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Illuminating Realities and Complexities: Unveiling the Verities and Challenges Faced by Young Women in the Context of Gender- Based Digital Violence

Case study Serbia

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Structure

- **Defining the problem**
- **Normative framework**
- **Diagnosis**
- **Recommendations**
- **Q&A**



Defining the problem
of

DIGITAL GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

- The specificity of digital technologies lies in their lack of spatial and temporal constraints, enabling instant and boundless contact, communication, and surveillance
- They provide new channels and opportunities for the spread and exacerbation of gender-based violence and other forms of hatred
- Violence enabled by technology does not occur in isolation; instead, technology extends and worsens the "continuum of violence" (Kelly, 1987; 1988) and "intimate intrusions" (Stanko, 1985) that women experience throughout their lives, both online and offline.



According to the UN Woman research data...

1

every third woman has experienced some form of digital violence by the age of 15, including unwanted, offensive, and explicit emails and SMS messages.

2

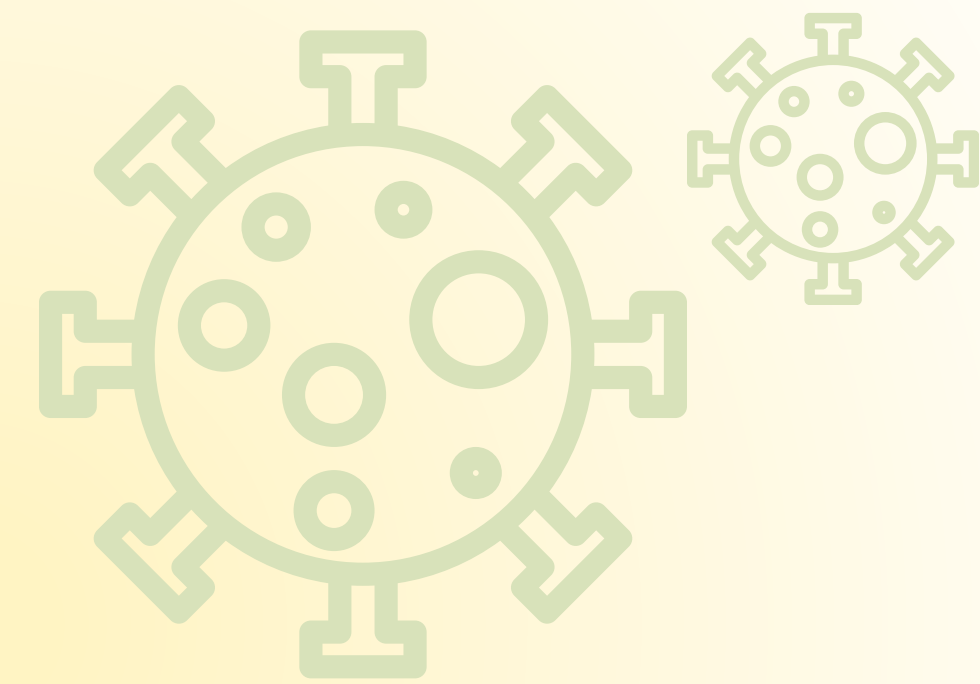
the risk of digital violence is higher for girls aged between 18 and 29.

3

women are exposed to digital violence 27 times more than men



During the COVID-19 pandemic, the risks of gender-based digital violence significantly increased due to movement restrictions and social isolation, as well as the greater involvement of vulnerable groups, such as women and girls, in the digital world.



