

RECOGNIZING AND PREVENTING VIOLENCE

(Women's Experience in Theory and Practice)



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INTRODUCTION

Violence against women, the sin of silence or the risk of speech

Violence against women, including domestic violence, is a hidden phenomenon and a widespread form of human rights violation, which harms not only individuals, but families and the society as a whole. At all times and in all places, violence against women is recognized mainly as a private problem, because the roots of this "hidden" phenomenon are deeply woven into the patriarchal tradition of cultural and social systems. For centuries this phenomenon has been considered as the "sin of silence". Usually, every society encourages the view that the family is a private matter, which results in that the domestic violence is not spoken about, and those with less power within the family, meaning women and children, have no ability and support to get out of the violence. Violence against women has become a matter of public interest only in the 60's of the last century, through the concept of violence against children, which has broken the sacrosanct "privacy" of the family, which had existed until then. The complexity of this issue proved to be not only a private problem of the family members, but a widespread social problem that requires urgent social action/reaction. Violence against women is a worldwide phenomenon that required "risk" of public speech and resistance against the "sin" of silence and privacy. The systematic research of this phenomenon, initiated through activities of feminist organizations in the 70's and 80's of the last century, led to changes in the understanding of the violence against women as a violation of basic human rights on the international level.

The first document of the UN that directly addresses the issue of domestic violence is the Recommendation no.19 "Violence against Women" CEDAW Committee on the Prevention of Discrimination against Women in 1992¹. *This document is important because it introduces the concept of "gender-based violence", which refers to any harm caused to a woman, which is a cause and consequence of unequal power relations that leads to the subordinate position of women, both in the private and in the public sphere*².

The precise data on the extent of violence against women do not exist, neither for globally or for Europe, nor for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Many studies tried to measure the extent of violence against women on a national, regional or global level. Although the methodologies differ, the data from these surveys suggest that in different countries from one-fifth to one-quarter of all women have experienced physical violence at least once, until adulthood. Over 45% of women have experienced some form of violence committed by men from their nearest social environment.

According to UN estimates, presented in the study by Women in an Insecure World (2005), annually, between 113 and

¹Recommendation provides legal interpretation of CEDAW, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1992). The definition of discrimination provided in the Convention notes that gender-based violence against women is recognized as a form of discrimination against women.

² Gender-based violence is deeply rooted in the social and cultural structures, norms and values that govern society and it survives because of the culture of denial and silence. The use of this term in the documents (national and international) aims to protect women from violence, which stems from gender stereotypes and specifically includes women, and in that sense it needs to be understood.

200 million of women demographically disappear. They are victims of infanticide, food and medical care deprivation, sexual exploitation and domestic violence.

Women in the age between 15 and 50 die more as victims of violence conducted by men, than from cancer, malaria, traffic accidents or war related events.

The data on violence against women and domestic violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina are disturbing. The Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2006) states that "a large number of women in Bosnia and Herzegovina is facing a problem of domestic violence," and the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina states that "domestic violence (...) is increasingly becoming "common" crime" in the country and therefore it has become a "serious problem of security".

In addition to that, a group of NGOs³ in an Alternative report on the implementation of CEDAW in B&H (2010) stated that "the violence against women, particularly the domestic violence, remains a widespread problem in BiH, and a serious violation of fundamental human rights and freedom of women."

In the last ten years in Bosnia and Herzegovina, various studies and general public attention is increasingly focused on the social reaction to the problem of violence against women in the family context.

Social reaction in B&H is usually understood as "protection from violence" and it includes the laws, policies and measures to ensure "security", but not the "welfare and the well-being" of different "vulnerable" groups of people, primarily women.

The term "protection against violence" refers to interventions aimed at achieving the security and the establishment and enforcement of legal sanctions against the perpetrators.

In this way, the concept of "security" that has been established to control the abuser, shows that the protection from violence is primarily a legal issue and the responsibility of police and juridical system. This concept of "protection"⁴ is insufficient for the type of a social reaction and state intervention which would require a professional intervention in solving specific problems due to a neglect of the gender dimension in the laws, bylaws and regulations and government policies, and the lack of a unified registration of cases of domestic violence, including violence against women.

Given the growing social threat of domestic violence, studies which would point to gaps in the system of "protection" of domestic violence victims are essential.

This publication which analyzes the theoretical and legal bases in the approach to the problem, and which is based on

³ Prava za sve (Sarajevo) and Helsinški Parlament građana (Banja Luka) in cooperation with Fondacijom Cure and Žene Ženama (Sarajevo), Forumom žena (Bratunac), Budućnost (Modriča), Lara (Bijeljina) and Udruženim ženama (Banja Luka).

⁴ Protection from violence is not considered from the perspective of human rights, and therefore does not take into account the impact of behavior and wishes of the victim or of the perpetrator, as well as the needs and expectations of victims in cases of domestic violence, or includes measures to assist and empower victims, which other subjects protection are required to provide.

the data collected on the protection, support and assistance to victims of violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the period June 2011 until May 2013, confirms the thesis that violence against women and domestic violence are complex phenomena and in order to understand the term "protection" of victims of violence at the individual, group and structural level different approaches need to be employed.

This publication contains five sections: Introduction (violence against women – The sin of silence or the risk of speech) theoretical conceptualization of violence against women (part one); the phenomenon of violence and social reaction (part two), organized in two sections, the socio-historical context and legal protection standards that talk about the forms of violence, factors which influence the social response to this phenomenon through the "framework" of international instruments, national legislation, and practices of (un)coordinated community response, the importance of the women's movement to protect women from violence, research, research results and their interpretation (part three) and the conclusions and recommendations for further research.

Theoretical concept of domestic violence

When we talk about domestic violence, there is no agreement among scholars about the exact meaning of the term "violence" and who members of the "family" are. This has an impact on the social reaction and the question of to whom this protection is owed and what kind of behavior should be sanctioned (Lukic, 2003). Different theorists have studied the causes of violence and the violent behavior of persons and victims, in order to determine the characteristics of this phenomenon, and now it is possible to talk about the psychological, sociological, criminological, ecological and feminist theories. According to the psychological approach, the causes of violence are traced back to the experiences from the childhood (abuse leads to abuse), personality traits (high need for power and control), personality disorders (borderline, antisocial, narcissistic) and mental illness (substance abuse). Although the psychological characteristics or diseases can not affect aggressive behavior, the responsibility for the violence should not transfer from the perpetrator to the victim. At the same time, one should bear in mind the role of social factors and the responsibility of social institutions to help and support the victims. Psychological theories about the causes of domestic violence cannot explain some of the characteristics of this phenomenon, such as: Why are women, children and other vulnerable family members most often the victims of violence, why in 90% of cases of domestic violence there is no mental disorder, or how come that more than 50% of the perpetrators and / or victims had no experience of childhood abuse as the cause of violence and suppression in adulthood. Sociological and feminist theories perceive this violence through the concept of power and control and stress the importance of socially constructed concepts - gender, family, social status, etc. According to the sociological approach (social learning theory, the theory of exchange) causes of violence are structural factors, stress, conflict, poverty and unemployment, especially in certain subcultures. All family members have a role in maintaining the violence and its transmission from generation to generation. It is often said that women belong to social group with less social privilege and power, which is defined as a minority group, with respect to the sociological meaning of the term minority, which is usually found in a disadvantaged social position of the dominant group that owns the resource. However, the multi-factorial sociological approach cannot explain why by far the largest percentage of domestic violence happens to women and why violence occurs in some families. Feminist theories gave simple answers to these questions and indicated that domestic violence is the most general social phenomenon, present in all times and cultures (spatial and temporal universality)⁵. Control through coercion is the main mechanism of domestic violence. Feminist approach to domestic violence against women is the basis for the key documents of the United Nations and the Council of Europe. Feminist theory states that the violence against women in the family context indicates the form of continued violence and abuse, the situation of repeated victimization, where the victims are vulnerable because they share a home with the abuser, and at the same time share feelings of love and loyalty to the abuser (Kelly, 2003:55-8). Any imbalance of power in the family and partnership is the potential situation which can lead to violence (Ignjatovic, 2011:21).

⁵ These theories have highlighted the fact that domestic violence is not a clash "natural" for the family members who have different interests and it is not the conflict of "equal", but the struggle for power of "unequal". Domestic violence is an important source of ensuring subordination of powerless family members living together. Patriarchy as the widest context of abuse and discrimination within the family and the social construction of gender produces and maintains domestic violence through structural and ideological influences.

Feminist theories of inequality and oppression and theory of differences have made a revolutionary shift in the understanding of the social environment and explaining and analyzing domestic violence, incest, and sexual harassment and have opened up the traditional institution of marriage and motherhood. Ecological theories define the violence as a result of the interaction of personal, situational, social, political and cultural factors (Heise, 1998).

Although there are differences in the theoretical interpretations, we can say that there is an agreement on key issues when talking about domestic violence against women: violence is a violation of fundamental human rights; there is inter-generational transmission of violence; there is a clear link between domestic violence and the amount of violence in society, including the violence depicted in the media; violence is explained by the interactive effect of several factors; domestic violence includes a wide range of threatening behavior of one or more family members; consequences of exposure to violence are numerous and have significant effect on mental and physical health; and women can be exposed to domestic violence throughout their lives (Ajduković, 2000:11-16).

Part One

The phenomenon of violence, historical context and social reaction

The global nature of violence against women is reflected in its presence in all of times and spaces, in all cultures and social systems, and it is always directed toward women as a group and not a woman as an individual. The systemic and systematic nature of this form of violence is very close to all hierarchical systems (sexism, racism, homophobia, etc.). They however are often not recognized in the concept and practice, and the explanation for it ignores the context of the historical and cultural differences and specificities, as well as local events that influence the changes in reactions (individual and social evolutions) in cases of violence against women (Yick, 2001; Piispa, 2002, Hester, 2004; Lybecker Jensen and Nielsen, 2005). But globalization, international concerns and transnational connections influenced the perception of the phenomenon of violence and the spread of specific forms of violence⁶, but also have influenced the direction of policies and actions in this area (Hester, 2004).

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe highlights the fact that violence against women is on the rise and that it is present in each member county of the Council of Europe; it has no geographical boundaries, it is not limited by age, it is not a special preference of any particular race, and that it is present in all types of family relations in each society; it is one of the most widespread form of human rights violations in the world, it is a consequence of unequal power between men and women, it leads to serious discrimination against females, within society and the family and takes away women's ability to enjoy fundamental freedoms, and therefore it must be prevented. The costs of violence are huge. Women's NGOs indicate that patriarchy, social factors and the intergenerational transmission of violence, have an impact on the occurrence of domestic violence, but also highlight the lack of determination of the broader social factors on the daily lives of men and women when it comes to the prevention and care, which results in a solution that rests solely on repression rather than the potential restorative justice.

1. The phenomenon of violence against women

Violence against women is a phenomenon familiar in all cultures and social systems of all times and all places, and the most serious form of violation of women's human rights (Mamula et al., 2010). Present in all societies, it is distinguished by the dominant forms of violence, relation towards violence, legal mechanisms for sanctioning the violence and the mechanisms for the protection of women victims of violence. Violence against women is often referred to as gender-based violence, a term that was first set out in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (UN, 1993)⁷, and today it is recognized by international and national bodies and institutions. It refers to any act of violence that results in, or it is likely to lead to physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering of

⁶ Specific forms of violence can be: trafficking, sexual exploitation, labor exploitation (household slaves).

⁷ Violence against women is "any act of violence based on gender / sex basis, which results in, or could result in, physical, sexual or psychological injury or suffering of women, including threats of such acts, coercion or deprivation of liberty, regardless of whether occurs in public or in private life."
"The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women

women. It includes threats, coercion and / or deprivation of liberty. Within this Declaration, it was said for the first time that it is not just about physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, but also all forms of violence against women that are occurring throughout society, or are already executed and / or unsanctioned by the state. Simply stated, gender-based violence includes those forms of violence in which women are the majority of victims and in the perpetrators are mostly male (Mamula and Komarić, 2005). Two dominant forms of violence against women are domestic violence and sexual violence. Domestic violence is widespread and occurs among all socio-economic groups. It includes physical, psychological, sexual and economic violence, and attempted murder, as well as murder. It is characterized by strong gender asymmetry, as well as a large number of unreported cases. Victims of violence are systematically subjected to suspicion, ridicule and accusations, and the socio-cultural context, in which we live today, in most cases, blames the victims for the experienced violence. Through the amendments to the Criminal Law of B&H and the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence, which criminalizes domestic violence, violence against women is becoming a more visible phenomenon.

Violence against women is the most common, widespread form of violence. Different methodologies of data collection on the prevalence of violence⁸ give different indicators on the annual rate of violence. Records of reported cases of domestic violence, although containing a number of deficiencies, confirm its gender-based character and the extent of the phenomenon. All current findings confirm that it is not a transient problem and an isolated event.

Violence lasts for many years before it is reported and resolved. Reasons why women stay in an abusive relationship and why they decide to withdraw the lawsuit are different and often such actions are incomprehensible for professionals who deal with the problem of domestic violence. Domestic violence is accompanied by a series of gender stereotypes (beliefs, attitudes and assumptions) and they are based on simplified explanations of this complex phenomenon.

Myths about this phenomenon shape not only public opinion but also the attitudes of women towards violence to which they are exposed, which then affects their different behavior and choices (Ajduković, 2000:33-42).

Domestic violence is characterized by a certain regularity in emerging, duration and termination, which is known as a cyclical dynamics⁹ of violence. In the literature, the behavior by which one partner realizes the power and control is described by the model of "the wheel of violence" (Pence, 1993, 1995). The perpetrator uses various strategies and tactics (abuse, threats, isolation, manipulation of children, economic abuse). It is important to examine the link between the violence against women and violence against children in the family, which is often analyzed separately in our society. Non-recognition of these links lead to erroneous assessments and interventions, which leads to adverse consequences (Ignjatovic, 2004, 2006), including a further exposure of women and children to violence, and can even lead to death. The consequences of violence are multiple and interconnected.

⁸ The most common sources of the prevalence of violence are: database in judicial systems, hospitals and emergency services, national researches, statistics on murder, rape.

⁹ The first phase - reporting of minor incidents, increase tensions. The second phase is stage/phase of escalation. The third stage is the stage of regret and apology (at this stage, the woman usually returns to abuser). After this phase, tensions are growing again, and the cycle begins again.

First of all, there are health related consequences, physical and psychological integrity of the victims, their ability to work and the overall socio-economic status.

Consequences for the society are enormous costs to suppress violence, increased morbidity and mortality, and an increased number of suicides, drug and alcohol abuse, and other pathologies, reduction of working population and educational opportunities, due to poor quality of life of families in which violence occurs, the erosion of social capital and many others (Milinović, 2011:26-29).

Violence against women is a combination of different types of violence, places of execution and various perpetrators, and it refers to different forms of violence (domestic violence, violence in the community, violence perpetrated or condoned by government officials and institutions where women work, and violence against women and a violation of human the rights of women during war or armed conflict (Council of Europe Recommendation (Rec (2002) 5)).

Violence against women and domestic violence are complex phenomena, and it is therefore necessary to use a variety of approaches to understand them better. Violence against women threatens the enjoyment of human rights of women, especially their basic rights to life, safety, dignity and physical and emotional integrity. It is recognized that violence harms not only women, but also the society as a whole.

It is important to emphasize the fact that some groups of women, such as women and girls with disabilities are often at a greater risk of violence, exploitation and abuse within the family and beyond.

2. The etiology of violence

Etiology is the primary determinant of behavior disorders, especially in domestic violence. In the center of all events, in addition to a number of factors, is the personality and its interaction with the social environment that results in favorable and/or unfavorable situations. The family is the fundamental factor for the development of healthy, mature and resilient personality, and it is modeled by a steady and diverse socio-psychological mechanisms.

Families can be a functional and dysfunctional. For the development of healthy, mature, resistant and capable personalities, disturbed family interactions dominated by numerous modalities of aggression and violence, are very harmful. Domestic violence occurs in the course of a disrupted communication and interaction between perpetrators and victims who are in mutual formal, cultural, social and emotional relationship.

The basis of all the violence and aggressions is a pathogenic factor. The sources of destructive forces are: pathological urges, needs and motives that are sure signs (indicators) of disorders and personality pathology, different symptoms and their numerous reflections. In addition to the many and various forms of violence and aggression, at any time and place, domestic violence deserves special attention, from the psychological, social, educational, legal, police and judicial aspect. Until now, domestic violence has been, and still is, either in the shadows or considered as a family's

privacy matter, according to the customary, ethical, cultural and even legal framework. From the diagnostic and therapeutic aspects, among others, the reaction of subjects of the protection (police, social work, health, education, NGOs, the media and the judiciary), need to identify the psychosocial characteristics of the violence actors, especially the perpetrators and the victims. A psychological profile of the perpetrator implies a certain level of impulsivity, aggression and sadism, insecurity, preferences for drunkenness, destruction, lies, anti-sociality, ethical deficiency, lack of sensitivity, inconsistencies, emotional variability and instability, jealousy, lack of guilt, lack of integration, lack of responsiveness, irritability, neurosis and psychosis. Victims are unobtrusive, inferior, insecure, fearful, less aggressive, not resistant, dependent, vulnerable, psycho-neurotic, hypersensitive, and weak. Violence and aggression are extreme socio-pathological phenomena, associated with and caused by: mental retardation, emotional disorders, and disorders of drive, motivation, internal and external conflicts, weakening or breakdown of adaptive power, reduced resistance or express vulnerability, poverty, low social level.

The modalities (forms and shapes) of domestic violence are numerous.

The basic ones are: physical, verbal, non-verbal (psychological violence) and sexual violence. Physical violence and aggression are: assault, coercion, prohibition, abuse, fights, injuries, homicide and suicide, infanticide, sexual abuse, rape, incest, disruption and destruction of property, deprivation of basic conditions for survival. Physical violence and aggression are turbulent, extreme, striking and obvious. They are more often recognized and legally sanctioned. Almost always they are the subject of intervention by health institutions, social work, police and judiciary.

Verbal (psychological) violence is recognized through: attacks, frequent and excessive criticism, invectives, threats, intimidation, insult, undervaluation and ignoring, belittling, profanity, vulgarity, conflicts, arguments, accusations. Verbal violence is less conspicuous, visible and evident. It is rarely subject to interventions, even though it is frequent, numerous, extremely stressful and psycho-socially harmful. Nonverbal violence arises out of disturbed emotional connections and relationships, from the cold and intolerant family climate. It is manifested in actions that are, knowingly or unknowingly, targeted or spontaneously directed towards mental hurting, which causes: irritation, annoy, provoke, harassment, contempt, hatred, anger, revenge, lying, discomfort, uncertainty, tension, dissatisfaction, fear, anger, sadness, helplessness, suffering. Domestic violence involves omission, neglect, as well as psycho-social problems. Those are casual and/or daily procedures that threaten victims. They are permanent or temporary sources of lack of resistance (vulnerability) for one's personality, and they are permanently damaging: adaptive power, somatic and mental health, psychosomatic resistance, i.e., psychosocial, and spiritual balance and cause psychosomatic illness of vulnerable personality.

Violence and aggression are highly correspondent; they are causally associated with a number of socio-pathological phenomena: social diseases (somatic, psychological, psychosomatic) individual and social disorganization and dysfunction (premarital, extramarital and marriage, family, school, spiritual institutions, narrow and wider social community); sociopath (smoking, alcoholism, drug addiction, sexual depravity and violence, aggression - homicide and suicide) and crime. (Milinović, 2011:29-40).

3. The movement for women's rights protection

During the 60s and 80s of the twentieth century, feminism united women in an active movement against subjugation, oppression and patriarchy in everyday life. Patriarchy is an important topic of feminist theory and specifically refers to the subordination of women, especially if you pay attention to the marriage contract.

Feminists criticize the text of the marriage contract and claim that the marriage is more of a status, than an agreement, in which the parties can not choose content. And because of that, a marriage contract is a pillar of patriarchy in which sex/gender differences remain intact and pushed aside in bringing down the barriers against gender-based violence. Feminist politics has named women suffering related to different types of violence, the responsibility to respond to traditional gender roles and re-examined the concept of security from the experiences of women and security institutions.

In the last twenty years, domestic violence has been named as one of the most severe violations of human rights which has led to broad social debate, scientific research, and the larger interest of society and government actors, particularly women's NGOs. Thanks to a strong pressure from the women's movement, domestic violence has been recognized as a serious social problem, which from the sin of silence entered the arena of public risk of speech and concerns. The international women's movement has shown that male violence against women is a global phenomenon, and it has the same dynamics in all cultures - some differences are notable in particular communities (the burning of women, killing of women for dowry, female genital mutilation, the stoning of women, etc.). Explanation and systematic approach to an understanding of this phenomenon is related to the activities of feminist organizations in the 70s and 80s of the last century.

In the 90s of the last century, women's organizations have provided the first specialized services, support and assistance to women victims of male violence (Mladenović, 1995), by collecting data, raising awareness of the public and especially of the key stakeholders and helped that various forms of violence against women are put on the political agenda. Women in non-governmental organizations continue to actively lobby for change, gathered in a network that is dedicated to combating violence against women at the national level and yet, they are still not recognized as providers of protection from violence in the legislation.

After the women's activist efforts to recognize violence as a public health problem, for the first time the state also declares it not as a personal thing of the family members, but as a public and national issue¹⁰. Thus, violence against women, at the request of the global women's movement, is defined as a violation of basic human rights. Women's organizations have emphasized the defense of women's human rights and dignity of women, protection efficiency and

¹⁰ Domestic violence against women, through the women's movement becomes a social issue (public issue). In most countries, women's groups and organizations organized key activities: free services for women subjected to violence, data collection, preparation of studies and research, changes in laws and procedures, public awareness, encourage multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral approach, organized shelters for women and the first trainings for professionals and government institutions (Mladenović, 1995; Logar, 2004,2005; Antic Gaber, Dobnikar, and Selišnik, 2009)

constant pressure on state institutions and international organizations in order to meet the standards guaranteed in international instruments. At the beginning, women's organizations have had a great distrust in the state and state institutions, especially in the police and the judicial system, perceiving them as part of patriarchal institutions that are not in solidarity with women (Logar, 2004). This attitude has changed, says Elen Pens (1996:177): "We realized that patriarchy is not a way of thinking, but practice, so we began to think how we can change such practice of controlling the wife. She is not only controlled by the one who's beating her, but by a system as well, which protects the perpetrator and strengthens his power. So for me, our work begins in this system. Judicial system is involved in the life of violated women, and there is missing our representation of their rights".

Behind all laws that penalize domestic violence and sexual violence, stand many deserving activists and feminist women's movements that have for years advocated that such legislation is formulated and adopted in their countries. In the region, but also in our country, positive developments in combating violence against women are visible since the late 1990s, which were initiated by women's organizations that systematically deal with this problem. As positive steps to protect women from violence, we can state primarily the opening of the SOS telephone line, counseling centers and shelters for women, the necessary changes in the legislation, the development of the necessary protocols for treatment by professionals, as well as the raising of public awareness about gender-based violence.

4. Domestic violence, woman as a victim, social reaction

Male violence against women is any act against the woman's will, which endangers her mentally, physically, sexually or economically. An abuser may be a family member (husband, son, father, brother, uncle ...) or any known (friend, acquaintance, boss, and colleague) or an unknown man. It is important to know that violence can happen to any woman, and that violence is not a result of woman's behavior, but then the system of patriarchy in which men have the power, and the violence against women is a way that they maintain that power. Violence against women is an example of the abuse of power of one sex over the other, encouraged by each community during the thousands of years of history. Women have limited access to information about their rights to protection from violence, and therefore seek help only after a long-term exposure to violence, when it has left a visible impact on their physical and mental health.

For a woman, victim of violence, it is first necessary to talk and think about what she went through. Constant exposure to violence diminishes the will of the victim to leave the abuser. She has a low self-esteem; suffers the bullying; she is economically and emotionally dependent on the abuser; uncertain in relation to her own needs; she has a poor self-image, has an unrealistic belief that she can change the abuser; she believes that jealousy is proof of love; unemployment and poverty positively impact the vulnerability of women to domestic violence, women who accept the traditional male breadwinner role in the family are often abused by partners. Every woman victim of violence can **talk and break the silence**, decide to trust herself and to evaluate the tremendous work that has been invested in the children and family, **find herself a support network and make a decision that she wants to get out of situations of violence**. Reporting the violence can be a difficult decision, since women are afraid of more violence. This is a big step,

because it is made clear to man that there is someone more powerful than him, and that violence is a crime. Most women are trying to hide the violence they have suffered, because they do not know where to go, to whom to turn, and to whom they can trust. They need a SOS line that they can call in an emergency and the institutions in which they can find advices. It is necessary for them to know about all the possibilities of how to protect themselves and how to overcome what they have survived. A social response to violence against women and domestic violence is the basis for the effective protection of women against violence, and refers to the public condemnation of violence, reporting, counseling, help, running the trials, prevention and moral support.

By incrimination of domestic violence, the country works on its suppression and prevention (by giving a clear warning that this is unacceptable behavior, which society will not tolerate) and repression (punishment and holding to account for acts of violence only its perpetrators). Therefore, the social reaction should be an optimal multidisciplinary approach, a coordinated, appropriate and effective preventive action by the authorities at all levels and non-governmental organizations in the prevention of domestic violence when it comes to both its causes and consequences. Of course, apart from the institutional approach, our personal approach is important; change of personal stereotypical attitudes and (in)actions to the surroundings in order to improve and raise awareness and facilitate a healthy environment, free of discrimination on any grounds (Andric, 1999).

5. The conceptualization of the problem from the perspective of victim/perpetrator of violence

Women do not talk about the violence that they suffer, because nobody supports them and nobody believes them; others search for a fault in them legal procedures take too long, there is a fear of the abuser, they do not have enough income, no place to go, they have children and are afraid that the abuser would take away the children, they are ashamed of what people would think, they are emotionally dependent on their partner, and they take care of the abuser and believe that it will be better. An abuser is usually the supreme controller who decides about woman's life in all situations. He decides what she needs to do, what to speak, what to think, when to make a phone call, how much money she needs. This control is perceived as his love and care for her. The abuser achieves this control by constant intimidation: "I will burn your hair, I'll throw you off the roof, I'll cut you to pieces, I will find you wherever you go." Often these threats relate to children or loved ones: parents, sisters and brothers.

Men are taught to dominate in the family, and sometimes, or often, they do so very violently. Children, who grow up in a situation of violence later on, do not know any other way of communication. Position of women in many cases, is not only different, but also less favorable. The position of women is therefore, not only different but also less favorable and unequal compared to men. The position of women and women's experience in most situations is different than that of men in the same situations. The position of women is a consequence of power relations between men and women. Women are subjected to oppression, exploitation and subordination. They are invisible, less recognized and their roles are subordinated to men's roles. Inequality stems from the society and not from biological differences (Ajduković, 2000).

The link between the domestic violence against women and the social reproduction (survival) of the patriarchy is systemic and can be seen on all levels. At the same time, the connection between the (re)production of domestic violence against women and the (re)production of violence of the social system is not immediate and simple, because the daily the system produces violence against women by maintaining a complex system of unequal power relations between the sexes in the family.

The patriarchal ideology, which is basically misogynist, justifies the actions of men against women and children through the rights and obligations that govern internal relations and are set to punish unfit family members. Violence against women by this ideology has no character of dysfunction, disorganization, disintegration and disruption of family relationships, but on the contrary, it is stimulated, and provides a means of discipline imposed as a "poor, female, passive and natural by cultural - male, controlling active element" (Miletic-Stepanović, 2006).

Families that should provide mutual love, care and respect to its members, become a space where violence is produced and reproduced as the only pattern. Oppression and humiliation of the weak and the powerless will remain in circulation for decades and will be transmitted to the offspring, with the result that women accept violence as a natural state, and/or their destiny.

6. Summary of part one

Gender-based violence is a global phenomenon, it happens every day, everywhere, and therefore a special attention is paid to the problem in recent years. Forms of gender based violence (GBV) vary and are numerous, occur at all stages of life, and often depend on the cultural and social norms that prevail in different parts of the world. Domestic violence is not a new phenomenon. Violence has been present in all cultures and social systems, but the awareness of the need to study and prevent domestic violence began to develop during the second half of the 20th century, when the problem of child abuse, violence against women in intimate relationships and violence against elderly in the family, was "discovered".

Domestic violence is a clear manifestation of the power and control that is conducted through distinctive forms of coercion, through physical and verbal violence to physical violence.

It is never a single or temporary phenomenon, but rather a "silent" repeated coercion and abuse, which has a number of manifestations, mostly through physical, sexual, psychological and economic forms. Statistics show that victims of male violence can be any woman, regardless of age and education, financial status or nationality and that the violent men can be of any profession, education level, financial situation and nationality.

Domestic violence can be understood only if we realize the connection that exists between multiple factors (macro-social, relational, psychological, and psychosocial factors associated with gender socialization) and the social structure that is a constant source of stress and personal problems. Therefore, the study of this phenomenon is necessary through an interdisciplinary approach, particularly comprehensive research and exploring the

phenomenology, etiology, consequences, and the development of the phenomenon and its prevention. Etiology is the primary determinant of behavioral disorders in the family.

Women's NGOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as a part of the international women's movement, carried the process of the recognition of domestic violence as unacceptable behavior and they are united in making the pressure on the government to recognize the right to a life free of violence (Petric, 2010).

Although in the past forty years a great knowledge has been collected about the forms, causes and consequences of domestic violence, direct work with the abused women and abusers and prevention is still not satisfactory. A key issue is how to use the acquired knowledge in the prevention of domestic violence in a specific socio-cultural environment (Ajduković and Pavleković 2004:15-17)¹¹. Social reaction (preventive and treatment) to reduce domestic violence is not based on cooperation and mutual complementarity of government departments and non-governmental organizations. Many women suppress negative experiences, deny violence and do not talk about it. This should not be surprising, since women are still considered as complicit in the survived violence, by the public.

The general opinion that domestic violence is a family problem present in urban and rural areas complicates the understanding of violence as a public health problem that has profound health, social and economic consequences to the individuals, as well as the family and the whole community.

Domestic violence is a personal, family and societal problem. With increasing awareness about human rights and the rights of children, women and the elderly in the last forty years, numerous stereotypes about the family as the basic unit of society have been broken. Family is also a violent environment in which the fundamental human rights of its members are often violated.

If we start from the fact that violence against women, including domestic violence, is a gender phenomenon, it is important to recognize that men and boys can also be victims of domestic violence. It is recognized also that children are victims of domestic violence, although they may not directly suffer violence. The presence of domestic violence is a trauma for them, big enough to victimize them.

Preventing domestic violence needs to be understood in the broader context of the fight against discrimination against women and achieving gender equality, legal and factual, for both women and men.

¹¹ According to UNICEF's analysis (1994), "The position of women in countries in transition," violence against women often goes undetected and undocumented although there are numerous data that is on the rise.

Part two

Legal protection standards

Normative-legal regulations of issues related to domestic violence (domestic violence against women and children) are very recent and are in line with the changes in understanding of domestic violence as a social problem rather than solely a private problem. International law is clear in its regulation that states, which fail to provide adequate institutional protection to victims of violence, are responsible for the violation of human rights of women (Mršević, 2002). In the last twenty years changes in access to legal regulation began to happen in the world, and in the legal system of Bosnia and Herzegovina the criminalization of domestic violence, has been present since 2000.

The issue of domestic violence is regulated by a domestic comprehensive, legally binding international framework. This is because of the structure of the legal system of our country and the fact that the sources of international law have prevalence over the domestic ones, and have a direct and priority application in a number of cases arising from the Constitution (Annex 1 of the General Framework agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina). Bosnia and Herzegovina has ratified all the relevant international instruments, and has established a significant legal framework for the protection of women. The Constitution states that B&H and entities are to ensure the highest level of internationally recognized human rights and freedoms (Article II / 1), that the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR) is directly applied in B&H and will have priority over other laws (Article II / 2). Also, "all courts, agencies, authorities and bodies indirectly managed by, or acting within the entity, are subjected to and apply human rights and fundamental freedoms" as defined in the Constitution of B&H (Article II / 6) (Sali-Terzic, 2011).

Violence against women, particularly domestic violence, remains a widespread social problem in Bosnia and Herzegovina and is a serious violation of fundamental human rights and freedoms of women victims of violence/those who survived violence¹².

1. International and domestic legal framework

The international legal framework refers to the documents of the United Nations, the Council of Europe and other relevant documents that directly or indirectly treat the matter of domestic violence, some of which are equivalent to national legislation, while others are recommendations on the objectives to be pursued. Some of the most important documents are:

¹² Alternative report on the implementation of CEDAW and women's human rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina, October 2010, published at: [http / www.rightsforal.ba / eng / dw / alternative report pdf](http://www.rightsforal.ba/eng/dw/alternative%20report.pdf)

- Charter of the United Nations (1945),
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948),
- European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1950)¹³
- European Social Charter (1961) and the Revised European Social Charter (1996),
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women / CEDAW (1979),
- Recommendation No. R (85) 4 on the domestic violence
- Recommendation. R (87) 21 on assistance to victims and prevention of victimization
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)
- General Recommendation No.19 CEDAW Committee (1992)
- UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993)
- American Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Violence against Women (1994)
- Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)
- Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Goals (2000)
- Recommendation. R (2000) 1450 on violence against women in Europe
- Recommendation. R (2002) 5 on the protection of women against violence
- Plan for the campaign of the Council of Europe to combat violence against women, including domestic violence (2006-2008)
- Council of Europe Convention on prevention and combating violence against women and domestic violence (2011)

The first document of the United Nations, which directly addresses the issue of domestic violence is Recommendation 19 "Violence against women" from the CEDAW Committee from 1992, which provides a legal interpretation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which by the definition of discrimination provided in the Convention¹⁴, in its concept and scope recognizes the gender-based violence as a form of discrimination. The beginning of a systematic and legal approach to the norms, regarding the issue of violence against women, is linked to 1993 and the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. In these documents violence against women is defined by range of the forms of violence, the context and relationships in which they occur, and has become a major issue of human rights but also an important health, social and economic issue (Ignjatovic, 2011:84). They emphasized that the state has a key role, and the government's responsibility is to create a "climate of zero tolerance" for the system of protection and prevention.

¹³ Article II of the Constitution of B&H provides for the direct and priority application of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in the legal system of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Entities

¹⁴ CEDAW is the first international document that gave a definition of discrimination based on sex

The domestic legal framework for protection from violence, due to the complexity of the structure of the state, needs to be looked at the level of B&H, Entities and Brčko District, and it refers to:

- The Constitution of B&H (Annex IV of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina)
- The Constitution of the Federation of B&H
- The Constitution of the Republic of Srpska
- The Law on Gender Equality in B&H
- The Criminal Code of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Entities and Brčko District
- Amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code
- Family Laws of the Entities and Brčko District
- Law on Protection from Domestic Violence in both Entities
- Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2006-2011 (GAP B&H)
- Resolution on combating violence against women (2008)¹⁵
- Strategy against Violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2007-2010
- Strategy for Prevention and Combating Domestic Violence in B&H 2009-2011
- Strategic Plan for the Prevention of Domestic Violence for the Federation, 2009-2010
- Strategy for the fight against domestic violence in the Republic of Srpska 2013

Normative-legal framework that governs the matter of domestic violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the last few years has seen a significant expansion due to the very shift in the social perception of the problem of violence as a public and not just private thing (Galic, 2010:9).

The incrimination of domestic violence in the legal system of Bosnia and Herzegovina has been present since 2000, and in 2003 the offense of "violence in the family or extended family" in the Criminal Code of the Entities and Brčko District has been introduced¹⁶.

The basis for the introduction of this crime stems from numerous international documents, in which domestic violence is treated as a violation of human rights as one of the most difficult aspects of violent crime in general. (Zahiragić, 2012:3).

¹⁵ It is a political document of the highest legislative body in the country, by which the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina joined the campaign of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Although not legally binding, the resolution is an important document because it expresses a clear view about the violence that women suffer.

¹⁶ The Criminal Code of the Republic of Srpska (Article 208), Criminal Code of the Federation of B&H (Article 222) and the Criminal Code of Brčko District of B&H (Article 218), regulate the domestic violence as a separate crime and prescribe punishment for its execution.

In order to enable a faster, more complete and efficient protection of victims of domestic violence, to define social subjects of the protection in cases of domestic violence and to have a more systematic approach to the perpetrators of violence, in 2005 both entities have adopted the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence, in which the act of violence is prescribed as a felony and a misdemeanor.

The entity parliaments have adopted the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence, primarily with the intent to influence the slowness of the criminal-legal protection and in that way oblige the judicial institutions (the prosecution and the court) to protect the victims of domestic violence until the completion of the criminal proceedings by imposing some of protective measures prescribed by these laws.

Domestic violence is defined in these laws as any act that causes physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm or suffering, as well as threats of such acts, or lack of care and attention that seriously impedes family members from enjoying their rights and freedoms on the principle of equality in the public or private life.

2. Legal norms which sanction domestic violence - the results of previous studies

The criminalization of the domestic violence aimed to sanction and prevent domestic violence, which is usually expressed as spousal abuse, violence against members of the household, and violence against children. Each of these forms includes a psychological, physical and economic abuse and points to an injury and endangerment of the security and relationships of trust, with a simultaneous manifestation of power and control over the victim.

