



**ANNUAL WORKING REPORT FOR THE  
VICTIMOLOGY SOCIETY OF SERBIA  
FOR 2020**



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VICTIMOLOGY SOCIETY OF SERBIA  
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**Belgrade, 2021.**

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## **The mission, aims and tasks**

Victimology Society of Serbia-VDS was established on 12 November 1997 as an independent and non-profit association of citizens. The purpose of founding VDS was to get together as many humanistic oriented professionals as possible, who contribute with their scientific, professional and personal authority, as well as inter-disciplinary research, education and victim support to the development of victimology and improving rights of victims of crime, war and human rights' violation, regardless of their gender, religious beliefs, political views or other personal features.

VDS's mission is to advocate for the improvement of rights of all victims and providing favorable social conditions in which victims would be in a position to realize their rights and satisfy their needs, as well as for establishing social structure that would enable all those whose rights are violated, to heal and reintegrate into the community.

The Victimology Society of Serbia is a member of several domestic organizations and networks: the European Movement in Serbia, the "Women Against Violence Network" and the Alliance of Associations "Network of Organizations for Post-Penal Support of Serbia". VDS was a member of the Republic Team for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and the Initiative for Legal Prohibition and Protection of Children from Corporal Punishment in Serbia. VDS is the founder and member of the Association for *Joint Action FOR Truth and Reconciliation*. VDS was a member of the National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture (NPM) from 2012 to 2017, and became a member of this mechanism again in 2020.

VDS is a member of a number of international and European organizations: The World Victimology Society, the European Forum of Victim Services (now Victim Support Europe), the International Scientific and Professional Advisory Council of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Program (ISPAC), the International Network of Organizations Combating Violence with Firearms (IANSA).

Over the past twenty-three years, VDS has established cooperation with a large number of individuals and organizations from the countries of the former Yugoslavia, as well as from other European and non-European countries.

The main activities of VDS are:

- Proposing amendments to laws and advocating for their implementation;

- Monitoring the status of victims in criminal proceedings
- Assistance and support to victims of crime;
- Scientific research of various forms of victimization, their consequences and ways of prevention, as a basis for further creation of appropriate policies on improving the status of victims of crime and war and protection of their rights;
- Advocating for raising public awareness about the situation victims endure, their rights and problems;
- Truth and reconciliation;
- Publishing;
- Organizing scientific and professional gatherings and
- Education.

These activities reflect the continuity of the Victimology Society's work on achieving long-term goals in terms of improving the position of victims, creating new institutions, influencing the rule of law and the prevention of crime and conflict.



## Activities of Victimology society of Serbia during the period of 1.1.-31.12.2020

During 2020, VDS activities were carried out according to VDS Work Program for 2020, adopted by the Parliament of the Victimology Society of Serbia. However, 2020 was marked by numerous challenges due to the pandemic caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus (Covid-19) which affected the standard ways of conducting business and realizing project and other activities. On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared a global pandemic due to the coronavirus. On March 15, 2020, Government of Serbia decided *to declare a state of emergency on the territory of the entire country*<sup>1</sup>. On March 16, 2020, the Government of the Republic of Serbia passed the *Decree on Measures during the State of Emergency*<sup>2</sup>, which ceased to be valid on the day of the abolition of the state of emergency, i.e. on May 6, 2020. During and after the state of emergency, until the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2020, VDS switched to a work-from-home regime, hence the project activities and the rest of VDS work and tasks were performed online. During the month of June, VDS briefly returned to working from the offices. However, during the second wave of the epidemic, in July and August, the organization subsequently returned to working from home. Furthermore, from September 1 to October 26, 2020, VDS office worked regularly, until the epidemiological situation in Serbia worsened once more and they employees/ volunteers went back to working from home. However, from December 7, working in shifts was introduced, so one person was in VDS office every working day. Nevertheless, as it will be presented further in the report, with some adjustments, all planned activities were mostly carried out within the planned deadlines.

### General work

*VDS membership, keeping the members of VDS and the public informed of the ongoing projects and the rest of VDS activities*

During the reporting period, one person joined VDS. Unfortunately, two members of VDS passed away in 2020: Marina Blagojević Hughson PhD, scientific advisor at the Institute for

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<sup>1</sup> "Official Gazette of RS", no. 29/2020.

<sup>2</sup> "Official Gazette of RS", no. 31 of 16 March 2020, 36 of 19 March 2020, 38 of 20 March 2020, 39 of 21 March 2020, 43 of 27 March 2020, 47 of 28 March 2020, 49 of 1 April 2020, 53 of 9 April 2020, 56 of 15 April 2020, 57 of 16 April 2020, 58 of 20 April 2020, 60 of 24 April 2020.

Criminological and Sociological Research, and Zlatko Nikolić PhD, senior research associate at the Institute for Criminological and Sociological Research, who was retired and one of the founders of VDS.

During the reporting period, VDS members on VDS *info* mailing list - received regular information on ongoing projects, publications, press conferences VDS organized, European Victim Support activities, victimology and other gatherings.

The Victimology Society's website was regularly updated, all the information about the Victimology Society's work - projects, publications, meetings and the like is on the website. Information is available in Serbian and English language. Jasmina Nikolić and Bejan Šaćiri PhD were in charge of maintaining the website during the reporting period, while Tatjana Orelj was in charge of administering the website.

In addition to the website, since 2012, the Victimology Society of Serbia is also present on Facebook, and since 2015 VDS has a twitter account which helps increase visibility of the Victimology Society and its activities. VDS also has a YouTube channel where video materials created within the project and other activities of the Victimology Society are available, as well as recordings of guest appearances of VDS members in electronic media. From 2020, VDS also has an account on the social network Instagram.

The appearance of the members of the Victimology Society in the media helps increase the visibility of the Victimology Society and its activities.

All activities related to membership, informing the members, updating the website and accounts on social networks - are self-financing. Sanja Čopić PhD, Jasmina Nikolić, Bejan Šaćiri PhD and Milica Luković Radaković were in charge of these activities in 2020.

## **Work of VDS body**

During 2020, a regular session of VDS Parliament was held (adoption of VDS work report for 2019, the financial report for 2019 and the work program for 2020). VDS Director and the Board of Directors of VDS performed their regular tasks provided by the Statute of VDS. The Board of Directors held regular (electronic) sessions and made decisions on current issues. In 2020, there was a change in the management structure of VDS: at the personal request, prof. Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović PhD, she was relieved of her duties as the director of VDS; Jasmina Nikolić was elected for the position of director and has been performing this duty since August 1, 2020. According to the provisions of VDS Statute, VDS director is a member of VDS Board by function, so Jasmina Nikolić remained a member of VDS Board by, and the Parliament decided to elect prof. Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović PhD as a member of the Board, so the composition of the Board remained unchanged.

Due to the epidemiological situation caused by Covid-19, based on Article 3 of the Rulebook on preventive measures for safe and healthy work to prevent the occurrence and spread of epidemics of infectious diseases ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 94/20), the director of the Victimology Society of Serbia in July 2020, adopted a *Plan for the implementation of measures to prevent the*



*occurrence and spread of epidemics of infectious diseases in the Victimology Society of Serbia-VDS* (available at <http://www.vds.rs/File/pravilnik.pdf>).

## Awards of the Victimology Society of Serbia for 2020

Victimology Society of Serbia established three awards in 2009:

- The award for the contribution to the promotion of victims' rights
- The award for a non-conflict and comprehensive approach to dealing with the war and war crimes "Third way"
- The award for the talented young researcher

The award for the contribution to the promotion of victims' rights is awarded to individuals or organizations who have significantly contributed through their activities and efforts to the promotion of victims' rights and to achieving main aims of the Victimology Society of Serbia. This year the award for the contribution to the promotion of victims' rights is awarded to **Zorica Mršević PhD**.

**Zorica Mršević PhD** is a scientific advisor at the Institute of Social Sciences in Belgrade and a member of the Victimology Society of Serbia. From 1992 until today, Mršević PhD has been active on the feminist, scientific, activist and international scene, especially advocating for the protection of the rights of victims from marginalized categories in our population. She is one of the founders and first lecturers of Women's Studies in Belgrade, as well as SOS hotline for women and children victims of violence, Autonomous Women's Center, Yukom, Labris and others. Through her three-decade-long work, she has combined feminist theory and research activities with LGBT activism, along with teaching activities, as well as the practices of international organizations and domestic state and government bodies, independent institutions. All whilst being working in the public policy sector and drafting laws, state strategies and action plans in the field of gender equality, anti-discrimination, human rights and the phenomenology of violence, with an undoubted impact on improving the rights of victims of violence and discrimination from the most marginalized categories in our population. This author has supervised the creation of more than twenty books and over 400 scientific papers published in domestic and foreign scientific periodicals, and has supervised the creation and/or participated in dozens of research projects, always looking at the rights of victims through the prism of her consistent feminist orientation. Through her research, teaching and activist work on the protection and promotion of the rights of LGBTI people she made an original contribution to social change in Serbia. She is the author of the first published research and scientific papers in Serbia on: freedom of public assembly of LGBT people (pride parades), justification and necessity of legal regulation of same-sex communities in Serbia, lesbian identity and rights. Mršević PhD is especially focused on the rights, status and depathologisation of trans people. She participated in the conception of the Model of the Law on Gender Identity and the Rights of Intersex Persons, which is based on the principles of depathologization and self-determination. Having all things listed above in mind, the Board of Directors of VDS made the decision to give Zorica Mršević PhD an award for contribution to the improvement of the rights of victims. It is certainly a recognition for her entire research, scientific and activist work, it is gratitude for her great contribution to achieving the goals of VDS, however it is also an impulse not to give up, but rather to remain as active as before and continue to contribute to improving the position and rights of particularly marginalized groups and citizens.

