

2024.

annual *report*

We are pleased to
present you with the
annual report of the
Spectra Association
for 2024.

introduction

The year 2024 was dynamic, filled with intense work, growth, and significant progress and challenges—on activist, political, and societal fronts. For Spectra, this was a year in which we spoke clearly and loudly about the necessity of respecting the rights and freedoms of all people, about the importance of continuous action and the persistent telling of the truth, regardless of circumstances or consequences. It was a year of perseverance and determination in promoting the values of democracy, feminism, and anti-fascism.

We were especially dedicated to the feminist struggle for the freedom of all, and we contributed to resolving many issues concerning the human rights of trans, gender-variant, and intersex people in various spheres of life. What we are particularly proud of is that we continued to insist on a Law that would enable legal gender recognition based on self-determination, and we resolved a nearly decade-long problem of estradiol hormone therapy shortages for all women, including trans women.

Our fight for the Law on Legal Gender Recognition based on self-determination is not just a fight for a legal norm—it is a fight for an idea that is important for society as a whole. Through numerous meetings, campaigns, and direct conversations with decision-makers, the community, and partners, Spectra has fought for self-determination to be a right of all citizens of Montenegro.

The social and political context was not favorable—there has been a rise in right-wing narratives, deep mistrust in institutions, and increasingly dominant rhetoric of exclusion. Yet, it is precisely in such an environment that our fight gains even greater significance.

This report is not only a review of the organization's activities and achievements during one calendar year—it represents a continuation of the struggle for justice and freedom. It is a testament to the energy, emotion, and courage invested, and a reminder of all the people, communities, and organizations that, together with us, bravely paved the way toward a better world for yet another whole year.

Program for the work **with the community**

Over the past year, through our community work program, we have recorded an increase in violence and hate speech directed at LGBTIQ+ individuals, while many existing challenges remain unresolved.

During 2024, Association Spectra received five reports of violence, two of which were reported to the relevant institutions, but without any adequate resolution. Through our free legal support service, we also followed the court process of a hate crime case from 2019 against a trans man, who was dragged out of his home and brutally beaten. Unfortunately, based on information provided by the attorney representing the victim, there are reasonable suspicions of a violation of the right to a trial within a reasonable timeframe, due to deliberate delays caused by the judicial authorities. The case became statute-barred, which prevented a proper verdict from being reached and justice from being served for the victim (ruling KŽ no. 44/24).

In response to these challenges, Spectra continues to strengthen its support services, including individual consultations, peer support, self-support groups, and psychological workshops. While individual consultations and peer support are provided on a daily basis, self-support groups and psychological workshops were held on average 2 to 3 times per month. From January to August 2024, Spectra also provided individual psychotherapy for 7 people, but unfortunately, this service had to be discontinued due to a lack of financial resources.

The issue of the lack of hormone therapy for women, which had persisted for years, was finally successfully resolved at a systemic level. For over 10 years, Association Spectra attempted to solve this issue by contacting the Ministry of Health as well as "Montefarm" (the network of pharmacies across Montenegro), but there was no response or resolution. However, after many years of dedicated effort, Montefarm finally decided to address the issue and procure the medication "Neofollin," which is now on the positive drug list.



Program for the work with the community

In 2024, Spectra carried out:

22

self-support groups for **32 individuals** from the TIGV community;

213

individual consultations for **19 individuals** from the TIGV community;

31

self-defense workshops for **10 regular participants**;

10

group psychological support workshops "Laughter of the Jellyfish" for **9 women**;

Individual psychotherapy for **7 people**, continuously, once a week.

Spectra continues to build a safe space for trans and gender-diverse individuals in Montenegro, offering psychological, legal, and peer support, and actively advocating for legal reforms and institutional recognition of trans people's human rights.



• self-support groups •



• individual consultation •



• New Year's decoration of space for the community •



• Trans camp •

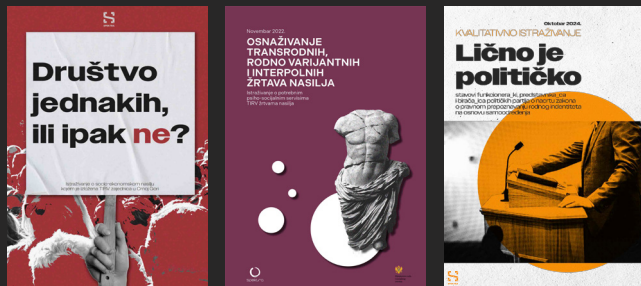
ADVOCACY PROGRAM

The **main goal of the advocacy program over the past year was the adoption of the Draft Law on Legal Gender Recognition Based on Self-Determination**, alongside efforts aimed at improving the legal and social status of TIGV individuals by strengthening institutional mechanisms and political will. The greatest focus was placed on advocating for the adoption of this law, despite obstacles such as the rise of anti-democratic movements, which ultimately blocked the process at the end of the year through both institutional and non-institutional actions.

