

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### The Practice of Managing Policies of the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Handling Gender-Based Violence

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#### Abstract

*This study analyzes the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina in overcoming gender-based cyber violence. Good governance within the policy and institutional framework is necessary to meet cybersecurity needs in an inclusive and gender-sensitive manner. A gender analysis tool for actors working in or with the security and justice sector to ask cross-dimensionally specific questions. The NAPRI (Need, Access, Participation, Resources, and Impact) policy tool helps its users analyze how the government of Bosnia and Herzegovina can apply the principles of good governance and gender inclusion. This study uses qualitative methods with descriptive analysis using secondary data. The findings of this study are that the legal framework of the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina is regulated within the framework of gender equality, the framework of violence against women, criminal law, international agreements, and conventions. The law analyzes cybersecurity and gender mechanisms in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Institutional governance practices are catalysts for countering the gendered impact of cybersecurity incidents and accelerating strategies to improve representation, oversight, decision-making, and service delivery. Although the legal framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina is largely in place, laws on violence against women are not well implemented, especially when trying the perpetrators of violence. Therefore, there is a need for better cohesion and cooperation between different stakeholders.*

**Keywords:** NAPRI tools, governance, Bosnia and Herzegovina, gender, cyber violence, gender-based cyber violence

#### I. Introduction

Online gender-based violence is increasing in the Balkans, with more than 35 examples of online gender-based violence against women and girls from January 2021 to March 2022 in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia (B.I.R.D, 2022). It is rooted in patriarchal norms and spread through social media. While both men and women are victims of violence perpetrated through digital means, almost, as a rule, online violence is not a gender-neutral crime. Even as people have access to and use the Internet, women, and girls worldwide must think twice about what they say, how they say it, and with whom they interact, as countless forms and manifestations of violence lurk before their eyes. Online gender-based violence tends to reflect and exacerbate gender norms and inequalities in the real world.

Technology-facilitated abuse silences individuals and suppresses their opinions, violating free speech and human rights advocacy. Women in public and political roles are disproportionately subject to cyber violence and gender disinformation campaigns, which aim to discredit, humiliate, intimidate and silence them in all areas of public life. This can negatively impact women's participation in the democratic process and intrinsically undermine government structure. According to the monitoring Balkan Investigative Reporting Network revealed six general trends in which digital violence occurs

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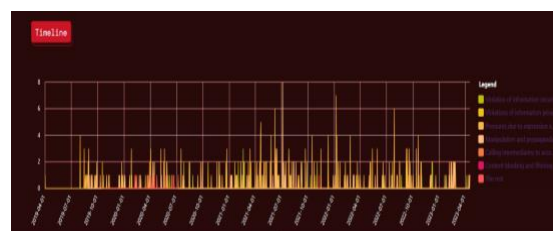
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(1) Online attacks with clear manifestations of hate speech; (2) online attacks that follow domestic violence; (3) Online attacks that lead to physical violence; (4) Online attacks that involve or cause a breach of privacy; (5) Online attacks against publicly exposed groups of women, particularly journalists and politicians; (6) Online attacks against already vulnerable groups, particularly minorities, and migrants (Karic & Ristic, 2022). Cyber violence can lead to further acts of transnational crime with profound human rights implications. Connections made in cyberspace and misuse of social media networks are the most commonly used by traffickers to trap victims into sexual exploitation schemes through various manipulation tactics ( UNODC, 2018).

The Digital Rights Monitoring Database report explains that a case in Bosnia and Herzegovina published articles that described women's physical appearance as sexist and humiliating for their age. The article resulted in verbal abuse, ridicule, stigmatization, and further discrimination against women by social media users in the comments section. In that case, neither the media outlet nor the social media platform removed the content even though it violated journalistic ethical standards and community guidelines. In addition, domestic violence is a trigger for online attacks and gender-based violence. In addition, news about the murder of women and stories about victims reporting rapists attracted misogynistic and offensive comments, with particular regard to "blaming the victim" and "victim humiliating" comments from users who claimed that the victim "got what she wanted, deserved" (B.I.R.D, 2022).