The purpose of punishment under the Criminal Code, is threefold: a) preventive influence on others to respect the legal system and not commit criminal offenses (ie general prevention), b) the impact on the offender not to perpetrate crimes and encourage his rehabilitation (ie, individual prevention and rehabilitation) and c) the expression of social condemnation for the work done and the fairness of punishing the perpetrator. The Criminal Code provides different kinds of punishment: imprisonment, long-term imprisonment and a fine. The laws also provide for parole, as a kind of criminal sanctions, warning measures that may be imposed under the conditions prescribed by law¹⁷. In addition, imprisonment can be replaced by a fine or socially useful work, under certain conditions¹⁸. In addition to these criminal sanctions, an offender may be subjected to one or more protective measures, such as compulsory psychiatric

¹⁷ Article 198 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Srpska from 2000 and Article 222 of the Criminal Code of the Federation of B&H and Article 218 of the Criminal Code of Brčko District from 2003, define the punishment for the offense committed by a family member. The perpetrator shall be punished by a fine or imprisonment up to three years. Also, the law provides several aggravating circumstances of the criminal offense of domestic violence involving the use of weapons, causing serious bodily injury or causing death, and the killing of a family member who was previously abused by the perpetrator. These offenses are punished with imprisonment of 3 months to 15 years, or "long-term imprisonment," 21-45 years.

¹⁸ Article 7 item b), Article 42, Article 43 a), Article 44, Article 62 of the Criminal Code of the Federation of B&H, Article 28, Article 34, Article 46 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Srpska, Article 7, Article 44, Article 61 of the Criminal Code of Brčko District.

treatment, the treatment of addiction, etc¹⁹. In the Criminal Code of the Federation of B&H and the Brčko District another element of criminal sanctions purpose has been implemented in 2010 ("protection and redress of victims of crime"). The Law on the Protection from Domestic Violence was adopted solely for the protection of the victims and the prevention of serious consequences for the victims.²⁰ The Law on the Protection from Domestic Violence prescribed violence actions both as a felony and a misdemeanor, and a question was raised about its applicability in practice.²¹

In September 2006 the legislature of the Federation of B&H adopted the Law on Amendments to the Law on the Protection from Domestic Violence, which have eliminated this dilemma. Acts of violence are standardized exclusively as a criminal offense. In the Republic of Srpska even after the Law changes in 2008, acts of violence are still treated as a felony and a misdemeanor.

The Law on the Protection from Domestic Violence in Federation of B&H expressly imposes an obligation to report the domestic violence to health and social workers, teachers, educators, the medical, educational and other institutions

¹⁹ Article 71 of Criminal Code of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

²⁰ It regulates: protection against domestic violence, the concept of domestic violence, people who are considered family members under this Act, a way of protecting family members, and the type and purpose of sanctions for perpetrators of violent acts (Article 1).

General principles and rules in this Act and other regulations governing the area of domestic violence, provide prevention and suppression of this kind of violence, effective measures to influence offenders and others not to commit violence and elimination of consequences of violence committed by prescribing a way to achieve this protection. The procedure of protection achieved under provisions of the offense, unless this Act provides otherwise. The solution of the pronounced protective measures by the competent court for offenses shall submit immediately, and no later than eight days (Article 2).

Protection from violent behavior, in terms of this Act, shall be provided by the police, the guardian and the magistrates' court. Subjects of protection against domestic violence and the court will provide an urgent solution these types of cases (Article 3).

Sanctions for protection from domestic violence are protective measures. The purpose of prescribing, imposition and implementation of sanctions is the personal protection of the family and its members - victims of violence, ensuring the realization and development of a healthy and harmonious life within the family, and respect for the legal system (Article 8).

The purpose of protective measures is to prevent and combat domestic violence, elimination of consequences of violence committed and take effective measures for offender's rehabilitation and elimination of conditions that favor or encourage the execution of new offenses of domestic violence (Article 10).

²¹ Acts of domestic violence under this law are:

- any use of physical force or psychological coercion to physical or psychological integrity of a family member,
- any failure by a family member that can induce or cause danger to cause physical or mental pain or economic damage,
- causing fear or danger or injury to the dignity of a family member or other coercion,
- physical assault of a family member, regardless of whether there is a physical injury or not,
- verbal assaults, insults, swearing, name calling, and other forms of harassment of a family member,
- Sexual harassment, stalking,
- any other similar forms of harassment of another family member, damage or destruction of common property or property in the possession,
- failing to act, supervise another family member or provide assistance and protection to the family member, although there is no obligation to do so under the law and morality which may result in either a sense of physical, psychological or economic and social vulnerability of the family member.

and bodies, as well as to non-governmental organizations, who in the performance of their duties find out about the committed violence. They are required to immediately report domestic violence to the police administration.

Both Laws on the Protection against Domestic Violence²², provide for the application of protective measures in misdemeanor proceedings: (1) the removal from the apartment, house or other accommodation, (2) the decision on the restraining order, (3) the prohibition of harassment or stalking the victims, (4) the obligations of psychosocial treatment, (5) the treatment of addiction, (6) provide for the protection for victims of violence, and (7) measures of community service, which exist only in the RS law.

The aim of these protective measures²³ is to prevent the commission of further acts of domestic violence and to provide protection to the victims of domestic violence, and criminal sanctions for the perpetrator of violence will follow the completion of criminal proceedings.

The Law on Criminal Procedure obliges the police, depending on the type of work, to inform the prosecutor of cases where there is a suspicion that a criminal offense was committed²⁴, immediately, or within seven days. The appropriate qualifications of the committed acts of violence should be carried out by the prosecutor and investigative activities should be carried out under the direct supervision or authorized by the prosecutor.

It is also important to mention here the norms and procedures of the Family Law in connection with domestic violence. This Law contains provisions on domestic violence in Articles 4-5 and 380-382, where the procedure for protection refers to the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence Federation B&H. Article 4 of the Family Law of FB&H regulates the prohibition of harassment of the spouse or any other family member, and the harassment refers to violating the physical or mental integrity of persons, in respect to the Article 4 of the Law on Gender Equality. Articles 380-382 regulate the right to protection from violent behavior in the family related to marital and extra-marital partners and family members. The police, guardianship body and Minor Offence Court, are required to provide protection, while all other people are obligated to report the acts of violence to the police administration , immediately after they become aware of it. The Center for Social Work stated that domestic violence is taken into account in awarding custody of the children.

This Law does not specifically prescribe compensation for the victims of domestic violence. General question on indemnity is regulated by the Law on Obligations of Federation B&H. Although the definition of domestic violence is

²² Brčko District has not yet adopted the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence.

²³ Which are essentially the sanctions in protection against domestic violence imposed on the perpetrator. The purpose of these protective measures is to prevent and combat domestic violence, to eliminate consequences of violence committed and take effective measures for offender's rehabilitation and elimination of conditions that favor or encourage the execution of new acts of domestic violence. The Act prescribes that the obligation, adopted by laws, should ensure the implementation of the imposed protective measures. All laws are adopted by the relevant ministries.

²⁴ This offense is qualified by the police as misdemeanor of violation of public peace and order.

not specifically prescribed by this Code, "family members are not excluded from liability for damages, due to inflicted bodily injury or damage to health, so that the courts apply this provision in determining damages caused by domestic violence" (Nezirović, 2005:92).

The Law on Social Protection, Protection of Civilian Victims of War and Protection of Families with Children, in addition to the categories that it protects, introduces the category of social protection of persons exposed to violence. Given that Social Work Centers have not established mechanisms to protect victims of domestic violence, they take care of the victims of domestic violence as a person in need, if they belong to this category, and provide assistance for them in cooperation with NGOs.

The Law on Health Care in Federation B&H does not specifically regulate an obligation to provide medical and psychological assistance to victims of domestic violence, nor does it require keeping the relevant statistics in health care institutions, which would provide easier estimation on the number of victims of domestic violence.

3. The role of institutional mechanisms for gender issues

Bosnia and Herzegovina has produced an impressive framework of institutional mechanisms for the integration of gender equality: the Agency for Gender Equality and the Gender Centers in both Entities, aim to integrate gender issues in all areas of public and private life. These institutions prepare reports on the implementation of the CEDAW Convention, make gender equality strategies, action plans for the various identified problems, conduct trainings of civil servants, provide comments on the laws and regulations in terms of compliance with the Law on Gender Equality and monitor the implementation of the specific recommendations of the UN CEDAW Committee.

The Council of Ministers of B&H in 2006 has adopted Gender Action Plan 2006-2011 (GAP) as a 5-year strategic document, aimed at achieving gender equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina in all spheres of the public and private life, as well as a plan for its implementation. By the Gender Action Plan the activities are to be undertaken in 15 different areas, and one of these areas is domestic violence against women. Institutional mechanisms for gender issues made strategies and action plans to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence, which stress the need to establish a solid link between achieving gender equality and combating violence against women²⁵. In this way, prevention of violence is put in the broader context of the fight against discrimination against women and achieving gender equality, real and legal. Institutional mechanisms highlight the obligations of the state and provide guidance to decision-makers to consider a number of commitments and measures, which are necessary for the prevention of violence against women and domestic violence.

The role of institutional mechanisms for gender equality in preventing gender-based violence, including domestic

²⁵ Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina, on the proposal of the Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina, adopted the Strategy for the fight against domestic violence in the period 2009-2011. Both entities have adopted strategies and action plans to combat violence, RS for the period 2009-2013, and FB&H for the in the period 2013-2017.

violence, as professional government services for equity and gender equality relates to:

- Monitoring the implementation of the Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina, UN CEDAW Convention, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the recommendations and guidelines of the Council of Europe in terms of gender-based violence and violence against women, including qualitative and quantitative data;
- Monitoring compliance and initiate amendments to the laws governing the field of preventing and combating domestic violence, in accordance with national and international standards for gender equality;
- Professional and technical assistance in terms of gender equality in the promotion of multi- sector models of care and prevention of domestic violence and gender-based violence;
- Raising awareness and knowledge on gender-based violence and gender equality as a prerequisite for the elimination of gender-based violence, in cooperation with all sectors of security and violence prevention;
- Initiating and conducting research on gender-based violence;
- Professional and technical assistance in the implementation of gender aspects in the strategies, policies, plans, programs, budgets and programs of education and training.

The Gender Centre of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, within the scope of its work, issues annual reports on the state of gender equality in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. These reports include data from Cantonal Ministries of Interior in relation to Article 222 of Criminal Code of the Federation relating to domestic violence²⁶, the data of the municipal courts²⁷ in relation to the implementation of the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence, data on the number of accommodated domestic violence victims in six shelters²⁸ and information on the number of calls to the helpline 1265 (number for the Federation)²⁹ for a period of 2006 until 2011 in the Federation of B&H.

4. The role and importance of women's NGOs in the protection from domestic violence

Until the reform of criminal legislation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, domestic violence was considered to be a private sphere and it has not been considered as a violation of basic human rights and freedoms. Until then, only women's NGOs in both entities engaged in providing support to victims. With the incrimination of domestic violence state institutions increasingly start to deal with this problem, within their jurisdiction, as subjects of protection of human rights, in a joint action with other women's organizations, especially those providing shelters and/or safe houses for violated women.

The experience of NGOs working with women victims of domestic violence indicate that most women keep their silence about the survived violence, and do not even think to report it to government institutions that are authorized

²⁶ 9597 reported cases of domestic violence and 4446 submitted reports on criminal offense in Canton MIs.

²⁷ 332 protective measures imposed in the municipal courts of the Federation of B&H.

²⁸ Six shelters (Sarajevo, Mostar, Jajce, Zenica, Tuzla and Bihać) in the same period have housed a total of 1459 women and children.

²⁹ Calls to unique SOS hotline during 2010 - 1902, and during the 2011 – 1431.

and obliged to provide assistance and protection. Also, activists point to another important fact and that is the economic dependence of women on the perpetrators of violence. The economic dependence is referred to as one of the primary reasons why women remain victims of violence and in the relationship with the perpetrators.

In contrast to the available official statistics, which indicate that the domestic violence against women is on the decrease, the data of non-governmental organizations engaged in providing assistance and support to women victims of violence, point to the continuous increase in the number of victims of domestic violence. NGOs in B&H collected data by recording the number of women beneficiaries of free legal and psychological assistance, SOS hotlines and safe houses for women and children victims of violence in B&H. NGOs' data indicate that violence against women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the vast majority of cases, manifests itself as a mix of physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence. Women's NGOs are still working to change the public perception of domestic violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina because stereotypes are still present in both private and public life, and so defer the perception of violence as a public and not just as a private problem. It is still emphasized that the key causes of violence against women is low social and economic status, alcoholism, drug use, etc.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina there are nine shelters for women and children victims of domestic violence³⁰, six in the Federation, and three in the Republic of Srpska, where teams of professional staff are providing psychological, medical and legal assistance, support in the rehabilitation and re-socialization, and support finding an exit strategy.

According to the Gender Center FB&H data, in 2010 there were 316 victims of domestic violence (women and children) placed in the shelters in the Federation of B&H, and 317 during the 2011. Financing costs of shelters were mainly covered from donor funds, up till the Amendments to the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence. Amendments to the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence (Federation of B&H in 2006 and the RS in 2008), established the obligation of providing funds for temporary housing and care for victims of violence in shelters from the budget of the entities to the extent of 70% of the funds necessary for the work of safe houses, and the budget of municipalities and towns up to 30% of the funds necessary for the operation of the shelter³¹. The placing of women and children, victims of domestic violence, in shelters is done by the police and Social Services Centers. After staying at a safe house (which takes on average three months) women, victims of violence, largely remain unemployed and without a permanent place of residence, and, having nowhere to go, in most cases, they return to violent environment. Research of NGOs in

³⁰ Safe houses / shelters for women and children victims of violence exist in the following cities: Sarajevo (Foundation of Local Democracy), Banja Luka (United Women), Mostar (Miriam-Caritas Mostar and Margeruite - Žena BiH Mostar), Prijedor (Foundation for Education and Social protection of Children), Bihać (Women from Una), Modriča (Budućnost), Tuzla (Vive Žene), Zenica (Medica).

³¹ Funding for temporary housing and care for victims of violence in a safe house are provided from the budget of the entity to the extent of 70% of the funds necessary for the operation of the shelter, and the budgets of municipalities and cities up to 30% of the funds necessary for the operation of the shelter. Funds provided from the budget of the municipality or city are transferred to the place of residence of the victim, the Center for Social Work and social care services, which is required to reallocate funds for the safe house in which the victim of violence is temporarily taken care for. The funds from the budget of the entity shall be submitted to safe houses. (Article 7 of the Law on Amendments to the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence RS). The same provisions are contained in the law in the Federation.

B&H³² also indicate that boys and girls in the teenage period are exposed to strong influence of gender stereotypes, which direct their thinking about the opposite sex, and influence the level of tolerance for gender-based violence in adolescent relationships. Since 1996 women's organizations have an undeniable role and play an important role in the field of prevention and protection from domestic violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

If we talk about the continuity of the work which will ensure a coordinated, appropriate and effective preventive action of institutional and non-institutional subjects for protection and prevention of domestic violence, that is the work of NGOs, especially women's NGOs. NGOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina have carried out the process of recognizing the domestic violence as an unacceptable behavior and are united in exerting the pressure on governments to recognize the right to a life free of violence.

Parallel with the work on raising public awareness and lobbying for legislative changes, NGOs have established first support services to women who have survived, suffered or are still victims of domestic violence. SOS hotlines and free legal and psychosocial assistance and support are the first activities which non-governmental organizations have offered to women who had and still have problem with domestic violence.

Advocating for changes to existing laws and the adoption of new measures, which will recognize domestic violence as a socially dangerous behavior, but also improve their application, are just some of the activities undertaken by women's organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Preventive measures taken by women's organizations are related to: a) awareness-raising campaigns and non-violent behavior in public and private media, b) promotion of obtaining legal protection and c) educational program in schools to change cultural patterns and traditional gender roles.

Requirement of women and women's organizations is always based on the paradigm that a victim has a right to be protected, and that the state has an obligation to build a system of legal instruments which protect the right to life, liberty and personal security, and to prevent violence, wherever it occurs and to provide other types of support (social, economic and health care) to survivors of violence, and to create a social climate of "zero tolerance."

5. Reaction of professionals in cases of domestic violence

Combating and preventing domestic violence requires an active role of the society, and above all state organs and institutions, which are identified by as the subject of protection, among which special significance have the police authorities and law enforcement agencies as well as the courts and prosecutors' offices.

According to the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence in the Federation B&H, police, prosecutors, social work centers, or social care services and courts are required to provide protection from violent behavior through an expedited procedure. Upon the receipt of information that domestic violence has occurred, police is obliged to

³² Vesta Tuzla and Žene Ženama Sarajevo

immediately notify a Social Work Center or Social Care Services, which will immediately provide direct social services and psychosocial support to victims of violence and make a report.

These subjects of protection, as well as the medical and other relevant authorities, are obliged to establish a proper protocol for dealing with cases of domestic violence, in order to ensure complete and synchronized connection system for protection against domestic violence. It is expected from all the subjects of protection to actively work and contribute to finding the most effective model of working together on protection against domestic violence which could be applied in all such cases, and which is characterized by the manner of execution and mutual relationship between the offenders and victims who have been or still are in close emotional relationships, share children or property, etc (Maric, 2010:135).

Criminal proceedings are conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code. Investigation is conducted by the Prosecutor and cases are processed by the judges, for felony of domestic violence (in the first degree), and the Supreme Court of the RS and Federation of B&H in the second degree. Territorial jurisdiction belongs to courts in whose territory the offense or misdemeanor took place. The detection and prosecution of perpetrators of criminal acts of domestic violence is a fundamental right and duty of the prosecutor. Immediately upon learning that there are reasonable grounds to believe that this crime was committed, the prosecutor will take the necessary measures to ensure its discovery and the investigation, to find the suspect, manage and supervise the investigation, as well as to manage the activities of the authorized officials related to finding the suspect and collecting statements and evidence.

The prosecutor conducts the investigation in accordance with the law, issues and represents the indictment before the court, declares remedies and performs other duties specified by law.

Criminal proceedings may be initiated only at the request of the prosecutor. After gathering all the necessary information and evidence in criminal proceedings, the prosecutor files an indictment against the perpetrator of the criminal acts of domestic violence with the court.

A court verdict is based only on the facts and evidence presented at trial. The judgment can dismiss the charges or acquit the accused, or the accused can be found guilty of the crime of domestic violence, and receive different criminal sanctions (fine, suspended sentence, judicial admonition and protective measures). The offender of domestic violence will be issued criminal sanctions: penalties (fines or imprisonment), suspended sentence as a warning of sanctions, protective measures (mandatory psychiatric treatment, the treatment of addiction and seizure).

A police officer or other authorized person may detain a person who is suspected of a misdemeanor of domestic violence and immediately and no later than 12 hours bring him to court and secure his presence if: the suspected perpetrator refuses to reveal his identity, if the perpetrator does not reside in BiH, or there is a danger that the perpetrator will continue with the infringement or repeated violence, which has equates to the said misdemeanor offense.