**The award “Third way”** is awarded to individuals or organizations who have contributed to the development of a non-conflict and a comprehensive approach to dealing with the consequences of war and promotion of peace in Serbia. This year's the award “Third Way” is given to **Milovan Pissarri PhD**.

***Milovan Pissarri PhD*** is a historian and director of the Center for Applied History in Belgrade. His contribution to the development of a non-conflict and a comprehensive approach to dealing with the consequences of World War II, the wars during the 1990s in the former Yugoslavia, and building a conflict-free society in Serbia and the region - is visible through his entire scientific research and activist work through the years. The focus of his interests is the suffering of minority groups, and the focus of his research work is the crimes committed against civilians under occupation and their standing in ongoing conflict. He defended his doctoral dissertation at the University of Venice in 2011, where he dealt with crimes against civilians in Serbia during the First World War. Pissarri PhD, together with eight other experts and activists, founded the Center for Applied History with the aim of bringing the history of marginalized groups, places where suffering took place, anti-war resistance and pacifism closer to the citizens. The activities of the Center, in addition to research, include exhibitions, seminars for teachers and students, public tours, conferences. The goal of these activities is to talk about forgotten victims, but also to build a different narrative from the currently dominant one, which is still based on glorifying nationalism and militarism, creating myths about war ventures and intolerance towards other nations.

Due to all things listed above, the Board of Directors of the Victimology Society of Serbia made the decision to award Milovan Pissarri PhD with the "Third Way" award. We believe that this award is a recognition for his work, for the work of the Center of which he is the founder, but also an incentive for further research and work on shedding light on this topic and bringing closer the history and suffering of marginalized groups.

**The award for the talented young researcher** is awarded to young people for the special quality of their scientific research in the field of victimology. This award aims to encourage young people to engage in scientific research in the field of victimology. Unfortunately, there were no proposals for this award in 2020.

### ***VDS Library***

During the reporting period, the book collection increased. VDS library currently has 1,822 titles in the fields of victimology, law, criminology, gender studies, truth and reconciliation, human rights, restorative justice and other fields. In addition, VDS library has a large number of journals, of which 6 journals VDS receives regularly, through exchanges: *Revija za kriminalistiko in kriminologijo*, *Varstvoslovje*, *Perjanik*, *Sociologija*, *Pravni zapisi i Pravo: teorija i praksa*. One issue of the magazine is a gift for VDS by members of VDS or institutions with which VDS cooperates: prof. Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović PhD donates to VDS library her copies of the *European Journal of Criminology*, *Criminology in Europe*, *The International Journal of Restorative Justice* and *Contemporary Justice Review*, while the University of Criminalistics and Police regularly submits its journal *Science, Security, Police - Journal of Criminology and law*. Finally, VDS library has a rich selection of audio and video materials.

VDS library is available to all members of the Victimology Society. Since November 2007, the use of the library has been included in the membership fee, while persons who are not members of VDS can join the library. The membership fee is 400.00 dinars for undergraduate, master's and doctoral students who are not employed, and 800.00 dinars for other users.

Since 2007, 99 people have joined VDS library. In the period 1.1.-31.12.2020. year, a total of 17 books were published.

The content of VDS library is available at [www.vds.org.rs/BibliotekaKnjige.htm](http://www.vds.org.rs/BibliotekaKnjige.htm)

The purchase of books for the library is mostly achieved through gifts and obtaining copies of books for publishing in the scientific journal Temida. The work related to the maintenance and use of the library is self-financing and voluntary. During the reporting period, Bejan Šaćiri PhD was in charge of VDS library.



### *Applying for projects*

One of the ongoing activities of VDS is seeking funding for projects and further development of a strategy for longer-term and more stable funding. During the reporting period, VDS applied for a total of 13 projects or project activities within the projects of other organizations -independently or in partnerships. Out of those projects and activities, funds were obtained for the realization of 6 projects, specifically for activities within the projects of other organizations.

### **Advocating for changes in laws and practices**

#### *Participation in working groups of the National Convention on the European Union (NCEU)*

VDS is an active member of two working groups within the National Convention on the European Union (NCEU): The Working Group in charge of monitoring negotiations of the Article 23 and the Working Group in charge of monitoring negotiations of the Article 24. During

the reporting period, VDS monitored the work of NCEU Working Groups for Articles 23 and 24 through regular updates.

### *Monitoring court proceedings and actions of institutions in cases of gender-based discrimination and other violations of women's rights, in the field of labor and employment*

Project *Recognize gender discrimination, recognize the violation of rights in the field of labor and employment! React!* is part of the Action for the *Promotion of Women's Labor Rights*, funded by the European Union and co-financed by the Swedish Agency for Cooperation and Development. The main goal of the project is to recognize gender discrimination and violation of other rights of women in the field of work and employment. Moreover, the goal is providing information on how they can exercise their rights in the field of work and employment and who can they turn to for help and protection in case of violation of these rights. The project should help increase the influence of civil society organizations for cases when they call on the relevant institutions to implement positive regulations to ensure the protection of women's right to work as well as to contribute to empowering women to protect their rights.

VDS monitored the work of courts and other institutions related to gender discrimination and violation of women's rights in the field of labor and employment, within the project activities during the reporting period. The court proceedings were not held often due to the Covid-19 epidemic. Furthermore, VDS collected data on individual cases of discrimination and other violations of women's rights in the field of labor and employment. This data was collected through surveys, interviews with representatives of state and non-state organizations and independent bodies that we thought have come into contact with women who are exposed to discrimination, as well as abuse at work or other violations of rights in the field of labor and employment (CSOs working to provide support and protection of women, Commissioner for Equality, Provincial Ombudsman, Ombudsman, Republic agency for peaceful settlement of labor disputes, etc.). A special focus was on obtaining data on human rights violations during and after the state of emergency due to Covid-19. During the reporting period, 14 cases were monitored.

Based on the data collected this way, in the coming period we will work on drafting conclusions and recommendations related to the conduct of competent institutions and organizations in cases of gender discrimination and other violations of women's rights in the field of labor and employment.

Participants of these activities were: Jasmina Nikolić, Sanja Čopić PhD, Mirjana Tripković, Mirjana Dokmanović PhD and Mina Mijailović.

### *VDS Femicide Research Group and its work within the European Observatory on Femicide*

The European Observatory on Femicide is one of the most important outcomes of the project *Femicide across Europe* (held within the European program of cooperation in the fields of science and technology (COST) - 2013-2017), in which Serbia participated (in the Executive Committee of the project were: prof. Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović, PhD, Sanja Čopić, PhD and Ljiljana Stevković, MA). The European Observatory on Femicide (EOF) was established in 2018. The mission of EOF is to prevent femicide through data collection, data visibility and awareness raising: creation of a single European system of data collection to measure and compare the

extent of femicide across Europe and raise awareness to the public as well as the professionals. Furthermore, through analysis of individual cases of femicide across Europe, this system aims to identify gaps in the response to violence against women. More on EOF you can find at <http://eof.cut.ac.cy/>

The EOF has four bodies: Coordinators who serve two-year terms, the Council, National Research Groups and two thematic groups (for quantitative and qualitative research). The role of the research groups is to work with the EOF to collect and analyze data on femicide – the data that is being collected for a pilot study. The research group for Serbia consists of VDS members: prof. Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović PhD, Sanja Čopić PhD, Vida Vilić PhD and Ljiljana Stevković, MA. The research group for Serbia has been involved in the EOF from the beginning.

During 2020, the research group for Serbia conducted the following activities:

- Collection of data within the EOF pilot study on cases of femicide during 2019 and 2020, in order to create a single database on cases of femicide in Europe. The key data sources are: police records and media texts, and additional data sources are: records of the prosecutor's office, social welfare system, NGOs and the like. All of the case data is collected, specifically information about the victim, the perpetrator, their relationship, situational factors, the context of the murder (previous violence), the support system, the outcome of the case. In Serbia, the key source of data was media coverage of the killings of women in the context of partner violence. A database of media texts on femicide of the Autonomous Women's Center was used, as well as additional texts of print and electronic media. The database for 2019 was completed and submitted to the EOF coordinators. The process of completion of the database for 2020 is underway.
- An online meeting called the *European Observatory on Femicide and data collection for Serbia* was organized. The meeting was held through the Go to Meeting platform on November 4, 2020. The aim of the meeting was to present the European Observatory on Femicide (EOF) and the research group for Serbia and what the research group has done so far, the types of data collected, as well as opportunities and ways of cooperation with organizations and institutions that have data on femicide. In addition to members of the Femicide Research Group for Serbia, the meeting was attended by representatives of state institutions: the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Justice, the Republic Statistical Office and the Institute of Forensic Medicine and civil society organizations involved in femicide research in Serbia: Autonomous Women's Center and FemPlaz. Representatives of the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office were not able to attend the meeting.

Persons directly involved in this activity are: prof. Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović PhD, Sanja Čopić PhD, Vida Vilić PhD and Ljiljana Stevković MA.

### ***Towards a fair redistribution of unpaid care in Serbia***

The project *Towards a Fair Redistribution of Unpaid Care Jobs in Serbia* is being implemented by the Phenomena Association, in cooperation with the Center for the Promotion of Healthy Lifestyles - Center E8. The project is supported by UN Women. As part of the project, the Victimology Society of Serbia is participating in the development of an advocacy plan for the redistribution of unpaid care jobs in the local community. The project should contribute to



solving the problem of redistribution of unpaid care jobs in the following ways: by raising the capacity of women's and youth organizations and by making an evaluation of the pilot initiative with recommendations; the project targets the problem of the invisibility of unpaid care and household chores as something valuable and invites organizations to advocate and encourage the public policies and investments needed to reduce and redistribute care work performed by women. The main activities of the project are: participation in an online seminar on advocacy for the redistribution of unpaid care jobs in the local community; preparation of the final document of the advocacy plan on the topic of redistribution of unpaid work by organizations in the local community and the presentation of the advocacy plan at the final online conference.

The activity was realized from October 15, 2020 to January 20, 2021. Jasmina Nikolić and Milica Luković Radaković were directly involved in the realization of this project activity.

## **Advocating for raising public awareness of the rights and status of victims**

### ***Marking the European Day of Victims***

On the occasion of February 22 - the European Day of Victims, a press release was issued. The press release was promoted by the media, posted on VDS website and distributed via social networks. The text of the announcement is available on VDS website <http://www.vds.rs/arhivasa.htm>.

In addition, representatives of VDS held lectures at Belgrade faculties with the aim of sensitizing students to the needs of victims and familiarizing them with the existence of services for victims, as well as with the aim of promoting volunteer work in these sectors:

- Jasmina Nikolić gave a lecture to students at the Faculty of Media and Communication in Belgrade. The lecture was organized by the Psychology students club "Action Potential";
- Sanja Čopić PhD gave a lecture to students at the Faculty of Law, Union University and the University of Criminal Investigation and Police Studies;
- Bejan Šaćiri PhD gave a lecture to students at the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade and the Medical College of Vocational Studies "Milutin Milanković";
- Mirjana Tripković gave a lecture to students at the Faculty of Political Science, University of Belgrade, Union of Social Work Students;
- Prof. Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović PhD and Ljiljana Stevković MA gave a lecture to students at the Faculty of Special Education and Rehabilitation, University of Belgrade.

On the occasion of this year's celebration of the European Day of Victims, the Victimology Society of Serbia drew the public's attention to the consequences suffered by victims due to victimization by various forms of crime, as well as one of the most important rights of victims, the right to compensation. The consequences of victimization affect victims in different ways. Victims suffer material damage, physical injuries, health problems, mental health issues and various socio-economic difficulties. In order to mitigate the consequences of crimes on victims, VDS appealed to the state to take measures to establish a State fund for the compensation of victims of violence.

The Victimology Society of Serbia has decided to mark the European Day of Victims in 2020 by joining in the action of the humanitarian organization "Be Human" in the aim of collecting aid for Marina Minić. Marina was injured on February 28, 2018, when her ex-boyfriend shot at her and subsequently killed himself. One of the bullets hit her and damaged her spinal cord to such an extent that she remained in a wheelchair. On that account, funds were being raised for Marina to have surgery in Thailand. Funds from VDS membership fees paid by March 11, 2020, in the amount of 63,000 dinars were deposited to the organization "Be human" for that purpose. At the end of the year, Marina Minić underwent surgery in Thailand and is now awaiting a period of rehabilitation.

### *Online Conference of the Victimology Society of Serbia "COVID-19 in the Balkans: Patterns of Victimization and Victims' Rights"*

The online conference of the Victimology Society of Serbia entitled "*COVID-19 in the Balkans: Patterns of Victimization and Victims' Rights*" was held in Belgrade on November 26 and 27, 2020. The conference gathered over 90 participants from Serbia, the region of former Yugoslavia (Northern Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Slovenia), as well as from other European (Greece, Romania, Great Britain, Ukraine, Switzerland) and non-European countries (India, Israel, New Zealand, USA). Due to the epidemiological situation caused by the COVID-19 virus and the necessity to respect preventive measures, the conference was held online, via ZOOM.



The online conference of the Victimology Society of Serbia aimed to stimulate the exchange of experiences and knowledge related to the impact of COVID-19 on patterns of victimization, rights and support for victims in the Balkan countries. The trends of crime were exposed, and thus also the victimization patterns during the pandemic, especially during the state of emergency, different types of crime in general, but also specifically victimization in the sense of violating / restricting human rights through measures brought on by states to prevent the spread of the virus. Moreover, the conference focused on the topic of access to justice during the pandemic and the challenges of the functionality of the state judiciary system, especially during the state of emergency. Furthermore, the impacts and consequences of the pandemic and the response of states in cases of particularly vulnerable categories of victims were analyzed, specifically: women, children (and families with children) and the elderly. In addition, the focus was also placed on the challenges faced by victim services in providing support to victims in general and women and children victims of domestic violence and human trafficking, specifically, as well as the lessons learned during this period.

The President of VDS, Prof. Slobodan Savić PhD and the Director of VDS, Jasmina Nikolić honored the official opening of the conference with a welcoming speech, followed by the announcement of the winners of the annual awards of the Victimology Society of Serbia.

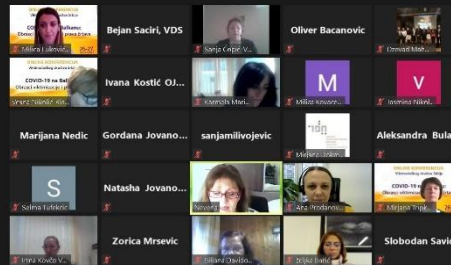
## Obrasci viktimizacije i prava žrtava u Srbiji tokom pandemije COVID-19

Prof. dr. Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović  
Viktimološko društvo Srbije



## Pristup pravdi u doba korone: naučene lekcije i izazovi

Nevena Petrović



Mogućnost adaptacije usluge podrške ženama sa  
iskustvom nasilja tokom i nakon vanrednog stanja  
izazvanog SARS-COV 2 pandemijom  
izazovi i naučene lekcije

AUTONOMNI ŽENSKI CENTAR

TANJA IGJATTOVIĆ  
DILJANA MALBAŠA  
MIRJANA MITIĆ



### Domestic violence

- study made by doctors based on data from March-June 2020 – no. of victims going to the hospital 4 times higher
- global trend?
- victims: aged 31-74 years, average 48.2, women





The work of the conference took place through five thematic sessions: Patterns of Victimization, Victims' Rights and COVID-19 in the Balkans, Women, Children and the Elderly as Victims in the Age of COVID-19, Support for Victims in the Age of COVID-19: Challenges and Lessons Learned, Patterns of Victimization, Victims' Rights and COVID-19 in the Balkans and Support to Victims in the Age of COVID-19: Challenges and Lessons Learned.

Similarly, as in the last ten years, VDS conference was an addition to the 16 Days of Activism Against Violence Against Women campaign, which began on November 25 with International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and ended on December 10 with International Human Rights Day.

Declared by the RS Chamber of Social Protection, the online conference of the Victimology Society of Serbia is categorized as an international conference. Furthermore, 20 points are earned for active participation in an international conference, and 10 points for passive participation in accordance with the Score List of conditions for acquiring points for renewing the license of professional workers in the social welfare system.

The following people had a chance to present at the online conference:

- Prof. Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović PhD, tenure professor at the Faculty of Special Education and Rehabilitation, University of Belgrade, member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts, member of the Executive Board of the Victimology Society of Serbia, honorary member of the World Victimology Society and former president of the European Criminology Association (Serbia)
- Prof. Oliver Bačanović PhD, tenure professor at the Faculty of Security, University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Skopje (Northern Macedonia)
- Prof. Dževad Mahmutović PhD, Associate Professor at the Faculty of Law, University of Tuzla; Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Sanja Škuletić-Malagić, Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
- Prof. Nevena Petrušić PhD, tenure professor at the Faculty of Law, University of Niš (Serbia)
- Prof. Irma Kovčo Vukadin PhD, tenure professor at the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Zagreb (Croatia)
- Sanja Čopić PhD, senior research associate at the Institute for Criminological and Sociological Research and President of the Executive Board of the Victimology Society of Serbia (Serbia)
- Ana Prodanović, Child Rights Monitoring Specialist, UNICEF (Serbia)
- Nikica Hamer Vidmar, Manager of the Victim and Witness Support Service, Criminal Law Directorate, Sector for Records, Pardons and Victim and Witness Support, Ministry of Justice and Administration of the Republic of Croatia (Croatia)
- Tanja Ignjatović PhD, Mirjana Mitić, and Dijana Malbaša, Autonomous Women's Center (Serbia)
- Marija Anđelković, ASTRA-Anti Trafficking Action, Belgrade (Serbia)
- Prof. Vasiliki Artinopoulou PhD, Tenure Professor at the Pantheon University of Social and Political Sciences, Athens (Greece)
- Prof. Andra-Roxana Trandafir PhD, Faculty of Law, University of Bucharest, and prof. Flaviu Ciopec PhD, Faculty of Law, Western University of Timisoara (Romania)