Figure 1 shows the database found in 2019 - 2023, with the highest cases in 2021 related to digital environmental manipulation

and propaganda. The database resulting from Digital Monitor covers the status of digital rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The database will document violations of digital rights and freedoms, with case descriptions and citations to appropriate sources to provide data on violations and highlight the use of technology to highlight social issues in the target country. The database categorizes cases by type of violation, means of attack, and actors, including affected parties and attackers. Understanding the social context and monitoring trends in digital rights and freedoms violations is important. Ongoing monitoring of digital threats and reporting of digital freedom violations will be carried out according to a detailed methodology, using guidelines based on the knowledge and expertise of the SHARE Foundation. The database is part of the wider BIRN (The Balkan Research Network) Research Resource Desk (BIRD) (B.I.R.D, 2022).



**Fig. 1.** Overview of Violations of Digital Rights and Freedoms in Bosnia and Herzegovina  
**Source:** B.I.R.D. (2022)

Based on the survey findings, OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) published a 2019 report investigating women's experiences of group violence and dedicated to how conflict affects women's experiences of violence. Figure 2. Findings from the OSCE quantitative and qualitative study in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) on violence against women (VaW) showed that the most serious incident of sexual harassment for 28 percent of women surveyed was

inappropriate stares or looked that made them feel intimidated, followed by intrusive questions about someone's private life (16 percent), unwanted touching, hugging, or kissing (15.3 percent), sexually suggestive comments or offensive jokes (10.7 percent), inappropriate invitations for dating (8.1 percent), disturbing comments about someone's physical appearance (7.4 percent), inappropriate advances on social networks (6.2 percent) (OSCE, 2022).

Type of sexual harassment	OSCE survey average	BIH	FBIH	RS
Inappropriate invitations to go out on dates	9.8	7.1	7.3	6.8
Intrusive and offensive questions about private life	14.2	11.6	10.6	13.7
Intrusive and offensive comments about appearance	11.4	8.5	7.5	10.4
Inappropriate staring or leering	19.2	16.4	15.8	17.8
Inappropriate offensive advances on social networking websites or in internet chat rooms	6.6	6.6	6.1	7.7
<b>The most severe forms</b>				
Unwelcome touching, hugging or kissing	11.4	7.3	7.0	7.8
Sexually suggestive comments or offensive jokes	12.0	8.9	7.8	11.1
Sending or showing sexually explicit pictures, photos or offensive gifts	2.7	1.7	1.3	2.1
Indecent exposure	4.2	2.3	2.5	2.0
Being forced to watch/look at pornographic material against one's wishes	0.6	0.5	0.7	0.2
Unwanted and offensive sexually explicit emails or text messages	4.0	3.3	3.2	3.9

Base: All women aged 18-74 (region: IS179; BIH: 2382; FBIH:1363; RS=1020)  
Source: OSCE-led Survey on Violence against Women, 2019

**Fig. 2.** Prevalence of different types of sexual harassment, %  
**Source:** OSCE (2022)

Good security sector governance is a valuable concept for framing governance standards for advancing gender equality in cybersecurity. D.C.A.F., OSCE/ODIHR, U.N. Women Gender and Security introduce tools and policy briefs focusing on specific security and justice issues and providers of security sector governance, security sector reform, and gender, with more focused attention on what gender equality is. Moreover, how to achieve it in specific sectors. The tool, called N.A.P.R.I. (needs, access, participation, resources, impact), is intended for anyone involved in the design, implementation, monitoring, or evaluation of programs and projects related to the security and justice sector, whether at the

international, regional, or national level. This paper uses a case study of the states of Bosnia and Herzegovina to analyze how government governance (legal frameworks and institutional institutions) overcomes gender-based cyber violence with the DCAF NAPRRRI toolkit (Serrana, 2019). This research uses qualitative and descriptive research to provide a more profound interpretation through secondary data from the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina publications, journal articles, and others.

## II. Theoretical Framework

The security and justice sector is the political environment that decides what has been measured is political because what is measured refers to what will do. Suppose the project design does not integrate a gender perspective. In that case, gender will not count, and the project will not promote gender equality, which is an integral part of good security sector governance. Gender analysis is "a critical examination of how different gender roles, activities, needs, opportunities and rights affect women, men, girls and boys and other gender identities in particular policy areas, situations or contexts." Gender analysis examines, for example, the relationship between women and men, their access to and control over resources, and the constraints they face relative to one another. Concerning the security and justice sector, gender analysis may focus on women, men, girls, and boys and other forms of insecurity and gender identity barriers to accessing justice and the quality of their representation and participation in the security and justice sector.