Numerous meetings were held at both the national and international levels to advocate for the law's adoption and for improving the human rights of TIGV people. The program also resulted in three publications: a study on economic violence against TIGV individuals, an analysis of political parties' positions on legal gender recognition, and a gender perspective on parliamentary elections. Two panel discussions were organized—one on socio-economic violence and the other on legal gender recognition based on self-determination—as well as a “Pride Café” event, which opened Montenegro Pride Week. The event brought together the community and decision-makers and focused on the rights of the LGBTIQ+ community. These events included a range of actors, such as civil society activists, academia, institutional representatives, international organizations, and TIGV community members, enabling broader discussion and networking

among key stakeholders. On average, each event was attended by 50 participants, facilitating direct dialogue and the exchange of views on key advocacy topics.

Additionally, active participation was ensured in two working groups focused on legislative and strategic frameworks for improving the rights of LGBTIQ+ people in Montenegro, enabling contributions toward creating more inclusive, human rights-based policies.



• Pride cafe •



• Panel Discussion
The Personal is Political •

THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION

The working group responsible for drafting the **Law on Legal Gender Recognition Based on Self-Determination**, in which we participated, completed its work in February 2024. This was followed by a public consultation process in line with legal procedures. The draft law triggered opposition from the Serbian Orthodox Church, supported by several media outlets including Prva TV and RTCG. In response, we refused to engage in debates with the Church and reported the media for inappropriate reporting. Subsequently, a program called Arguments was aired on RTCG, during which the Law was discussed. Although the media insisted on including an opposing viewpoint, we agreed under the clear condition that we would not legitimize debate on this issue. The show was successfully conducted.

However, our continued presence on public service broadcasting remains a challenge, which we believe is linked to our critical stance on RTCG, especially concerning the unlawful appointment of its general director and critiques of its editorial policy.

This Law is of crucial importance for the trans community as it would ensure a fast, clear, and dignified legal gender recognition process without the inhumane requirement of forced sterilization. It would significantly improve the quality of life for trans individuals and ensure respect for their fundamental human rights.

Although all procedural steps were followed, **the adoption process was blocked by Prime Minister Spajić and the Government of Montenegro**. Despite broad support from domestic and international

actors throughout 2024, and the fact that this Law is the result of eight years of joint work by civil society, institutions, and legal experts—including the current Chief State Prosecutor—it was repeatedly removed from the agenda of the Commission for Political System, Internal and Foreign Policy, at the request of the Prime Minister, who persistently prevents it from being submitted to Parliament.

The Law has received support from **48 credible activists and civil society organizations in Montenegro**, 8 of which have issued public statements in its favor (CGO, CEDEM, Queer Montenegro, Women's Rights Center, Human Rights Action, ANIMA, Juventas, CDT). At the same time, **4 major international organizations representing over 1,000 member groups** expressed their support (TGEU, ILGA Europe, ERA, IGLYO). Additional support came through an open letter signed by **137 regional CSOs and activists**, as well as another letter signed by over 100 members of the academic community. Moreover, **15 Members of the European Parliament** called for the Law's adoption, labeling it a priority for EU integration.

In December, **4 major political parties** that make up the parliamentary majority officially supported the Law at our panel event (DPS, SD, PES, URA). Also, during the **Youth Parliament session** in the Parliament of Montenegro, one of the youth initiatives directed at the Government was the implementation of the legal gender recognition Law based on self-determination by the end of the year.

The Government was obliged to implement this Law as part of its commitments under Montenegro's EU

Accession Program for 2023 and 2024, which has not been fulfilled. The EU Delegation in Montenegro publicly stated that the EU encourages Montenegro to adopt the Law on Legal Gender Recognition Based on Self-Determination without delay. Although the adoption of this Law is one of the obligations within the Reform Agenda for the EU accession process 2024–2027, it has not yet occurred—despite the fact that the Law was ready for adoption by the end of 2024. It is currently included in the Government's 2025 work program.

Key international bodies recognizing the importance of self-determination, such as the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) and the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), have called for the guarantee of legal gender recognition without sterilization as a prerequisite. This aligns with Montenegro's international human rights obligations.

Although there is no specific EU acquis directly addressing legal gender recognition based on self-determination, it is clear that this Law would contribute to meeting the final benchmarks in the area of fundamental rights. Specifically, by adopting the Law, Montenegro would further ensure the implementation of recommendations from the CPT and enable adequate and timely judicial proceedings in cases of abuse, should they occur. The European Commission has already issued a positive opinion on the Draft Law, recognizing its contribution to advancing human rights in Montenegro and urging its swift adoption.

PUBLICATIONS

An Equal Society – Or Not?

This is the first research on the extent of economic violence experienced by transgender, gender-variant, and intersex individuals. The aim of the study was to collect data that would enable the systematic and institutional development of support programs for these communities, especially women, who are the most vulnerable group.

The methodology and data analysis were conducted by Dr. Nađa Bobičić in collaboration with PhD candidate Lara Končar, with consultations from the Association Spectra team. The legal analysis, which included both international and national legal frameworks, was conducted by Ivana Mihajlović.