Misdemeanor proceedings shall be instituted by a misdemeanor warrant by an authorized body or by filing the request misdemeanor proceedings with the court.

From the time when they gain the knowledge that domestic violence occurred, authorized police authorities can act in two ways: prevent the perpetrator of further violent behavior and provide physical protection to the victims (which with their consent may be temporarily placed in a suitable accommodation, shelter, provided with necessary medical and other assistance), or take measures to detect and prosecute perpetrators of domestic violence.

The role of the police in combating this phenomenon is strict regulation, with an important role of the so called "rule the seam", or the assessment of whether it is a violent act or not and if there were any felony or misdemeanor based responsibility. The identification of the perpetrator, conducting pre-investigation or investigations, arrest, are the repressive measures taken by the police, in order to put an end to the violence and restore control over the perpetrator.

Through the adequate use of the available legal measures, as well as the cooperation of victims of domestic violence with the police, particularly in the area of documenting and reporting the crime and its perpetrator, there would be significantly better results in the suppression of domestic violence.

In case of receipt (in any manner and by any person) of report of violence or the receipt of the request for assistance to persons exposed to any form or modality of domestic violence, the official (professional) is obligated to act in the following way: urgently and without delay to go to the crime scene, to obtain information, to bring the perpetrator of domestic violence in police premises, make a report, send a report to the Centre for Social Work and enter data into existing records.

Domestic violence is difficult to detect, because it happens in the privacy of the home and married life, which are also legally protected. When violence is detected and criminal or misdemeanor proceedings against the offender are initiated, such proceedings are often not completed. There are many difficulties in gathering evidences against the perpetrators of violence. The amount of direct evidence collected is small and those are often only testimonies of the victims of violence.

Police officers, prosecutors, judges, social workers, and everyone else included in the work of providing protection to victims of domestic violence and who are taking part in the proceedings against perpetrators of such violence, must be specifically educated and knowledgeable of basic human rights and freedoms, covered by international standards in all aspects of this field, because that is the only way they can stand up to the task of providing protection from all forms of violence.

By the Ordinance on protective measures, which is the responsibility of the police, it is regulated that the application

for the protective measures is filled by the competent police department to the competent Municipal court (misdemeanor Division),.

The application must include personal information about the perpetrator of domestic violence, as well as the proposed protective measures and an explanation. An explanation should include the facts and the evidence on the actions of violence, as well as information about the victim. The protective measures are prepared, planned and implemented by the relevant police authorities, in whose territory the victim of domestic violence has a domicile or residence.

By their professional treatment towards the victim and perpetrator, the police officers are trying to contribute to the general social condemnation of this type of the violence and the development of public awareness about it. The Ordinance provides a detailed assessment of the endangerment of the victims and a plan of implementation of the protective measures. The Ordinance also provides for keeping of the records that the Cantonal Ministries of Interior are required to maintain regarding the victims and perpetrators, and the protection measure.

A Review of the criminal sanctions imposed in 289 resolved cases in the period from 2004 to 2010, which were followed as part of the Programme of the OSCE Mission to monitor the judicial branch of the Federation of B&H, RS and Brčko District, it was found that in most cases the probation was imposed, nearly 77.2% (or 223 cases) a prison sentence is imposed only in 8.3% of the total number of cases (or 24 cases), while the perpetrators were fined in 13.5% of cases (or 39 cases)³³.

According to the data of the Municipal Court in Sarajevo, in accordance with Article 222 of the Criminal Code of the Federation of B&H in 2011, of 124 solved cases of domestic violence, in 42 convictions were ordered (40 with a prison sentence, one financial fine and one probation). In accordance with Article 6 of the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence in the Federation of B&H, 17 protective measures were issued (3 removal from the apartment or other residential facility; 9 restraining orders; 4 prohibiting harassment and one mandatory psycho-social treatment).

According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Canton Sarajevo, during 2011 the number of reports of domestic violence was 223³⁴ and the number of submitted reports on the crime committed for the same period is 221. The shelter in Sarajevo (Foundation of Local Democracy) in 2011, has housed 92 people, 40 women and 52 children, and the number of calls to the SOS helpline (1265), was 1431 during the same period. According to the Article 18 of the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence, the requirement for protective measures may be filed by the person exposed to violence or her counsel, the police, the prosecution, the guardianship authority, government and non-governmental organizations, and also protective measures may be imposed ex officio.

Bearing in mind that the protective measures are imposed in the course of summary proceedings, and that they are not ordered following any of the conventional methods which would prove liability (e.g. misdemeanor proceedings,

³³ Applies only to cases of guilty- verdicts.

³⁴ 258 reports of domestic violence-perpetrators: 246 men and 12 women, 223 reports of domestic violence-perpetrators: 219 men and 4 women

etc.), it is understandable that most often the police is the one imposing the protective measures.

This is so because the police can collect all the necessary documentation (statement of the victim, witnesses, medical finding, an excerpt from the criminal record, etc) in a relatively short time that will be attached to the application, and which will be then considered by the court in imposing protective measures.

Once the court receives the request for the imposition of protective measures, it will respect the urgency of the proceedings, in accordance with Article 3 of the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence, while deciding on the said request.

If the court establishes, based on the submitted application and the accompanying evidence, that there are grounds for suspicion of criminal offense of domestic violence, and that there is a danger to the physical integrity of the victim, or that there is a danger that the violent behavior will continue, it will issue a decision to impose one or more of the protective measures for the perpetrator, based on the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence.

In the decision on the imposition of protective measures, the Court will require from the authorities responsible for the enforcement of the protective measures imposed to report to the Court on the implementation of the imposed injunction. Preventive measures are aimed at the protection of the victims and they are in no way aimed at the sanctioning of the perpetrator of domestic violence.

Protective measures of psychosocial treatment, are also regulated by a special Ordinance, and are conducted in medical institutions of primary health care - mental health centers or specialized consultative psychiatric services at medical institutions, in collaboration with the social services. If the medical condition of the perpetrator, who has been issued this protective measure, requires hospitalization, protective measures are implemented in a hospital in the Canton where the perpetrator has a permanent or temporary residence. Perpetrator, on whom the court imposes a protective measure, is required to take part in the implementation of the protective measure. During the implementation, the victim of domestic violence may be involved in the treatment, if the victim agrees to it.

The Ordinance further provides that the cost of the treatment is borne by the court that imposed the measure. The Implementation Plan of protective measures is created by a multidisciplinary therapeutic team (social worker, psychologist, psychiatrist, nurses and other qualified persons) from the hospital or therapeutic communities and a guardianship authority, together with the perpetrator of domestic violence. The Ordinance prescribes in detail what the plan of implementation should include, and how to keep records and report on the ordered measures of mandatory treatment of addiction to alcohol, drugs or other psychotropic substances of the perpetrator.

Centers for Social Work are the main carriers of social, family and child care in the local community. In domestic violence cases, only in certain centers victims of domestic violence receive support in terms of psycho-social therapy and care. One of the well-organized centers is the Center for Social Work Banja Luka, which following the so-called Sombor model made the "Banja Luka model" to provide support to victims of domestic violence. In this regard, a mobile multi-disciplinary team which helps and supports victims of domestic violence, was formed, and works 24 hours duty and reacts whenever violence occurs. In the case of a report of domestic violence, the professional service

for domestic violence at the Social Work Centers or an authorized person will, inform the police about it, make an official note of the information discovered, establish cooperation with relevant institutions and individuals, provide psychological support to the victims of violence, inform the victims about their rights to take appropriate measures to protect themselves, provide health care to the victims, if necessary, and make contact's for free legal aid, provide psychosocial treatment, and record, process and sort all of the data according to the sex.

The school, as an institution which performs further socialization of children, besides family and pre-school institutions, is a place where students should be introduced to the primary prevention of domestic violence, as this environment also affects the behavior of students and develops attitudes about interpersonal relationships among peers, and also between family members and adults as well. The task of educational institutions is primarily the protection of children's rights.

6. Summary

The reform of the Criminal Code in Bosnia and Herzegovina defined domestic violence as a criminal offense. The criminalization of domestic violence aimed to sanction and prevent domestic violence, which is usually expressed as spousal abuse, violence against members of the household, and violence against children. Each of these forms includes psychological, physical and economic abuse and points to an injury and endangering of the security and trust in the relationships, with a simultaneous manifestation of power and control over the victim.

The basis for the introduction of these charges stems from numerous international documents, where domestic violence is treated as a violation of human rights, as one of the most difficult aspects of violent crime in general, with the request to all states that such behavior needs to be criminalized. Until the reform of criminal legislation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, domestic violence was considered as a private sphere and it has not been seen as a violation of basic human rights and freedoms.

By incrimination of domestic violence, the state is working on its suppression and prevention (by giving a clear warning that this is an unacceptable behavior, which society will not tolerate) and repression (punishment and holding to account perpetrators of such acts of violence).

Despite the incrimination of domestic violence, the problems of the victims are not solved. Criminal proceedings before the courts take quite long time, so the victims cannot obtain effective care. Domestic violence is a completely new offense, which had not previously existed in our criminal law and the problem of insufficient education of the involved professionals (police, prosecutors, judges) to apply the prescribed norms, or an unwillingness to confront the deep-rooted stereotypes of "gender-based violence" is still present.

The decision on "protection" is generally made on the basis of the perception about the male/female roles as subjects of protection, and it is generally to the detriment of women. The imposed criminal sanctions are at or below the limits prescribed by law. Another problem is that the perpetrators are prosecuted for "unqualified" form of the crime of domestic violence, although the law provides for qualified forms of domestic violence involving the use of firearms

which can have fatal consequences for the victim and also negative consequences for the children in the family where the violence occurs. Also, the problem is that the courts throughout the country rarely revoke the suspended sentence after having committed a new offense during the period of probation, although this is permitted under the law (Article 64 of the FBiH CC).

Women victims of violence are generally not familiar with the procedures, although the obligation of the judge and prosecutor is to instruct them about their rights. It is also worrying that women never file a property claim, not in criminal nor in civil proceedings. All this indicates that the needs of victims of violence are not being met, and that the legal provisions are mainly related to the need to punish the offender and not actually to protect the rights of victims. Also, the problem of slowness of the criminal-legal protection lies in the absence of a multidisciplinary approach to solving the problem of domestic violence.

Legislators (the entity parliaments) have tried to alleviate this problem, by adopting the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence, whose primary purpose is to provide a protection to victims of domestic violence through the completion of the criminal proceedings, as well as the imposition of protective measures provided by this legislation. Also, this law defines the responsibilities and obligations of the institutions of the state, who are the subjects of protection in cases of domestic violence.

Duties and responsibilities of the subjects of protection (police, courts, prosecutors, social welfare centers, health institutions), are defined in the Ordinance on procedure adopted by the relevant ministry.

There are numerous problems in the application of this law. In particular, the legal provisions are not mutually agreed upon, and they are neither coherent with the Law on Gender Equality, which means that victims throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina cannot achieve the same level of protection and support. This leads to a legal uncertainty, unequal treatment before the law and the impossibility in achieving the protection for women and children victims of domestic violence.

Although the violence is defined as a criminal offense and it is sanctioned by the civil and criminal law procedures, violence still says underreported by women, because they have little or no trust and confidence in institutional care.

Part three

Research: The problem, objectives, sample, method, processing

Domestic violence is a social danger, with long-term consequences, which is left in the privacy and intimacy of the partnership so that it could excuse perpetrators of violence and social structures of accountability both for doing something and not doing anything and to implicate the of guilt women.

In conducting this research, in the period from August to October 2011, a number of collaborators from non-governmental organizations and institutions from Zagreb, Sarajevo, Istočno Sarajevo, Mostar, Tuzla, Modriča, Bihać, Goražde, Zenica and Banja Luka have been involved in all its phases.

The intention was to systematize the experiences of women victims of violence when it comes to the institutional and not-institutional care in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which can be the basis for finding or rather discovering innovative solutions to activist and professional practice. This research is particular because it is based on the attitudes and opinions of women victims of violence on the subjects of protection and prevention of domestic violence and, as such, will complement the results of previous research.

Through the research on the topic: The protection of women from domestic violence, we wanted to determine the distribution of not only domestic violence, but also other, different forms of violence against women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the most common forms of violence against women, the frequency of reporting the violence, factors that contribute to (not)reporting the violence, whether the victims are satisfied with the mechanisms of the protection from the authorities, the most frequent perpetrators of violence against women, the most common forms of major consequences on the victims and the dominant attitudes of the society towards women victims of violence, especially domestic violence.

The research included 388 adults, women who have experienced some form of violence. According to the research plan, the sample should have included 500 women, who have experienced various forms of violence during their lifetime. It was decided that the research should include an equal number of women who reported violence to the competent institutions and those who did not reported it, to be able to determine the reasons that contribute to the decision about the reporting of violence.

The study was conducted on a sample of 388 adult women who are survivors of some form of violence within the age of 18-79 years ($M = 41.14$, $SD = 11.69$). Of 388 women who have experienced violence, almost half (48.6%) reported it to the relevant institutions. More information about the participants in the research is contained in the part on the Results of the research.

A questionnaire was made for the purposes of the research, which combined open- ended questions (ex., duration of abuse), multiple choice questions (ex., a form of violence), and estimates on Likert scales (ex., satisfaction with the help provided).

The main part of the questionnaire was designed in 2010 in Croatia, to conduct a research, "**Protecting the rights and supporting victims/witnesses of domestic violence,**" which was conducted by the Women's Room at the initiative and with the financial support of the Office for Gender Equality of the Croatian Government. For the purposes of present research a few specific questions had been added.

In order to verify the clarity and the comprehensibility of the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted with the participation of 15 women who have experienced violence and the questionnaire proved to be clear and user-friendly, so there was no need to change it.

The survey was conducted in both entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina in cooperation with civil society organizations (CSOs) Žene sa Une (Bihać), Viva Žene (Tuzla), Association of Women (Tuzla), Budućnost (Modriča), Žena BiH (Mostar), Center for legal aid for women (Zenica), Udružene Žene (Banja Luka) and the Centers for Social Work Goražde, Sarajevo (5 municipalities) and the City of Istočno Sarajevo (6 municipalities). The survey covered participants from 56 towns and villages.

After detailed instructions, the women filled out the questionnaire, and also people from collaborative organizations/centers where present and ready to help with questions, if they were not entirely clear, as well if some of the women had difficulties with reading (e.g. visually impaired, illiterate). Average time for completing the questionnaire was between 20 and 30 minutes. The collected questionnaires were placed in sealed envelopes and were stored in a safe area in the office space of Žene Ženama, until the final entry and data processing.

The results were coded and analyzed by statistical program SPSS 16.0 for Windows-basic descriptive statistics: frequency of the responses and the percentage of responses for each item, the mean, the corresponding standard deviation; quantitative analysis of the survey: testing the difference (t-test, ANOVA), correlation (regression correlation).

The results of the research

1. Analysis of the attitudes of women, victims of domestic violence

The research results are presented and interpreted in relation to the following six parts: Participants in the study; Experience of violence; Reporting violence; Support for the victims and satisfaction with the work of the institutions; Perpetrators of violence; Consequences of violence; and Stereotypes towards victims of violence.

Participants in the research

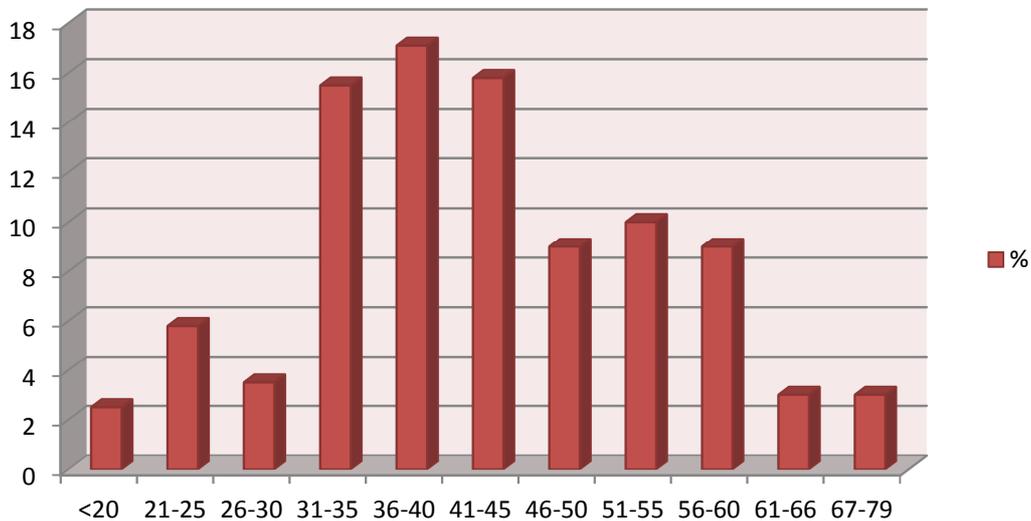
Data were collected from 388 women who during their lives experienced at least one act of violence. It is significant to mention that the majority of collaborators didn't answer all of the questions in the questionnaire, what we believe it has to do with the specificity of topic.

The Range of ages of participants ranges between 18 to 79 years old (M = 41.14; SD = 11.69; Median =40 year)

The majority of women who participated in the survey come from age range from 36 to 40 years

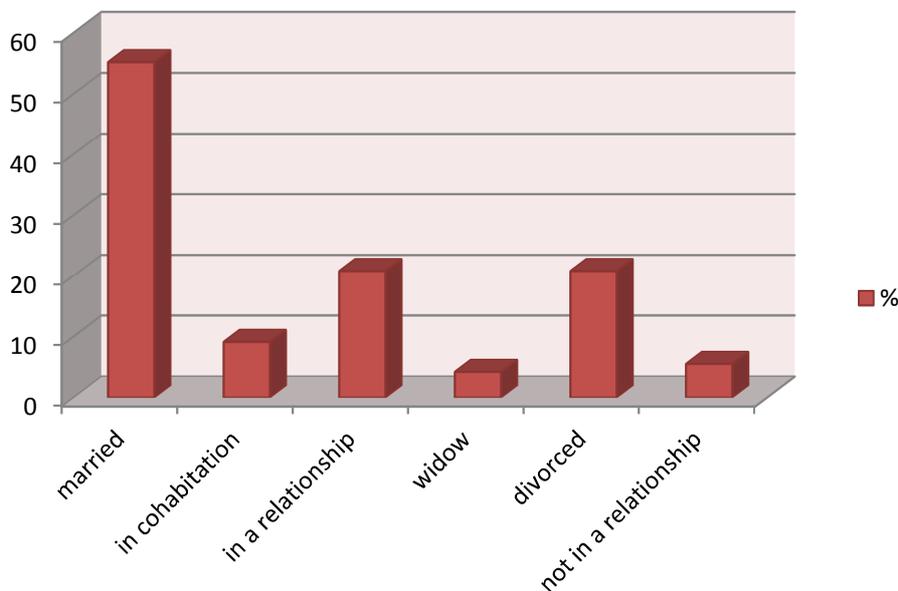
17.1%), followed by the middle age women from 41 to 45 years of age (15.8%) and groups of women between 31 and 35 years of age (15.5%) (Image 1.)

