



CITIZEN'S BUDGET 2026

GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Budget Review for Montenegro

KEY CONCEPTS

GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING



Treats the budget as an **instrument for transforming social relations**, not just as a technical act of resource allocation. This approach is being used to reform public financial management (PFM), through program budgeting, medium-term budget frameworks, and performance budgeting.

GENDER ASPECTS OF IMPACT



Implementing gender budgeting is **crucial to a country's economic growth**, ranging from encouraging employment and reducing the unemployment rate, reducing the poverty rate, dealing with the demographic picture of the country', to GDP increasing.

CITIZEN'S PERSPECTIVE



A gender-oriented Citizens' Budget emphasizes gender equality issues, showing **how the budget affects women and men** and which programs directly address gender inequalities, as a simplified, visually oriented and understandable version of the official budget document.

GENDER INEQUALITY



Recognition in a society depends on the existence and provision of reliable and consistent gender-disaggregated data on various social issues, creating a process of **comparing the expected with the achieved results** from the implementation of budget resources according to relevant gender criteria.

CONSTITUTION OF MONTENEGRO, ARTICLE 8 & 18

01

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HEALTH CARE LAW

LAW ON GENDER EQUALITY

02

09

SOCIAL AND CHILD PROTECTION LAW

LAW ON BUDGET AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

03

08

LAW ON PROTECTION FROM WORKPLACE HARASSMENT

LAW ON PROHIBITION OF DISCRIMINATION

04

07

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT LAW

LAW ON STATE ADMINISTRATION

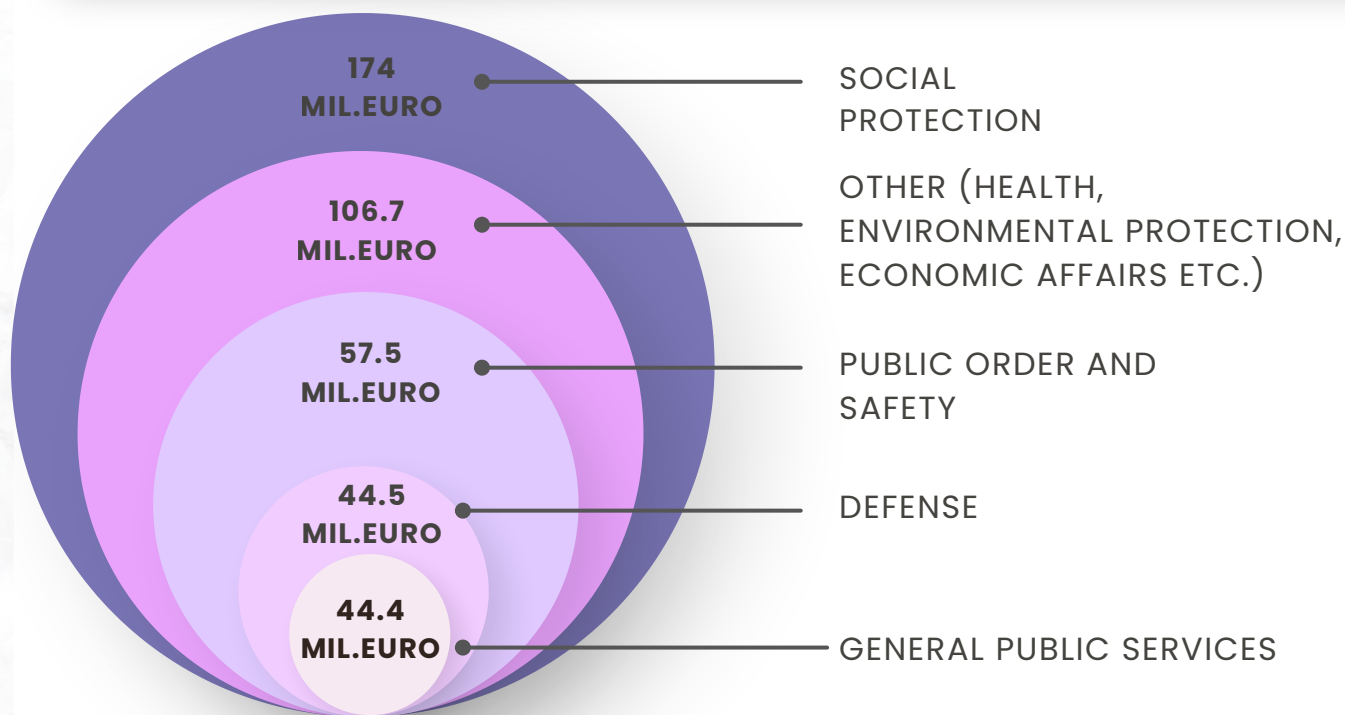
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06