The Personal is Political

This is the first research study exploring the views of political party officials, representatives, and voters on the Draft Law on Legal Gender Recognition Based on Self-Determination. The study, conducted by the Damar Institute, focused on the attitudes of Montenegrin political parties regarding this law, identifying potential barriers to its adoption and implementation.

These insights represent a key step toward developing strategies for improving the human rights of transgender people in Montenegro.

Gender Perspective of the Parliamentary Elections

This publication was produced through a collaboration between the Women's Rights Center and the Association Spectra, within the project "Gender Perspective of the 2023 Parliamentary Elections."

The aim of the publication was to provide arguments for policy and legal changes to remove barriers to greater participation of women and marginalized groups in politics. The analysis covered the extraordinary parliamentary elections held from May 15 to September 30, 2023, focusing on campaign programs, electoral lists, and results. Both qualitative and quantitative analysis revealed that most electoral lists barely met the minimum quota for the under-represented gender.

Panel Discussion “The Personal Is Political”

december 2024

We organized a panel discussion to present the key findings from the **first research study on the views of political party officials, representatives, and voters regarding the Draft Law** on Legal Gender Recognition Based on Self-Determination. The discussion opened space for a broader conversation about the draft law and current political party policies in the area of gender equality, with a focus on the right to self-determination.

Panelists included:

Mirjana Pajković (Ministry of Human and Minority Rights), Nikoleta Đukanović (University of Donja Gorica), Jelena Andrić (Evropa Sad), Aleksandra Vuković – Kuč (DPS), Ana Novaković – Đurović (URA), Jevrosima Pejović (Special MPs’ Club), Boris Mugoša (SDP).



Panel Discussion “An Equal Society – Or Not?”

february 2024

The findings of the **first study on socio-economic violence** against the transgender, gender-variant, and intersex community in Montenegro were presented. The discussion offered recommendations for improving the human rights of TIGV individuals and systemic responses to gender-based violence.

Panelists included:

Mirjana Pajković (Ministry of Human and Minority Rights), Lara Končar (University of Belgrade), Ivana Mihajlović (Union of Free Trade Unions of Montenegro), Nađa Bobičić (Faculty of Political Sciences, Belgrade).



OTHER EVENTS

Pride Café “Where Are Our Rights?” september 2024.

As part of the 12th Montenegro Pride, we organized a Pride Café dedicated to the rights of LGBTIQ+ individuals and gender equality. In an informal setting, representatives from civil society, political parties, and civic activists came together to open dialogue about the challenges facing the LGBTIQ+ community and to discuss potential solutions.

The aim of the event was to deepen discussions about building an inclusive society based on equality and solidarity.



GOVERNMENT BODIES

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We actively participated in:

- The Working Group for the Draft Law on Legal Gender Recognition Based on Self-Determination in Montenegro.

The working group was led by the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights of Montenegro, and Jovan Ulićević has been an active member since its inception in February 2022.

- The Working Group for the Draft Strategy for Improving the Quality of Life of LGBTI people in Montenegro (2024–2028) and its Action Plan (2024–2025).

This working group was also led by the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights of Montenegro, with Jovan Ulićević actively participating as a member.

INTERNATIONAL **REPORTS**

We contributed to the preparation of several international reports. Our input was included in the following:

- European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) Report
- Shadow Report to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
- Recommendation Report of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in cooperation with the international organization Transgender Europe and Central Asia (TGEU)
- Recommendation Report of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in collaboration with the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer & Intersex Youth and Student Organisation (IGLYO)
- European Commission Enlargement Report for Montenegro
- European Commission Country Report for Montenegro
- Annual Report of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association – Europe (ILGA-Europe)
- Report of the United Nations Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
- U.S. Department of State Human Rights Report

FEMINIST PROGRAM

About the feminist program:

The goal of the Feminist Program is to increase the presence of feminist practices and values in Montenegrin society. The program recognizes the superficial, formalistic, and heteronormative treatment of feminism and feminist principles in both formal and informal education, which results in feminism and gender equality being viewed solely as a “women’s issue.” This prevents a meaningful, collective fight against the patriarchal system embedded within an oppressive capitalist framework, thereby enabling its continued existence. **Spectra also acknowledges the importance of feminist solidarity—its cultivation and strengthening—which stands as another key objective of the program.**

Through this program, we use **various channels to bring key feminist issues from the margins to the center**, allowing them to become all-encompassing and realize their transformative potential in shaping how we live, work, care, and love.

Throughout the past year, we continued to **combine feminist knowledge, artistic sensibility, and technology** through creative methods and innovative approaches, aiming to create, expand, and redefine spaces for feminist engagement.

Our strong online presence remained consistent. According to Meta Business Manager, our Facebook content reached **102,161 users** with a total of **590,863** views. On Instagram, we recorded a reach comparable to that of 2023 (199,776), with **760,164** total views—more than half of which were organic. This is a significant achievement given the numerous political content restrictions* introduced by Instagram in the past year. On X (formerly Twitter), despite the platform’s increasing promotion of far-right content under Elon Musk’s leadership, our impressions increased to approximately **72,000** compared to 52,000 in the previous year.

