

**DRAFT STRATEGY FOR THE PREVENTION AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN
AGAINST VIOLENCE AND THE ACTION PLAN**

2017-2021

March 2017

List of Acronyms

<i>MoJ</i>	<i>Ministry of Justice</i>
<i>MLSW</i>	<i>Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare</i>
<i>MEdu</i>	<i>Ministry of Education</i>
<i>MoH</i>	<i>Ministry of Health</i>
<i>Mol</i>	<i>Ministry of Interior</i>
<i>MHMR</i>	<i>Ministry of Human and Minority Rights</i>
<i>MIST</i>	<i>Ministry of Information Society and Telecommunications</i>
<i>CSW</i>	<i>Centre for Social Work</i>
<i>WHO</i>	<i>World Health Organization</i>
<i>IPH</i>	<i>Institute for Public Health</i>
<i>NGO</i>	<i>Non-governmental organization</i>
<i>UNICEF</i>	<i>United Nations Children's Fund</i>
<i>CRC</i>	<i>Convention on the Rights of the Child</i>
<i>BES</i>	<i>Bureau for Educational Services</i>
<i>CIRT</i>	<i>Computer Incident Response Team</i>

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from 2017 to 202129

CHAPTER I

Introduction

I.1 Background

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) provided an essential contribution to the protection of children and prevention of violence and articulation of children's voice. Violence should be understood in the sense of the CRC Article 19, which stipulates children's right to protection “from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child”.

Exposure to violence or sexual abuse is a painful experience, increasing the risk of mental and physical health problems among children and adolescents, during childhood or adulthood. Although all children are at risk of becoming victims of violence, children with disabilities are particularly vulnerable. The WHO survey of the prevalence and risk of violence against children, which was published in July 2012, suggested that the risk of any form of violence was 3.7 times higher for children with disabilities than their non-disabled peers. Children with mental or intellectual disabilities are particularly vulnerable and are 4.6 times more at risk of sexual violence than their non-disabled peers.

Violence and sexual abuse of children lead to high socio-economic costs: these are the costs of the services related to mental and physical health, child care services and police resources. Childhood trauma results in poorer quality of life and less capability to take an active part in the society; this, in turn, may result in social isolation and unemployment, along with financial problems often arising from such circumstances. The survey showed that violence could affect children's performance at school, which might entail long-term negative economic consequences, including poverty. Exposure to violence at an early age can hinder brain development and is linked with a number of mental health problems. ***In all of its forms, violence against children is detrimental, and in the worst cases can be fatal.***

Given the above, prevention of violence against children and their protection from such violence become the most important objectives in developing national laws and strategies. Therefore, Montenegro set the following priority objectives: putting in place satisfactory conditions for children's optimal growth and development, including investing in parental competences; use of evidence-based practices, and interventions to protect each child. These priority objectives have been translated into the Strategy for the Prevention and Protection of Children against Violence for the period 2017–2021.

I.2 Strategy

The Strategy covers the period from 2017 to 2021. It applies to all children aged 0–18, regardless of their gender, nationality, level of functional abilities, sexual orientation or any other personal characteristic. It also sets forth the measures to step up protection and all other forms of assistance to children who experienced violence or sexual abuse.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW) coordinated the drafting process, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Education (MEdu), Ministry of Justice (MoJ), Ministry of Human and Minority Rights (MHMR), Ministry of Finance (MoF), Ministry of Interior (Mol) and representatives of the non-governmental sector.

I.3 Vision

The overarching vision of the Strategy is a violence-free environment and happier childhood for all children in Montenegro. The vision is a projection for the future; however, it is based on the present-day situation in the country.

The overarching vision of the Strategy:

** A violence-free environment for happier childhood in Montenegro **

I.4 Goal

The goal of the National Strategic Framework for the Prevention and Protection of Children against Violence in Montenegro (2017-2021) is strengthening the role of the national system within a multidisciplinary response concerning: prevention of violence and protection of physical and mental health of children who experienced violence or are at risk of violence; care and services available to children victims of violence, and mitigation of health and other negative impacts of violence.

The goal of the Strategy:

"Provide enhanced protection from all forms of violence, including neglect and exploitation, for all children in Montenegro, by 2021."

The objectives of the Strategy address improvements in the legislative and institutional frameworks, judicial system, social norms, development of life skills and resilience in children, and setting up of a monitoring and evaluation system.

There is a wide consensus that **schools** are the places where various forms of violence are often identified. It is important that children and youth have opportunities to talk to an adult person whom they trust. They should also know what to do if a friend of theirs suffers any form of violence or sexual abuse. The efforts to suppress peer violence (bullying) should be increased. Children in Montenegro have access to the Internet, which is a route to acquisition of valuable digital skills, but at the same time makes them more exposed to unpleasant experiences, inappropriate contents and abuse. Children need to be informed on how they can cope with various online risks, and schools play an important role in this endeavour.

Children should also be aware of their sexuality and their bodies, physical and psychological violence, and sexual abuse. This can help them set boundaries and realize what constitutes unacceptable behaviour, which also enables them to verbalize troublesome experience.

Primary healthcare centres are the key institutions where prevention starts, since their staff establish communication with parents and children early on. These institutions are able to

identify early signals indicating presence of violence, developmental or behavioural problems, and can help ensure timely intervention by reporting or referring such cases to the police or the social services.

The social services available in the country must be adequately equipped, both in terms of staff and in terms of all other types of resources. This facilitates adequate resolution of the problem of violence against children, through support to the family as a form of prevention and through child protection in the case risks exist. Children must be “in good hands”. This is the outline of the prospective social welfare approach.

The police are trained and able to identify children victims of violence and abuse, and to act with due care in such situations, which can largely mitigate the trauma for children victims of violence. The police should closely cooperate with the **judicial system**, which should punish the perpetrators, protect the victims and set an example when it comes to acting in the best interests of the child, together with **lawyers, forensic experts and social services**.

I.5 Rights-based approach

The Strategy is guided by the international human rights and child rights standards, as set forth in the CRC.

The CRC includes at least four modalities of rights; these have been recognized by the Committee on the Rights of the Child as general principles, and should be taken into account in the course of Strategy implementation and in all situations concerning children. They constitute the basis for the Strategy.

- **The child's best interest**

All actions concerning children, whether implemented by the government or the NGOs, legislative or judicial institutions, should be guided by the child's best interest. This includes all the measures undertaken to protect children from all forms of violence.

- **Child participation**

Ensure that children have the right to freely express their views on all matters that affect them; their views should be taken into account in line with their age and maturity. For this purpose, children should in particular be given the opportunity to be heard in any judicial or administrative proceedings, either directly or via a suitable representative or authority, and the current legal procedure allows for such practice.

- **The rights to life, survival and development**

The state should ensure the right to life, survival and development of the child, which implies quality care for the child, health and education. This means that the state has the responsibility to prevent violence, since it can endanger the child's survival and development.

- **Non-discrimination**

The state must respect and ensure the child rights set forth in this Strategy and the exercise of those rights without any discrimination against children, parents or guardians on any ground, regardless of their race, skin colour, gender, sexual orientation, language, religion, political affiliation, nationality, physical ability, birth status etc.

I.5.1 Public participation

Development and implementation of the measures under the Strategy involve, in addition to the government, also other stakeholders, such as the universities, institutions, media, NGOs and

youth networks. The private sector can also have an important role in promoting protection of children against violence.

1.5.2 Multidisciplinary and intersectoral approach

Violence against children is a complex issue which includes other issues such as gender-based violence, discrimination, poverty, organized crime and labour. The national Strategy must take into account the overall complexity and the need for a **multidisciplinary response to violence**.

The intersectoral approach implies design and implementation of interventions through cooperation of all sectors, both at national level and at local community level. This calls for coordination of ministries/institutions, local authorities and civil society.