- Nicole Farnsworth, Program Director, Lead Investigator, Kosovo Women's Network (Kosovo):
- Jasmina Nikolić, director of the Victimology Society of Serbia (Serbia)
- Selma Tufekčić, social worker of CSO "Vive Žene" Tuzla (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

The Program Committee members of the Conference were:

- Prof. Gorazd Meško PhD, tenure professor, Vice Dean for Research and Manager of the Institute for Criminal Justice and Security at the Faculty of Criminal Justice and Security, University of Maribor (Slovenia)
- Prof. Oliver Bačanović PhD, tenure professor at the Faculty of Security, University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Skopje (Macedonia)
- Prof. Vasiliki Artinopoulou PhD, Tenure Professor at the Pantheon University of Social and Political Sciences, Athens (Greece)
- Scholar and prof. Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović PhD, member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts, tenure professor at the Faculty of Special Education and Rehabilitation, University of Belgrade, member of the Board of the Victimology Society of Serbia, honorary member of the World Victimology Society and former president of the European Criminology Association (Serbia)
- Prof. Irma Kovčo-Vukadin PhD, Tenure Professor at the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, Department of Criminology, University of Zagreb (Croatia)
- Prof. Almir Maljevic PhD, Associate Professor at the Faculty of Criminology, Criminology and Security Studies, University of Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina).

The Organizing Committee of the Conference included:

- Jasmina Nikolić, director of the Victimology Society of Serbia
- Sanja Čopić PhD, senior research associate at the Institute for Criminological and Sociological Research in Belgrade and President of the Board of VDS
- Bejan Šaćiri PhD, researcher at the Victimology Society of Serbia.

The conference was financially supported by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development. Participants of this year's online conference did not pay the registration fee, however, they were invited to pay a donation for the establishment of a fund for emergency aid for victims, ones that are most affected by consequences of the COVID-19 virus, those who contact the VDS Info and Victim Support Service and in this way - improve the capacity and work of the service. 33,000.00 dinars were collected for this purpose.

### *National mechanism for the prevention of torture*

VDS is one of the six civil society organizations with which the Ombudsman signed an agreement on cooperation for working on the National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture (NPM) in 2020. The signed agreements regulate, in more detail, the cooperation that will take place between the Ombudsman and the selected organizations in performing the NPM activities. This agreement is based on the Decision of the Ombudsman of June 19, 2020 on the selection of organizations with which the Ombudsman will cooperate in performing NPM tasks and in accordance with Article 2a. paragraph 2 of the Law on Ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

The Cooperation consists of activities such as visitations to the places where persons deprived of liberty are currently or where they might be, by representatives and professional associates of the organizations in the project. Next, the activities are also preparing reports or parts of reports on these visits, as well as developing recommendations for eliminating the identified shortcomings in the work of institutions which are holding persons deprived of liberty. Furthermore, the work consists of making expert findings and opinions on their health condition, especially physical injuries and mental pain suffered as a consequence of any form of abuse. Moreover, cooperation meant preparing reports or parts of thematic reports on the situation and the status of persons deprived of liberty, as well as preparing analyses and / or opinions on regulations or draft regulations governing the status, rights and obligations of persons deprived of liberty.

During the reporting period no visits were made.

The following people participated in the cooperation: Dr. Sanja Čopić, Jasmina Nikolić and Milica Luković Radaković



### *Discussion panel on the protection of women from gender - based discrimination and violations of labor and employment rights*

Within the project *Recognize gender discrimination, recognize the violation of rights in the field of labor and employment! React !*, mentioned earlier in the report, three discussion panels were organized on the protection of women from gender-based discrimination and violations of labor and employment rights. The aim of the discussion panels was to bring together experts from different perspectives who provide assistance and protection victims of gender-based discrimination and violations of labor and employment rights and to contribute to establishing dialogue, networking and better use of existing resources to help and support



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victims at the local level, regional and national level. Furthermore, the *Guide to Protecting Women from Gender-Based Discrimination and Violations of Labor and Employment Rights*, was published as part of this project and was for presented and distributed on the panel.

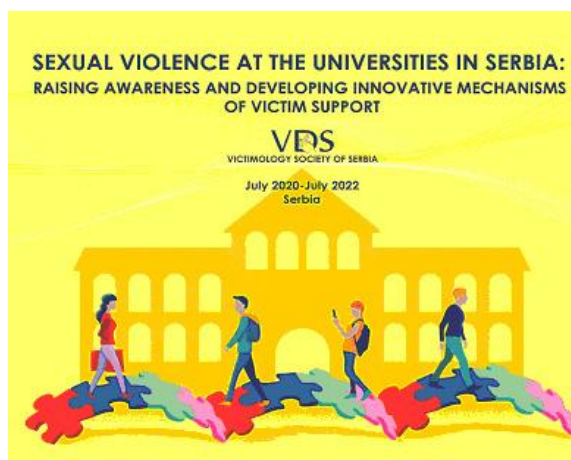
Discussion panels were organized on 15.10.2020, 19.11.2020. and 22.12.2020. The first discussion panel was held at the Mona Hotel in Belgrade with ten panelists, while the other participants were able to join online (via the Zoom application). This discussion panel could be followed via VDS Facebook page. The remaining two discussion panels were held online (via the Zoom application) and could also be followed via VDS Facebook page.

Jasmina Nikolić, Dr. Sanja Čopić and Milica Luković Radaković were directly involved in the realization of this activity.



## Research

### *Sexual Violence at Serbian Universities: Raising Awareness and Developing Innovative Victim Support Mechanisms*



The Victimology Society of Serbia is one of nine research organizations from around the world that in 2020 received the award for innovation in the prevention and the response to gender-based violence, awarded by the Initiative for Research on Sexual Violence and the World Bank (see: <https://www.svri.org/what-we-do/research-support/svri-grants/svri-grant-2020>). The award was given for the realization of the project *Sexual Violence at Universities in Serbia: Raising Awareness and Developing Innovative Mechanisms*



to Support Victims. More about the award and other awarded institutes and organizations can be seen at <https://www.svri.org/what-we-do/research-support/svri-grants/svri-grant-2020>

*The project Sexual Violence at Serbian Universities: Raising Awareness and Developing Innovative Mechanisms to Support Victims* aims to raise awareness about sexual violence at universities / faculties in Serbia and improve the institutional response by proposing innovative mechanisms for prevention and adequate response to cases of sexual violence at universities / faculties in Serbia. The project consists of four groups of activities: research on sexual violence at universities in Serbia, development and piloting of trainings for "first response" to sexual violence at universities, also, development of mechanisms for prevention of sexual violence and support to victims at universities as well as dissemination of project results.

Before the project activities began, the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI) organized preparatory workshops for the members of the project team. SVRI organized five workshops in the period from May to July 2020 (14.5., 27.5., 10.6., 24.6. And 8.7.). The workshops were planned to take place in South Africa for the representatives of the organizations that received the award, however due to the epidemiological situation the workshops were organized online. The aim of the workshops was to introduce all the winners to the representatives of SVRI and the World Bank, as well as to each other, furthermore, to get acquainted with the program around the award and the work and communication plans. In addition, the workshops aimed to stimulate exchange of experiences and knowledge and to strengthen the capacity of organizations to implement projects in the current conditions created by the Covid-19 pandemic. Following the introductory workshop, three thematic workshops were organized to address the following issues: Ethics and Safety, Research Methods and Tools, and Dissemination of Research Findings. The last workshop was dedicated to the question of how to stay in touch and continue cooperating during the implementation of the project and after it.

Furthermore, before the beginning of the project, VDS project team met with representatives of the World Bank, including the World Bank office in Belgrade. The meeting was held online on June 11, 2020. The goal of the meeting was to familiarize the World Bank representatives with VDS project and to discuss possible forms of cooperation and assistance in disseminating the results of the project.

Finally, in order to strengthen the capacity of the project teams, SVRI organized online seminars and trainings, which were attended by four members of VDS project team: Challenges in collecting data on violence against women during the Covid-19 pandemic (July 2, 2020). Evidence-based programs for the prevention of violence against women (14.7.2020), training for writing short forms (science pitch) (27.10.2020) and a workshop on story-telling (16.11.2020).