The risks of gender-based digital violence are particularly pronounced in women and girls who have been exposed to various forms of discrimination in physical spaces, and the increase in this risk correlates with factors such as their migration status, nationality, disability, religion, sexual orientation, political affiliation, or social visibility

Typology of Gender-Based Digital Violence:

- **Cyberstalking**

- **Cyberbullying**

- **Doxxing/targeting**

- **Cybersexual harassment**

- **Revenge porn**

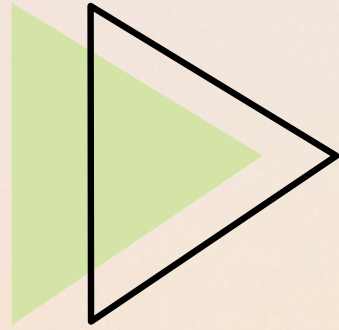
Normative Framework of the Republic of Serbia

Law on the Basics of Education and Upbringing	Criminal Code of the Republic of Serbia
Law on the Organization and Jurisdiction of State Authorities for Combating High-Tech Crime	Rulebook on the protocol of action in the institution in response to violence, abuse, and neglect
Law on Gender Equality	Gender Equality Strategy for the period from 2021 to 2030

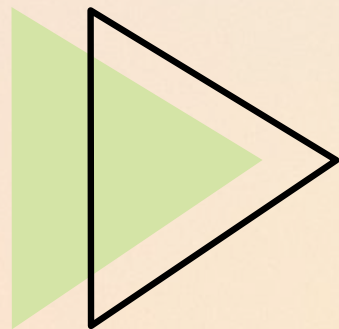
In October 2021, the Group of Experts of the Council of Europe for Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO) made a recommendation regarding the "digital dimension" of violence against women. GREVIO identified deficiencies in the legislation of the Republic of Serbia related to digital gender-based violence and recommended a clear definition of the digital dimension of violence against women.



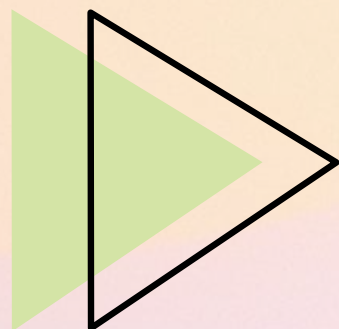
Diagnosis



Insufficient recognition of digital violence against women as gender-based violence and violence in general, as well as insufficient recognition of the category of young women as particularly endangered and exposed to this form of violence.



Lack of adequate prevention measures and mechanisms for monitoring achieved results in the suppression of digital gender-based violence.



Collaboration among all stakeholders in this field is not adequately realized and coordinated.

Recommendations



- **Conducting a comprehensive study and creating data-driven manuals**
- **Increasing the implementation of digital strategies for education and awareness-raising among service providers**
- **Integrating the issue and prevention of digital gender-based violence more extensively into existing platforms and apply additional digital strategies to change societal norms (e.g., through social media), provide e-psychosocial support, and implement professional support strategies**