1.5.3 Specialization of the services working with children

The government has identified the need for a new policy aimed at staff specialization and upgrading of the services working with children in all the competent institutions.

1.5.4 Sustainability

In the course of design and implementation of strategic interventions, attention should be given to both their short-term and long-term sustainability. The system that the Strategy puts in place should ensure continuity and self-sustainability.

1.5.5 Gender sensitivity

Gender plays an important role in these matters; the differences in the violence-related risks and consequences for girls and boys should be taken into account.

1.5.6 Evidence-based approach

The Strategy is based on reliable data/indicators which are available internationally and nationally, and on the scientific research which helps problem identification, prioritization and development of objectives and activities.

1.6 Definitions of terms

The definitions used in the Strategy rely on the human rights standards, as used by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, WHO and UNICEF.

Child is anyone below the age of 18.

Violence against children refers to all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent behaviour, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse while in the care of parents, legal guardians or any other person who has the care of the child.

Sexual violence is defined as all forms of sexual acts, attempts to induce a child to engage in a sexual act, or unwanted sexual comments referring to someone's sexuality, with coercion by any person, regardless of their relation to the victim in any context. This includes presence or absence of physical contact, including, but not limited to: (a) inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any psychologically risky or unlawful sexual activity; (b) use of children for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation; (c) use of children in video or audio illustrations related to sexual violence, and (d) child prostitution, sex slavery, sex tourism, trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation (in-country or transnational), sale of children for sex, and forced marriage.

Child pornography refers to “any representation, by whatever means, of a child engaged in real or simulated explicit sexual activities or any representation of the sexual parts of a child for primary sexual purposes”.

Emotional violence includes failing to provide a suitable and conducive environment for children to develop their social competences in a comprehensive and stable way, in line with their individual potential and in the community setting, for example: (a) all forms of dangerous and continuous interactions with a child; (b) causing of fear, intimidation and threats; exploitation and treatment which corrupt, denigrate and reject, isolate, neglect or differentiate a child from other children; (c) ignoring of emotional response; neglect of mental health or of health and educational needs; (d) insulting, shaming, considering a child worthless, teasing a child or hurting his/her feelings; (e) domestic violence; (f) restriction of movement, isolation or shaming and humiliation; (g) psychological harassment and provocation by adults or other children, including through information technologies.

Adverse childhood experiences refer to potentially traumatic experiences that may have adverse long-term health impacts. Such experiences include physical, emotional and sexual abuse, physical or emotional neglect, domestic violence, parental mental health problems, alcohol or other addictions, divorce, imprisonment of either parent(s) or guardian(s). Adverse childhood experiences relate to some of the strongest or most frequent sources of stress that children may experience early on in life.

Neglect refers to failing to provide all aspects of child's development: health; education; emotional development; nutrition; housing, and social welfare. It may include: (a) physical neglect, i.e. failing to protect the child from danger, failing to meet the child's basic needs, including sufficient food, dwellings, clothes and basic medical needs; (b) psychological or emotional neglect, including minimum emotional support and love, chronic neglect, failing to care for the child by ignoring the signals communicated by small children; (c) neglect of mental and physical health by denying the right to medical treatment; (d) neglect of education- the carer's failure to comply with the law in relation to ensure regular school attendance; (3) abandonment.

Exploitation refers to work exploitation of children, including child prostitution, sale of children and recruitment of children for armed conflicts.

Child begging refers to a number of activities whereby an individual asks strangers for money pleading poverty or need for charity for health or religious reasons. Beggars may also be selling trinkets, such as dusters or flowers, for amounts of money unrelated to the value of the items sold.

Bullying is a form of physical violence as well as acts of aggression which imply and make use of force or power imbalance. Bullying may take a number of forms: direct bullying includes verbal aggression, pushing, physical assault, extortion or vandalism; indirect bullying includes avoidance, gossip, pulling dangerous pranks, and other verbal modes and actions; cyber bullying implies use of the Internet technology, including digital web pages and email.

Partner violence refers to the actions of intimate partners or former partners which impose risk of physical, sexual or psychological violence, including physical assault, sexual coercion, psychological violence and control.

Corporal/physical punishment and forms of criminal offences or forms of degrading punishment refer to punishment which involves use of physical force to inflict pain, but not injury, as a method of discipline, and includes hitting a child with a hand or an object (such as a stick, belt, whip, shoe etc.); kicking, shaking or throwing a child; pinching, or pulling a child's hair; forcing a child to stand in an unpleasant or undignified position or forcing a child to perform excessive physical exercise, and inflicting burns or cuts.

Forced/early/child marriage refers to “the union of two persons under the age of 18 at least one of whom has not given their full and free consent“ [sic – at least one person under 18].

CHAPTER II

Violence against children and child abuse – the situation in Montenegro

II.1 Fact-sheet on children

According to the latest population census in Montenegro, conducted in 2011, the share of children, i.e. persons below the age of 18, in the total population of 620,029 was 145,126, or 23.4%.

Of the total number of children, 48% were girls and 52% boys. Most children were of Montenegrin ethnicity – 44%, followed by those of Serb – 25% and Bosniac ethnicity – 11%. The shares of Egyptians and Croats were under 1%, while 6.1% children did not state their ethnicity. Approximately 50% of stateless persons were children, mainly Egyptians – 32% and Roma – 26%.

In 2011, out of the 72,637 children aged 6–14, 68,835 (95%) attended school; 3,802 children from this age group (5%) did not attend school.

Following the substantial increase caused by the extended impact of the global economic crisis, the poverty rate in Montenegro declined after 2012, dropping from 11.3% to 7.5% in 2014, and suggesting a gradual economic recovery. In 2014, the poverty rate was considerably higher in the rural areas than in the urban ones, similarly to the previous years (12.1% in rural and 5% in urban areas). Divergences in the poverty rate depended also on the number of children younger than 6 living in the families. Thus, in 2013 the poverty rate was considerably higher among the families with three or more children, compared with the families with two children, or those with one child, namely 21.6%, 4.5% and 17% respectively. One in ten children was poor (10%), and child poverty was most present in the northern region and in the rural areas. Out of the total number of poor children in the country, 55% lived in the northern region and 75% in the rural areas.

Between 2010 and 2016, Montenegro invested efforts in amending and adopting new legislation to enable full implementation of the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence and ensure comprehensive protection of victims in line with the international standards. During the initial two years following the adoption of the Law, its implementation was slow due to the incompatibility of other relevant laws. Adoption of the Strategy for Protection against Domestic Violence in 2011 launched the process of adoption of laws aiming to ensure such compatibility. This process unfolded until 2015; it featured cooperation of all relevant state institutions, non-governmental sector and international organizations. The Law on the Treatment of Juveniles in Criminal Proceedings came into force on 6 January 2012, and its implementation began on 1 September 2012. The key novelties it introduced included new diversion measures, expanded application of attendance orders, training of professionals assisting the courts and state prosecution offices, improved treatment of juveniles in the course of enforcement of institutional correction measures and juvenile incarceration. The Law on Social Welfare and Child Care was adopted in 2013, introducing more encompassing measures for the protection of children victims of violence. Amendments to the Criminal Code from July 2013 introduced two new protection orders, namely restraining order (Article 77a) and barring order (Article 77b). These aim to eliminate the risk of re-offending by banning the perpetrator's access to the victim or the victim's home or by having the perpetrator evicted from the home. These

measures put the Criminal Code of Montenegro in compliance with the Istanbul Convention. The Law on the Treatment of Juveniles in Criminal Proceedings (Official Gazette of Montenegro 64/11), Law on Social Welfare and Child Care (Official Gazette of Montenegro 27/13, 1/15, 42/15, 47/15 and 56/16), Criminal Code (Official Gazette of Montenegro 40/13) At the meeting held on 18 March 2015, the Parliament of Montenegro adopted the Law Amending the Law on Free Legal Aid. The amendments granted free legal aid to the victims of domestic violence under the Law on the Protection against Domestic Violence, similarly to victims of the criminal offences of domestic violence or trafficking in persons. The Law on Compensation to Victims of Violent Crimes was adopted in June 2015. In the aim of protecting and assisting victims of violent crimes committed with wrongful intent, and for the sake of timely removal of harmful consequences of victims' difficult physical and psychological condition, the Law stipulated monetary compensation, allocated from the national budget. The 2016 Law Amending the Family Law introduced a ban on corporal punishment for children, prohibiting physical punishment or any other cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment of children.