Image 1: Percentage of participants by age groups



Looking at the collected data in accordance with the place where they spent the greatest part of their lives most frequently they come from small towns., then cities, (26.1%), then villages (24%), and big cities (20%). The question was raised whether they are currently married or single. More than 2/3 of women currently have a partner where half of them approximately are married (55.2%); then comes the common law marriage (9.1%) or relationships (5.2%). The number of divorced amounts to about 20.8%, widows 4.2% and 5.5% were at the time not in a relationship. The results are presented in the Image 2.

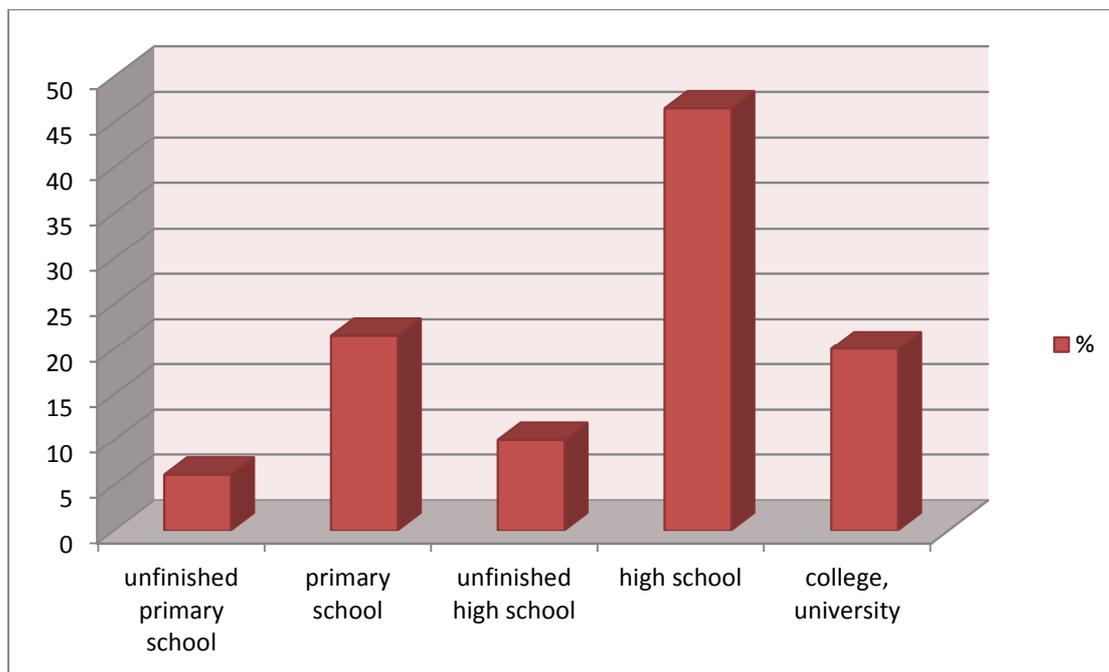
Image 2: Martial status /relationship status of participants



To the question on whether they have children, the majority of women gave positive answer, 25.3% of them have one child, 35% two children, 16.2% three children, and 6.3% have more than three children. 16.2% of them did not have children while there were also 4 pregnant women.

Concerning the question on the level of education we found that the majority of participants finished high school (46.5%). Each fifth woman finished primary school (21.5%), while there were the least of those with an unfinished primary school (6.1%). Results are presented in the Image 3.

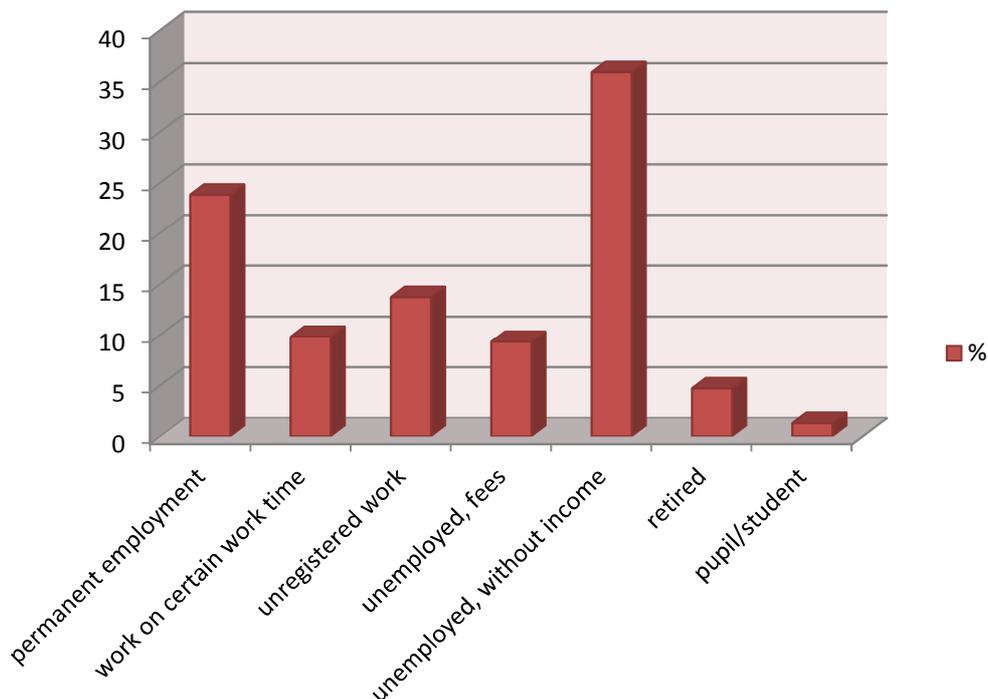
Image 3. Educational level of participants



Also we were interested to find out how many women know how to use the Internet. We found that approximately half of them do not use the internet and do not have access to the internet (52.3%), while an equal percentage of them use it occasionally (24.5%) and daily (23.2%).

Considering the question about current employment, almost half of the women declared that they are unemployed and without any kind of resources (35.9%) or that they work on a temporary fee basis (9.3%). Permanent employment have 23,8% of women , 9.8% work on a limited work time, and 13,7% work as a unregistered workers – that means without being registered. After them come retired women (4.7%) but the lowest is the number of pupils and students (1.3%) (Image 4)

Image 4: Current work status of the participants



In response to the question to evaluate their socio-economic status, almost half of the women (48.9%) consider that their material situation is very bad or bad, 37.9 % consider that it's medium and 13.3% percent of them consider their material situation to be good or very good. 12.7% from the total number of women receive temporary social help and 10.8% were receiving it in some earlier period.

Experiences of Violence

Considering the goals of the survey, we were interested in all types of violence which women have experienced during the lives from their childhood within their primary families and later on in life.

Violence during childhood

About one third of women (36.5%) comes from families in which violence was present. The most common violence perpetrator was the father (89.4%) after him the mother (5.6%) and other members of the family, like the child,

brother, or step-mother (3.3%). To the question whether they reported the experience violence to the police only 19.9% gave a positive answer.

Experience of violence during the adulthood

We developed a scale for violent experiences in adulthood for purposes of this survey, and it is composed of 29 particulars that describe different types of violent behavior. The types of violence (physical, mental, sexual and economic violence) as well as the associated particulars are presented in tables from 4 to 8. The task of the participants was to evaluate whether they ever experienced the described violence themselves and to indicate if it happen once or several times. The total result for each specific type of violence was calculated as a sum of points on all associated particulars. Considering the fact that the majority of participants did not answer all questions, in Table 1 we quote the number of participants who answered all the questions from specific categories of violence.

Table 1. Total number of participants who completed all questions from specific category of violence

Type of violence	N	No (%)	Yes (%)
Psychological Violence	223	7.6	92.4
Psychological Violence - Isolation	243	40.7	59.3
Economic Violence	241	39	61
Physical Violence	223	20.2	79.8
Sexual Violence	232	70.7	29.3

Comparing the different types of violence to which participants were exposed in adulthood, it is determined that the most common type of violence was physical violence, but the rarest was the sexual type of violence. The results of correlation analyses display that different types of violence in adulthood are positively connected.

Table 2. Relation between different types of violence

	Psychological violence-Isolation	Economic violence	Physical violence	Sexual violence
Psychological Violence	.76***	.72***	.72***	.46***
Psychological Violence-Isolation		.66***	.61***	.45***
Economic Violence			.65***	.41***
Physical Violence				.48***

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$

As can be seen from the displayed table, mutual correlations of physical violence that include isolation, physiological and economical violence are bigger than correlations between these types of violence with sexual violence. Sexual violence is mostly connected with physical but minimally with the economic type of violence.

We also looked into the correlation between violent experiences in the primary family where person grew up and violent experiences in adulthood. We noted a significant correlation between almost all types of violence in adulthood, mostly with sexual violence ($r = .30, p < .01$); physical ($r = .27, p < .01$); psychological violence ($r = .27, p < .01$) and psychological violence which includes isolation of victim ($r = .14, p < .01$). Therefore, women who declared that they grew up in violent families also indicated that they often experienced particular types of psychological, physical and sexual violent act during adulthood but no economic violence. In tables from 3 to 7 the frequencies of specific types of violence are represented

Table 3. Frequency of specific types of psychological violent acts

Psychological violence	N	No (%)	Yes, once (%)	Yes, several times (%)
Threat by force	314	69 (22)	42 (13.4)	203 (64.6)
Threats of taking away children	265	139 (52.5)	22 (8.3)	104 (39.2)
Taking away children	238	177 (74.4)	23 (9.7)	38 (16)
Deprecation, humiliation, devaluation	294	35 (11.9)	29 (9.9)	230 (78.2)
Spying	260	138 (53.1)	34 (13.1)	88 (33.8)
Misappropriation of personal documents	247	197 (79.8)	14 (5.7)	36 (14.6)
Destruction of personal documents	250	206 (82.4)	18 (7.2)	26 (10.4)
Misappropriation of children's personal documents	242	198 (81.8)	15 (6.2)	29 (12)
Threatening with weapons (knife, gun)	275	172 (62.5)	26 (9.5)	77 (28)

The most common types of psychological violence are: undervaluation and humiliation (88.1%) and threats by force (78%). After those follow threats to take away the children (47.5%) and spying (46.9%). More than third of women experienced threats by weapons, almost every fourth woman experienced that a perpetrator took away her children, and almost every fifth woman experienced destruction of personal documents or misappropriation of children's documents. The majority of women experienced different types of psychological violence several times.

Table 4: Frequency of specific types of psychological violence which includes victim isolation

Psychological violence-isolation of the victim	N	No (%)	Yes, once (%)	Yes, several times (%)
Ban on contacting relatives and friends	271	119 (42.9)	31 (11.4)	121 (44.6)
Prohibition on leaving home except for work	253	155 (61.3)	21 (8.3)	77 (30.4)
Complete prohibition to leave home	251	182 (72.5)	25 (10)	44 (17.5)

As the most common type of experienced isolation the participants mentioned prohibition to contact relatives and friends (56%) from which 44.6% experienced that kind of behavior several times. After that follows the prohibition to leave the house except for work (38.7%), and 30.4% experienced it several times. The participants reported least the occurrence of a complete prohibition to leave the house and it was 17.5% of them who experienced it several times.

Table 5: Frequency of specific types of economic violence

Economic violence	N	No (%)	Yes, once (%)	Yes, several times (%)
Restricting supply of basic necessities for survival	251	110 (45.8)	27 (10.4)	114 (43.8)
Taking away and sale of personal property	246	158 (64.2)	30 (12.2)	58 (23.6)
Prohibiting employment	262	178 (67.9)	15 (5.7)	69 (26.3)

The most common type of economical violence is restriction of supplies necessary for life (54.2%) of which 40% of women experienced that several times. Misappropriation and sale of personal property experienced 36% participants, from which 24% experienced that several times. Prohibition of employment experienced 32% from which 26% of them experienced it many times.

Table 6. Frequency of individual types of violence

Physical violence	N	No (%)	Yes, once (%)	Yes, several times (%)
Violently pushing against wall or other objects	261	93 (35.6)	42 (16.1)	126 (48.3)
Slapping	324	69 (21.3)	38 (11.7)	217 (67)
Causing burns	246	198 (80.5)	15 (6.1)	33 (13.4)
Punching	312	102 (32.7)	30 (9.6)	180 (57.7)
Kicking	274	123 (44.9)	34 (12.4)	117 (42.7)
Inflicting bodily wounds	247	175 (70.9)	32 (13)	40 (16.2)
Wounding by weapons	243	227 (93.4)	4 (1.6)	12 (4.9)
Attempt to murder	234	208 (88.9)	19 (8.1)	7 (3)

The most common types of physical violence are: slapping (79%) pushing against the wall or other things (67.3%), hit by hand (64%) and kick by leg (55%), and the rarest are attempts of murder (11%) and wounding by weapons (6.5%). Therefore, the most common types of physical violence could be described as "minor wounds". However, almost third of participants reported serious wounds and one fifth reported violence by causing of burns. Also, it should be noted that a majority of participants experienced some types of violence on several occasions.

Table 7. Frequency of certain forms of sexual violence

Sexual violence	N	No (%)	Yes, once (%)	Yes, several times (%)
Unwanted sexual comments and /or advances	251	146 (58.2)	27 (10.8)	78 (31.1)
Unwanted or forced physical contact	250	149 (59.6)	23 (9.2)	78 (31.2)
Unwanted or forced sex	244	179 (73.4)	13 (5.3)	52 (21.3)
Forced prostitution	239	231 (96.7)	3 (1.3)	5 (2.1)

Attempted rape	241	204 (84.6)	15 (6.2)	22 (9.1)
Rape	236	211 (89.4)	8 (3.4)	17 (7.2)

The most common types of experienced sexual violence are unwanted sexual comments and /or offers and unwanted or forced physical contacts (40%) of both types were repeated on several occasions. Unwanted sex experienced 26.6% women, of whom 21.3% several times. Attempt of rape experienced 15% of women, of whom 21.3% several times. Attempted rape experienced 15% of women, and rape 10.6% of them. Women who mentioned experience of rape, 7.2% states that they experienced it several times. Women rarely reported forced prostitution which was mentioned by 3% of women. Furthermore, we wanted to find out who were the most common perpetrators which women experienced during adulthood. (Table 8)

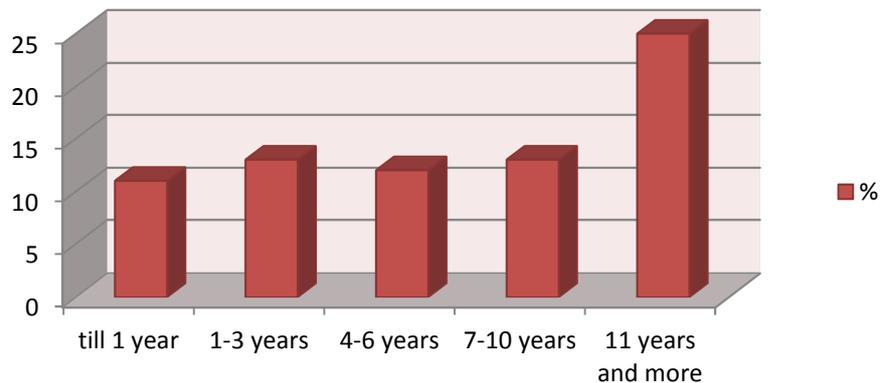
Table 8. - Violence perpetrators during adulthood

	N	No, never	Yes, once	Yes, several times	Types of violence
Husband/current or former partner	283	34 (12)	27 (9.5)	222 (78.4)	Physical, psychological
Family member	170	121 (71.2)	9 (5.3)	40 (23.5)	Physical, psychological, sexual
Friend/acquaintance	156	145 (92.9)	3 (1.9)	8 (5.1)	Psychological, sexual
Superior at work	230	138 (87.9)	5 (3.2)	14 (8.9)	psychological (verbal) sexual
Stranger	229	144 (91.1)	12 (7.6)	2 (1.3)	sexual
Someone else	100	90 (90)	2 (2)	8 (8)	Physical, psychological

Considering that the participants were mostly victims of domestic violence, the participants mentioned husband/partner/ex partner (87%) as the most common perpetrators. Then follows the violence that women experienced from other family members (28.8%) where is interesting to note that the participants mentioned the son as the perpetrator. When we talk about identity of "someone else" the participants mostly meant the relatives. Last column contains the types of violence which the participants associated with the perpetrators.

Answers to question about the length of exposure to domestic violence through their lives are presented in Image 5.

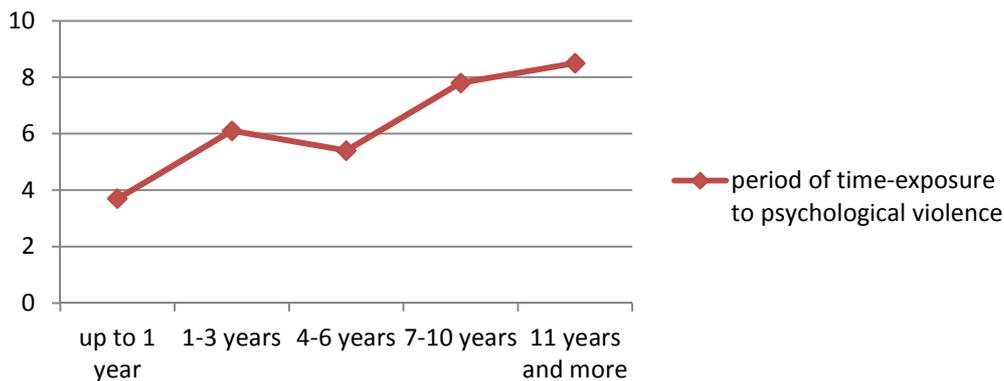
Image 5. Length of exposure to domestic violence during a lifetime (all abusive relationships until today)



Almost fourth of women are exposed to domestic violence 11 and even more years. The Percent of participants present in other categories is significantly lower and interestingly almost equal.