Recommendations

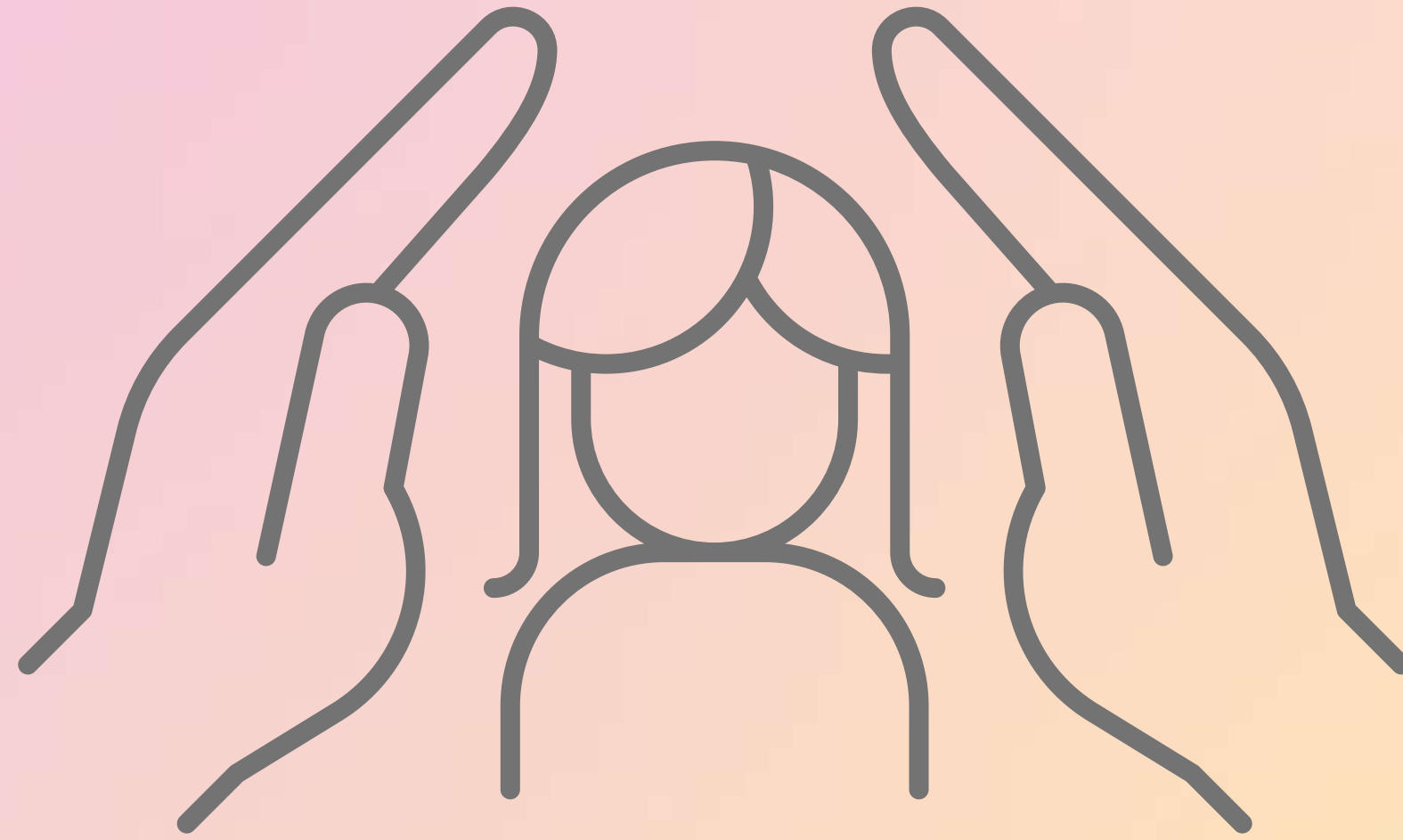


- **Full engagement of the Gender Equality Body in local self-government units**
- **Networking women's NGOs and youth organizations**
- **Promoting activism among men and boys in the fight against gender-based digital violence**
- **Systematic implementation of an intersectional approach**



References

- Criminal Code of the Republic of Serbia ("Official Gazette of the RS," numbers 85/2005, 88/2005 – correction, 107/2005 – correction, 72/2009, 111/2009, 121/2012, 104/2013, 108/2014, 94/2016, and 35/2019).
- "Digital Intrusions: Technology, Spatiality, and Violence Against Women" by Harris, Bridget & Vitis, Laura (2020), published in the Journal of Gender-Based Violence, Volume 4(3), pp. 325–341.
- Law on Personal Data Protection ("Official Gazette of the RS," number 87/2018), available at: [Law on Personal Data Protection \(paragraf.rs\)](#).
- Law on the Fundamentals of Education and Upbringing ("Official Gazette of the RS," numbers 88/2017, 27/2018 – other laws, 10/2019, 27/2018 – other law, 6/2020, and 129/2021).
- Law on the Organization and Jurisdiction of State Authorities for Combating High-Tech Crime ("Official Gazette of the RS," numbers 61/2005 and 104/2009).
- Regulation on the Protocol of Action in Institutions in Response to Violence, Abuse, and Neglect ("Official Gazette of the RS," number 30/10), available at: [Protocol on the Procedure in Institutions in Response to Violence, Abuse, and Neglect \(paragraf.rs\)](#).
- "In Front of the Screen" research on gender-based violence in the digital space, conducted by the organization Atina in 2021.



Thank you for your attention!