In December 2015, the Government of Montenegro adopted the Strategy for the Protection against Domestic Violence (2016-2021).

II.2 Children's participation in policy making

A survey of the perceptions concerning the extent of children's participation in policy making, and thus also the right to express their views, showed that two-thirds of citizens (67%) did not believe that young people had any influence over the decision-making processes at the competent local or national authorities.

The Ombudsman Office set a good example with the "golden advisors" network (gathering children taking part in the work of the Office), which was launched at the event "Say NO to Violence", held on 18 November 2016, celebrating the International Children's Day.

II.3 Perceptions and social beliefs concerning violence

In 2013, **Ipsos** research agency carried out a survey on violence against children in Montenegro and on the awareness, attitudes and practices, using a sample of 1,000 respondents who were older than 18.

The survey showed that 55% of citizens thought that violence against children was present. This indicated that most citizens did not turn a blind eye and were able to recognize both less severe forms of physical violence and the most severe forms of mental or sexual violence. However, a significant share (37%) dismissed the fact that violence against children was taking place in Montenegro or thought that it was present only to a lesser extent. Citizens could identify a number of institutions responsible for the prevention of violence against children, such as the police, centres for social work, parents and schools. Still, the predominant opinion (66%) was that the state and the society did not react adequately in the cases of violence against children.

The survey indicated a high degree of tolerance to physical punishment as a method of discipline, also evident in the attitudes to physical punishment as a method of discipline in families and schools. Although more than one half of the citizens (57%) thought beating as a was a completely unacceptable discipline technique, 60% thought that light beating was sometimes effective; one half (53%) thought physical punishment was still justified at times.

With regard to tolerating or justifying physical punishment at school, it is worrying that almost one third of citizens (28%) thought that in some situations teachers had to shout at students, punish, or even insult or hit them, in order to maintain classroom discipline or teach them something.

The survey also suggested a low level of awareness of the presence of sexual violence in Montenegro, with only 30% of the respondents acknowledging its existence. It is worrying that the presence of this form of violence against children was denied (8%) or minimized, with almost one half of the population (46%) believing that it did not happen. Denying the presence of sexual violence against children was even more highlighted when compared with the data on the victims of sexual violence, where almost one in ten adult citizens of Montenegro knew either a child or an adult person who had experienced sexual violence.

The findings of the survey showed that almost two-thirds of citizens (69%) were aware of the presence of peer violence in Montenegro. A considerably lower share thought that such violence was going on at local schools (40%), or the schools attended by their children (36% primary school, 35% secondary school). The perception of this form of violence was that it was taking place somewhere else, rather than in the immediate environment. It is worrying that one in three citizens in Montenegro (33%) knew a child who had been victim of school violence.

The study of the beliefs, attitudes, acceptance and experiences related to domestic violence and violence against women, carried out by the UNDP in 2012, showed that only 3.5% of the respondents believed that violence was frequently reported. The attitudes towards domestic violence suggested that one in four respondents, principally male and in the age group 18–30 or 51–60, believed that in some situations physical violence was warranted if the woman flirted; a different standard applied to men in similar situations. Gender-based violence was more frequently justified in the Roma community, by 41.2% of women and 52.9% men, compared to only 2.7% of women and 4.6% men among the Montenegrin population. Other studies suggest an alarming degree of acceptance of violence within families, in particular in the Roma community; it is necessary to work towards changing that attitude.

NGO Juventas conducted a survey on violence against children and perceptions of such violence. It suggested that peer violence (bullying) took place frequently - 26% of students said their peers molested (insulted) them on a daily basis.

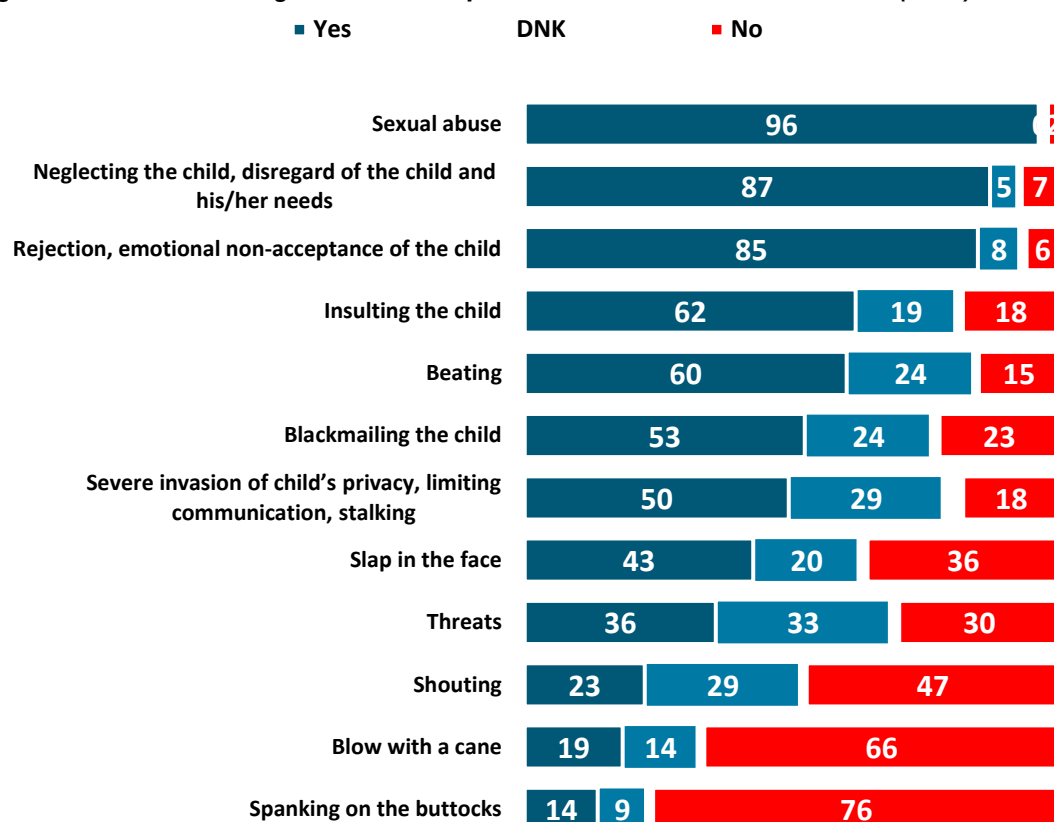
According to the survey of the awareness, attitudes and practices among the general public in Montenegro related to violence against children, conducted in late 2016 by the NGO SOS Helpline Niksic, NGO Centre for Women's Rights and UNICEF, 8% of citizens knew a child who had been victim of sexual abuse, while 12% knew an adult who had experienced such abuse as a child.

II.4 Corporal punishment

According to the survey mentioned above, the methods of upbringing in Montenegro raise a concern, when compared against international standards and contemporary views. The figure below shows how individual respondent's categorized specific actions as acts of violence. According to the MONSTAT and UNICEF 2013 survey, 68% of children aged 1-14 in Montenegro had been exposed to physical aggression in their families during the preceding

month, 31% had been subjected to physical punishment, and 2% to severe physical punishment.

Figure 1: Individual categorizations of specific actions as acts of violence (2016)



Almost one half of the citizens of Montenegro believed that beating a child could be justified, while almost one-third thought teachers could use some form of violence to maintain classroom discipline.