A good SSG applies the principles of good governance in the security sector,

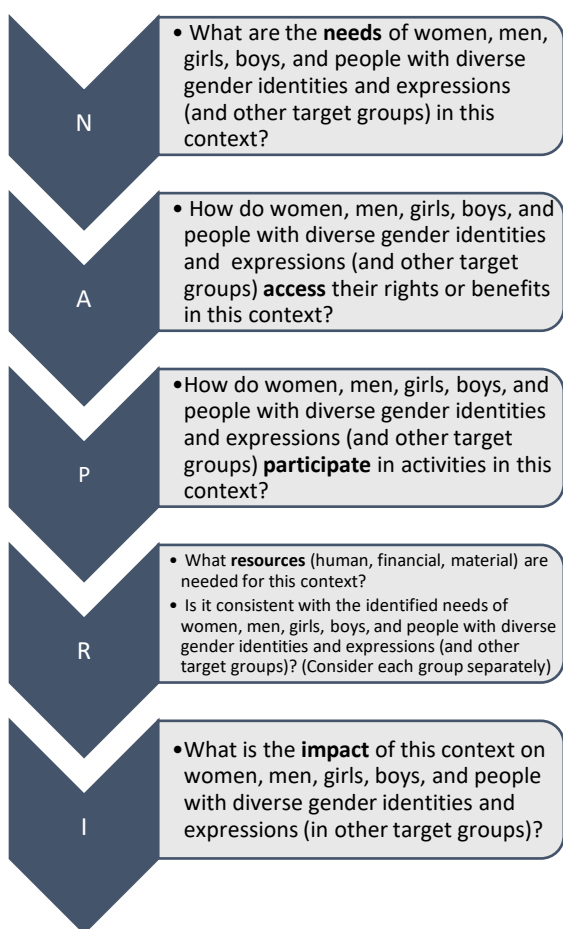
including Accountability, Transparency, Rule of Law, Participation, Responsiveness, Effectiveness, and Efficiency (DCAF, 2015). Good security sector governance further requires the justice and security sector to understand the diverse needs of society and meet these needs as part of security provision, management, and oversight (DCAF, OSCE/ODIHR, UN Women, 2019). The following explains these principles and how they can apply in cybersecurity (Klopfner, Rizmal, & Sekulosk, n.d.). First, accountability has clear expectations for the provision of security, and independent authorities monitor whether these expectations are met and effectively impose sanctions if they are not. Cybersecurity requires more close cooperation between public and private actors than any other security sector. For example, state cybersecurity actors must work closely with online service providers and telecommunications networks, usually owned by private businesses. Therefore, surveillance actors must look beyond state actors' work and consider the roles and responsibilities of non-state actors involved in cybersecurity. Second, Transparency information is freely available and accessible to those who will be affected by decisions and their implementation. The principle of transparency also needs to be applied to cyber security. In addition, the division of roles and responsibilities of various cybersecurity actors must be clearly defined. It can be verified transparently so that the process of providing security can run smoothly with multiple actors working together.

Third, in the rule of law, all persons and institutions, including states, are subject to publicly known laws enforced impartially and consistent with international and national human rights norms and standards. Cybersecurity governance requires a new approach to regulation as it needs to consider

the roles and responsibilities of state and non-state actors in providing effective cybersecurity. The legal and regulatory framework relating to the provision and oversight of cybersecurity should be based on the rule of law. It should be developed in line with sound governance principles. Fourth, Responsiveness. The Institute is sensitive to the different security needs of all sections of the population and carries out its mission in the spirit of a service culture. Cybersecurity must take an approach where the security needs of individuals and the people are at the core of protection. Therefore, policies relating to the provision and supervision of cybersecurity must ensure that the needs of all members of society to participate fully and safely in online life are accurately reflected and protected. Fifth, Effectiveness: Institutions fulfill their respective roles, responsibilities, and missions with high professional standards. Cybersecurity needs to be delivered effectively to networks and citizens, with clearly defined parameters based on an analysis of the country's needs and population. Finally, in Efficiency, Institutions make the best possible use of public resources in fulfilling their respective roles, responsibilities, and missions. In addition, cybersecurity governance and oversight processes need to be adapted in a way that allows them to support the efficient provision of security for various actors in cyberspace.