This continues the platform’s efforts to suppress political content—particularly human rights topics concerning queer people, other marginalized groups, and crucial information about the genocide in Gaza.

**Meta’s updated Instagram platform introduced an automatically selected option to “limit political content,” without allowing users to opt in voluntarily.*

Feminist knowledge:

During Pride Week, in collaboration with the regional organization Trans Network Balkan, we organized a discussion titled **“Transfeminist Stories – Recipes for Revolution”**. The panel featured regional activists who presented the publication Transfeminist Cookbook, and together we discussed the future of the feminist movement and models of solidarity.

We also continued our **“Activist Masterclass”** series of educational lectures throughout the year. These sessions were traditionally led by experienced activists from Montenegro and the region. A total of 14 lectures were held, attended by 33 participants, most of whom participated continuously. Topics included: the history of Pride marches and what civic initiatives can learn from them, how to engage in public advocacy, fascism as an ever-present threat, and freedom of speech as an identity issue, among many others.

In partnership with the Union of Free Trade Unions of Montenegro, we organized our first **three-day training for union representatives, aiming to increase understanding of the human rights of trans, intersex, and gender-diverse (TIGV) people**. Ten representatives from various trade unions attended. The training was conducted in cooperation with Staša Baštrica (Executive Director of Queer Montenegro) and Ivana Mihajlović (Deputy Secretary General of the Union). It enhanced the unions' capacity to understand the rights and needs of TIGV people and support better working conditions.

We also conducted a training for social workers titled **“Social Work with Trans, Gender-Variant, and Intersex Survivors of Violence”**. The training was led by Danijela Nikić (social worker and project coordinator), with Iskra Đurišić (community work assistant) participating as a “alive library.” The session helped social workers gain the skills and knowledge needed to provide appropriate support.

At the end of 2024, we organized a **three-day training for activists**, attended by 16 participants, covering a wide range of topics related to combating anti-democratic movements.

Promotion of Feminist Values + Collective Action:

In 2024, our campaigns focused on making the Law on Legal Gender Recognition Based on Self-Determination more accessible to the general public, emphasizing how its adoption would benefit society as a whole by strengthening democracy, the rule of law, and human rights for all citizens.

The promotional efforts around the law can be grouped into **three overarching categories**, with five parallel and complementary campaigns running throughout the year:



Continuous Advocacy Campaign for the Law

We engaged in continuous media monitoring and proactive outreach to the general public, decision-makers, local and international organizations to build widespread support for the law. Although it was not adopted in 2024, **we stood united in support of the universal value of self-determination**, emphasizing that gender identity is just one dimension, and that the law protects freedom for all.

Key actions:

Mobilizing the Montenegrin political scene:

1. **Urging political parties** to publicly support the law;
2. Advocating at the **Youth Parliament**, calling on the Government and Parliament to adopt the law by the end of 2024;
3. Supporting the initiative of **15 Members of the European Parliament** who called for the law's adoption;
4. By conducting the first survey on the views of female officials, representatives and voters of political parties on the Draft Law on Legal Recognition of Gender Identity on the Basis of Self-Determination, in cooperation with the Damar Institute. The results of the survey were presented during the panel discussion "The Personal is Political", and the panel brought together numerous representatives of the **civil sector, the Government** and the Parliament as speakers and participants, who on that occasion sent a clear call to the Government to adopt the Draft Law as soon as possible, so that female members of the Parliament could vote on the Law, which, as the survey showed, they are in majority support.

The **results** of this campaign include:

15

Members of the
**European
Parliament**

70+

young people from
the **Youth
Parliament**

4

major **European
human rights
organizations**

4

**Montenegrin
parliamentary
parties** (URA,
PES, DPS, SD)

Support from Local and International Allies

- Public letter by **137 academics** urging Parliament to adopt the law;
- Public endorsements from **organizations and institutions** in Montenegro;
- Public support from **individual citizens** aimed at demystifying the law;
- **A call for the law to be added** to the agenda on the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia, marking Montenegro's drop on the ILGA-Europe Rainbow Map from 12th to 21st place;
- Citing numerous **international reports** positioning the law as a prerequisite for EU integration;
- A joint call by **24 NGOs and 24 activists** from Montenegro to the Government and Parliament;
- **Letters of support** from TGEU and three other major international LGBTIQ+ organizations: IGLYO, ERA, ILGA-Europe—with a collective membership of over 1,000 organizations.