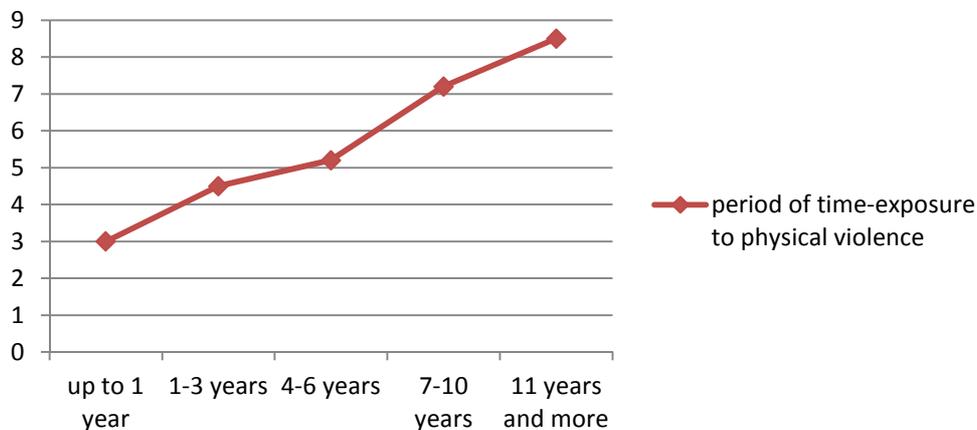
We also checked whether there is a difference among different types of violence during adulthood considering the length of exposure to violence. With additional analyses we found considerable differences among the types of experienced violence and we noted different patterns of relationships. For psychological violence, psychological violence which includes isolation and economic violence the participants that were exposed to it from 4 to 6 years consistently achieve lower results than those participants who were exposed to violence from 1 to 3 years and in comparison to those who were exposed to it for more than 7 years. Lower results achieve only those participants who were exposed to it for less than 1 year. In Image 6 we illustrate the results of ANOVA as an example for psychological violence.

Image 6: Comparison of participants with different length and exposure to psychological violence.



Contrary of that, the trend of physical and sexual violence is linear as illustrated by Image 7 which contains the results of the analysis for physical violence.

Image 7: Comparison of the participants with different duration of exposure to physical violence



As can be noticed, the relationship between the duration of violence and the physical violence is linear. In other words, women who were more exposed to violence generally reported the higher frequency of experienced violence. Also, we checked whether there are differences among the participants coming from different living areas considering

the duration of exposure to domestic violence during their lives, whereby a significant diversity was noted ($\chi^2(16) = 32.58; p < .01$).

Women who live in cities were exposed to violence for a shorter time than women who live in villages, smaller rural places or big cities.

The participants were also asked about the venue of violence, and obtained answers are presented in Table 9.

Table 9: The place where violence happened

The place	N	No (%)	Yes, once (%)	Yes, several times (%)	I don't remember (%)
In common space shared between you and the perpetrator	300	23 (7.7)	30 (10)	240 (80)	7 (2.3)
In your home	181	115 (63.5)	14 (7.7)	40 (22.1)	12 (6.6)
In the home of perpetrator	177	120 (67.8)	4 (2.3)	44 (24.9)	9 (5.1)
In home of your or perpetrator's family	178	96 (53.9)	14 (7.9)	58 (32.6)	10 (5.6)
In public places	177	81 (45.8)	35 (19.8)	54 (30.5)	7 (4)
In school/university	162	145 (89.5)	5 (3.1)	7 (4.3)	5 (3.1)
In work place	164	123 (75)	13 (7.9)	18 (11)	10 (6.1)
Somewhere else	94	82 (87.2)	2 (2.1)	7 (7.4)	3 (3.2)

The obtained results point to the joint home with the perpetrators as the most common venue of violence (90%) and as the rarest school/university (7.4%). Further, every second woman approximately experienced violence in her own home, or home of violator's family or on a public place, and every third woman approximately experienced it in the home of the perpetrator or home of perpetrator's family.

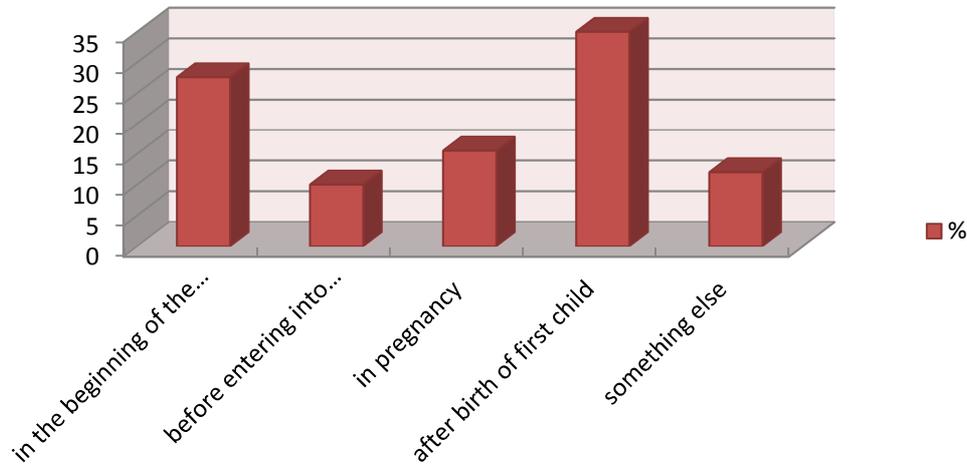
Finally, about 18% of women experienced violence in the place of work.

The participants were asked about the period of life when **violence started to happen in the family**.

As can be noticed from Image 8, a third of women reported that violence started with the birth of first child (35%), after follows answer "from beginning of relationship" (27%). Every sixth woman estimated that the violence started

during pregnancy (15.5%) and every tenth woman said that it started before being married/in a common law marriage.

Image 8: Period of life when violence started in the family



Current experience of violence

To the question whether they are at present victims of some type of violence 49.4% participants answered affirmative. To the question if they still live with perpetrator 50% of women gave affirmative answers. These results are disturbing considering the health and safety of women. Also, it was also checked whether there is a difference between women who are presently victims of violence and those women who are not, due to their socioeconomic status, however, no significant difference was noted. In other words, socioeconomic status does not affect the status of a person as a victim.

Similarly, it has been tested whether there are differences between women who currently live with the perpetrator and the women who do not live with him, considering socioeconomic status. The effect of social and economical status was not noted.

To the question if the perpetrator forbids them to leave him 68.2% of the participants answered negative, although of that number 46% of them currently live with a violator. We were interested to find out whether there is a connection between the prohibition to leave the perpetrator and the current coexistence with him. The analysis produced a significant effect ($\chi^2 (1) = 12.27, p < .001$). In accordance with expectations, women to whom the perpetrators prohibit to leave him more often continue to live with the perpetrator. To the question if they ever left the perpetrator 62.7% answered positively, from which 32% of them did it several times.

All participants were asked about their current relation with the perpetrator. The majority of women (40.5%) answered that they're living again with violator, 32.4% of them said that they had no, but 18.4% of them stated that they had to stay in contact because of the children.

In order to determine the prevalence of violence against women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the participants were asked if they know of somebody who is a victim of domestic violence. About a third of women (30.5%) indicated that they know someone who's a victim of domestic violence, out of which 28.1% of women know more than one victim. Almost a third of participants (27.8%) said that they did not know any victim of domestic violence, and 14% of them said that they were not sure whether someone close to them was a victim of violence.

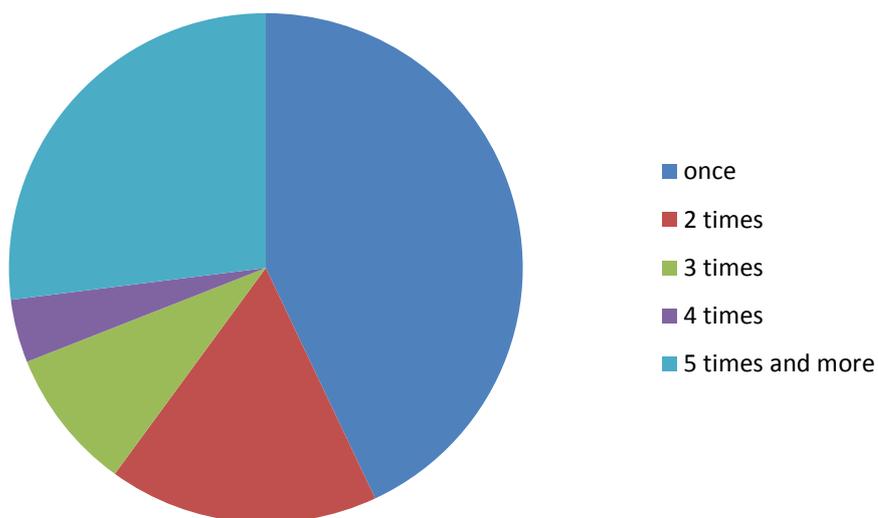
Reporting of violence, assistance to victims and content and satisfaction with work of institutions

To the question of if they reported violence it has been determined that about a half of women (51.4%) did not do so. Also we wanted to check if there was a difference between women who reported violence and these who did not do it considering if they currently live with a perpetrator, however, no significant difference was found.

Of women who reported violence the majority did so personally (75.5%) In situations when violence is reported by someone else, in 4.9% cases it was reported anonymously, in 4.2% violence is reported by relatives and in 3.5% of cases violence is reported by neighbors. In 8.4% of cases the violence reported someone else, for example, social worker. Rarest reporting of cases of violence was done by children (2.8%) and friends (0.7%). We were interested to find out if the participants had support to report violence and it was discovered that about 70% of women had a family support and /or closest persons, of whom 41.4% of had partial support, and 28% of them complete. It was determined that there was no difference according to the types of experienced violence for the participants who did not have the support and those whose had partial or complete support in reporting of violence.

To the question how many times did they report violence to police we notice that majority of women (43%) reported it only once. However, every fourth woman did it 5 or more times (Image 9).

Image 9. Number of times that cases of violence were reported to the police



Further, we were interested to find out if there exists a difference between women who reported violence once and these who reported it 2 and more times considering the type of violence. (Table 10)

Table 10. Comparison between reporting violence once and reporting it several times

	Number of reports to the police	N	M	SD	T
Psychological violence	Once	30	7.30	4.80	1.73
	Several times	169	5.80	4.28	
Psychological violence isolation	Once	34	2.71	2.27	2.14*
	Several times	185	1.85	2.10	
Economic violence	Once	33	2.58	1.88	1.74
	Several times	183	1.92	2.00	
Physical violence	Once	24	6.75	3.09	1.78*
	Several times	175	5.19	4.11	
Sexual violence	Once	28	0.75	1.20	0.74
	Several times	180	0.86	1.70	

***p < .001; ** p < .01; * p < .01

As can be seen, significant differences are found between two of groups of women on measures of psychological violence which include isolation and physical violence. In both cases more violence experienced women who reported violence to police only once.

The participants who reported violence were asked how the act was qualified. (Table 11)

Table 11: Qualification of act

Qualification of act	N	%
Criminal law (article. 222 Domestic violence)	37	28.0
Law on protection against domestic violence	50	37.9
Law on Misdemeanor	6	4.5
Something else	2	1.6
I do not know	37	28.0
	132	100.0

In 37.9% of cases the violent act was qualified under the Law on protection against domestic violence, while most rarely the violent act was qualified under the Law of Misdemeanors. For every fourth women the offense was qualified under the Criminal Law as bullying in the family, while the same percentage of women do not know how the offense committed was qualified.

Furthermore, the participants who reported violence were asked at what stage the process is in. As can be seen from Table 12, for 27.3% of participants the procedure is completed, while one in five participants dropped the lawsuit. For the lowest number of participants the process is with the state prosecutor's office or waiting in the final judgment, or at the stage of appeal.

Table 12. Current stage of process against perpetrators of violence

Current stage of process	N	%
Process was completed	41	27.3
I gave up the lawsuit	33	22.0
In court	27	18.0
With the police	25	16.7
I do not know	14	9.3
Something else	5	3.3
At the state prosecutor's office	3	2.0
In some stage of appeal/awaiting validity	2	1.3
	150	100.0

The following question concerned the type of sentence assigned to the perpetrator. (Table 13). As can be seen even 45.7% of participants did not know what type of punishment awaits the perpetrator. Every fifth woman stated that the perpetrator received suspended sentence, fine/safety measures. Only one participant mentioned a jail punishment.

Table 13. Punishment for perpetrator

Type of punishment	N	%
Suspended sentence	20	19.0
Fine	19	18.1
Protection measure	17	16.2
Jail sentence	1	1.0
I do not know	48	45.7
	105	100.0

It was checked also if the punishment of perpetrator differs according to the qualification of the violent act. An act which is qualified under the Criminal Law as a violent behavior in family the perpetrator mostly got a suspended sentence or protective/safety measure, while for an act qualified under the Law on protection against domestic violence the perpetrator could be either punished by fine or a protective/safety measure. The participants who did not know how the act was qualified also did not know what kind of punishment the perpetrator got.

Participants were asked did they told anyone about what was happening/happen to them (Table 14)

Table 14. Person that the participants shared their experience with

Person	N	Yes (%)	No (%)	I do not remember (%)
Partner	145	51 (35.2)	92 (63.4)	2 (1.4)
Family members	223	177 (79.4)	45 (20.2)	1 (0.4)
Close friend	198	154 (77.8)	42 (21.2)	2 (1)
Colleague	162	69 (42.6)	92 (56.8)	1 (0.6)
Expert from organization of civil society	226	154 (68.1)	68 (30.1)	4 (1.8)
Doctor	175	83 (47.4)	90 (51.4)	2 (1.1)
Imam/priest	164	39 (23.8)	122 (74.4)	3 (1.8)
Someone else	93	27 (29)	61 (65.6)	5 (5.4)

The results show that the told what was happening to them mostly to members of their family (79.4%), to a close friend (77.8%) or an expert from NGO (68%). Generally, almost every second woman talked about that problem with partner. This fact is surprising considering that participants stated their husband/partner as a perpetrator of violence. By additional information it was determined that majority of women who talked about violence with their partner currently do not live with him anymore. Therefore it could be possible that women abandoned a partner after series of attempts of resolving of problems. Also, it could be possible that this is not the same person, which means that it could be possible that the "perpetrator" and the "partner" to whom a person confessed" are two different persons. Nearly a third of women talked with "someone else", which commonly referred to social workers. The smallest number of participants talked with an imam or priest. Additional analysis showed that 21% of women complained only to one person, while the other women talked with different people.

Furthermore, we wanted to find out from the participants if they ever experienced a situation when they sought a help from close person in order to stop the abuse, used physical force in order to defend themselves from perpetrator or situation where they first physically attacked the perpetrator. (Table 15)

Table15. Experiences of participants related to help, self-defense and attack on perpetrator of violence

Have you ever experienced?	N	No (%)	Once (%)	Several times (%)
situation in which you sought help from a person close to you	232	133 (40.1)	88 (26.5)	11 (33.4)
situation where you would use force in self defense	317	174 (54.9)	76 (24)	67 (21.1)
situation where you would first attack the perpetrator	307	283 (92.2)	18 (5.9)	6 (2)

The results show that more than a half of participants (59.9%) experienced situation where they asked for help from close person in order to stop the domestic abuse, whereof third of them several times.

Participants have least frequently experienced a situation where they first attacked a violator, what reported about 8% of women. But, 45.1% of participants had a situation where they used physical force in order to defend from violator. 21.1 % of them did it several times.

After violent experience majority of participants did not look for medical help (66%), while every fourth woman looked for help only once. Only 8.9% of women looked for medical help several times.

Also, the majority of the participants after survived violence were not hospitalized (85.8%) because there was no need for that (for example, only psychological violence). 10.1% of them were hospitalized only once, but 4.2% several times. Further, we tested if there are differences among women who looked for medical help in accordance to the experienced violence in adulthood. The results of analysis prove that women who did not look for medical help

experienced a lesser number of different types of violence in comparison to the women who were hospitalized once or several times.

The participants were asked if the government institution protected their rights during the reporting of violence, and these results are showed in Table 16.

Table 16. Protected rights of the victims

Victims' rights	N	Yes (%)	No (%)	Do not know (%)
Security and legal aid	136	100 (73.5)	25 (18.4)	11 (8.1)
Free legal aid	127	98 (72.6)	28 (20.7)	1 (5.9)
Free psychosocial support and counseling	129	100 (74.1)	28 (20.7)	1 (5.2)
Information about indictment/charge	86	44 (51.2)	26 (30.2)	16 (18.6)
Information about verdict and penalty for offender	80	29 (36.3)	34 (42.5)	17 (21.3)
Protection of personal information during investigation and trial	81	23 (28.4)	30 (37)	28 (34.6)

Comparing the percentage for particular rights it can be noticed that according to the evaluations of participants the authorities provided mostly free psychosocial support and counseling (74.1%), protected the right to security and protection against the perpetrator(73.5%) and the right for free legal aid 72.6%).

Rarely have the authorities' adequately protected personal data during the investigation and trial. In addition, every third woman does not know whether she is entitled to have her personal data protected. Every second woman considers that her right to information about the content of accusation/ appeal was respected, and every third considers that her right to information about the verdict and penalty against the perpetrator has been respected. Generally, one can say that at least one third of the participants was informed about each of these rights. Participants' responses about experiences with various institutions, organizations and NGO are presented in Table 17.

Table 17. Experiences with various institutions, organizations and NGO

Who	N	I did not have experience (%)	Very bad (%)	Bad (%)	Neither bad nor good (%)	Good (%)	Very good (%)
Police	264	111 (42)	15 (5.7)	29 (11)	44 (16.7)	51 (19.3)	14 (5.3)
Medical Staff	228	114 (50)	6 (2.6)	9 (3.9)	36 (15.8)	58 (25.4)	5 (2.2)
Prosecutor	216	146 (67.6)	5 (2.3)	9 (4.2)	26 (12)	29 (13.4)	1 (0.5)
Courts	217	139 (64.1)	6 (2.8)	14 (6.5)	25 (11.5)	33 (15.2)	0 (0)
Centers for social work	287	81 (28.2)	26 (9.1)	30 (10.5)	37 (12.9)	75 (26.1)	38 (13.2)
NGOs	287	80 (27.9)	10 (3.5)	3 (1)	15 (5.2)	84 (29.6)	95 (33.1)

Generally, participants had an experience with the work of different institutions and NGOs. However, they had least experience with the work of the prosecutor's office and courts, and mostly with the NGO-s and centers for social work where the research was conducted. About one half of women had an experience with medical staff and police. The participants mostly had a good and very good experience with NGO-s (62.7%), after then follow the centers for social work (39.3%) and the medical staff (27.6%).

In interpretation of this data one should be careful, considering that the women who participated in the survey came through the OCD and centers for social work.

Also, it is important to mention that the mentioned organizations and institutions are those with which the participants had the most frequent experiences.

The highest number of bad and particularly bad experiences the participants had with centers for social work (19.6%) and police (16.7%). But the percentage of participants who had positive experiences with these institutions is higher than the percentage of women who had negative experiences.

Generally, participants had more positive than negative experiences with different organizations.

In the end, the participants were asked what they would advise a close person who survived domestic violence, and results are presented in Table 18.