The DCAF NAPRI tool is simple for thinking about how good governance and gender equality principles can be applied to the security and justice sector. This tool enables actors working in or with the security and justice sector to conduct gender analyses by encouraging users of the tool to ask questions across multiple dimensions of a specific context (DCAF; OSCE/ODIHR; UN Women, 2019). This tool can help users

analyze the context, project ideas, policies, laws, or other actions/interventions that use nothing more than research or reflection. It can also serve as a framework for extensive participatory gender analysis using various data collection methods (DCAF; OSCE/ODIHR; UN Women, 2019). The NAPRI tool can be adapted to any context and is based on the principles of good governance in the security sector. This provides a good starting point for identifying how and to what extent gender has been considered in the context of a good SSG. Applying the NAPRI gender analysis tool to a cybersecurity context reveals the following list of possible questions:



**Fig. 3.** List of possible questions by applying the NAPRI gender analysis tool to a cybersecurity context

**Source:** processed by the author from Serrano Lorraine Andaya, DCAF, OSCE/ODIHR, UN Women (2019)

From the questions posed in the NAPRI toolkit, it may be useful to focus on the principles of responsiveness and participation and advance a gender perspective at the institutional level. Responsiveness as a governance mechanism needs to apply a gender perspective and build sensitivity to the security needs of individual internet and ICT users in their constituencies. The safety needs of women, men, girls, boys, and people of different gender identities and expressions online can be very different. Therefore, evaluating and analyzing those needs and supervision are important before initiating policy changes. Participation is useful for combating the gender impact of cybersecurity incidents and addressing critical issues such as cyber VAWG, government actors tasked with the provision, management, and oversight of cybersecurity must be able to understand and represent the perspectives and security needs of the people they serve to protect. Therefore, the governance of provision and oversight of cybersecurity needs to be carried out with a participatory approach (Dorokhova, Vale, Laçi, & Mahmutovic, 2021).

### III. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1. Bosnia and Herzegovina Government Policy Governance Instruments in Overcoming Gender-Based Virtual Violence

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, there are three gender centers established as public institutions (government bodies), namely the BiH Gender Equality Agency, the BiH Federation Gender Center, and the Republika Srpska Government Gender Equality Center. Gender Agencies and Centers are essential instruments in initiating and implementing activities in the field of gender equality. In both

the executive and the legislature, institutional mechanisms on gender equality include agencies at the municipal, canton, entity, and state levels. The Gender Equality Committee of the BiH Parliamentary Assembly (Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina, n.d.) exists at the state level. At the entity level, there is the DPR, the Gender Equality Committee and the BiH Federation (House of Representatives of the Parliament of the Federation of BiH, n.d.) and the DPR RI Equal Opportunities Committee Republika Srpska (Equal Opportunities Committee of the National Assembly of Republika Srpska website, n.d.). The cantonal assembly in the BiH Federation has established a committee for gender equality. At the local level, there are committees in municipal assemblies in almost all municipalities throughout BiH. The law in BiH does not explicitly regulate online gender violence. However, several frameworks and conventions can form the basis for such regulations: gender equality frameworks, violence against women frameworks, criminal law (BiH and entities), and international treaties and conventions.

#### A. Gender Equality Framework

The principle of gender equality and the obligation to achieve gender equality in BiH is guaranteed by various legal actions in national laws and regulations and international legal documents signed and ratified by BiH. Public policy also applies. One of the most important is the BiH Gender Action Plan 2018–2022 (Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina, n.d.). The obligation to adopt a Gender Action Plan is enshrined in the Gender Equality Law (Law on Protection from Domestic Violence of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, n.d.). This law addresses the main problems of men and women in the country, intending to achieve absolute gender equality. It regulates, promotes, and protects gender equality, guarantees equal

opportunities and treatment for all people regardless of gender in public and private spheres of society, and protects against discrimination based on gender. In particular, the law prohibits discrimination based on gender, direct and indirect gender-based discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, gender-based violence, and victimization.