II.5 Adverse childhood experiences in Montenegro

The first survey on adverse childhood experiences in Montenegro was carried out in 2013, and involved a group of youth aged 18-25. The survey examined exposure to various adverse experiences during the initial 18 years of life (child abuse and neglect) and experiences with behaviour that posed health risks, such as: sexual experience, early pregnancy, substance abuse etc. Students reported mainly emotional abuse – 30.4% and emotional neglect – 27%. 24.3% reported physical abuse, and 3.9% sexual abuse. With regard to dysfunctional families, 24% reported witnessing their mothers being abused, while 11.9% reported witnessing alcohol abuse. The students who reported exposure to adverse childhood experiences were 2.7 times more likely to smoke, 10 times more likely to use alcohol and drugs, and 138 times more likely to attempt suicide than the ones from the group that did not report such exposure.

II.6 Child marriages

Child marriages are mainly present among the Roma and Egyptian in Montenegro. 18% of girls in these two communities get married before they turn 15 years of age, compared to 0.5% of

girls from the general population. Marriage before the age of 18 is also more frequent among Roma and Egyptian women - 56%, compared to 6.2% among the general population.

According to the 2011 census, 69% of children aged 15-17 that were married were girls, and the remaining 31% boys. Child marriages severely interfere with the child's right to education, life and development. Perpetrators of the criminal offence of arranged child marriage are rarely prosecuted, due to several factors, such as difficulties with proving the offence and perception of tradition. Some Roma organizations are actively working to prevent such marriages; one such organization prevented 39 such marriages prior to 2015.

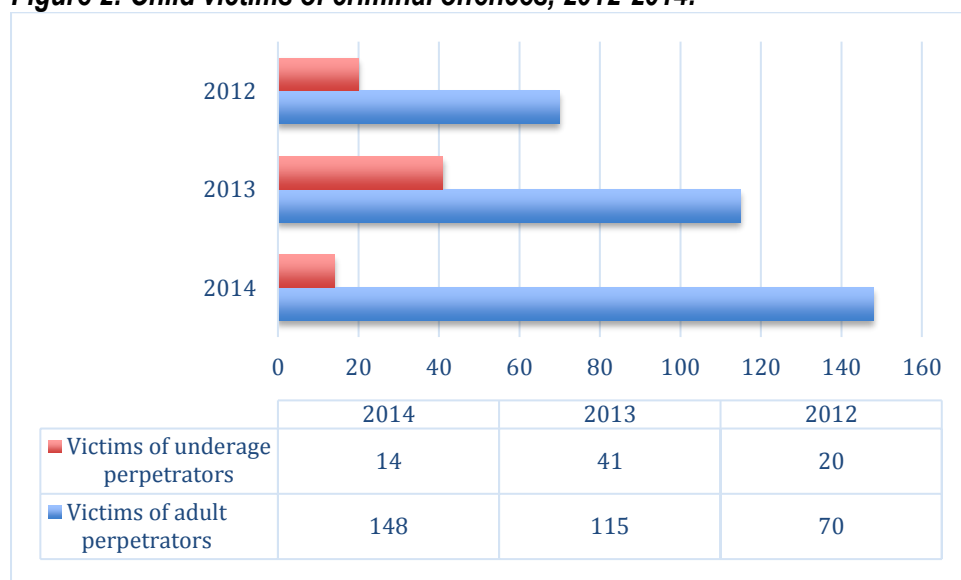
II.7 Criminal offences and violence against children

Children who are exposed to adverse childhood experiences, domestic violence or neglect show greater likelihood of getting into conflict with law and being violent to other children.

In 2012, 264 criminal reports were filed against children, and 177 children were convicted in court proceedings. In 2013, the number of criminal reports was 244, and the number of children convicted was 130. In 2014, the number of criminal reports was 236, and the number of children convicted was 125. The number of children in conflict with law is showing a slight declining tendency.

Children were mainly victims of the crimes committed by adults; some, though, were victims of the crimes committed by other children.

Figure 2: Child victims of criminal offences, 2012-2014.



70 children were victims of violence committed by adults in 2012. In two cases children were victims of sexual violence, and in 18 cases they were victims of domestic violence. During the same year, 20 children were victims of the crimes committed by other children; three out of them were victims of sexual violence.

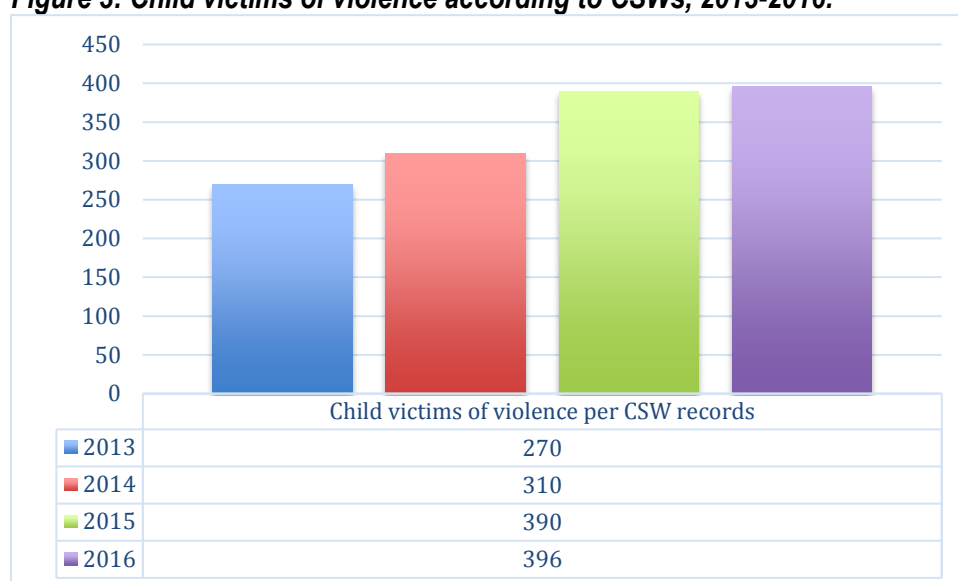
41 children were victims of violence committed by other children in 2013. 115 children were victims of violence committed by adults; there were three cases of sexual violence, and 50 children were victims of domestic violence.

14 children were victims of violence perpetrated by other children in 2014. 148 children were victims of violence perpetrated by adults; there were three victims of sexual violence, and 52 victims of domestic violence.

The figures show the rising trend in the number of children victims of the crimes committed by adults, in particular domestic violence, and a slight declining trend in the number of children victims of juvenile delinquency.

Between 2012 and 2014, the number of children victims of adults increased by approximately 100%. Domestic violence and sexual violence against children account for some 40% of the total number of cases of violence against children; gender plays a role in sexual violence, given that girls were victims in 93.1% cases.

Figure 3: Child victims of violence according to CSWs, 2013-2016.



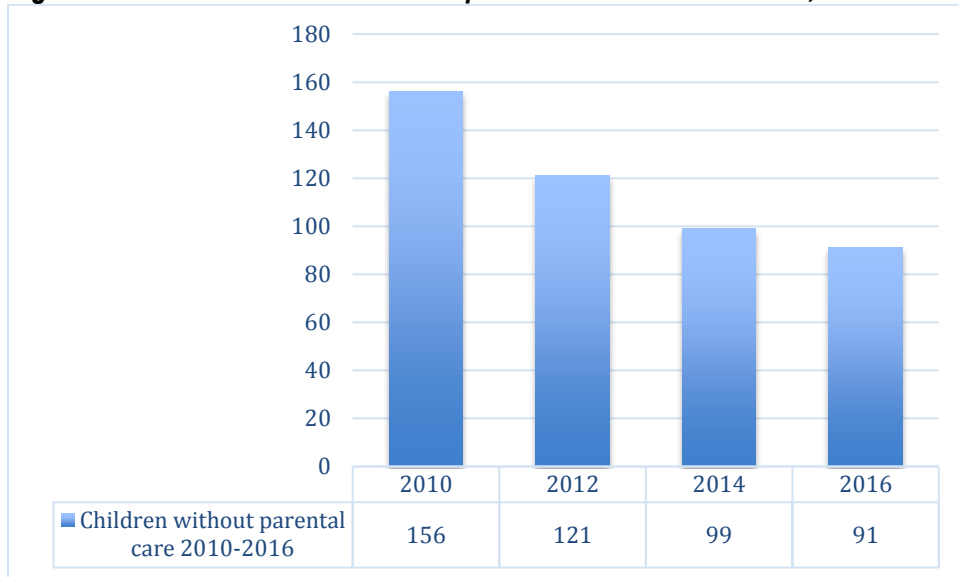
According to the CSWs, which work directly with children victims of violence, 270 children were reported as victims of violence in 2013; 310 in 2014; 390 in 2015, and 396 in 2016.