Table 18. Advices of participants to persons who survived domestic violence

Advices	N	Yes (%)	No (%)	I do not know (%)
to pretend as though nothing happened	232	10 (4.3)	170 (73.3)	52 (22.4)
to call the police and report abuse	293	214 (73)	27 (9.2)	52 (17.1)
to leave the perpetrator but not report the abuse with the police	238	70 (29.4)	110 (46.2)	58 (24.4)
try to change one's own behavior and thus avoid violence	213	20 (17.2)	118 (50.6)	75 (32.2)
to call SOS	303	217 (71.6)	28 (9.2)	58 (19.1)
Something else	96	18 (18.1)	27 (28.1)	51 (53.1)

The highest percentage of participants would advise a close person to call the police and report the violent act (73%) or ask for help from SOS telephone service and a shelter (71.6%). Every third woman would advise a close person to abandon the perpetrator, but also not to report violence to police. However, every fifth woman would advise a close person to try to change her behavior and prevent the violence. Only 4.3% of women would advise a close person to pretend that nothing happened.

Perpetrators of the crime

To the question about the sex of the perpetrator of crime it was determined that in 94% of cases the perpetrator is a man, and in the last 6% of the cases the perpetrator is a woman.

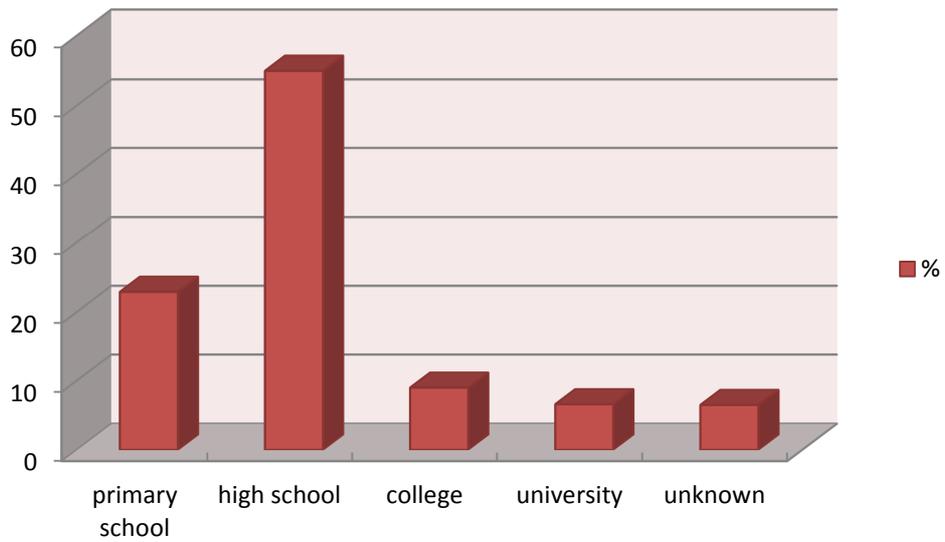
The age of the perpetrators spans from 20 to 83 age (M = 43.83; SD = 10.88;

Median = 44). So, the perpetrators mostly come from the age group between 40 and 49. (36%), after that follow age the groups between 30-39 (23.8%) and 50-59 years of age (21%).

The smallest number of perpetrators come from the age group from 20 to 29 (8%) and the group from 60 to 75 years old (9.5%).

Considering the question of education of the perpetrators it was determined that most of them have finished high school (55%) and primary school (22.9%). The smallest percent of perpetrators belong to those with a finished university school degree (6.6%) and higher qualification (9%) (Image 10).

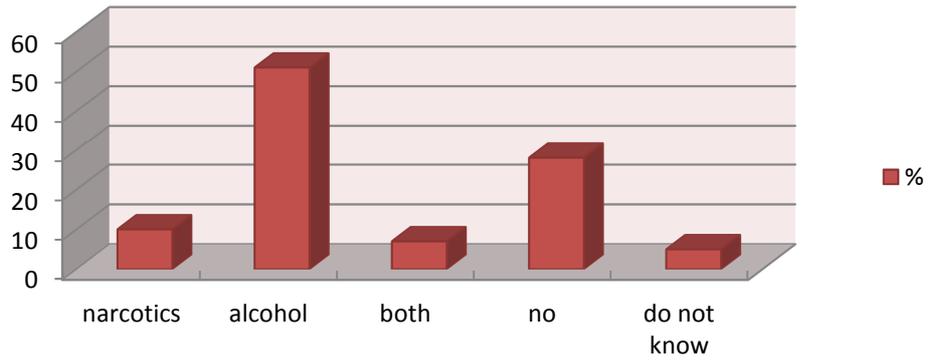
Image 10. Education degree of the perpetrator of violence



Considering the question about the relation with perpetrator it was determined that in the 90% of cases the perpetrator of current violence is a husband/partner, but in 13.1% it is an ex-partner or ex-husband. Further, four women (2.1%) stated a son as a perpetrator of violence, and 22 of them (6.7%) stated another family member, for example a cousin.

At the time of committing the crime the perpetrator in 51% of cases was under the influence of alcohol. But, less than third of the perpetrators were not under any kind of narcotic. Every tenth perpetrator at the time of committing the crime was under the influence of drugs. (Image 11)

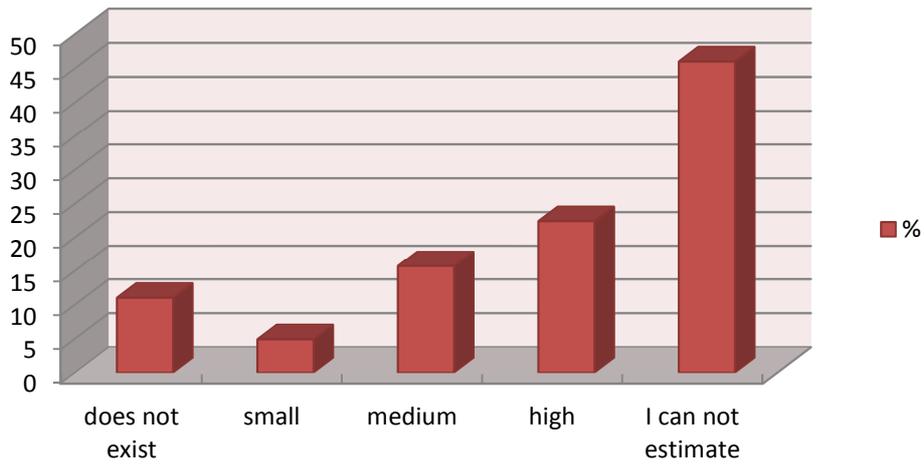
Image 11. Influence of drugs/alcohol during the commission of the crime



Further, 52.7% of women stated that the violator was not previously reported/sentenced for the same crime, and 6.5% of them gave a positive answer. Every fourth woman stated that she does not know if the violator was earlier reported/sentenced for the same crime.

The Participants were also asked about the plausibility that the perpetrator repeats the violent act and results are presented in Image 12.

Image 12: Plausibility that the perpetrator repeats the violent act



As seen from above, almost 46% of women cannot estimate the probability of repetition of the violence. However, every fifth woman said that the probability is high (22.4%). Further, 15.7% of the participants reported medium probability, and 11% said that there is no probability that the violent act will happen again.

Consequences of violence

The participants had to answer 20 questions related to different feelings, behaviors and problems which appeared as a consequence of the experienced violence. The participants had the task of estimating how the mentioned symptoms applied to them on a scale of 5 degrees (from 1 = does not refer to me to 5= completely refers to me). All particles scored in a way that higher results indicate a higher degree of the problem. The total score is counted as a sum of answers on individual questions. The participants achieved a result in span of 20 to 100 (M = 66.70, SD =17.53). The answers of the participants are presented in Table 19.

Table 19. Percent of individual feelings, behaviors and problems after the experienced violence.

Problem	N	1	2	3	4	5
Headache	312	30 (9.6)	5 (1.6)	24 (7.7)	60 (19.2)	193 (61.9)
Pressure and pain in chest, followed by accelerated heart rate	287	26 (9.1)	8 (2.8)	26 (9.1)	53 (18.5)	174 (60.6)
General weakness	284	33 (11.6)	9 (3.2)	31 (10.9)	47 (16.5)	164 (57.7)
Increased use of alcohol	232	191 (82.3)	7 (3)	13 (5.6)	9 (3.9)	12 (5.2)
Increased use of medicines	269	94 (34.9)	14 (5.2)	50 (18.6)	28 (10.4)	83 (30.9)
Increased use of drugs	231	223 (96.5)	1 (0.4)	1 (0.4)	2 (0.9)	4 (1.7)
Increased use of cigarettes	246	114 (46.3)	6 (2.4)	27 (11)	39 (15.9)	60 (24.4)
Problems with sleep (insomnia, waking during the night)	262	20 (7.6)	10 (3.8)	40 (15.3)	54 (20.6)	138 (52.7)
Lost/increased appetite	249	34 (13.7)	13 (5.2)	44 (17.7)	43 (17.3)	115 (46.2)
Disturbance	270	16 (5.9)	8 (3)	28 (10.4)	62 (23)	156 (57.8)
Anxiety	268	22	10	29	64	143

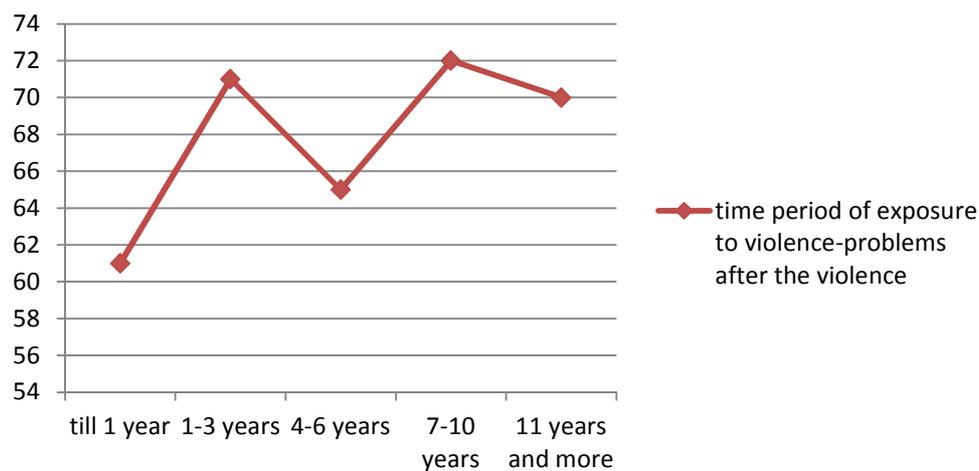
		(8.2)	(3.7)	(10.8)	(23.9)	(53.4)
Tension	275	20 (7.4)	10 (3.7)	22 (8.2)	67 (22.7)	156 (58)
Sadness	263	23 (8.7)	11 (4.2)	24 (9.1)	55 (20.9)	150 (57)
Feeling of betrayal	255	27 (10.6)	11 (4.3)	28 (11)	45 (17.6)	144 (56.5)
Fear of certain situations, places or persons	269	46 (17.1)	16 (5.9)	49 (18.2)	25 (9.3)	133 (49.4)
Decreased desire to socialize with loved ones	249	54 (21.7)	20 (8)	44 (17.7)	31 (12.4)	100 (40.2)
Lack of concentration	245	44 (18)	15 (6.1)	49 (20)	46 (18.8)	91 (37.1)
Problems while doing daily work	245	48 (19.6)	16 (6.5)	53 (21.6)	40 (16.1)	88 (35.9)
Exposure to criticism from one's environment	241	101 (41.9)	24 (10)	33 (13.7)	19 (7.9)	64 (26.6)
Suicidal ideas and thoughts	241	157 (65.1)	13 (5.4)	15 (6.2)	15 (6.2)	41 (17)

1- Does not refer to me; 2 – rarely refers to me; 3 – moderately refers to me; 4 – mostly refers on me; 5 – completely refers to me

Generally, more than 50% of women reported the majority of stated feelings, experiences and problems after the violence. The exceptions are suicidal thoughts, increased use of alcohol and drugs which are also the rarest problems. Women feel most commonly headache, disturbance, tension, pressure and pain in the chest, sorrow and similar things.

The connection between the manifestation of the problem after the experienced violence and the individual types of violence was also tested. It was determined that a significant positive connection between the expression of problems and all kinds of violence exists, whereby the problems became more pronounced due to the psychological and economic violence, and significantly less due the psychological violence, including isolation. Further, the possible difference in women's expression of different problems and feelings considering the duration of violence was also tested. A significant difference was not determined; however, an interesting "trend" was noted. The results are presented in Image 13.

Image 13: Comparison of participants with the experienced violence in different duration considering the scope of the problem, behavior and feelings after the violent experience



In spite of the expectation that the expression of the problem would increase with the length of exposure of violence, there was no linear trend. As can be seen, women who were exposed to violence less than one year reported the smallest number of problems and negative feelings. Further, women who were exposed to violence between 1 and 3 years reported a higher number of problems than the previous group, but it was also higher than the group who were exposed to violence between 4 and 6 years. The highest results achieved women who were exposed to violence between 7 and 10 years. In cases of women who were exposed to violence for longer than 11 years a slight decrease in severity of the problem was recorded. But the differences between individual groups is not significant.

Further, it was tested whether there is a difference between the participants according to the type of support (they did not have support, particular and complete support) during the time of the violence considering the severity of the problem and negative feelings. A significant difference was not determined by the analysis between the three groups of participants, however, women who reported the highest number of problems estimated that they had particular support, and the least by the women who had complete support of family and /or close persons. Also, a difference in expression of problem and feelings between women who are currently victims of violence and those who are not was not noted.

In a second important question we were interested to find out in which size women blame themselves for the survived violence. (Table 20)

Table 20: Answers on scale of self-guilt

Claims	N	1	2	3	4	5
I think I could have prevented or avoided the violence to which I was subjected	262	130 (49.6)	25 (9.5)	54 (20.6)	21 (8)	32 (12.2)
I feel responsible for what is happening in my family	252	120 (47.6)	43 (17.1)	48 (19)	23 (9.1)	18 (7.1)
In my opinion I did nothing to invite trouble from the culprit	325	70 (21.5)	21 (6.5)	30 (9.2)	29 (8.9)	175 (53.8)

1- Does not refer to me; 2 – rarely refers to me; 3 – moderately refers to me; 4 – mostly refers to me; 5 – completely refers to me

If one looks at individual claims, more than half of the participants do not consider themselves responsible for what happened in their family, and also that they have done nothing wrong what could cause the violence by the partner. Also, the majority of the participants consider that they could not have prevented or avoided the violence that happened to them.

By additional analysis a significant correlation of self- guilt with the length of exposure to different types of violence was not noted. However, a significant correlation between growing up in the family where violence was presented and self-guilt was noted, ($r = .36, p < .001$). Whereby self-guilt was more pronounced in cases of women who have grown up in violent homes.

Stereotypes about victims of violence

Myths of rape

The scale of myths of rape consists of 5 claims, and participants' task was that on a scale of 5 degrees estimate how much their experience matches the suggested statements (from "1" " absolutely no" to 5 " yes, completely").

The total result was obtained as a sum of answers on associated values, whereby higher result indicates a higher support for the myths of rape. The participants` answers on this scale span from 5 to 25 ($M = 8.78; SD = 4.07$). It can be noticed generally that the prominence of myths of rape in participants` answers is relatively at a low level (Table 21).

Table 21. Answers for claims of myths of rape

Claim	N	1	2	3	4	5
Only women can be raped	319	190 (59.6)	47 (14.7)	41 (12.9)	28 (8.8)	13 (4.1)
Rapists are usually strangers	319	169 (53)	58 (18.2)	52 (16.3)	26 (8.2)	14 (4.4)
Rape victims are mostly attractive young women	318	172 (54.1)	59 (18.6)	54 (17)	23 (7.2)	10 (3.1)
If a woman is not seriously injured, it is unlikely that she was raped	316	180 (57)	66 (20.9)	47 (14.9)	15 (4.7)	8 (2.5)
When a woman says no to sex it can often mean yes.	312	200 (64.1)	54 (17.3)	41 (13.1)	9 (2.9)	8 (2.6)

1 – Absolutely no; 2 – mostly no; 3 – either yes or no; 4 – mostly yes; 5 – yes, completely.

As can be seen, the participants mostly agree with the statement: "Rapists are the most commonly unknown men" (12.6%) and they agree in the least with statement "When woman say for sex 'no', that could mean 'yes'" which support 6% of participants.

Scale of stereotypes about partner relationships

This scale consists of 5 claims, and the participants' task was to estimate on scale of 5 degrees how much they agree with the claims. (From 1 – absolutely no, to 5 – yes, completely). The total score was obtained as a sum of answers on associated values, whereby a higher result indicated a higher support of stereotypes of partner relationships. Answers of the participants on this scale spans from 5 to 25 (M = 8.85; SD = 4.45). Generally it can be noticed that the prominence of stereotypes on partner relationship by the participants' answers is on a low level. (Table 22)

Table 22. Answer to statements about partner relationships

Claim	N	1	2	3	4	5
A man sometimes cannot resist hitting a woman who has caused him to be angry	329	199 (60.5)	43 (13.1)	39 (11.9)	29 (8.8)	19 (5.8)
A woman should not be seeing her friends if it bothers her partner/husband.	319	176 (55.2)	59 (18.5)	44 (13.8)	19 (6)	21 (6.6)
It is understandable that a man yells at a woman when he is mad.	320	195 (60.9)	60 (18.8)	29 (9.1)	27 (8.4)	9 (2.8)
Women who cheat on their partners/husbands deserve to be beaten.	319	180 (56.4)	61 (19.1)	41 (12.9)	22 (6.9)	15 (4.7)
A woman should always do what her partner/husband says.	331	223 (67.4)	54 (16.3)	36 (10.9)	13 (3.9)	5 (1.5)

1 – Absolutely no; 2 – mostly no; 3 – either yes or no; 4 – mostly yes; 5 – yes, completely.

As can be seen, women mostly support the claim "Sometimes a man cannot refrain not to hit a woman when she made him angry" (14.6%) and the least with the claim "Women should always do what her husband/partner orders her". With the last claim agree 5% of the participants. Generally, a relatively small number of participants support stated claims.

Scale of assigning guilt to victim for violence experience

A scale of assigning the guilt to victim for violent experience consists of 3 claims, and the participants task was that on scale of 5 degrees estimate how much they agree with claims (from 1 – absolutely no, to 5 – yes, completely). The total score is obtained as a sum of answers on associated values, whereby a higher result indicates a higher assigning of guilt to the victims for experienced violence. Generally it can be noticed that assigning of guilt to the victim for experienced violence is relatively low. (Table 23) Answers on the scale range from 3 to 15 (M =54.98; SD = 2.44).

Table 23: Answers on claims on scale of assigning quilt to victim for experienced violence

Claim	N	1	2	3	4	5
Women who were beaten by their partners must have deserved it.	32 5	223 (68.6)	63 (19.4)	28 (8.6)	6 (1.8)	5 (1.5)
Sometimes a victim is guilty for the violence.	33 4	223 (66.8)	67 (20.1)	35 (10.5)	5 (1.5)	4 (1.2)
A woman who tolerates violence and does not leave the perpetrator does not deserve any better.	34 0	192 (56.5)	46 (13.5)	48 (14.1)	20 (5.9)	34 (10)

1 – Not at all; 2 – mostly not; 3 – neither yes or no; 4 – mostly yes; 5 – yes completely.