The law prohibition of discrimination (Amendments to the Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination, 2016); establish a framework for exercising equal rights and opportunities for all in BiH. Moreover, provide a system of protection against discrimination. *Discrimination* is defined as "different treatment, including exclusion, limitation or preference based on actual or alleged reasons against a person or group of people and those associated with them based on race, color, language, religion, ethnicity, disability, age, national origin or social, affiliation with national minorities, political or other beliefs, property status, membership in a trade union or other association, education, social and gender status, sexual orientation, gender identity, sexual characteristics and any other circumstances which have a purpose or consequence of preventing or jeopardizing the recognition, enjoyment or realization of any person based on equality, rights, and freedoms in all areas of life."

Sexual harassment is defined in the BiH Gender Equality Act and the Prohibition of Discrimination Act as: "any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that seeks to violate the dignity of a person or group of persons, or which achieves such an effect, especially when the behavior creates a frightening, hostile, demeaning, or abusive environment."



Public policies for specific sectors, coordinated by the Gender Equality Agency or Gender Center, include Action Plans for the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women's Peace and Security (Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, Gender equality Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina). Strategy for Implementing the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention and Eradication of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees); gender responsive budgeting activities (Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina, n.d.); (Gender Equality Act in Bosnia and Herzegovania, n.d.).

### B. Framework for Violence Against Women

Violence against women is recognized by law in Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, the law has no specific provision regarding using ICT to commit such violence. No lex specialist directly acknowledges violence (against women) that involves the use of technology. Family Law addresses violence against women in BiH, but there is still no consolidated family law at the national level. There are three laws governing family matters: the Family Law of the Federation BiH (Family Law of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, n.d.), the Family Law of Republika Srpska, and the Family Law of the Bryko (Family Law of Brčko District, n.d.). In particular, domestic violence is regulated in more detail by the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence (LPDV): LPDV Federation BiH (Law on Protection from Domestic Violence of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, n.d.), LPDV Republika Srpska ( Law on Protection from Domestic Violence of the Federation of Republic Srpska, n.d.), and LPDV Kabupaten Brýko ( Law on Protection from Domestic Violence of the Federation of Republic Srpska, n.d.). LPDV has the function of

protecting survivors of violence, while the handling of violence is based on the Criminal Code. Domestic violence is recognized in criminal law as a crime. In addition, *domestic violence* is also defined as a form of gender-based violence.

### C. Criminal Code and Framework

BiH, because it divides authority, has four KUHP and Criminal Procedure Code: KUHP BiH (Criminal Law of Bosnia and Herzegovina, n.d.), KUHP Federation of BiH (Criminal Law of Bosnia and Herzegovina, n.d.), KUHP Republika Srpska (Criminal Code of the Republika Srpska) and the Criminal Law of Brcko BiH (Criminal Law of Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina, n.d.). The criminal code in BiH criminalizes domestic violence and other offenses. It is defined in a gender-neutral manner, except for violations which, by their nature, can only make women victims. However, the law provides a basis for prosecuting perpetrators and protecting victims of gender-based violence. It creates a framework for the general prevention of violence against women, among other crimes. Significant legislative changes occurred in 2017 when the new Republika Srpska Criminal Code was adopted and harmonized with the Istanbul Convention. The Criminal Code in Republika Srpska now regulates crimes such as molestation/harassment, association to commit a criminal act of trafficking in persons and children, sexual extortion, and the crime of satisfying sexual desire in front of children (also recognized in the criminal law of the BiH Federation and Brýko BiH District). And criminal acts of harassment or intimidation in the workplace.

The Criminal Code of the BiH Federation (Article 183) and the Brýko District of BiH (Article 180), and the Criminal Code of

Republika Srpska (Article 150) recognize, among other things, the following crimes: Endangering security; Persecution/harassment (defined only by the Criminal Code Republika Srpska and the BiH and Brčko District Criminal Law Federation does not define it); Unauthorized wiretapping and audio recording; Unauthorized optical imaging, i.e., photography; Sexual harassment (defined only by the Criminal Code Republika Srpska – BiH and Brčko District Criminal Law Federation does not recognize it, implying unequal protection of victims of sexual harassment across the country); Forced sexual intercourse (Office on Women's Health, resources on sexual coercion, n.d.) (BiH and Brčko District Federation Criminal Law); Sexual extortion (KUHP Republika Srpska); Blackmail 1979; Obscene and lewd behavior.