The first group of activities was launched during the reporting period. Specifically, research for determining the scope and nature of sexual violence at universities / faculties in Serbia, as well as reviewing existing policies and mechanisms of response and support for victims of sexual violence at universities / faculties in Serbia and abroad. Furthermore, activities were collecting data on examples of good practice of 'first response' training on sexual violence at universities / colleges. In regard to this, the following activities were carried out:

- Desk analysis: Collection of literature containing examples of quantitative and qualitative research on sexual violence, with a focus on research on sexual violence in universities and other educational institutions, including research on online sexual violence (in universities in general); creating a bibliography and a database of relevant papers; making a questionnaire for data from the literature as a basis for qualitative analysis of the literature and review of previous research; creating the structure of the part of the research report based on the review of previous research; the work began with writing a review of the research.
- Empirical research: Developing research methodology; creating questionnaires for empirical research; research preparation (contacting people from selected universities, obtaining data on the number of students who will be in the sample, getting acquainted with online platforms for data collection).
- A blog has been written about the project and the research, Šaćiri, B (2020). A social and educational imperative: How can we prevent sexual violence and support victims at universities in Serbia? Available at: <https://www.svri.org/blog/how-can-we-prevent-sv-and-support-victims-at-universities-in-serbia>

The project began on July 1, 2020. and should last for two years. World Bank is funding the project. During the reporting period, in the project participated: prof. Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović PhD, Sanja Čopić PhD, Jasmina Nikolić and Bejan Šaćiri PhD.

### *Illicit Arms Trade and Gun Violence in Europe: An Analysis of the Situation in Serbia*

The TARGET project - Arms trade and its impact on gun violence in Europe is implemented by the Flemish Peace Institute (Belgium) and the Institute for Security and Global Affairs of the University of Leiden (Netherlands). It is a large international research project on gun violence in Europe and the illicit arms trade. The project consists of an in-depth analysis of gun violence and the analysis of the impact of illicit arms trafficking and gun violence in seven countries: Belgium, Estonia, the Netherlands, Poland, Serbia, Spain and Sweden.

The Victimology Society of Serbia conducted a research in Serbia to determine the extent and nature of gun violence in Serbia as well as specifications of firearms used in cases of violence in Serbia; next, the researched aimed to identify existing measures and practices related to the prevention of gun violence and the fight against illicit arms trafficking, as well as and to limit the impact of illicit firearms trafficking on violence. The result would be developing a proposal for collecting and storing data on the impact of illicit firearms trafficking on gun violence in order to improve the current data collection on these issues.

Project collaborators are: Europol, the Dutch National Police, UNDP-SEESAC, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the European Monitoring Center for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA). The project is funded by the Directorate General for Migration and Home Affairs of the European Commission within the Internal Security Fund - Police 2019. More information about the project can be found at <https://vlaamsvredesinstituut.eu/en/target/>

The following activities were carried out during the reporting period:

- Participation of VDS researchers, Sanja Čopić PhD and Mirjana Dokmanović PhD in the online meeting of researchers about the general Target project, 24.9.2020.
- Desk analysis: Collection of literature related to illegal firearms trafficking and gun violence in Serbia; attending a meeting with SEESAC representatives, online, 29.10.2020. for obtaining additional data from the competent state institutions, to be included in the database; collecting quantitative data on incidents of gun violence in Serbia and firearms used in those incidents from two sources: the RS Ministry of Interior and the Gun Violence Monitoring Platform; analyzing and writing part of the research report based on the desk analysis.
- Empirical research: Developing research methodology; drafting a research instrument (questionnaire for guidelines for conducting interviews).

The project lasts from 1.9.2020. to 31.3.2021. Directly involved in the project realization were: Sanja Čopić, PhD Mirjana Dokmanović PhD and prof. Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović PhD.

### *Conducting research and research related activities within the project "#SOSagainstViolence – A media campaign to reduce violence against women during and after the Covid-19 epidemic in Serbia"*

The project "SOS Against Violence – A Media Campaign to Reduce Violence against Women during and After the Covid-19 Epidemic in Serbia" is implemented by the NGO Phenomena in partnership with the UN Agency for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (UN Women). Within this project, the Victimology Society of Serbia is conducting research about the response of competent institutions and services for combating domestic violence in the Republic of Serbia during the Covid-19 epidemic and developing recommendations for improving practical crisis response policies based on the rights, needs and experiences of victims.

VDS analyzed literature and other written material, available in printed or electronic form, related to domestic violence, during the reporting period. In addition to that, also analyzed were available support services and response of competent authorities and institutions in cases of domestic violence during the Covid-19 epidemic, especially during the state of emergency, with the focus on the following: a) normative framework on protection from domestic violence and an adequate response during a crisis (during and after the state of emergency due to Covid-19 epidemic); b) analyzing existing research related to the response and implementation of existing solutions in cases of domestic violence during the Covid-19 epidemic; c) data of state bodies, institutions and civil society organizations about the response of state bodies, institutions and services in cases of domestic violence during the Covid-19 epidemic; and d) data on media coverage of cases of domestic violence, available services and the response of competent authorities, institutions and services during the Covid-19 epidemic. A report and a summary with the main findings and recommendations from the desk analysis was prepared based on the analysis.

The activities are carried out from October 2020 to June 2021. Dr. Sanja Čopić, prof. Dr. Vesna Nikolic-Ristanovic, Jasmina Nikolic, Milica Lukovic Radakovic and Mirjana Tripkovic were directly involved in the implementation of this activity.

## **Education**

## *Prevention of harassment in the workplace - forms, victim support, legislation and basics of mediation*

VDS held a training entitled *Prevention of Harassment in the Workplace - Forms, Victim Support, Legislation and Basics of Mediation* during October 2020. The training was organized for six people employed by Lidl. The training was meant for all employees in order to recognize the signs of harassment in the workplace and implement a timely response. It was especially meant for support providers and first responders within the company. The training aims to: identify the signs of harassment in the workplace and distinguish them from other violations of employment rights, including discrimination. Moreover, the training goal was to develop communication skills and non-violent conflict resolution techniques as well as to introduce the support network in Serbia to Lidl employees. Furthermore, the goal is to familiarize the employees with the Law on Prevention of Harassment at the Workplace and with the basics of mediation within the organization. The training was financed by the company Lidl, and it was realized by: Jasmina Nikolić, Sanja Čopić PhD and Mirjana Tripković.

## *The Power of Change - The Power of Prevention Gender - Based Violence in Serbia*



The project *Power of Change-Power of Prevention of Gender-Based Violence in Serbia* is implemented through the United Nations Fund for Combating Violence against Women (UNTF). The project should help reduce harmful, gender-based stereotypes related to discrimination and violence against women and girls by raising the level of knowledge and information of young people and stimulating a change in negative attitudes and behaviors. The Victimology Society of Serbia is one of the eight organizations participating in the project. The activities are carried out in eight cities / municipalities in Serbia: Kraljevo, Novi Sad, Zajecar, New Belgrade, Celarevo, Aleksinac, Prijepolje and Sombor.

The main activities within the project are:

- Participation in an accredited training 'Power of Change' to form and lead support and self-help groups for women survivors of violence or prevention workshops for girls
- Organizing and holding a series of workshops for girls according to the model 'Power of change'
- Organizing the "Live Library" event
- Implementing StepUp! campaigns: Distribution of WAVE network materials at the local community level
- Supporting a group of young people in organizing local advocacy activities for the prevention of gender-based violence



- Sharing information about the 'Power of Change - Power of Prevention' campaign via social media
- Participation in the final conference of the project.



The project is being implemented from 10.6.2020 - 30.9.2022.

Jasmina Nikolić, Milica Luković Radaković and Mariana Nedić completed the accredited training "Power of Change". In the reporting period, they worked on designing workshops for girls that will be realized at the beginning of 2021.

### *Training on breathing techniques, relaxation and focusing on the present moment*

As part of the project *Decentralization to Strengthening the Network of Women Against Violence, Improving the Services and Position of Women Survivors of Male Violence*, a *Training on Breathing, Relaxation and Focusing Techniques for the Present Moment* was held for the WAVN members, Belgrade region. The training was carried out in four parts in the offices of the Victimology Society of Serbia. The objectives of the training were to teach participants to use breathing, relaxation and focusing techniques to be in the present moment when working with victims, as well as to train victims to use the learned techniques independently. Also, one of the

goals was to prevent burnout on the job of the participants in the training. The training was created and led by prof. Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović PhD and was held on 13.01.2020, 12.2.2020, 27.2.2020. and 12.3.2020.



### *Volunteer training*

Training for working in the service for victims the *VDS info and victim support Service* was held in 2020. The training was realized according to the program for training social service providers to work with victims of violence, the program which Victimology Society of Serbia developed. Republic Institute for Social Protection first accredited the program in 2012, after that the accreditation was regularly renewed. The general goal of the training program is to acquire the necessary basic knowledge and skills for working with victims of violence, which should be possessed by every social service provider who comes or can come into contact with, adult or minor - victim of any type of violence. Through this training, participants acquire the necessary skills and knowledge that will enable them to recognize the victim of violence, to recognize and understand the needs of the victim, to provide the necessary information, emotional support and

other types of assistance, as well as to refer the victim to other competent services and organizations depending on previously identified needs. The uniqueness of this year's training, compared to previous years, is that it is organized and realized online and for only one participant. The training was realized by: prof. Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović PhD, Sanja Čopić PhD, Jasmina Nikolić, Bejan Šaćiri PhD and Mirjana Tripković

## Providing support to victims of crime

### *VDS Info and Victim Support Service*

The VDS Info and Victim Support Service is the first general service for victims of crime, which was founded in 2003 within the Victimology Society of Serbia. The target group of the Victim Support Service consists of all victims of crime, women and men, members of all ethnic groups, regardless of any personal characteristics (LBGT, the sick, people with disabilities, etc.). Assistance and support are offered to both direct and indirect victims (members of victims' families and other persons affected by a crime or other harmful event). Finally, the target group also includes crime victims in the court, as well as victims of violence in prisons, former, future and present prisoners, in relation to their rights and victimization. The services provided to victims within the Support Service are:

- Emotional support;
- Information (on psychological reactions and dynamics of recovery, practical information for re-establishing life flows after a traumatic event, information on victims' rights and mechanism to exercise them, on the possibilities of using restorative approaches, especially mediation and other peaceful solutions, etc.);
- Referral to specialized (state and non-governmental) services and organizations or individuals in Belgrade and Serbia depending on specific needs;
- Support in court proceedings as well as in contacts with state institutions and in the mediation process.