Campaign outcomes include:

48

credible **civil society organizations and activists** in Montenegro

8

independent public statements

100+

respected academics

137

regional **organizations and activists**

A minimum of

4

international reports explicitly urging the law's adoption



Video Promotion

By monitoring ever-changing social media algorithms, which constantly favor different types of content, we worked to adapt the delivery of our messages and select the most effective means of communication to ensure that the message of self-determination and the importance of the Law reached the widest possible audience. We tailored our messages both in content and visual design, striving to incorporate elements that make content relevant and engaging on social media, while implementing our ideas with integrity, in an authentic and unique way, through the following campaigns:

„Myth busting“

We launched a video series on social media aimed at debunking common myths about the right to self-determination and trans people, which often act as barriers to understanding the importance of adopting the Law. These videos were released in Reel format on Instagram, with plans to further promote a compilation of all videos beyond social media platforms.

Campaign results: nearly 80,000 views.

„How Do You Wear Self-Determination?“

We created our first line of promotional material to communicate the value of self-determination and the Law in a relevant way. As part of this promotion, we created a video series titled “How Do You Wear Self-Determination?”, featuring three videos. The goal was to symbolically introduce the idea of self-determination into public spaces through everyday objects, thus spreading self-determination wherever people are. The promotional material was distributed in exchange for symbolic donations, which directly supported community members in difficult financial situations. Following a successful promotion and distribution, we decided to continue producing this type of material through an open call for artists titled “What Does Self-Determination Mean to You?”, which received nearly 50 submissions. In 2025, materials will be produced featuring the works of seven selected artists.

Campaign results: nearly 9,000 views.



Collaborative Action

(in cooperation with regional queer and activist organizations)

Every November 20, we remember all those who lost their lives simply for wanting to live freely and happily. On the **Trans Day of Remembrance** (TDOR), we declared that transphobia, which denies the value of trans lives, has deprived them of their most basic human right. This year, we decided to send a joint message as a region, resulting in the campaign:

**„Živjeli!
#TDOR2024”**

Spectra collaborated with the Balkan Trans Network, including organizations Kolektiv Talas TIGV from Serbia, kolekTIGV from Croatia, TransForma from North Macedonia, and TransAkcija from Slovenia. The campaign aired as a **commercial** on Montenegro's Public Broadcaster for seven days, three times a day, helping to introduce the importance of trans lives to a large audience unfamiliar with the topic. All participating organizations shared the video on their social media in local languages. During the campaign shoot, a second short video titled “**Why?**” was also created, addressing the same theme in a unique way.

Campaign results: 27,000 views (on Spectra's social media; actual reach is larger when including partner networks); the commercial was viewed by households across Montenegro who follow the Public Broadcaster.

REACHING

In 2024, we continued to strengthen our visibility through numerous responses, media appearances, and public statements. We note that visibility has almost doubled when comparing 40 instances of media presence in 2023 with 75 instances in the past year. This marks a significant increase in our capacity for external communication and our watchdog role.

- ▶ In January 2024, we expressed support for professor and historian Boban Batrićević due to violations of his freedom of speech, and called for a protest in front of the Misdemeanor Court while awaiting the trial outcome;
- ▶ Together with 22 NGOs, we appealed to the Supreme State Prosecutor (VDT), Milorad Marković, to defend freedom of expression and order the cessation of the misdemeanor proceedings initiated by state prosecutor Snežana Šišević against Boban Batrićević, author of the column “Torokanje po metodologiju i Đaonikiju” published on the Antena M portal;
- ▶ In a TV E program appearance, Spectra's activities and the importance of the Law on Legal Gender Recognition Based on Self-Determination were presented;
- ▶ We demanded an adequate response to the latest case of police brutality against a member of the LGBTIQ+ community in Serbia and expressed solidarity and support to the organization Da se zna! in further legal proceedings;
- ▶ We shared the human rights situation in Montenegro according to ILGA-Europe's annual report, which noted a rise in hate speech against LGBTIQ+ individuals, often going unpunished;

- ▶ In another appearance on TV E's morning program, **we presented the results of research on socio-economic violence against trans people** as a reflection of the vulnerability of labor rights in Montenegro, emphasizing that the Law on Legal Gender Recognition would significantly mitigate this violence;
- ▶ We responded to a human rights **attack by the Serbian Orthodox Church** over their statement regarding the Law on Legal Gender Recognition;
- ▶ We demanded prompt action from the Ombudswoman of the Radio Television of Montenegro, Danijela Popović, and **requested information on steps taken to remedy the damage to human rights** in Montenegro;
- ▶ We clarified **facts and addressed misconceptions about the Law** in a segment on Adria TV;
- ▶ Spectra **submitted a complaint** to the Director of the Agency for Electronic Media, Sunčica Bakić, regarding the violation of professional standards by Prva TV during the “Muško, žensko ili nešto treće” segment on the “Jutro” show;
- ▶ Together with the “Ravnopravno” NGO coalition, we expressed **concern over the uncritical and unbalanced coverage of the Law** on Legal Gender Recognition by the public broadcaster;
- ▶ In RTCG's show “Naglas”, the contributors to the draft law **presented facts and highlighted its importance**;
- ▶ We pointed out the outcome of our efforts – the Ombudswoman of the public broadcaster **acknowledged our complaint regarding uncritical reporting**;
- ▶ On **Transgender Day of Visibility**, we emphasized that being visible means living your truth, demanding respect for your autonomy, and having the power to control your life;
- ▶ A TV E feature **presented the activities Spectra provides** within its space, along with regular programs;

- ▶ On Gradska TV's "Pressing", we discussed gender equality, its scope, and the laws that guarantee but fail to implement it;
- ▶ Together with 16 NGOs, we protested the proposal to extend the mandate of current Constitutional Court judges;
- ▶ Alongside 14 NGOs and civil society activists, we sent an initiative to Prime Minister Milojko Spajić requesting Montenegro to sponsor the UN Resolution on the Srebrenica Genocide;
- ▶ The Agency for Electronic Media of Montenegro issued a warning to Prva TV for multiple violations of the Law on Electronic Media and Program Standards following our complaint;
- ▶ We highlighted key points from the U.S. State Department's 2023 human rights practices report for Montenegro;
- ▶ Following a complaint from the "Ravnopravno" coalition, the Agency for Electronic Media warned RTCG, stating the public broadcaster must uphold media laws and ensure all content is anti-discriminatory, secular, impartial, and protective of citizens' rights;
- ▶ On Adria TV's "Dobar dan", a Spectra activist publicly shared her experience, contributing to visibility on trans lives and the Law;
- ▶ We highlighted key points from Amnesty International's report confirming multiple human rights violations in Montenegro;
- ▶ Alongside 100 NGOs and 320 prominent citizens, we urged Prime Minister Milojko Spajić to not only vote but co-sponsor the UN Resolution on Srebrenica;
- ▶ RTCG's "Budimo budni" covered the Law on legal gender recognition with participation from a Spectra activist;

- ▶ We highlighted **key takeaways from ILGA-Europe's Enlargement Report** and emphasized EU recommendations Montenegro must prioritize in the accession process;
- ▶ On Victory over Fascism Day, we released a **short video** illustrating the connection between today's struggles and anti-fascist resistance;
- ▶ We called on political parties to **support the Law**, highlighting those who have publicly endorsed it;
- ▶ On IDAHOBIT, we stressed **Montenegro's drop on the Rainbow Map from 12th to 21st place**, noting that without the Law, the country falls below the EU average;
- ▶ Spectra and 23 NGOs urged Democratic Montenegro's president Aleksa Bečić to influence party councillors in Podgorica to **withdraw the street naming proposal after Pavle Bulatović**;
- ▶ On May 24, the UN General Assembly adopted a Resolution declaring **July 11 the International Day of Reflection on the Srebrenica Genocide**; we expressed pride in Montenegro for voting in favor despite pressure;
- ▶ Spectra joined 38 NGOs in sending an initiative to Prime Minister Milojko Spajić and Minister of Culture and Media Tamar Vujović to **reform RTCG into a true public service**;
- ▶ We called for the **adoption of the Law** through a statement supported by over 100 members of the academic community;
- ▶ We highlighted **key guidelines from the EU 2023 democracy report** for Montenegro, in which High Representative Borrell emphasized the need for legal changes, especially in non-discrimination;
- ▶ We emphasized **CEDAW's recommendations** linking the fight for gender equality with the experiences of all women;

- ▶ We shared public support for the Law from organizations and institutions to dispel prevalent doubts and urged MPs to support it;
- ▶ We did the same with individual supporters of the Law;
- ▶ In the “Odgovor” program, Spectra’s Executive Director addressed legal issues, government support, and other matters concerning the LGBTIQ+ community;
- ▶ RTCG 2’s show “Još smo mi zeleni” featured Spectra’s Executive Director, particularly focusing on questions related to the Law;
- ▶ We shared key facts and recommendations from the 2023 CPT report, which warned against the false belief that suppressing trans needs reduces prison violence;
- ▶ On Pride Day, we stated that Stonewall is a symbol of resistance and progress and that self-determination is the core of freedom;
- ▶ Alongside regional CSOs, we supported Serbian and Kosovo activists whose “Mirëdita, dobar dan” festival was banned in Serbia;
- ▶ We stated that after IBAR, human rights must follow, highlighting the Law’s importance in EU integration;
- ▶ With other NGOs, we called on the Montenegrin government to declare July 11 a day of remembrance and ensure its regular observance;
- ▶ On Montenegro’s Statehood Day, we reminded that self-determination is a precondition for independence, dignity, and autonomy;

- ▶ Amid talks of dismissing Education Minister Anđela Jakšić Stojanović, we joined nine NGOs in calling for her to remain;
- ▶ With 28 NGOs, we urged Parliament to adopt the resolution on Israeli crimes in Palestine;
- ▶ Together with other NGOs, we supported the Union of Free Trade Unions' stance on preserving pension contributions in the 2024–2027 fiscal strategy;
- ▶ On International Peace Day, we reminded that peace is impossible without self-determination;
- ▶ At the September Pride March opening, we emphasized that the Law is a human right, and self-determination is the essence of freedom;
- ▶ On a “Građanski ugao” episode dedicated to Montenegro Pride, Spectra activists shared personal perspectives on Pride's importance;
- ▶ On World Mental Health Day, we said human rights are half of health;
- ▶ We called on the academic community to denounce a sexist Ethics Committee decision and propose changes to ban such behavior;
- ▶ Our Jovan spoke about the proposed foreign agents law by the Za budućnost Crne Gore coalition, and its impact on civil society;
- ▶ We reiterated the European Commission's call to implement CPT recommendations, which include self-determination rights;
- ▶ On International Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism, we raised awareness of its ongoing manifestations and resistance efforts;

- ▶ We also joined a joint NGO statement emphasizing Montenegro's antifascist heritage;
- ▶ We strongly condemned the attack on journalist Ana Raičković and her family and property;
- ▶ On Trans Day of Remembrance, we joined regional organizations in stating that the right to self-determination is essential for freedom and survival;
- ▶ The shortage of injectable estradiol hormone therapy was resolved after eight years;
- ▶ During 16 Days of Activism, we noted the rise in violence against women, especially trans women, as a red flag for public safety;
- ▶ We stated that Members of the European Parliament addressed a letter to the Government of Montenegro outlining their assessment of the measures needed for the full implementation of Chapter 23, which includes the full implementation of the Law on Same-Sex Life Partnership through harmonization of the legal framework, as well as the adoption of the current Draft Law on Legal Gender Recognition Based on Self-Determination.
- ▶ Our Jovan spoke on TV E's "24 sata" about the Law on Legal Gender Recognition Based on Self-Determination, also discussing the letter from Members of the European Parliament who emphasized that legal gender recognition based on self-determination is a priority for Montenegro's EU accession process.
- ▶ Our Iskra and Marija spoke on TV E about the international campaign marking the Transgender Day of Remembrance.
- ▶ Together with 24 civil society organizations and 24 civil activists, we addressed the Government and Parliament of Montenegro, urging them to determine and adopt the Law on Legal Gender Recognition Based on Self-Determination before the end of the second session of the current year.
- ▶ On the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, we emphasized that solidarity must go beyond declarations and called on the Montenegrin Government, Parliament, and MPs to cancel the arms procurement plan involving products from the Israeli state-owned company Rafael Advanced Defense Systems.

- ▶ Activists from Spectra and Queer Montenegro, during the second session of the Youth Parliament, **called on institutions to adopt the Law** on Legal Gender Recognition Based on Self-Determination.
- ▶ In the show Građanski ugao (Civic Corner), our Jovan spoke about the recent **case of sexual harassment by a teacher** from “Slobodan Škerović” High School in Podgorica, as well as about the status and rights of LGBTQ+ people in Montenegro during 2024.
- ▶ We announced that the international organization **TGEU sent a letter to the Government and Parliament of Montenegro** calling for the adoption of the Law on Legal Gender Recognition Based on Self-Determination by the end of the year.
- ▶ At the panel **The Personal is Political**, it was stated that the Draft Law on Legal Gender Recognition Based on Self-Determination has the support of the majority of political parties in Montenegro.
- ▶ We relayed the appeal of **137** organizations and activists from the region: **Montenegro must urgently adopt the Law** on Legal Gender Recognition Based on Self-Determination
- ▶ On Human Rights Day, we reminded everyone that **each day is a new opportunity** to take small steps toward achieving human rights and freedoms that include and embrace everyone.
- ▶ We shared **a letter from the leading European human rights organizations** (ERA, IGLYO, and ILGA-Europe) calling for the urgent adoption of the Law on Legal Gender Recognition Based on Self-Determination.
- ▶ We strongly condemned the lack of courage, determination, and political will shown by Prime Minister Milojko Spajić, **who failed to include the Draft Law** on Legal Gender Recognition Based on Self-Determination on the agenda of the 61st session of the Government of Montenegro, despite it being fully prepared.
- ▶ We also highlighted **the Government's neglect of the human right to self-determination**, which resulted in the failure to timely adopt the Draft Law on Legal Gender Recognition Based on Self-Determination.

OUR GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Our team participated in numerous national and regional events, the most significant of which include:

- 1.** One team member attended the international training “Prevent and respond to gender-based violence,” organized by the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation and the Swedish Police in Moldova;
- 2.** One team member attended the training “Monitoring, analysis of the legislative framework and evidence-based advocacy related to torture and gender-based violence,” organized by Human Rights Action in Petrovac;
- 3.** One team member attended the event “XVI Forum on Transitional Justice in Post-Yugoslav Countries,” organized by the RECOM Reconciliation Network and the Humanitarian Law Center in Pristina;
- 4.** Team members attended the training “Support and Professionalism: Training for Activists Working with Victims of Gender-Based Violence,” organized by Association Spectra in Andrijevica;
- 5.** The Association Spectra team attended the “Strengthening Regional Trans Activism” training in September, organized by Trans Network Balkan in Zagreb;

- 6.** The Association Spectra team participated in the Transposium from October 2 to 6, organized by Transforma and Trans Network Balkan in Skopje;
- 7.** One member of Association Spectra attended the ILGA annual conference in Bucharest from October 16 to 19;
- 8.** One member of Association Spectra attended the Transfeminine Leadership Academy training organized by Transgender Europe from October 23 to 26;
- 9.** One member of Association Spectra attended the IGLYO annual conference from October 26 to 28 in Ljubljana;
- 10.** One member of Association Spectra visited the European Parliament and European Commission in an event organized by IGLYO from December 2 to 5.

ABOUT OUR PROJECTS

“Trans Voices of Montenegro: Leading the Way Towards Gender Equality – Second Chapter” began in March 2023 and ended in May 2024. Association Spectra implemented the project independently with support from Transgender Europe and Central Asia. The general goal was to increase the participation of trans, intersex, and gender-diverse (TIGV) individuals in activism through empowerment and education. The project budget was **\$18,000**.

“The Power of Equality – Building the Capacity of the TIGV Community to End Gender-Based Violence” started in August 2023 and ended in August 2024. The project was implemented independently by Association Spectra, funded through a grant program by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. The main goal was to provide a multidimensional response to gender-based violence against TIGV people through psychosocial support, victim empowerment, and improved systemic treatment. The project budget was **€31,552**.

“The Right to Self-Determination: A Foundation of Democracy” began in January 2024 and ends in December 2024. It was independently implemented by Association Spectra through a grant from the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights. The project aims to systematically address the lack of a legal framework that adequately protects the human rights of trans, intersex, and gender-diverse people in Montenegro, as highlighted in the LGBTIQ+ Quality of Life Improvement Strategy (2019–2023). The project budget was **€20,000**.

Projects we have launched:

“Community Driven Gender Equality Builds Strong Democracy” began in September 2024 and ends in July 2025. The project, supported by the **Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands**, is implemented independently by Association Spectra. The goal is to raise awareness of social justice issues threatening democracy and human rights, and to engage trans, queer, and women’s communities in activism. The budget is **28,500€**.

“No One Is Free Until We Are All Free” started in August 2024 and will end in August 2025. The project is independently implemented by Association Spectra and funded by the **Ministry of Human and Minority Rights**. Its goal is to address the high levels of gender-based discrimination and violence rooted in prejudice and stereotypes against women and people of diverse identities. The budget is **12,000€**.


“The Right to Self-Determination – Everyone’s Right” began in August 2024 and ends in August 2025. Also funded by the **Ministry of Human and Minority Rights**, this project aims to address gender-based discrimination against trans, intersex, and gender-diverse individuals. It will contribute to reducing discrimination through public education, advocacy, and awareness-raising. The project also supports the Law on Legal Gender Recognition Based on Self-Determination and the broader advancement of LGBTIQ+ human rights in Montenegro. The budget is **16,000€**.

“Tools to Build a Feminist Future: Democracy, Community and Solidarity” began in July 2024 and ends in March 2025. The project is supported by the **Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation**. Its goal is to strengthen the feminist movement in Montenegro to effectively resist anti-gender and anti-democratic agendas through education, advocacy, and the promotion of feminist values. The budget is **300,000 SEK**.

The National Democratic Institute (NDI) supported our work through the Equal Rights in Action Fund with a project grant of **\$25,000**. The project started in June 2024 and was planned to end in May 2025. Unfortunately, due to an executive order issued by President Trump, this project was suspended, along with all other U.S. government-funded initiatives globally.

Operational support to our *work*


These grants aim to support Spectra in its work on strengthening democracy and gender equality in Montenegro:



Smart Balkans supported us with an operational grant of **€30,000** for the period from January 2023 to December 2024.



Legal Empowerment Fund provided **\$20,000** for the period from June 2022 to June 2024.




Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice granted **\$10,000** in operational funds for one year, from October 2024 to September 2025.



Equality Fund granted **CAD 119,739** for the period from February 2023 to January 2025.



Mama Cash supported us with **30,000€** in operational funds for one year, from April 2024 to March 2027.



Frida, which has supported Spectra since its founding, provided **\$17,500** in operational funds for one year, from October 2023 to October 2024.

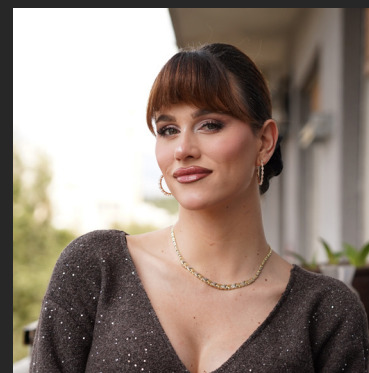
our team



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Aleksa Radonjić
*communications
officer*



**Aleksandra
Kraljević**
intern



Marija Đurković
*financial
manager*

BUDGET AND FINANCE

BUDGET AND FINANCE

year	budget
2024	217 047
2023	245 546
2022	94 007
2021	85 179
2020	102 214
2019	56 938
2018	10 618
2017	0



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Norway