It is justified that the relationship between the online digital world and the physical world is a continuum and cannot be separated. Because the recording and distribution of rape videos via the internet reinforces and perpetuates the trauma and violence experienced by victims/survivors, in cases of sexual coercion, the internet becomes a means to access and maintain control over the victims (Vasudevan, 2018). The law does not explicitly mention the words "online" or "internet" and does not prevent law enforcers, prosecutors, and judges from extending legal protection to victims/survivors.

#### D. International Treaties and Conventions

BiH is a signatory to various international conventions and legal documents that guarantee the full enjoyment of human rights, freedoms, and gender equality. 101 The most important of them, which can be used in cases of violence against women with the use of technology, are: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Freedoms, 1948; European

Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, 1953; Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1979; European Council Convention on the Prevention and Eradication of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), 2011; Cyber Crime Convention (Budapest Convention), 2001.

#### *3.2. Institutional Governance of the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina*

Of all the questions posed in the NAPRI toolkit, it may be helpful to focus on the principles of responsiveness and participation and the advancement of a gender perspective at the institutional level. Implement legislative measures that define and criminalize sexist hate speech incidents and apply them to all media, including reporting procedures and appropriate sanctions. More proactive detection and reporting procedures for sexist hate speech should also be encouraged concerning all media, including the internet and new media.

#### A. CERT in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) is a group of information security experts responsible for protecting against, detecting, and responding to an organization's cybersecurity incidents. CERT may focus on resolving incidents such as data breaches and denial of service attacks but also provides warnings and incident handling guidelines. CERT conducts ongoing public awareness campaigns and engages in research aimed at improving security systems. In 2011 the BiH Council of Ministers considered and adopted a strategy (Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2011) to establish a CERT in BiH by the Ministry of Security. To date, there is no



CERT at the state level. In June 2011, the BiH Republika Srpska Information Security Act established a national team for dealing with computer security incidents in the entity and placed it within the Republika Srpska Information Society Agency. In June 2015 Republika Srpska CERT started operations.

The proactive actions (Republika Srpska CERT website, n.d.) of CERT Republika Srpska include dealing with online threats. The incident reporting form (Republika Srpska CERT incident reporting form, n.d.) includes the sending of SPAM messages, distribution, and sharing of copyrighted content, distribution of content prohibited by law, and incidents not covered by the existing classification. It is important to note that this CERT only covers incidents in the cyberspace of the Republika Srpska entity. BiH has not adopted a cybersecurity strategy and cybercrime. However, the issue of cybercrime and cyber terrorism is discussed in the strategy to combat organized crime at BiH (2014-2016) (Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, n.d.) and the strategy for preventing and combating terrorism (2015-2020) (Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, n.d.) both with national security in mind.

Integrate a gender equality perspective into all policies, programs, and research related to artificial intelligence to avoid the potential risks of technology perpetuating sexism and gender stereotypes and examine how artificial intelligence can help close the gender gap and eliminate sexism. That includes measures to increase women and girls' participation in information and technology as students, professionals, and decision-makers. In addition, the design of data-driven algorithms must factor into gender-based dynamics. Transparency around

this issue should be increased, and awareness about the potential for gender bias in big data; solutions to increase accountability should be offered.

#### B. Gender Participation at the Institutional Level

They create practical and legitimate security and judicial services that meet international and national standards. Recommendation 16 (b) CEDAW/C/BIH/CO/4-5 (2018), is mainly implemented through the promotion of gender institutional mechanisms, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations. Awareness-raising campaigns and reducing tolerance for violence continue. Activism campaigns against gender-based violence and other media and civic campaigns raise awareness of violence about human rights violations and promote protection mechanisms. There is significant cooperation and assistance provided by the media. At the same time, the Press Code and Radio and TV Broadcasting Code contain provisions prohibiting discrimination based on sex and promoting gender equality.

In 2016, in response to Recommendation 16(c) CEDAW/C/BIH/CO/4-5 adopted the Law on Providing Free Legal Aid, which regulates the forms of free legal aid, service providers, and users, their terms and method of implementation, financing, and control, as well as monitoring its implementation. In addition, the law on free legal aid has also been adopted in hospitals and eight (out of ten) cantons in F BiH. In BD BiH, the Office of Free Legal Aid law is applied within the Court of Appeals jurisdiction (CEDAW/C/BIH/6, 2018).

