

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND THE ISTANBUL CONVENTION: ADDRESSING THE DIGITAL DIMENSION OF VIOLENCE

Parliamentary Round Table organised by the PACE Parliamentary and Electoral Cooperation Division in cooperation with the Montenegrin delegation to PACE

Venue: *Splendid Conference & Spa Resort, Hall of Dynasties*, Budva, Montenegro

Date: 27 November 2026 from 16.30 - 18.00

Background

Violence against women remains a widespread reality across Europe. The Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention establishes clear obligations to prevent violence, protect victims and prosecute perpetrators.

An increasing proportion of this violence now takes place online. It includes harassment, threats, the non-consensual sharing of images and coordinated attacks on social media. These forms of abuse often extend violence experienced offline, while their scale and persistence amplify the harm they cause.

GREVIO has addressed this issue in its General Recommendation No. 1 on the digital dimension of violence against women. It identifies gaps in existing legal and policy frameworks and calls for the Convention to be applied in a way that reflects how abuse is carried out today.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has stepped up its work in this area, notably through Resolution 2649 (2026) on Promoting and strengthening the implementation of the Istanbul Convention and Resolution 2646 (2026) on Violence and hate speech against politicians as a threat to democracy. The Committee of Ministers has also addressed these issues through Recommendation CM/Rec(2026)2 on Accountability for technology-facilitated violence against women and girls.

Women parliamentarians are particularly exposed. As public figures, they are frequent targets of gendered abuse and threats, especially online, which can impede their work and deter them from engaging fully in political life. Discussions held during the Dublin pre-conference event on violence against elected representatives further highlighted the growing concern over hate speech and threats - both online and offline - as a serious challenge to democratic functioning, linked in part to increasing polarisation and misinformation.

Parliaments have a key role to play in responding to these challenges through legislation, oversight and internal standards. This round table will provide an opportunity to examine these issues and consider possible responses.

PARLIAMENT OF MONTENEGRO

Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Objectives

- Examine how violence against women takes shape in digital spaces;
- Consider the implications of GREVIO's General Recommendation;
- Discuss the situation of women parliamentarians, both as targets and as legislators;
- Identify possible responses by parliaments;
- Exchange national experiences

Draft Programme

Welcome and Opening Remarks

- **Anđela Vojinović**, Vice-President of the Parliament of Montenegro
- **Petra Bayr**, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

Thematic Session

Speakers

- **Damir Gutić**, Minister of Social Welfare, Family Care and Demography of Montenegro
- **Tanja Gonggrijp**, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe
- **Jelenka Andrić**, Chair of the Gender Equality Committee of the Parliament of Montenegro
- **Iris Luarasi**, Member of PACE, member of the PACE Network Women Free from Violence, former President of GREVIO
- **Maria-Andriani Kostopoulou**, President of GREVIO
- **Maja Raičević**, Director of the Women's Rights Centre
- **Zanda Kalniņa-Lukaševica**, Chair of the Latvian delegation to PACE

Moderated Thematic session

Interactive segment / floor discussion

- **Interventions and exchange with participants**

Conclusions

- **Vasilije Čarapić,** Head of the delegation of Montenegro to PACE
- **Despina Chatzivassiliou,** Secretary General of the PACE

Moderator

- **Aneta Spaić**, Full Professor at the University of Montenegro's Faculty of Law

PARLIAMENT OF MONTENEGRO

Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE