

MONTENEGRO

- **Campaign #SafeAtHome,¹ as part of the national #StayAtHome Campaign,² was launched by the Operational Team for Fight against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence** with the support of the British Embassy in Podgorica. The aim of the campaign is to show the victims that they are not alone and that they can receive assistance and protect themselves and other family members from violence.
 - **The materials published via social networks and media, within the campaign, include the phone numbers of the:**
 - Police Directorate - to report the perpetrators of violence;
 - National SOS Line for Victims of Domestic Violence, which is free of charge, anonymous and available 24/7, where the victims of violence are provided with comprehensive support;
 - The numbers for specialised free legal aid and psychological support such as Women's Safe House, SOS line for Women and Children Victims of Violence, Women's Rights Centre and the Centre for Roma Initiatives.
- **All organisational units of the Police Directorate, i.e. police officers in the local and central levels, were ordered to urgently/promptly take measures in all cases of domestic violence and violence against women** and, whenever possible, to use the legal possibility of ordering a violent person's removal from the apartment or other housing environment, which will be followed by a mandatory protective measures by police officers.
- **The heads of the competent state prosecutor's offices, by Instruction for Urgent Proceeding, were ordered to act promptly and urgently prosecute domestic violence cases**, as the victims of domestic violence, both in Montenegro and throughout the world, need to be provided with an efficient institutional protection at these challenging times.
- **A Technical Group was formed to prepare the guidelines/recommendations as soon as possible for institutions to act in cases of domestic violence and violence against women during the coronavirus pandemic** (within the regional programme "Implementing norms, changing minds" which is funded by the European Union and implemented by UN Women, aims at ending gender-based discrimination and violence against women, with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged groups of women, in six Western Balkans countries and Turkey).
 - The Supreme State Prosecutor's Office recommended to the Technical Group more severe criminal sanctions for perpetrators of crimes and misdemeanours in cases of domestic violence, as well as increased attention in the interpretation of the concept of domestic violence. In addition to this.
- **Phone application to facilitate reporting of violence is being developed and trial release is expected soon.**

¹ The campaign was launched by the Ministry of Interior, the Police Directorate and the non-governmental organisations which are members of the Operational Team for Fight against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence.

² The campaign was launched in order to prevent the spread of coronavirus in Montenegro

- **Misdemeanour Court, in the cases of domestic violence and violence against women, organises trials by handling the cases of immediate arrest (where the accused persons are immediately brought to the competent magistrate after committing an offence and police custody).** In addition to this, efforts are made to close cases as soon as possible. **Preventive measures, which play a special role in prevention, have been imposed also during this period along with the imposed penalties, such as prohibition of harassment and stalking, mandatory psychiatric treatment and protection in a healthcare institution, restraining order and removal from apartment.** All cases are governed by the principles of the Istanbul Convention, with due diligence of the court focused to protect victims.
- Although according to some information from civil sector, the number of complaints they received has been increased, the statistics of this Court shows that there has been no increase in cases in the field of domestic violence and violence against women. Thus, in March, (when sanitary and health control measures were introduced) a total of 57 of these cases was received, 22 of which were with prompt arrest of the accused, while the number of received cases in February was slightly higher (64 cases in total, 32 of which with immediate arrest of the accused). In the first ten days of April this year, a total of 13 domestic violence cases i.e. violence against women, were received, 10 of which were related to immediate arrest of the accused. All of this indicates that repressive and preventive court practice have been equally enforced by the measures imposed by the court.