All forms of assistance and support for victims are free. The basic principles of the Support Service, which are also the principles of work of all organizations of this type surrounding the organization European Victim Support, are trust, respect for the victim, their rights, needs and feelings, confidentiality of information and autonomy of the victim's will. The help and support provided within the *VDS Info and Victim Support Service* is based on an empowerment and a supportive attitude towards victims, which can be important for their recovery, but also for motivating the victim to find a solution to the problem they face.

During the reporting period, the following activities were implemented:

- Training for volunteers was organized, which was discussed more in the previous part of the report.
- Providing support to victims - in 2020, 141 victims of various forms of victimization turned to the Support Service for help and support; the Support Service was in total contacted 229 times, which means that a number of victims called several times each. Of the total number of victims, 117 were female and 24 were male. In addition, in four cases, VDS representatives attended and kept track of the trials of victims who turned to the Support Service for help.

- Regular updates of the database consisting of state institutions and civil society organizations that provide assistance and support to victims as well as updates in the interactive map of these services, which is available at <https://www.victimservices.eu>.
- Regular supervision of volunteer work. The head of the Service is Jasmina Nikolić; prof. Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović PhD is in charge of external supervision, while internal supervision of volunteer work was carried out by Jasmina Nikolić, Mirjana Tripković and Bejan Šaćiri PhD.
- Social media presence was regularly maintained and appropriate content posted in order to increase the visibility of the Support Service. Specifically on social networks Facebook and Instagram and on VDS website. Contents such as examples of victims contacting the Support Service, as well as other materials aimed at victims and potential victims.
- During 2020, on a monthly bases a report on the work of the VDS Info and Victim Support Service was posted on VDS website, Facebook and Instagram.

Victim support was also provided within the project *Recognize Gender Discrimination, Recognize Violations of Rights in the Field of Labor and Employment! React!* where legal assistance was provided to women with problems related to discrimination and violation of rights in the field of labor and employment. Furthermore, the initiative *"Isolated, not alone"* funded by the Avon Foundation for Women also sponsored the work of the Support Service. Avon Foundation project funds were used to support organizations within the Women Against Violence Network in Serbia, to aid their urgent needs to cover additional operating costs, costs of operators working on SOS hotlines for victims of domestic violence, and costs for acquiring necessary protective equipment (face masks and gloves) for staff providing direct support to women in the field. The project also included direct financial assistance to the most vulnerable groups of women victims of domestic violence - for their needs such as food and medicine.

VDS Info and Victim Support Service provided support to women in situations of violence during the COVID-19 virus pandemic through a hotline, which was available 24 hours a day (April, May, June). Moreover, support on the telephone, email, skype, Viber, Whatsapp, FaceTime, Facebook included: emotional and empowerment method support for women, information about other organizations and institutions and their work in the pandemic conditions, psychological support, legal information, anger management and how to resolve conflicts in conditions of isolation, making a safety plan, providing information related to the field of social welfare and labor law, psychosocial support in order to mitigate the consequences of living in crisis situation of the pandemic virus COVID-19, urgent material benefits in the form of food or protective equipment. Important to mention is that the organization UN Women enabled the uninterrupted work of the Support Service, in the mentioned period.

The working hours of the Support Service have been extended from 10 am to 8 pm during this reporting period and since the beginning of the state of emergency in March, except for the three mentioned months when it worked 24 hours a day.

The following persons were involved in the work of the Support Service during the reporting period: Jasmina Nikolić, Mirjana Tripković, Sanja Čopić PhD, Bejan Šaćiri PhD, Marijana Nedić and Milica Luković Radaković.



The work of the Service in this period was financed from the funds of the project *Recognize gender discrimination, recognize the violation of rights in the field of labor and employment! React!* (EU and CIDA), *Isolated not alone* (AVON Foundation), *Strengthening the Women's Against Violence Network and improving the services and position of women survivors of male violence through decentralization* (OAK Foundation) and *Supporting women in situations of violence during the Covid-19 virus pandemic* (UN women).



***Strengthening the Women's Against Violence Network and improving the services and position of women survivors of male violence through decentralization***

During 2020, for the third year in a row, the Victimology Society of Serbia coordinated Belgrade region of the Network of Women Against Violence (NWAV) and the activities planned in the Belgrade region within the project *Strengthening the Women's Against Violence Network and improving the services and position of women survivors of male violence through decentralization*. The aim of the project is to increase the impact of the Women Against Violence Network on national and local policies through participating in decision-making, access to funds and implementing activities. The specific objectives of the project are: to better recognise and create a greater impact of the SOS hotline as a leading service intended for women with experience of violence in Serbia; to improve roles of members of the Women Against Violence Network as service providers and to increase efficiency and capacity of the Women Against Violence Network to form a joint SOS line for women who have survived violence or are currently in a situation of violence in Serbia.



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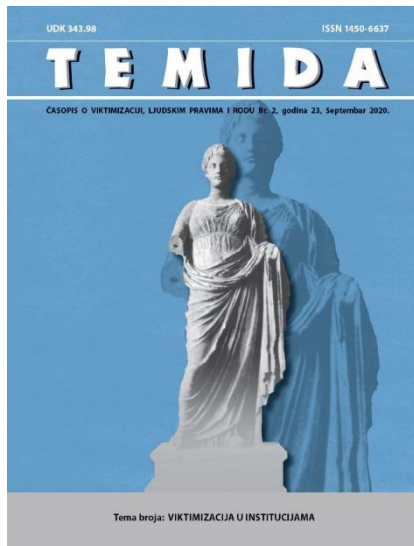
VDS coordinates the Belgrade region, which consists of the following organizations: ASTRA, Athens, the Autonomous Women's Center, the Roma Center for Women and Children Daje,... From the circle - Belgrade and VDS. Moreover, until July 2020, Jasmina Nikolić served as the coordinator of the entire NWAV. The project is funded by the OAK Foundation. Jasmina Nikolić, Mirjana Tripković and Milica Luković Radaković are directly involved in the realization of the project.

### ***The pilot mentoring program of the Network of Post-Penal Admission Organizations in Serbia (MOPPS)***

Within the project of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, MATRA program, "*Strengthening the role of the civil sector in the post-penal system*", as well as within the OSCE-funded project "*Support for Improving the Reintegration of Vulnerable convicted persons through the program of Network of organizations for post-penal reception*" (MOPPS) VDS was included in the pilot mentoring program as a member of the Network of organizations for post-penal reception. The aim of the mentoring program is to contribute to improving the reintegration of convicted persons through MOPPS support in developing a post-penal mentoring program for convicted persons in cooperation with the Criminal Sanctions Directorate (UIKS). The main activities of the mentoring program are: establishing coordination between the Network and UIKS, creating mentoring teams in six member organizations of the Network, selecting beneficiaries of mentoring programs, implementing mentoring programs in the period from September to December 2020, providing support focused on individual needs that were identified by the employees in the criminal treatment service in correctional facilities (KPZ) in their post-penal admission plans. VDS was in charge of implementing a mentoring program at the Women's Penitentiary in Požarevac. One person was included in the mentoring program conducted by VDS, during the reporting period, and information was collected for additional two persons in order to prepare for inclusion in the mentoring program upon leaving. Mirjana Tripković and Milica Luković Radaković from VDS were engaged in the realization of this pilot program. They attended the training for mentors organized by MOPPS. Jasmina Nikolić, Sanja Čopić PhD and Bejan Šaćiri PhD were included in this program as members of the mentoring team. Piloting of the mentoring pilot program was completed at the end of the year; however, the program will continue through regular activities of the VDS Info Service and Victim Support Service.

## Publishing activities

### *Journal on victimization, human rights and gender Temida*



In 1998, immediately after its establishment, Victimology Society of Serbia launched the journal on victimisation, human rights and gender, which was named after the Greek goddess of justice Temida. First, inspection copy was published in 1997. Temida is the first and still the only journal dealing with issues of victimisation, human rights and gender in Serbia, but it has also been recognised as such in the region of the former Yugoslavia and even broader. Temida has been published regularly since 1998. From 1998 to 2017 it was published quarterly, while from 2017 it is published three times a year.

Temida is a leading national journal in the field of social sciences in Serbia according to the categorization of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia. Temida is an Open

Access journal.