The number of victims of domestic violence was 228 in 2016, while 46 were victims of violence outside their families, and 122 victims of neglect. 202 victims were girls, and 188 boys.

II.8 Children without parental care

There were 156 children without parental care placed in institutions in Montenegro in 2010. That number was 121 in 2012; 99 in 2014, and 91 in late 2016.

Figure 4. Number of children without parental care in institutions, 2010-2016.



CHAPTER III

III.1 Strategic objectives

The strategic objectives are listed below.

Strategic objective 1: Improve legislation and implement policies protecting children from all forms of violence

Explanation: Implementing the policies and legislation that help eradicate violence against children sends a strong message to the community about the importance of protecting children from all forms of violence. The programmes that address violence can never fully succeed if they are not supported by policies and laws. The laws that recognize different forms of violence against children – physical punishment, sexual abuse and exploitation, as well as emotional violence – send a strong message to the society that violence is unacceptable and punishable by law.

Strategic objective 2: Improve the institutional framework for professional, quality and more efficient care for and protection of children

Explanation: Quality interventions and adequate support ensure much more than immediate protection - they help establish a long-term safe environment for children. Provision of an integrated range of quality community-based services supports prevention of all forms of violence against children.

Strategic objective 3: Strengthen the judicial system to protect children against violence and to work in the child's best interest

Explanation: Since children's access to the judicial system is hindered, they need assistance to efficiently engage with it. Free and efficient legal aid is particularly important for the children deprived of liberty. Another key aspect of the children's right to access to justice is specialization and enhanced capacities of professionals with regard to a number of laws, including the anti-discrimination ones.

Strategic objective 4: Initiate changes in the social norms that accept, forgive or ignore violence.

Explanation: Prevention of violence poses a different kind of challenge than responding to it. The behaviours, potentially acquired in childhood and/or witnessed at home, school, in the community or the media, should never be considered normal. However, that is often the case. Changing behaviour takes time, but it does not have to span across several generations. There is solid evidence showing that it is possible to change harmful social norms and attitudes.

Strategic objective 5: Development of life skills and resilience among children to prevent violence and its consequences

Explanation: Children should be enabled to master life skills that would help them protect themselves against violence, such as: communication skills; non-violent problem solving and conflict resolution; critical thinking; building self-respect etc. Children sometimes feel helpless and frustrated, and these programmes can provide to them alternative, non-violent ways to overcome life's challenges.

Education has been recognized as one of the best possible investments to be made in any society. It is the principal tool for lifting the economically and socially marginalized children out of poverty and enabling them to find ways to fully participate in the society. Education plays a vital role in the promotion of human rights and democracy, development of a child's personality and potential, respect of diversity etc.

Strategic objective 6: Set up a system for monitoring, evaluation and research

Explanation: The 2006 UN Secretary General's study on violence against children recommended improving the national systems for the collection of data and information for the purpose of identification of vulnerable groups and progress monitoring.

III.2 ACTION PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY FOR THE PREVENTION AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AGAINST VIOLENCE 2017-2021

III.2.1 Strategic objective 1: Improve legislation and implement policies protecting children from all forms of violence

Activity 1.1. Carry out a review of the legislative framework on violence against children in Montenegro and identify the necessary amendments and/or needs for new legal provisions governing this subject-matter

Indicator: Review of the legislative framework completed, and necessary amendments and/or new legal provisions identified, by 2019.

Expected outcome: Review of the legal framework governing child rights and protection from violence in all segments of life has been implemented, and recommendations issued concerning possible improvements of that framework. The new legal instruments and proposed amendments provide the legal basis for all further policy implementation.

Institutions: Key implementing agency: MLSW. Partners: MoJ, MoH, NGO sector.

Financial assessment: No additional costs.

Activity 1.2. Amend the Labour Code to incorporate provisions stipulating no prior convictions for severe violence against children, in particular sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, as a job requirement for the persons working with children

Indicator: Labour Code amended to include provisions stipulating the job requirement of no prior conviction for severe violence against children, in particular sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, for the persons working with children, by 2020.

Expected outcome: Children protected from potential danger in day-to-day environment.

Institutions: Key implementing agency: MLSW. Partners: MoJ, MoH, Mol.

Financial assessment: No additional costs.

Activity 1.3. Set up a register of persons convicted for sexual offences against children

Indicator: A register of convicted sex offenders set up by 2021.

Expected outcome: Sexual violence against children reduced, and the public informed of potential dangers for children. Prevention facilitated due to better public information; prevention of recidivism.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: MoJ and the Judicial Council.

Financial assessment: €20, 000.

III.2.2 Strategic objective2: Improve the institutional framework for professional, good quality and efficient care for and protection of children

Activity 2.1. Set up and operationalize a national Children's House for children victims of violence

Indicator: National Children's House for children victims of violence set up by 2020. Children victims of violence come or are brought to the centre (alone or accompanied by the non-violent parent), which develops specific programmes for them, in cooperation with the relevant institutions. Timeline: by 2020.

Expected outcome: Forensic interviews with children who experienced sexual or physical abuse or domestic violence take place at the Children's House. Medical examinations of children are carried out in a safe environment. Thorough trauma assessment is done, and short-term treatment provided to the child victim.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: MoI and MLSW. Partners: multisectoral cooperation in running the Children's House - MoJ, MoH and NGO sector.

Financial assessment: €100,000.

Activity 2.2. Enhance the quality and frequency of home visits to families with newborns by the visiting nurses

Indicator: The number of home visiting nurses and their visits increased by 20 percent by 2021; nurses better able to identify the at-risk families and provide support; regulated cooperation with the social welfare and child care sector.

Expected outcome: Greater coverage of at-risk families; less violence against children; improved parenting practices; improved health and survival rates of newborns.

Institutions: Key implementing agency: MoH. Partners: NGO sector.

Financial assessment: € 20,000-25,000 per year.

Activity 2.3. Design and implement a comprehensive training and education of the health professionals working with and interacting with children, with an emphasis on the family paediatricians and gynaecologists, to recognize all forms of violence against children

Indicator: Training designed and implemented by 2021.

Expected outcome: The medical teams working and interacting with children empowered and trained to recognize the signs of all forms of violence against children.

Institution: Key implementing agency: MoH.

Financial assessment: €40,000.

Activity 2.4. Implement training to strengthen and develop the capacities and counselling services for treatment of and psychosocial support to children victims of abuse or neglect and their families within the Centre for Mental Health or within the psychiatric wards in general hospitals

Indicator: Developed programme to strengthen the counselling services providing treatment and psychosocial support. Build the capacities for counselling services in the healthcare sector by 2020.

Expected outcome: Victims and their parents provided psychosocial support.

Institutions: Key implementing agency: MoH.

Financial assessment: €20,000.

Activity 2.5. Design and implement specialized training for psychiatrists and psychologists on carrying out forensic interviews with children victims of violence

Indicator: Programmes designed and implemented. The professionals trained by 2020.

