



The Montenegrin CEI Presidency 2020 and CEI-Executive Secretariat, in cooperation with the UNDP in Montenegro, has a pleasure to invite to the online event

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN A TIME OF COVID - 19 CRISIS

21 December 2020, 10.00 (CET)

2020, the year of the Montenegrin CEI Presidency is a crucial year for gender equality and the empowerment of women. The world commemorates a number of important milestones in the field of gender equality, such as the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the 20th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, and the 10th anniversary of UN-Women.

Following the adoption of the Joint statement on solidarity and cooperation of the CEI Member States in the face of challenges posed by the novel coronavirus disease COVID-19 at the Extraordinary Virtual Meeting of CEI Heads of Government (15 May), as well as the Communiqué from the CEI MFA Meeting (24 September), where need for further women empowerment has been recognised, the event will address the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women and girls. It will be a forum for presenting national policy measures and practices across the CEI region and enabling dynamic discussion for identification of a more gender-inclusive recovery path.

Ensuring gender equality is a precondition for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable region and one of the guiding principles of the 2030 Agenda, but also an important prerequisite for recovering faster and building a brighter future. Despite progress achieved, significant gender inequalities persist. The CEI region is faced with the scarcity of women's voices within the decision-making process, including in leadership positions at international level. Women are disproportionately burdened by unpaid care work, while being over-exposed in informal economy, without social protection. They are subject to different forms of gender-based violence and discrimination and denied equal access to legal rights and basic services, including health care, education and justice.

The health and socio-economic crisis is hitting hardest the most vulnerable groups of population, among which, women are particularly exposed to the impact of the pandemic. This degraded economic position of women in the society, especially of women working in the private sector, but also their representation in the key decision-making positions. Should we let the crisis to deteriorate existing inequalities or we can use the recovery efforts and ensure the women fare better in the post covid-19 world? The answer is clear - women are in the frontline of the pandemic and must be put in the driving seat of the recovery.

The event, that comes 25 years after the historic turning point for the global agenda of equal rights, freedom and opportunities for women - Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, will deepen regional cooperation on women's economic empowerment and meaningful participation and leadership in politics, with focus on their role in international affairs field.

The discussion will contribute to identification of key policies in order to address various socio-economic challenges women face through the CEI region.



The discussion will be underpinned by the actions envisaged by the SDG 5 on Gender Equality and the recent EU Gender Action Plan III. Leading questions for the discussion:

- How can regional actions ensure women's economic security and increase participation in decision-making?
- How women leadership can change the current state of international affairs, especially post COVID-19?
- What would be legal reforms and policy change in order to increase participation and leadership of women?

Audiences

We anticipate the participation of high officials from 17 Member States (Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine).

Please confirm your presence at the following [link](#) by 20th December 2020.

Please be informed that the event will be conducted through the Zoom platform.

Access information with link through which you can assess the event on Monday will be shared ahead of event. The official language of the event is English.

AGENDA

10.00 – 10.15 Opening remarks

- Amb. Ljubomir Mišurović, State Secretary at the MFA of Montenegro
- Roberto Antonione, CEI Secretary General

10.20 – 11.10 Keynote presentations

- Daniela Gasparikova, UNDP Resident Representative for Montenegro
- Biljana Pejović, Head of Department for Gender Equality at the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights of Montenegro
- Dragana Radević, Director of the Institute for entrepreneurship and economic development (IPER) from Montenegro
- Samra Filipovic-Hadžiabdić, Director of the Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Helena Valas, Head of Equal Opportunities Division, Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities of Slovenia

11.10 – 11.30 Q&A

11.30 – 11.45 Closing and wrap-up

- Nina Kodelja, CEI Deputy Secretary General