LAW ON CIVIL SERVANTS AND STATE EMPLOYEES

BASIC LEGAL FRAMEWORK
COVERING GENDER BUDGETTING

STRUCTURAL COMPONENT OF GENDER PROGRAMS FROM THE TOTAL BUDGET BY SECTOR



The perspective of GRB viewed through the submission of gender budget statements, reflects a formalized, result oriented framework where 22 explicit budget programmes embed gender indicators, targets allocations across diverse sectors

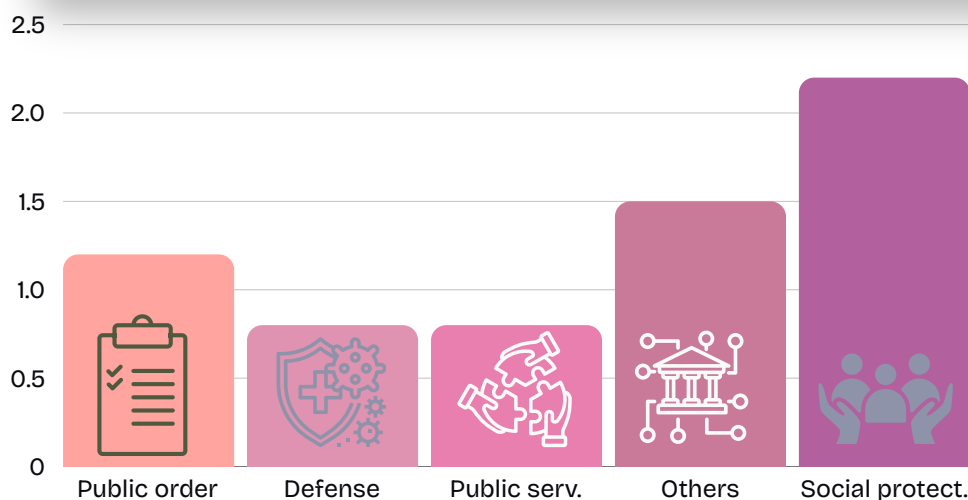


For 2026, an estimated amount of 427,1 million euros from a total budget plan of 3,8 billion euros for sectorial division of budget resources with explicit gender orientation. The function of stat that has the biggest gender oriented budget funds is Social Protection.



Montenegro's Gender Strategy is primarily pursued through social assistance, family policy, care services, and minority inclusion. A significant part is directed on protection of rights, access to justice & safety, consistent with legal protection and human rights enforcement.

STRUCTURAL COMPONENT OF GENDER PROGRAMS FROM THE TOTAL BUDGET BY SECTOR



The dominance of Social protection shows that Montenegro treats gender equality largely as a social inclusion and welfare issue. The substantial share under Public order and safety underscores that protection from violence, legal empowerment, and human rights are central pillars of the gender agenda. Overall, Montenegro's 2026 gender budget reveals a rights-based, socially oriented model, with strong institutional mainstreaming in core state functions and notable attention to defence and public administration. Future policy could consider rebalancing towards more gender-responsive economic and health investments to complement the existing social-protection focus.

Together, the four biggest functions represent 75% of the gender budget, meaning that three-quarters of all gender-oriented funds are concentrated in these areas. The remaining (economic affairs, health, culture, education, housing, etc.) jointly account for the other 25%. This shows a highly concentrated structure: gender budgeting in Montenegro in 2026 is structurally dominated by social policy, rights and security, defence, and core public administration

SOCIAL PROTECTION

Social protection is the function of state that dominates when it comes to gender budgeting, reflecting the strong link between gender equality and social policy.

Key institutions include:

- Ministry of social welfare, family care and demography (91.3% gender-oriented)
 - Fund for protection and achieving minority rights (100%)
 - Red Cross of Montenegro (100%)
 - Ministry of human and minority rights (25.2%)
- it concentrates over 40% of all gender-relevant funds and covers core issues such as poverty reduction, care work, family policy, and minority women's inclusion.