Expected outcome: Forensic experts are available to detect violence against children. The perpetrators are successfully prosecuted. Children victims of violence are protected during the court proceedings against the perpetrator. Children victims of violence are provided tailor-made assistance and care by trained and specialized professionals.

Institutions: Key implementing agency: MoH. Partners: MLSW, Mol.

Financial assessment: €30, 000.

Activity 2.6. Set up child and adolescent psychiatric wards

Indicator: Child and adolescent psychiatric wards established by 2020.

Expected outcome: Children victims or at-risk children have access to specialized and quality treatment in specific wards, which are child-friendly and enable the best possible treatment and reintegration.

Institutions: Key implementing agency: MoH.

Financial assessment: €80,000.

Activity 2.7. Develop quality services to work with the perpetrators of violence against children

Indicator: Increased number of professionals and their enhanced expertise; the programme for working with the perpetrators developed and implemented by 2020.

Expected outcome: Perpetrators involved in prevention and reintegration programmes. The number of perpetrators reduced.

Institutions: Key implementing agency: MoH. Partners: MLSW and NGO sector.

Financial assessment: €40,000.

Activity 2.8. Adjusting the work of the multidisciplinary operational teams for protection against violence at the local level to the needs of the specific case

Indicator: Reorganization carried out; human resources enhanced by 2021.

Expected outcome: Local teams are fast, mobile and efficient in working with children victims of violence. The team's response is multidisciplinary. Children are provided quick and good quality services and institutional response.

Institutions: Key implementing agency: MLSW. Partners: Mol, MEdu, MoH, Prosecution Service, NGOs.

Financial assessment: €30,000.

Activity 2.9. Design and implement training on mandatory coordination and referral mechanisms intended for service providers, for the purpose of early detection and response, in cases of child abuse or neglect

Indicator: Professionals from CSWs, the police, teachers and health professionals trained to identify victims and use the referral mechanism, by 2021.

Expected outcome: Children victims of violence are identified by the professionals they interact with. Children who are identified as victims are quickly and efficiently referred to the relevant institutions. Increased number of identified children victims of violence who would otherwise remain unidentified.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: MLSW, MoH, Mol and MEdu.

Financial assessment: 30.000 €.

Activity 2.10. Staff specialization and upgrade of child protection services

Indicator: Child Protection Directorate set up within the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare by 2018.

Expected outcome: Stronger capacities of the MLSW to protect child rights.

Institutions: Key implementing agency: MLSW.

Financial assessment: €10, 000 per year.

Activity 2.11. Training to strengthen the capacities of the CSW staff for protection of victims of violence

Indicator: Training to strengthen the capacities of CSW staff as an ongoing activity.

Expected outcome: Children victims of violence provided adequate and quality assistance and support at the CSWs.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: MLSW and Institute for Social and Child Protection. Partners: NGO sector.

Financial assessment: €7,000 per year.

Activity 2.12. Design and implement child protection policies and procedures in children's institutions

Indicator: The policies and procedures designed and implemented by 2018.

Expected outcome: The professionals working in children's institutions are aware of the ways to respond to any form of violence against children, including peer violence or violence perpetrated by the staff. Children are aware of the complaints mechanisms.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: MLSW and NGO sector.

Financial assessment: €20,000.

Activity 2.13. Institutionalize the "family outreach worker" service intended to improve and build parenting skills and approach to family relations, providing support to parents and guardians and teaching them positive parenting skills

Indicator: Country-wide implementation of the "family outreach worker" service by 2021.

Expected outcome: Less violence against children. Lower child abuse and neglect risk factors (e.g. parental substance abuse, alcohol abuse, mental health problems etc.). Better parent-child interaction. Better parenting skills, including elimination of physical punishment. Preventing removal of the child from the family. Fewer behavioural problems among children.

Institutions: Key implementing agency: MLSW. Partners: NGO sector.

Financial assessment: €100, 000 per year.

Activity 2.14. Design positive parenting programmes that include counselling and helplines to support parents

Indicator: Positive parenting programmes and parent counselling designed and available to all by 2019. Helplines for parents set up and operational by 2018.

Expected outcome: Parents empowered to apply positive parenting practices. Fewer cases of abuse and neglect. Lower risk factors for child abuse and neglect.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: MLSW,MEdu. Partner: NGO sector.

Financial assessment: €30,000 per year.

Activity 2.15. Include mandatory themes/modules on the prevention, identification, assessment and reporting of violence (abuse and neglect) against children, aligned with the international standards and best practices, in the curricula for pre-service training of the professionals working with children

Indicator: Curricula designed at all of the departments that train future professionals who will be working with children, such as Psychology, Pedagogy, Social Work, Medicine, Faculty of Law, Police Academy etc. by 2021.

Expected outcome: Enhanced expertise, competences and sensitivity of the professionals working with children.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: state and private universities; faculties; MEdu; Bureau for Educational Services (BES); Institute for Social and Child Protection; Judicial Training Centre; MoH, and Police Academy. Partner: NGO sector.

Financial assessment: €30,000.

Activity 2.16. Design professional development programmes on violence against children, protection against violence and continuous care for all the relevant professionals working with children victims of violence, children who are at risk of violence and children exposed to adverse childhood experiences

Indicator: Professional development programmes designed; number of training events; number of participants, by 2021.

Expected outcome: Better practices in working with children. Better identification and reporting of the cases of violence against children by the competent institutions.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: MEdu; BES; MoH; hospitals and primary healthcare centres; Institute for Social and Child Protection; Judicial Training Centre. Partners: Office for the Fight against Trafficking in Persons, NGO sector, donors.

Financial assessment: €30,000.

Activity 2.17 Strengthen the human resources and financial capacities of the Ombudsman Office of Montenegro

Indicator: Increased number of staff at the Ombudsman Office tasked with the promotion and protection of child rights. Increased budget of the Ombudsman Office for the promotion of child rights and implementation of a survey on the status of child rights, by 2021.

Expected outcome: Stronger capacities of the Ombudsman Office for the promotion of child rights and implementation of the survey on the status of those rights.

Institutions: Key implementing agency: Ombudsman Office of Montenegro.

Financial assessment: €2,000.

III.2.3 Strategic objective 3: Strengthen the Police Directorate and the judicial system to protect children against violence and work in the child's best interest

Activity 3.1. Strengthen the capacities of the police in order to increase the number of staff trained to work with children and their level of expertise on acting in the child's best interest

Indicator: Standardized training for all police officers designed and implemented by 2019.

Expected outcome: Children have contact with trained police officers working in the child's best interest.

Institutions: Key implementing agency: MoI.

Financial assessment: €15,000.

Activity 3.2. Ensure that each police centre and station have child-friendly premises for conducting the interviews with children, separating the child from the perpetrators or other persons

Indicator: All the police departments which work with children have specialized premises, equipped to meet the standards, where children can wait, accompanied by their representatives, so as to prevent contact with the perpetrator, by 2021.

Expected outcome: Children are protected from repeated victimization; they are interviewed by a police officer in a child-friendly setting.

Institutions: Key implementing agency: MoJ.

Financial assessment: €60,000.

Activity 3.3. Improve the quality of the legal aid available to children victims of violence (abuse and neglect) and set up complaints mechanisms

Indicator: Standards for the provision of legal aid to children victims of violence developed and implemented, and training developed, by 2018. Register of certified lawyers available at the Bar Association. List of certified lawyers shared with the MoJ and courts. MoJ conducts regular evaluation of the services provided to children, including the granting of the complaints concerning the provision of legal aid. This is an ongoing activity.

Expected outcome: Children's human rights endorsed by the judicial system. Children have their legal representatives and free legal aid throughout court proceedings.

Institution: Key implementing agency: the Bar Association of Montenegro.

Financial assessment: €15,000.