Obtained results show that the participants mostly support the claim " Woman who suffer violence and doesn't leave from violator also doesn't deserve better" (15. 9%) and at last claim "Sometimes victim is guilty herself for experienced violence " (2.7%). According to the previous results, support of individual claims is generally low.

In the end, the correlation of myths of rape, stereotypes about partner relationships and ascribing of guilt to victim for experienced violence (Table 24).

Table 24: Correlation of myths about rape, stereotypes about partner relationships and ascribing of guilt to victim for survived violence

	Stereotypes about partner relationships	Blaming victim for the violence
Myths about rape	.73 ^{***}	.58 ^{***}
Stereotypes about partner relationships		.56 ^{***}

***p < .001

Obtained results present moderate to high positive correlation between myths about rape, stereotypes about partner relationships and assigning guilt to victim for survived violence. The highest correlation is between myths about rape and stereotypes about partner relationships and the least between the stereotypes about rape and assigning of guilt to victims. So, women who cultivate well-marked stereotypes about rape are also women who support stereotypes in partner relationships, and they in addition ascribe guilt to victim for the survived violence.

Further, the correlation between of myths about rape, stereotypes about partner relationship and ascribing guilt to victim with different experiences of the types of violence was tested; problems, feelings and behaviors after the survived violence and with a self blame. The conducted analysis did not identify a significant correlation between myths and stereotypes to victims with individual types of the experienced violence, neither with problems, feelings and behaviors. Their positive correlation with self blame was determined. Women who blame themselves for situations where they were involved they frequently ascribe guilt to victims and they have well marked stereotypes about rape and also stereotypes about partner relationships. Further, a correlation with different length of suffering violence with myths and stereotypes for victims was determined. However, significant differences on the scale of stereotypes about partner relationships and reporting violence once and several times was noted so that women who reported violence several times on average achieve more results than the women who reported violence only once. [t(274) = 2.71; p < .001].

2. Analysis of the attitudes of professionals

For the purposes of this research, to complete the understanding of the term "protection" of women from domestic violence, a form for the interview has been constructed, which, in addition to the general information section³⁵, contained a section with sixteen open questions. Open questions were related to the identification of: (a) perceptions of professionals dealing with violence against women, (b) the achievement of protection-standard provisions of the legal system, (c) problems that experts have working on this subject/topic, and (d) cooperation and conditions that would allow easier and more competent work and achieve better results.

Eleven experts³⁶ responded to questions on this form, based on their own knowledge and experience in the direct work, representation of women and men in the trials, through the activities of "coordination team"³⁷ as well as a large number of expert meetings to exchange experiences³⁸. Expert answers are sorted by similarity by types and grouped

³⁵ Name, profession, office / institution where they work, experience / knowledge about domestic violence.

³⁶ Four judges from the Municipal, Cantonal and Federation Supreme Court, the Prosecutor of the Federal Prosecutor's Office, two investigator from the Ministry of Internal Affairs KS, two social workers from PI, Center for Social Work, staff from shelter (FLD Sarajevo), a psychologist from the Institute of Public Health of students at the University of Sarajevo and Director of shelters for women victims of domestic violence FLD Sarajevo.

³⁷ "Coordination Team" from Sarajevo Canton is a form of treatment that provides access to services (primarily experts from the Centre for Social Work, as well as police and professionals from shelters), and if necessary, other professionals (medical and educational institutions, the media, the courts).

³⁸ One such meeting was held in December last year on Jahorina organized by Žene Ženama in order to establish a multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary collaboration in order to collect all relevant information on violence against women and domestic violence in the Sarajevo Canton, joint assessment of the situation, and joint planning of comprehensive protection.

into four categories.

Asked about the perception of violence against women, which included attitude towards the conceptualization of violence in our conditions, concerning the problem of definition private/social, patriarchy, myths, stereotypes, the factors that lead to violence, and the most suitable model of explanations of domestic violence-multivariate and its importance in the prevention, experts gave the following answers:

- Coordinator of the shelter: "This is a very serious social problem that has far-reaching consequences on the individual level, family level and the community. Bosnian family is specific for patriarchal behavior patterns, especially the myths and stereotypes about male / female relationships and roles that are transmitted from generation to generation and are hardly changed in a public statement. "
- Inspector in the police: "The causes of violence are multiple and must be considered together while explaining violent behavior in the family. First of all those are macro social, psychosocial factors associated with socialization. "
- Clinical psychologist at the Institute for the protection of students: "Multivariate model"³⁹ which explains men's violence against women and children in the family is the best model, because it takes into account the various effects of different factors and risks, but its use is limited. Family relations were severely damaged during the war and the collapse continued in the post-war difficult social circumstances. This is not an excuse for the increase of domestic violence, because not all men are violent, but a suggestion that we need to pay attention to the link between socio-economic factors and the male/female roles, since they are a strong predisposition to male aggression. "

To the question on obtaining protection-standard provisions of the legal system, the following answers were given:

- Judge: "When drafting legislation, we have used the experience of other European countries, particularly the Scandinavian model. However, not enough attention is focused on the analysis of the mentality in our society, the specifics which had to be taken into account in applying this model. We have a good normative basis but weak and insufficient practice for the application of laws, policies and measures. In B&H, the legal framework is present in the field of domestic violence; victims are treated differently even though the actions of all subjects of protection are prescribed by the relevant rules, especially when it comes to the police, the prosecution and the court. "
- Prosecutor: "The criminal laws of the Entities and Brčko District recognize felony of domestic violence and other related offenses. Also, the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence is very applicable, but the relationship to the seriousness of this crime is still insufficient and questioned both by the police and the prosecution and the court. Continuing education is required. "

³⁹ The most appropriate theoretical model developed by O'Neil and Harway which is significant because it shows that the multiple factors that cause male violence, are in constant interaction and changing and are intertwined in a complex manner. In other words, male violence against women, can only be understood if we realize the connection that exists between the individual, social and psychological characteristics of men and the social structures that cause stress, tension and personal problems.

Regarding the questions about problems, which experts who worked in this field/topic had, different answers were given, which have been divided into: problems of organizational and administrative aspects of the work, inadequate law enforcement and consequences for professionals:

- (1) Problems in the organizational and administrative aspects of the work were emphasized especially by social workers, investigators and judges and prosecutors, and they relate to a small number of trained professionals in these institutions who are dealing with these issues in relation to the large number of reported/identified cases of violence, which is directly related to the lack of time to document the violence and "deep understanding" of the problem (related to the position and feelings of the victim, victim's fear of taking concrete steps).
- (2) Inadequate implementation of laws and/or "improvisation" in the framework of the existing legislation, in the opinion of the judges, prosecutors and coordinator of shelters, is reflected primarily in criminal court proceedings, the non-recognition of violence, the long duration of court proceedings and mild punishment of the perpetrators of violence (mostly suspended sentences).
- (3) When it comes to the consequences for the professionals, all research participants emphasized being „overwhelmed" with problems (professional burn out), physical and psychological burden lead to a disconnection among service within the same institution and between different institutions, when it comes to professional practices and procedures. The consequence of this situation is that the most important data is lost and never written down, and also that the data remains only within one service, which prevents the inclusion of other professionals, and so that becomes harmful to long-term monitoring of the case and its adequate resolution.

On the issues of cooperation and the conditions that would enable an easier and more competent work and achieve better results, we got these answers.

- Police investigator: "Inadequate institutional protection leads to poor exchange of information and also poor cooperation between the different subjects of protection, which further leads to difficulties in proving the violence, misunderstanding and lack of support that would guarantee the safety of the victim (the general lack of understanding of problems and needs of victims)"
- Coordinator of shelter "There should exist patterns that will facilitate the recording and documentation, that will allow data to be passed to other agencies that deal with this problem and that data can be updated. In that way, experts from different institutions have an overview of the situation and can work together to participate in the decision making, which is based on needs and interests of victims and their right for protection and security. "
- Judge: "It is necessary to clearly define the broad framework of measures for the protection of victims and control/sanction for violent behavior, and that means establishing close, long-term mutual cooperation between key institutions and actors from the position of social effectiveness and efficiency. Also, it is important to strengthen the institutional treatment regarding the application procedures for the protection of victims of violence in protection, which would not depend only on personal motivation and engagement of professionals, and also establish a mechanism for monitoring the effects of treatment. "

Concluding remarks

Research on the protection of women from domestic violence, in addition to the literature studies that deal with this phenomenon, was carried out on the entire territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with 388 women who had had experience of violence and 11 experts from governmental and non-governmental sectors, who deal directly or indirectly with the protection of women from domestic violence, and the research has resulted in the following conclusions:

a) Findings from the literature and practice (activist and institutional)

- Violence against women, including domestic violence is a complex phenomenon at the individual, family, social, and global level, it is present at all times and in all places, which disproportionately affects women and is therefore, designated as gender-based. Key concepts that characterize it (patriarchy; relations of domination and subordination; customary, traditional, religious and cultural norms and practices and economic inequality) suggest that violence against women is not an incident, it is limited to specific, individual women, but it is a mechanism used for centuries as a means of maintaining male dominance and control over women.
- Accurate data on the prevalence of violence against women does not exist, but there are some data from various studies at national, regional and global level on the extent of violence, that confirms that about ¼ or 1/5 of woman, regardless of what country, has the experience of living through the violence. Most of these violent acts are done by men from their nearest environment. Most women suffer physical and sexual violence and do not speak about this issue, suggesting the existence of extremely high so-called «dark number».
- Violence against women has for many years been shrouded in silence and was considered a private problem of women. Victims of domestic violence are women, children or other persons, suitable for abusers (parents). Violence is taught and transmitted from personality to personality of a child - victim to adult - tyrant. In many families, violence and aggression are a behavioral script or part of the style of response, associated with primitivism, regressive reaction and behavior and learning of violent and aggressive behavior. Violence against women is entering the public, through the concept of the family, namely through the "discovery" of the problem of violence against children, which discovered the link between violence against women and physical abuse of children.
- The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Srpska, as immigration attractive areas, experienced the sudden and shocking change in the social structure, including the family system, and the expression of spousal abuse, violence against members of the household, and violence against children, which is a reality that cannot be denied or hidden. Increasing problem in the social changes to which individuals and families have been or are exposed to, consistent with the patriarchal stereotypes and gender division of labor, domestic violence becomes a constant source of affirmation of "marginalized masculinity" and trans-transmission of violence.
- Bosnia and Herzegovina is faced with this difficult crisis, does not view domestic violence from the perspective of necessary action of various social factors and therefore there is no response to the violence

that would be in line with the needs of women and the reality. Due to the lack of a unique record of domestic violence cases, the available data by government institutions who have first contact with women victims of violence (centers for social work, police and prosecutors) are incomplete and contradictory, and point to different interpretations and approaches to addressing the problem. Offer to assist victims of domestic violence is limited to a few places (women's shelter and a Center for Social Work), because there is no institutional services that are able to provide comprehensive, a sensitive and specialized assistance and protection to victims of domestic violence but also from other forms of gender-based violence.

- Institutional subjects, although without specialization, are the main carriers of protection from domestic violence, and women's organizations, specialized on this issue, due to their unregulated status in this area remain in the field of prevention and support.

b) Quantitative research

- The complexity of different forms of domestic violence against women, required an examination of "more complex picture of the victim", and that meant the inclusion of a broader range of variables in order for research (quantitative and qualitative) to include issues of "homogenous victim of violence," but also suggests important differences between the types of violence, partner characteristics and cultural context in which violence occurs and (in)adequacy of institutional assistance, support and protection.
- Data for the quantitative study were collected from 388 women who had experienced at least one form of violence during their lifetime. The age range of the examinees ranges from 18 to 79, and most are over the age of 40. More than a third of women (36.5%) come from families where violence was present, while in most cases the perpetrator was the father (89.4%). In adulthood, most women experienced psychological violence (92.4%) and physical abuse (79.8%), followed by economic violence (61.5%) and isolation (59.3%) while the minority of women experienced sexual violence (29.3%). Also, about a third of women knew someone who was a victim of domestic violence.
- The largest number of women has been exposed to violence for more than 7 years (40.3%). Home, which victims and perpetrators of violence share, is the most common place where the violence happened / is happening (90%). Almost half of the study participants are currently victims of some form of violence.
- More than half of the women who participated have reported violence (51.4%); in most cases, they did it in person (75.5%), of which (43%) one time, while one in four women did so five or more times. When reporting the violence, most of the women had some form of support from the family and people close to them (70%). Women who reported violence differ from those that did not report it based on the number of different forms of the violence that they have testified about. Also, by the women who reported the violence the perpetrator of violence was often the husband / partner, and they are currently exposed to violence (53.9%) in comparison to women who did not report it (41.4%). In the duration of the violence there is no difference between women who reported violence and those who did not.
- In terms of experience with the functioning of the relevant institutions, victims have had the least experience with the prosecution and the courts, and most experience with non-governmental organizations and Social Welfare Centers. They are least satisfied with the police (29%), Social Work Centers (27%), courts (26%) and

prosecutors (20%). On the other hand, the respondents stated that they are the most satisfied with the services provided by civil society organizations (86%), social work (55%) and medical staff (55%). Participants in the research noted that most frequently a husband / partner / ex-partner (87.9%) was the perpetrator of violence. Most offenders are over 40 years old and have finished high school. As for the consequences of violence, more than 50% of the participants speak about a range of feelings and issues, which are the result of violence and the most common ones, are: headache, anxiety, tension, pressure and chest pain, sadness, etc.

- Responding to a question about the myths and prejudices towards victims of violence, women have shown a very low level of acceptance towards the rape myths, stereotypes about partner relationships and blaming the victim of survived the violence.
- According to these results we can conclude who a victim of domestic violence most often is, and who reports it. It is a woman in the age group of 36-40, who spent most of her life living in suburbs, who is married or in relationship and mother of two children. She finished high school and is unemployed and has no income, and her financial status is assessed as being mediocre, "neither good nor bad."
- Such woman is likely to have grown up in a family where there was violence and the most common perpetrator was the father. In her adulthood, she was exposed to at least one form of violence, usually psychological, followed by physical, economic and sexual violence. Very often, it was a combination of physical and psychological violence. The perpetrator of violence in the adulthood was usually the husband/partner/ex-partner or family member, and the violence usually occurred in the same home with the perpetrator. The offense is usually qualified according to the Law on the Protection from Domestic Violence. Violence is likely to have begun with their first child birth or is present from the beginning of the relationship. The woman reported the violence to the police two or more times, before confessing it to at least one person, usually someone from the family, close friend, or person from the civil society organizations. She has often sought help from a close person to stop the abuse. After experiencing violence, she did not seek medical attention, nor was she hospitalized. She has experience with a variety of institutions, bodies and non-governmental organizations, and most commonly with centers for social work and NGOs. Generally she has a good experience with the majority of different institutions and most of the competent institutions have ensured a part of the rights which she is entitled to as a victim.

c) Qualitative Research

- The results of the qualitative research, obtained through direct interviews with the experts dealing with victim protection in the Sarajevo Canton suggest a number of specificities characteristic of the institutions and organizations that provide assistance and protection of victims, and which work on sanctioning domestic violence.
- There is an agreement about the difficulties in the work, arising from the complexity and specificity of the phenomenon of violence involving the needs and feelings of the victims, lack of support from the society and the unwillingness of the victims to undertake a change, but also due to the lack of legal protection in practice.
- Another important source of problems is the institutional weaknesses related to organizational and administrative aspects of the work and coordination between the services of different organizations in the

- protection of victims of violence.
- The lack of a systemic institutional framework of work and cooperation between the subjects of protection leads to numerous frustrations and professional stress in the Social Work Centers and women's shelters. There is still no "successful" model of local protection from violence in the family context. The current model of Canton Sarajevo is based on professional and personal capacities of engaged experts, but looking long term this is not the best solution since it maxes out the resources of the professionals which can lead to their withdrawal and cancellation.
 - The state does not notice this problem which on the one hand leads to a decrease in the protection of victims' rights, and on the other hand it threatens the professional capacities of those who for years have shown commitment and responsibility in relation to the problem of domestic violence. In this way a clearer picture of the problems is provided as well as shown the possibilities for improvement.
 - Suggestions for improvement indicate the need for better and more precise laws and regulations and defining the procedures for enforcement of the protection from violence that will be consistent with the responsibility of each institution. Also, the necessary changes in the organization of work, processes and procedures of professionals and institutions are needed, in order to avoid "improvisation" in the professional practice when it comes to the protection of victims of domestic violence.
 - Solution to the problem of systemic interventions in the local context depends on government policies and strategies for protection against domestic violence. Without them, all the efforts of professionals, though useful in certain cases, will not lead to the expected results on the social level.
 - Domestic violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina can be characterized as a problem of security, both in the private and public life. Its real decrease can be achieved only through effective measures, and such measures at this time do not yet exist.
 - It is often the case, that women, who are victims of violence, are directed, by the government institutions, to seek legal and psychological support and protection from the local women's NGOs. This kind of support receives (in) adequate financial support by the government entity or local communities.
 - The placement of women and children, victims of domestic violence, in shelters is done by the police and Social Services Centers. Training in the area of violence against women and the protection mechanisms in the last five years have been the focus of government institutions that are the subjects of protection in domestic violence cases. However, this continuing education does not continue nor is it mandatory for all professionals and professionals dealing with the protection of women against violence, and are therefore more an incidental occurrence than a systematic approach to combat gender-based violence.
 - *There are different approaches to the phenomenon of gender-based violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina which are trying to explain the causes and the various aspects of violence. Some of them see violence as a phenomenon outside the responsibility of the perpetrators and the victims, while other approaches emphasize the responsibilities of the perpetrators, as well as the victims.*

Recommendations

- The optimal approach to the protection of women against violence needs to be multidisciplinary which would explore various aspects of gender-based violence in order to seek the optimal solution to this problem.
- The state must take all reasonable steps to prevent, investigate and punish all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence. Although the government-specific approaches differ, depending on the situation in the Canton, they all require a multi-sector response, which should be focused on the causes of violence and its consequences, as well as the examination of attitudes and behaviors and measures in legislation, policies and practices. Reasonable measures, in the broadest sense, consist of a legal punishment for perpetrators and the effective measures to protect victims and preventive measures, such as public information and education programs aimed at changing of the attitudes about the social roles of men and women, which lead to violence and discrimination.
- Under an optimal institutional approach technical and advisory support of all institutional mechanisms for gender equality is important which at the same time has an impact on the laws, strategies, policies and programs in all areas of life and work but also the continuing education of all subjects of protection from violence.
- Of course, apart from the institutional approach, our personal approach and change of our own stereotypical attitudes and actions are very important, as well as the influence we have on the society in the direction of raising awareness and facilitating a healthy environment free of discrimination on any ground.

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