There has been visible progress in a systematic approach to introducing gender equality principles into the work of relevant defense and security sector institutions. Gender equality training is included in the regular training program. The network of designated gender focal points across all defense and security agencies is expanded. The sex-disaggregated database has been further improved and updated regularly. The introduction of affirmative action increased women's interest in the military and police professions, even increasing the number of women sent to peacekeeping missions (CEDAW/C/BIH/6, 2018). Law enforcement agencies and competent authorities also provide gender-sensitive training for law enforcement officers (Criminal Law). That is to support efforts to create a gender-responsive justice system and transparent procedures to be followed by the police and throughout the justice system to enforce the law in the case of ICT-based violence (against women).

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, women's participation in the legislative and executive bodies at all levels is about 20%. The election law adopted in 1998 introduced gender quotas for candidates in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Following several amendments to the Election Law, the current election quota is regulated in Article 4.19. Quotas are mandatory, set a relatively high percentage of 40%, and have mandatory ranking-sequence rules. The Central Electoral Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina has the authority to reject any list that is not made following this rule (Susmel, 2019).

As a result of the 2018 general elections, women's representation in the House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina is

currently 23.8%. Of the three members (chairman, one female representative, and one male representative), the first representative of the People's Representative Council is a woman. That is an example of the PARTICIPANT of actions regulated in the DPR's Rules of Procedure. In entity parliaments, women's participation on average was 19.7% (21.4% in the Parliament of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and 18% in the National Assembly of Republika Srpska). In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the number of women increased by more than 4%. Furthermore, there was a decrease in the number of women elected to the National Assembly of Republika Srpska. At the Cantonese level, the average female is 31% (Susmel, 2019).

Progress is seen in the implementation of Recommendation 28 (paragraph ce) of "Closing observations on the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of Bosnia and Herzegovina" (CEDAW/C/BIH/CO/4-5), with the establishment of a club of women parliamentarians of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina – the first inter-party club in the country. In cooperation with other clubs and working parties, the club works on creating and adopting measures and oversight of legislation in all areas of interest to women. An action plan of activities is developed, and priority topics are determined in collaboration with institutional gender mechanisms for lobbying cooperation through thematic sessions, roundtables, and meetings with non-governmental organizations. Currently, two women ministers are on the Committee of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina. There was a significant increase (25% female ministers) in the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Susmel, 2019).

#### IV. Conclusion

The analysis findings show that gender-based cyber violence has become an exponential security threat in the last decade. Cybersecurity governance in Bosnia and Herzegovina impacts everyone, women, men, girls, boys, and anyone with diverse gender identities and expressions. Therefore, actors responsible for developing new strategies should apply a gender lens when identifying problems and include their recommendations in national strategies and other documents. Lack of representation and equal participation of people of different sexes in policy-making and decision-making processes can lead to security needs being ignored and not addressed due to a lack of perspective. Analysis with the NAPRI tool in observing the policy framework of Bosnia and Herzegovina in combating cyber-gender-based violence is still weak. The online gender-based violence law has not explicitly been regulated in drafting. The legal instruments of Bosnia and Herzegovina still need to expand the strategy to regulate the flow mechanism of reporting mechanisms, protection, and effective sentencing according to a gender lens.

Most of the parliaments of Bosnia and Herzegovina are exclusively gender-neutral. Lawmakers and public policymakers should collaborate with relevant stakeholders to develop sound governance principles for legislation on violence against women and coordinate the implementation of gender-sensitive legislation. Therefore, the existing cooperation of institutional mechanisms for gender equality lays the groundwork for the development and adoption of a gender action plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina as a strategic political document which, at the state level,

establishes the basis for action for the introduction of gender equality and the implementation of obligations. Law in all relevant areas of society. FBiH, territorial ministries and institutions that the government must be competent, cooperate with institutional mechanisms for gender equality and organizations civil society, must improve the referral system for survivors of gender-based online violence, especially for vulnerable groups, such as women and girls, as well as strengthen and standardize protocols at the local level. It is also important to ensure that disadvantaged groups, including women with disabilities and from minority communities, can access available services.

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