PUBLIC SERVICES

This function matters because it finances the institutions that shape laws, budget rules, administrative systems, statistics, and public accountability.

In practice, gender equality is supported not only through social transfers or frontline services, but also through the machinery of government that plans, monitors, and evaluates public policy. The gender-relevant allocation is concentrated in five budgetary users: Parliament, Ministry of public governance, State Statistics Office, Real estate administration and Ministry of finance. The most relevant gender-responsive roles are institutional rather than transfer-based

DEFENCE

The Ministry of defence is marked as 80.9% gender-oriented, which is unusually high for a defence portfolio. This suggests:

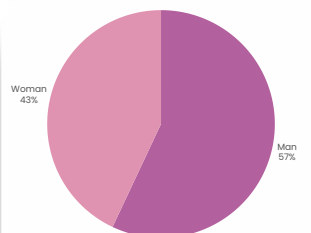
- Strong emphasis on gender mainstreaming in the armed forces (recruitment, promotion, anti-discrimination measures).
- Possible integration of gender perspectives in security policy, peacekeeping, and civil protection.

As one of largest functions by estimated gender-relevant funding, the gender-oriented spending in defence typically concerns the integration of gender equality into the armed forces and the defence administration

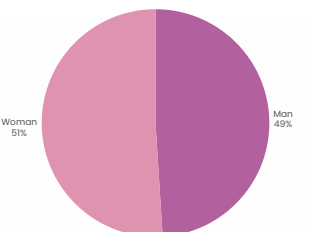
PUBLIC ORDER & SAFETY

The second-largest function by estimated gender-relevant funding, based on the user-provided institutional gender-orientation shares and the total gender-budget envelope of €427.1 million, this function accounts for an estimated €57.496 million, or 13.46% of total gender-oriented spending. A sizeable share is directed toward institutions associated with rights protection, justice, legal safeguards, and state response capacity, which suggests that gender equality is also being approached through the lenses of protection, accountability, and access to justice.

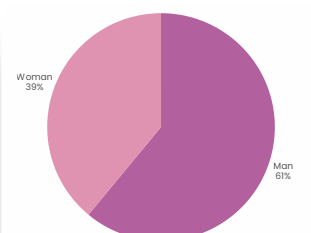
Average by gender user of social protection benefits



Womens representation in public administration has oscillated from 39.6% in 2011 to round 43.5% in 2023. At decision-making levels, women peaked at 54.9% in 2021, then dropped to 46.4% in 2023. The Gender Equality Index for Montenegro assigns one of the countrys lowest scores (44.1) to the "Power" domain, highlighting the persistent gender imbalance in decision-making.



Women in Montenegro's defence sector hold a majority (51%) of managerial positions within the Ministry of Defence, which are primarily administrative roles, but remain severely underrepresented in operational command positions within the Armed Forces, where they occupy only 8% of such roles.

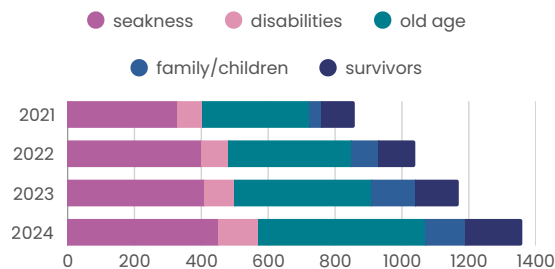


In 2021 there were 214 judges, of whom 122 were women, while public prosecutors were 110 in total, with 72 women.

This implicates that women are well represented in professional roles within the justice chain.