Temida has been in the international DOI system since 2007. It has been indexed in DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals) since 2010 and in the EBSCO research database since 2013. In 2015 it was included in the new edition of the Web of Science – Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI), a new edition of journals that extends the content of the Web of Science and makes it possible to search, find and quote journals that are included in this edition. This allows publishers to gain insight into citations, while the process of evaluation and inclusion in other collections within the Web of Science is underway.

During 2020, three issues of Temida were published:

- Number 1. *Victimization and diversity*
- Number 2. *Victimization in institutions*
- Number 3. *Child victims*

During the reporting period, some of the main activities related to the *Temida* magazine were:

- Regular communication of members of the Editorial Board of *Temida* magazine.
- Regular meetings were held between the Editor-in-Chief, the Deputy Editor-in-Chief, the Technical Editor and the Secretary of *Temida* Magazine.
- The *Temida* page on VDS website was regularly updated. All the key information about the magazine, its history, editorial policy, instructions for authors, as well as whole issues in pdf format can be found there.

- The evaluation process by Thomas Reuters to include *Temida* in the Web of Science (Social Sciences Citation Index) is still ongoing.
- Three legal entities and one natural person subscribed to the magazine in 2020.
- The exchange of *Temida* magazines with seven magazines from the country and abroad continued in 2020.

VDS received financial support from the RS Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development for issuing editions in 2020.

### *Other publications*

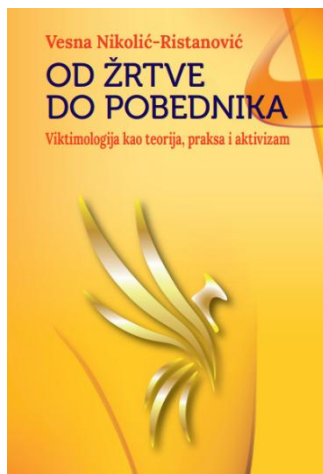
#### ***A guide to the protection of women from gender-based discrimination and violations of labor and employment rights***



This Guide was created as part of the work on the project *Recognize Gender Discrimination, Recognize Violations of Rights in the Field of Labor and Employment! React !*, which is part of the *Action for the Promotion of Women's Labor Rights*, funded by the European Union and co-financed by the Swedish Agency for Cooperation and Development. The guide is intended for all employed women as well as women who are seeking employment. The guide should encourage women who are exposed to gender-based discrimination or other violations of rights in the field of labor and employment - to start the process of exercising and protecting their rights. The guide is also intended for professionals who encounter or may encounter women victims of gender-based discrimination and other violations of labor and employment rights so that they can provide them with information on who to contact

and how to protect themselves and their rights. The guide is available at [http://www.vds.rs/File/VodicKaoKnjiga\\_2020.pdf](http://www.vds.rs/File/VodicKaoKnjiga_2020.pdf)

#### ***From Victim to Winner: Victimology as Theory, Practice and Activism***



Prof. Vesna Nikolić - Ristanović PhD is author of the book called *From Victim to Winner: Victimology as Theory, Practice and Activism*. The book consists of nine intercorrelated units in addition to the introduction and conclusion. Ranging from the general to the specific, the author firstly points to the development of victimology as a science, subsequently to the movement for the rights of victims in the world and Serbia as well as the victimological research as a way of measuring and documenting victimization. This is followed by chapters through which the author introduces the reader to the concept and typology of victims, the concept and types of victimization, the risks of victimization and their theoretical explanation as well as the ways in which victimization can be prevented. Furthermore, there is a section on the consequences of victimization, the needs of victims, and the recovery process. Finally, the author analyzes the legal position and rights of victims,

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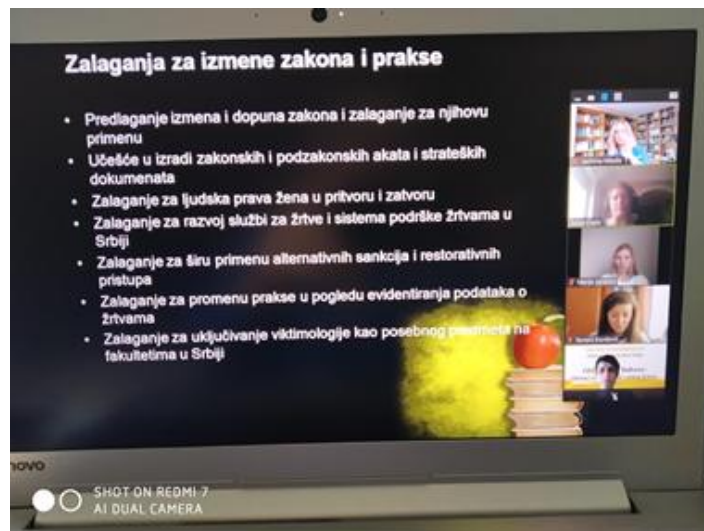


pointing out the standards set in international documents on victims and the degree of their fulfillment in Serbia. Throughout the book, the author connects theory and practice, which contributes to a better understanding of the basic theoretical premises of victimology. The book is available on VDS website [http://www.vds.rs/File/OdZrtveDoPobednika\\_Elektronsko.pdf](http://www.vds.rs/File/OdZrtveDoPobednika_Elektronsko.pdf)

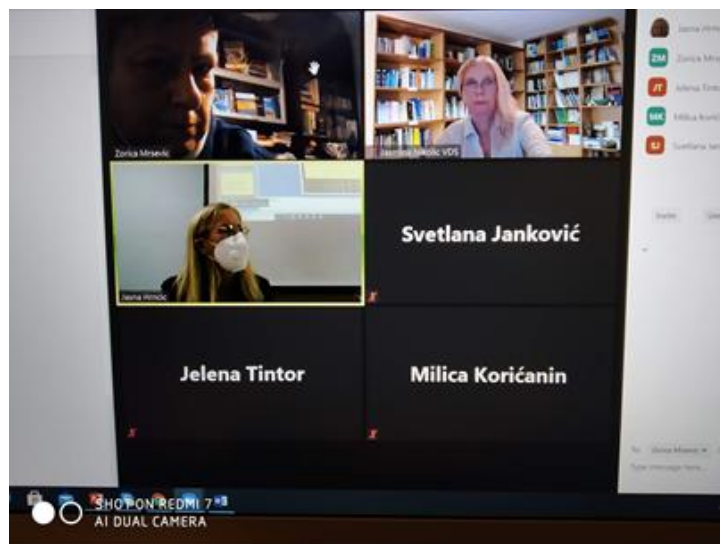
## **Cooperation with higher education institutions, professional practice and international internship programs**

The Victimology Society of Serbia is the scientific base of the Faculty of Special Education and Rehabilitation of the University of Belgrade (FASPER). During the school year 2020/2021:

- Members of VDS, Sanja Čopić PhD and doc. Nikola Petrović PhD were guests lectures at FASPER on the courses of Criminology with juvenile delinquency and Victimology.
- Within the Victimology course, a virtual visit of the Victimology Society of Serbia was organized for students, during which students were introduced to the organization and main activities of VDS, 11/18/2020.



Jasmina Nikolić, director of VDS, held a lecture on December 19, 2020 at the master's studies at the Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Belgrade. The topic of the lecture was the *Development of services for victims in the world and in Serbia*.



## **Participation of VDS members in the projects of bodies of international and domestic organizations and networks**

Jasmina Nikolić, director of VDS, participated, as a member, in the work of the Coordination Board of the Women's Against Violence Network.

Sanja Čopić PhD was hired by UN Women in Serbia to prepare two reports: Report on the work of the Coordination Body for Gender Equality for 2019 and Report on the contribution of women's organizations to the goals of the National Action Plan for the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy of the Republic of Serbia 2016-2020.

Prof. Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović, PhD, Sanja Čopić, PhD, Mirjana Dokmanović, PhD and MA Ljiljana Stevković are involved in COST Action CA18121 - Cultures of Victimology: understanding processes of victimization across Europe, which spark the development of an innovative, functional and comprehensive theoretical framework for cultural victimology. Prof. Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović PhD is a member of the Management Committee, and Sanja Čopić PhD and Mirjana Dokmanović PhD are the deputies. The Action lasts for four years (2019-2023). During the reporting period, the following activities were carried out: prof. Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović PhD and Sanja Čopić PhD participated in the first conference Cost Action CA18121, which was held from 15 to 17 January 2020 at the Pantheon University of Social and Political Sciences in Athens (Greece); prof. Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović PhD participated in the online meeting of the Executive Committee of the Action, which was organized on July 28, 2020; prof. Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović PhD, Sanja Čopić PhD and Mirjana Dokmanović PhD participated in the online meeting of researchers, which was organized on December 17, 2020.