Activity 3.4. Prepare and implement training for judges, prosecutors and lawyers on the concept of child rights, as well as training and professional development programme for working with children, communication with children and establishing a safe environment in the course of court proceedings, in line with the relevant international standards and applying the UN Guidelines on justice involving child victims and witnesses of crime

Indicator: Two training events per year prepared and implemented, involving 50 participants. This is envisaged as an ongoing activity until 2021.

Expected outcome: Those who provide legal aid to children are trained to work with them. Judges and prosecutors work in the child's best interest. All the professionals have been trained to apply the UN Guidelines on justice involving children victims or witnesses of crime and the Council of Europe Guidelines on child-friendly justice, which they apply in their work; everyone is trained to work in compliance with these standards.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: Judicial Training Centre; Bar Association, and NGOs.

Financial assessment: € 6,000 per year.

Activity 3.5. Eliminate repeated victimization of child victims and witnesses by means of setting up separate child-friendly rooms in the courts and prosecution offices, separating the child from the perpetrator; use video links to interview children in separate rooms and upgrade the equipment

Indicator: There are specialized and properly equipped premises in all courts where children and their representatives can wait without having contact with the perpetrator. Special digital equipment for interviewing children is in place in all Montenegrin courts by 2019. Children victims are not interviewed more than twice.

Expected outcome: Children give their statements by means of a video link, assisted by a psychologist or psychiatrist. There is no repeated victimization in the course of court proceedings. Children do not enter the courtroom. Child-friendly procedures are applied.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: Supreme Court of Montenegro and Judicial Council.
Financial assessment: €100,000.

Activity 3.6. Ensure that each court and prosecution office has departments for professional support to children, consisting of professionals assisting the judge in the proceedings for violence against children

Indicator: Existence of team of professionals composed of a psychologist and a social worker (or special education specialist) by 2021.

Expected outcome: Children are protected from further violence in the cases where they are victims/witnesses. Children do not face the perpetrator. During the court proceedings, questions asked by the lawyer are communicated by the psychologist in the manner suitable for the child. The professionals working with children are trained to apply the UN Guidelines on justice involving child victims and witnesses of crime and the Council of Europe Guidelines on child-friendly justice, which they apply in their work; they have all been trained to comply with these standards in their work.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: Judicial Council; Prosecution Service.
Financial assessment: € 25,000 per year.

Activity 3.7. Inform the children and their legal representatives on child rights and available support services within the judicial system

Indicator: The number of initiatives addressing better information of children and their representatives on child rights and available support services within the judicial system by the end of 2021.

Expected outcome: Better information of children and their representatives on child rights and available support services within the judicial system. Better access to justice for children.

Institutions: MoJ; Supreme Court; Supreme State Prosecution.
Financial assessment: €10,000.

III.2.4 Strategic objective 4: Initiate changes in the social norms that accept, forgive or ignore violence

Activity 4.1. National campaign against physical punishment of children and domestic violence

Indicator: Nation-wide campaign implemented in local communities and on TV by the end of 2017. National conference on domestic violence held.

Expected outcomes: Greater awareness of domestic violence. Reduced domestic violence. Fewer citizens physically punish their children. Children growing in safer family environments.

Institutions: Key implementing agency: the Government. Partners: local governments; NGO sector.

Financial assessment: €60,000.

Activity 4.2. Implement a national campaign on violence against children, in order to raise awareness concerning peer violence, school violence, online violence, partner violence and sexual violence, as well as the social norms and culture-based practices that accept, forgive or ignore violence

Indicator: Three video campaigns implemented nationally on all the popular TV stations. Campaign in schools on "Love and tolerance versus bullying and peer violence." A toolkit developed and distributed to schools, institutions, healthcare institutions and CSWs, also presented to the general public on the national TV and radio. This is an ongoing activity. "Net

friends” application, which is a part of extra teaching material for IT teachers, promoted in schools.

Timeline: 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021.

Expected outcome: Better awareness concerning the presence of school violence, online violence and peer violence. Children are aware of the dangers and ways to prevent online sexual violence and other forms of violence. Less school violence, including peer violence, partner violence among adolescents, online violence and violence by the school staff. School becomes a safe environment for children.

Institutions: Key implementing agency: MEdu. Partners: NGO sector and the media.

Financial assessment: €40,000.

Activity 4.3. Develop, improve and implement training programmes with the aim to change the attitudes that accept, forgive or encourage violence, including the stereotyped gender roles, racial or ethnic discrimination, acceptance of physical punishment and other harmful traditional practices.

Indicator: Programmes that impact changes in attitudes developed and accredited; number and type of training; number of trained participants. This is an ongoing activity by 2021.

Expected outcome: Changes in the attitudes entrenched in the social and cultural norms and traditions. Mitigated gender stereotypes and all types of discrimination in the society. Children less exposed to the violence which arises from patriarchal attitudes and gender discrimination.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: MHMR; MEdu. Partners: MLSW; MoH; NGO sector, and donors.

Financial assessment: € 10,000 per year.

Activity 4.4. Media training on the rights of the child, all forms and types of violence against children and media reporting on violence against children

Indicator: Design of a training programme and a guide for media reporting on violence against children, sexual, psychological, physical, economic violence, neglect and early marriages, in line with the rights of the child; dissemination of such guide among media representatives. Continuous development of media professionals by 2020.

Possible outcome: The media informed about the children’s rights, international standards and children’s vulnerability to violence. The media become a powerful partner promoting, free of charge, antidiscrimination and contemporary perceptions concerning child upbringing and children’s role in the society.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: Agency for Electronic Media; Agency for Personal Data Protection. Partners: the media.

Financial assessment: € 7,000 per year.

Activity 4.5. Develop an automated content rating system in order to remove or block material which is not suitable for children

Indicator: Design and implement regulations on the media activities to set up a rating system. Rating systems operational on all national TV stations by 2020.

Possible outcome: Children safer from online violence and violence on TV. Children protected from the negative impacts of some TV programmes.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: Media Regulatory Body; Ministry of Culture. Partner: NGO sector.

Financial assessment: € 10,000.

Activity 4.6. Share information about violence against children, especially online sexual exploitation and online peer violence, via the media, including the electronic ones

Indicator: Design promotional and information-sharing material such as TV clips, short documentaries etc. and distribute them regularly in the media, between 2017 and 2021. Promotion of CIRT in schools.

Expected outcome: Media cooperating with the competent institutions. Greater public support to development of support services intended for children and families. Changes in the attitudes concerning physical punishment of children. Greater public awareness of the factors that may jeopardize or foster a child's healthy development.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: MIST, Media Regulatory Body. Partner: the media.
Financial assessment: € 10,000 per year.

III.2.5 Strategic objective 5: Develop life skills and resilience among children to prevent violence and its consequences

Activity 5.1. Promote, strengthen and empower a national helpline for counselling and reporting violence against children, including online violence

Indicator: National helpline for children, toll-free and available 24/7, established by 2018. CIRT promoted in schools.

Expected outcome: Violence against children becomes more visible, children know who to turn to for help and advice, and adults have the opportunity to receive information or advice or to report suspected violence against children and be referred to the relevant institutions.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: MLSW; NGO sector.
Financial assessment: € 45,000 in the initial year; after that € 30,000 per year.

Activity 5.2. Design and implement programmes to empower preschool children to develop socio-emotional skills

Indicator: Programmes designed and implemented in all preschool institutions by 2021.

Expected outcome: Preschool children empowered to recognize some forms of violence and alert their parents, guardians and teachers.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: MEdu; BES. Partners: NGO sector; donors.
Financial assessment: € 40,000.

Activity 5.3. Implement preventative activities as part of regular and extracurricular activities with the aim to promote the rights of the child and the principle of non-violence

Indicator: Preventative and educational programmes implemented in schools; workshops with students or projects. This is envisaged as an ongoing activity by 2021.