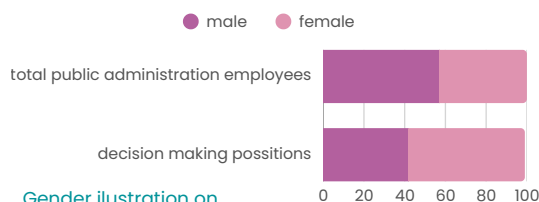
Gender chart on

Total expenditures for social protection benefits (mil. euro)



Gender chart on

Public sector employees by gender and position



Gender illustration on

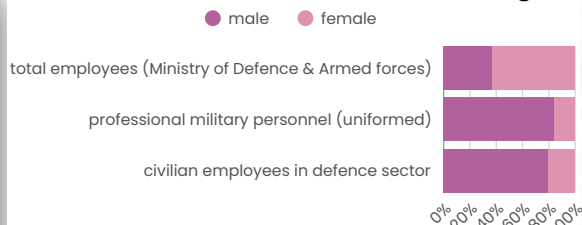
Political representation average by gender



In 2024, women remain significantly underrepresented in political leadership, holding just 28% of parliamentary seats and 33.8% of municipal councilor positions, while none of the countrys 25 mayors are women. No political party is led by a woman, and Montenegro has never had a female president, prime minister, or parliamentary party leader. Although gender quotas introduced in 2011 have increased womens parliamentary representation from 8.6% in 2006 to 28% in 2024,

Gender chart on

Overall structure in the Defence sector of Montenegro



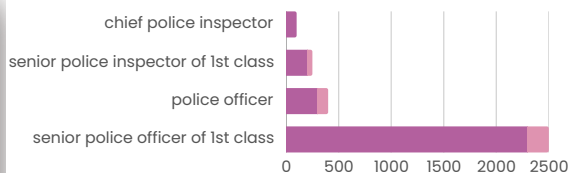
Gender statistics in

Overall structure on military rank by gender

This stark disparity reflects a glass ceiling effect, where women are concentrated in civilian administrative leadership but excluded from the highest military command ranks, with no woman yet promoted beyond the rank of Major in the Montenegrin Army.

Gender chart on

Overall structure on selected police ranks



Thus, while some leadership functions show a non-negligible share of women, the rank-and-file remains overwhelmingly male.

This has implications for how public order is enforced and how victims—especially women—interact with the police. Public order burden concentrated on men: the majority of police contacts, criminal proceedings and custodial sentences involve male perpetrators, especially for crimes against life and body, property and public safety.

WHAT CHANGES WERE MADE IN THE BUDGET IN 2026?

MINISTRY OF FINANCE - STATE FUNCTIONS



Financing of the Agency for Gender Equality

On July 23, 2026, a new Law on Gender Equality was adopted, which created completely new, permanent budgetary obligations for the financing of the Agency for Gender Equality and the salaries of new gender officers in public administration



AGENCY FOR GENDER EQUALITY (INDEPENDENT BODY)



MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



The Ministry of Economic Development has planned 330,000 less for women's business development in 2026 compared to 2025.

The total planned framework for the Women's Entrepreneurship Development Strategy in 2026 amounts to 12,346,120 euros, which is about 333,000 euros less than in 2025, when it amounted to 12,679,900 euros.



THE CAPITAL CITY OF PODGORICA



Growth at the local government level

The capital city of Podgorica has increased support for women's businesses from €45,000 in 2025 to €70,000 in 2026..



WOMEN'S BUSINESS



HOW CAN CITIZENS PARTICIPATE MORE?



Montenegro has moved from piloting GRB to embedding it in the core public finance framework, but citizen-centred, participatory GRB is still emerging and largely mediated through civil society organizations rather than direct individual engagement. The three pillars – gender statistics, digital transformation, and institutional capacity for inclusive governance are present in the national architecture, but they are unevenly developed and offer clear entry points for strengthening citizens' voice.

GENDER STATISTICS AND DATA

An institutional priority is to treat gender statistics as a public good and a participatory governance tool: integrating gender-disaggregated datasets into open data portals, publishing GRB indicators alongside programme budgets. This shifts gender statistics from technocratic compliance to a shared evidence base for citizen advocacy & participatory budgeting.



DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Digital transformation in GRB is still mainly oriented toward e-learning and document access rather than interactive co-creation, but the foundations are there for more citizen-oriented tools, participatory modules that ask women and marginalized groups to prioritise gender-sensitive investments, where citizens can both see gender-responsive budget information and act on it through feedback, proposals and monitoring.

CONSISTENT SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Institutional landscape offers inclusion: women primarily participate through organized NGOs and thematic networks, formalised participatory GRB mechanisms. Strengthening institutional capacities has two dimensions: consolidating GRB skills within public administration and structurally embedding mechanisms for citizen input – public hearings, co-design workshops and monitoring the execution of gender-responsive budget statements.