## **Persons who were engaged in the implementation of VDS activities in 2020**

The following persons were engaged in the implementation of projects and ongoing activities of VDS during the reporting period:

- 3 persons in permanent employment - Jasmina Nikolić, director of VDS and head of the VDS Info and Victim Support Service, Bejan Šaćiri PhD (until February 26, 2020) and Milica Luković Radaković, assistant (from September 1, 2020).
- 5 people were hired under a contract for author's work - prof. Dr. Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović, Sanja Čopić PhD, Bejan Šaćiri PhD (from February 26, 2020), Mirjana Tripković and MA Ljiljana Stevković.
- 1 accountant - Bernada Ljubinković.
- 1 person who administers VDS website - Tatjana Orelj.
- 1 volunteer - Marijana Nedić

### **Participation of VDS members and volunteers in professional and scientific gatherings and seminars in the country and abroad (on behalf of VDS or as presenters of VDS activities and related victimology topics)**

#### Prof. Vesna Nikolic-Ristanovic PhD

- Webinar "Violence Against Women in Time of COVID-19", 29.06.2020, Coalition of Faith-Based Organizations, presentation *Violence against women and COVID-19 crisis in Serbia*.
- Online Conference of the European Society of Criminology, 10-11.9.2020. Presentation *Victimology in Serbia: achievements and challenges* within the panel of the Balkan Criminology working group.
- II International Understanding Violence Congress online, 16-18.10.2020., IMDAT, Prevention of Violence and Rehabilitation Association and ASUMA, The Crime and Violence Prevention, Research and Control Center, Istanbul. Presentation *Women as victims of violence*.
- Conference organized by Nottingham Trent University (UK) for the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the UN, UN75 at NTU: Living Securely Virtual Conference, panel Sexual violence and wellbeing, 25.11.2020. Presentation Sexual violence at universities in Serbia
- Online conference of the Victimology Society of Serbia *COVID-19 in the Balkans: patterns of victimization and victims' rights*, 26.-27.11. 2020. Presentation: *Patterns of victimization and victims' rights in Serbia during the COVID-19 pandemic*.

#### Sanja Čopić PhD

- Annual meeting of partner organizations working on gender discrimination issues related to work and employment (Kosovo Women's Network, Reactor – Research in Action, Gender Alliance for Development Centre (GADC), Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka (HCABL), Women's Rights Centre (WRC) i the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation), online 16.-17.7.2020.
- Training for using digital tools "It's easy to be online when you have a support team", Trag Foundation, Belgrade, September 2020.
- Open doors of justice, online panel *Do victims have rights in criminal proceedings?* organized by the Committee of Lawyers for Human Rights YUCOM, 5.11.2020.

- Conference organized by Nottingham Trent University (UK) on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the UN, UN75 at NTU: Living Securely Virtual Conference, 25.11.2020.
- Online conference of the Victimology Society of Serbia *COVID-19 in the Balkans: patterns of victimization and victims' rights*, 26.-27.11. 2020. Presentation *Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and measures to prevent the spread of the virus to the elderly*.
- OSCE Sub-Regional Expert Meeting on the Elimination of Violence against Women and Girls, online, 30.11.2020.
- Webinar *Intersectional solutions to eliminate violence against migrant women and girls*, 18.12.2020.

#### Jasmina Nikolić

- Regional Meeting Udružene, Budva, Montenegro, 26.2.-1.3.2020.
- Seminar "The power of change - how to establish self-help and support groups for women survivors of violence", UG Fenomena, Kopaonik, July 2020.
- Online discussion *Challenges and Achievements during COVID19 Crisis for Victim Support Services*, Victim Support Europe, July 2020.
- Annual meeting of partner organizations working on gender discrimination issues related to work and employment (Kosovo Women's Network, Reactor - Research in Action, Gender Alliance for Development Center (GADC), Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka (HCABL), Women's Rights Center ( WRC) and the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation), online 16.-17.7.2020.
- Workshop "Improving the capacity of specialized women's NGOs to manage a mobile application for reporting violence in Serbia", SOS Vojvodina Network, Belgrade, September 2020.
- Training for using digital tools "It's easy to be online when you have a support team", Trag Foundation, Belgrade, September 2020.
- Trade unions and potential new membership, Center for Democracy Foundation, 3.10.2020.
- Online conference of the Victimology Society of Serbia *COVID-19 in the Balkans: patterns of victimization and victims' rights*, November 26-27. 2020 (presenter)
- Conference of the Provincial Ombudsman *Life without Violence*, 8.12.2020. (presenter)
- Conference *Labor and Employment in Serbia: What awaits us in 2021*, Center for Democracy Foundation, 15.12.2020., (presenter)
- Improvement of gender equality in Serbia, National online conference organized by the Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation, 17.12.2020.

#### Mirjana Tripković

- Two-day training "Online supervision workshop for activists of the Women Against Violence Network", 17.07.2020. (attendee)
- Online workshop "Basics of Zoom platform navigation Advanced use of Zoom platform and evaluation", 30.09.-01.10.2020. organized by Trag Foundation (attendee)
- Training for the implementation of the mentoring program within the project "Support to the improving the integration of vulnerable convicts through the program of the Network

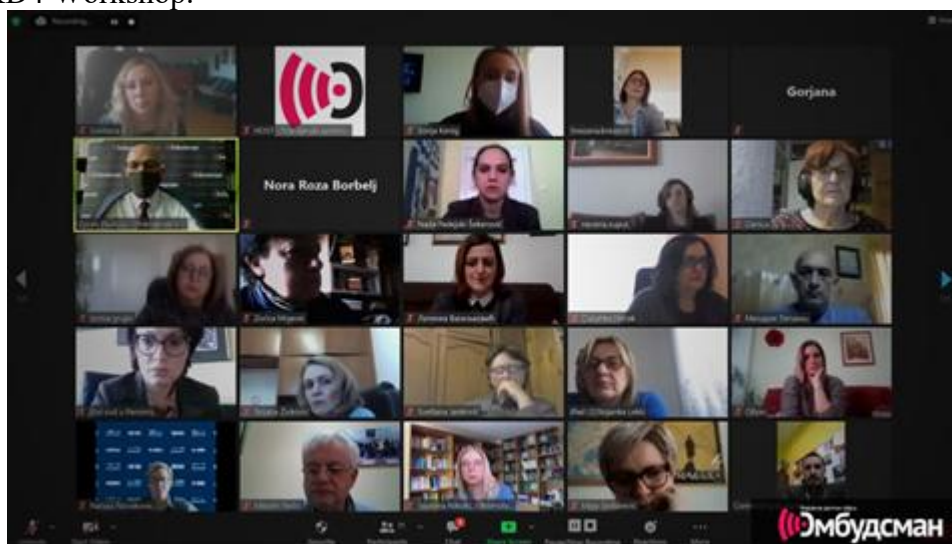
of organizations for post-penal reception in Serbia", Network of organizations for post-penal support, Belgrade, 2020.

Milica Luković Radaković

- Seminar "The power of change - how to establish self-help and support groups for women survivors of violence", UG Fenomena, Kopaonik, July 2020.
- Training for the implementation of the mentoring program within the project "Support to the improving the integration of vulnerable convicted persons through the program of the Network of organizations for post-penal reception in Serbia", Network of organizations for post-penal support, Belgrade, 2020.
- Workshop "Improving the capacity of specialized women's NGOs to manage a mobile application for reporting violence in Serbia", SOS Vojvodina Network, Belgrade, September 2020.
- Training on the topic of advocacy for the redistribution of unpaid (home) care jobs at the local level, UG Fenomena and the Center for the Promotion of Healthy Lifestyles - Center E8, Belgrade, 2020.
- Training for using digital tools "It's easy to be online when you have a support team", Trag Foundation, Belgrade, September 2020.
- Training for representatives of the NGOs "Standards and Methodology of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture", the Council of Europe and the Office of the Ombudsman, Belgrade, October 2020.
- Training for working with young people on disaster risk reduction, with a focus on ecology and health care issues", UG Fenomena, Belgrade, December 2020.
- Webinar "Violence against women with disabilities and COVID-19", From the circle Vojvodina and the Autonomous Women's Center, Belgrade, December 2020.

MA Ljiljana Stevković

- ISRD4 Workshop.



## **Media appearance of VDS members**

Prof. Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović

- RTS 2, Show "All the colors of life", July 2020

Sanja Čopić PhD

- Politika, Blic, Victims of crime should be materially compensated, February 2020.
- Copernicus TV, Topic: European Day of Victims, 18.02.2020.
- Radio Belgrade 2, Topic: How to achieve complete rehabilitation of victims, November 2020.
- TV Nova S, Morning program, Topic: Violence against women - SOSProtivNasilja campaign, 5.12.2020.

Jasmina Nikolić

- TV forum Prijepolje, Topic: Home isolation as a cause of domestic violence, April 2020.
- RTS 2, Show "All the colors of life", Topic: announcement of the online conference of the Victimology Society of Serbia "COVID-19 in the Balkans: patterns of victimization and the rights of victims", December 2020.

## **Donors**

During the reporting period, the implementation of VDS projects and other activities was supported by:

- RS Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development
- The Government of the Republic of Serbia within the program of financial support to business entities for maintaining liquidity in difficult economic conditions due to the COVID-19 pandemic caused by the SARSCoV-2 virus,
- Sexual Violence Research Initiative and World Bank for Innovation in Preventing and Responding to Gender-Based Violence
- European Commission within the Internal Security Fund
- EU

- Swedish Agency for Cooperation and Development
- OAK Foundation
- UN Women
- United Nations Fund to Combat Violence against Women (UNTF)
- Avon Foundation

We thank the donors on this occasion as well.

Other ways of financing:

- Training fees
- Membership fees
- Subscription to the scientific journal Temida.

In Belgrade, February 2021.