Expected outcome: Less tolerance to violence in schools and in the society; enhanced children's communication skills, constructive problem solving and acceptance of diversity; greater capacity to provide protection against all forms of violence etc.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: MEdu; BES; donors, NGOs.
Financial assessment: €10,000 per year.

Activity 5.4. Continuous implementation of programmes focusing on reducing peer violence

Indicator: Preventative and educational programmes and workshops implemented; number and type of such programmes; number of children included. This is envisaged as an ongoing activity by 2021.

Expected outcome: Less peer violence, children empowered to report peer violence.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: MEdu; BES; donor. Partners: NGOs; MLSW.

Financial assessment: €10,000 per year.

Activity 5.5. Develop and implement programmes helping children from the vulnerable groups protect themselves against all forms of violence

Indicator: Design, accredit and implement preventative and educational programmes and workshops; number and type of such programmes; number of children participating. This is an ongoing activity until 2021.

Expected outcome: Children from vulnerable groups (RE population, children with special needs in education, children without parental care etc.) empowered to recognize, defend against and report any form of violence.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: MEdu; BES; MLSW; Institute for Social and Child Protection; donors and NGOs.

Financial assessment: €10,000 per year.

Activity 5.6. Strengthening socio-emotional-health skills at all levels of education

Indicator: The elective subject Healthy Lifestyles promoted; the number of students signing up for the elective; the number of regular and extracurricular activities on reproductive health, importance of sports, HIV and AIDS, mental health, prevention of substance abuse etc.

Expected outcome: Children are aware of potentially risky behaviour and its consequences. Lower use of alcohol and cigarettes among children; raised awareness on traffic safety; less bullying and peer violence. Raised awareness of healthy lifestyles.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: MEdu; BES. Partners: MoH; NGO sector; donors.

Financial assessment: €10,000 per year.

III.2.6 Strategic objective 6: Design a system for monitoring, evaluation and research

Activity 6.1. Develop and operationalize the indicators for monitoring and evaluation of the work addressing violence against children in electronic format (databases of the MLSW, MoI, JIS, MoH and MEdu)

Indicator: Indicators, disaggregated by age and gender, are being entered into the MLSW database and the JIS databases, other ministries' databases. Timeline: by the end of 2021.

Expected outcome: Tools for evaluation and monitoring of implementation of laws and policies on violence against children are in place and are being used by all the relevant stakeholders, in order to identify the deficiencies, progress, problems and best practices in the overall system for the prevention and protection of children from violence.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: MLSW, MoJ, MoI, Judicial Council Secretariat, MoH, MEdu.

Financial assessment: €40,000.

Activity 6.2. Connect and network all of the databases held by the relevant ministries, in relation to violence against children

Indicator: Connecting the database of the MLSW with the databases of the Judicial Information System, MoI, MoH and MEdu concerning the specific performance indicators, by the end of 2021.

Expected outcome: The tools for evaluation and monitoring of implementation of laws and policies addressing violence against children are available and applied by all the relevant stakeholders to identify the deficiencies, problems and best practices in the overall system for the prevention and protection of children against violence.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: MLSW; MoJ; Mol; MoH; MEdu; Judicial Council Secretariat.

Financial assessment: € 40,000.

Activity 6.3. Implement surveys on the incidence of violence against children

Indicator: Continuous surveys on the incidence of violence against children by 2021.

Expected outcome: Integrated data collection and a systematic approach to, analyses and research of violence against children. The data serve as the basis for future development and improvement of the system and enable comparison and analysis of the situation before and after.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: Institute for Social and Child Protection; courts; Mol; Prosecution Service. Partners: MLSW; MoH; MEdu; NGOs.

Financial assessment: € 20,000 per year.

Activity 6.4. Set up a committee composed of the representatives of competent institutions and NGO sector, tasked with monitoring the Strategy implementation

Indicator: Annual report on implementation developed and delivered to the Government.

Expected outcome: Timely identification and elimination of any problems with implementation. Strategy implementation facilitated.

Institutions: Key implementing agencies: the ministries will take turns as follows: MLSW in 2017; MEdu in 2018; MoH in 2019, and Mol in 2020.

Financial assessment: No additional costs.

III.3 Performance indicators for the implementation of the Strategy objectives from 2017 to 2021

Performance indicators for the objectives ¹ :
1. Number of children exposed to violence in their families reduced by 20 percent by 2021.
2. Number of reported cases of violence against children ² at the national level within a single year increased by 10 percent by 2021.
3. Number of reported cases of child neglect at the national level within a single year increased by 10 percent by 2021.
4. Number of reported cases of sexual violence against children at the national level within a single year increased by 10 percent by 2021.
5. Perception of school children concerning the frequency of peer violence increased by 30 percent by 2021.
6. The percentage of citizens who believe child beating is unacceptable increased by 30 percent by 2021.
7. The “family outreach worker” service expanded to all municipalities in Montenegro by 2021.
8. At least 50 percent of child victims/witnesses of violence interviewed by means of a video link by 2021.
9. Child sex offenders’ recidivism rate reduced by 20 percent by 2021.

¹The international practice distinguishes between (1) the indicators which quantify the degree of violence against children by measuring its prevalence, and 2) the indicators which suggest the degree of functioning of the “protective environment”, where this does not include only the work of the institutions, but other stakeholders who work to prevent and respond to cases of violence, abuse and exploitation. A protective environment includes: the state authorities’ capacities to protect a child; presence of the services for prevention, rehabilitation and re-integration; prevalence of harmful practices, attitudes and customs in the community; level of development of life skills among children and the level of their participation; the capacities of families and community, etc. (Source: UNICEF (undated). “Manual for the Measurement of Indicators of Violence against Children”. Internal document). An advanced protective environment is expected to result in an increased number of reported cases of violence, as this would indicate a lower level of tolerance towards violence in the society, better identification of the cases of violence, greater readiness to report violence and greater level of trust in the institutions providing adequate protection to victims. On the other hand, violence against children in the society is expected to diminish, since it will become increasingly unacceptable to citizens, with a more functional protective environment deterring potential perpetrators.

²Including neglect.

List of national and international regulations used for the development of the Strategy

Constitution of Montenegro (Official Gazette of MNE 1/ 2007 of 25 Oct, 2007)

Family Law (Official Gazette of RMNE 01/07)

Law on the Protection against Domestic Violence (Official Gazette of MNE 46/10)

Criminal Code (Official Gazette of MNE 40/08, 25/10, 32/11, 40/13, 56/13)

Criminal Procedure Code (Official Gazette of MNE 57/09, 49/10)

Law on Misdemeanours (Official Gazette of MNE 01/11, 6/11, 39/11, 32/14)

Law on Public Order (Official Gazette of RMNE 41/94)

Law on Gender Equality (Official Gazette of RMNE 46/07)

Law on Social Welfare and Child Care (Official Gazette of MNE 27/13, 1/15, 42/15, 47/15)

Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination (Official Gazette of MNE 46/10, 18/14)

Law on Internal Affairs (Official Gazette of MNE 44/12, 36/13, 1/15)

Law on Free Legal Aid (Official Gazette of MNE 20/11)

Law on Health Care (Official Gazette of RMNE 39/04, Official Gazette of MNE 14/10, 40/11, 03/16, 39/16, 02/17)

Law on the Treatment of Juveniles in Criminal Proceedings (Official Gazette of MNE 64/11)

Convention on the Rights of the Child;

Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts;

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty;

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;

Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;

Convention against Transnational Organized Crime;

Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children;

Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air;

Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition;

Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction;

ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, and ILO Recommendation No. 190 Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labour;

European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and Protocols 11, 4, 6, 7, 12, 13 to the Convention;

Protocol No. 14 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ETS No. 194);

Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence;

European Social Charter (1961) and Revised European Social Charter;

European Convention on the Compensation of Victims of Violent Crimes;

Convention on Cyber Crime No. 185;

European Convention on the Exercise of Children's Rights ;

Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse.