska, the Federation of BiH and the Brčko District of BiH**, taking into account the parameters recommended by the bodies that monitor the implementation of international standards in BiH (GREVIO, CEDAW) which include sex, age, ethnicity, disability, type of violence and relationship perpetrator and victim. Make data publicly available on a regular basis;
- **Enable public institutions that collect data** on all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence and femicide, at all levels at which this data is collected in Bosnia and Herzegovina, **to have a sufficient number of trained women and men professionals and resources for comparative and regular analysis of the collected data**, which should also include assessments of the implementation of measures on prevention and combating of these forms of violence, and assessment of situation regarding to the observed shortcomings and recommendations of bodies that

¹⁰ For example: Protection of women from violence in the judicial system of BiH, 2020, Foundation of United Women from Banja Luka and Center for Women's Rights from Zenica, <https://udruzene-zene.org/publikacije/rodno-zasnovano-nasilje/zastita-zena-od-violence-in-the-judicial-system-of-Bosnia-and-Herzegovina/>



monitor the application of mandatory international standards (GREVIO, CEDAW). Funds for training and additional resources for conducting analysis of collected data should be regularly planned and allocated through public budgets of institutions;

- **Facilitate the implementation of regular population surveys** on all forms of violence against women in BiH, which will include **the collection and analysis of data on the exposure and impact of violence on multiple marginalized groups of women**, such as Roma women, women with disabilities, women from rural areas, single mothers, elderly women, female migrants, etc. **as well as proposals for special measures to enable undisturbed access to protection and support based on their specific needs;**
- **Enable financial support from public budgets at all levels in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as to strengthen the support from the international funds for continuous independent monitoring of the work of public institutions** that act in the field of preventing and suppressing all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence and femicide, as well as collecting and analyzing the data **conducted by civil society organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina** toward implementation of mandatory international standards and recommendations of bodies that supervise their implementation (GREVIO, CEDAW).

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