Gender-based violence against women is a global problem, which is recognized and defined by numerous international conventions and Croatian legislation as one of the most serious forms of human rights violations and obstacles to gender equality.

During the pandemic, there has been an increase in violence against women in Croatia, especially during the lock-down, when women in violent relationships were closed at home and were exposed to various forms of violence by their partners for a long time.

Croatian Ombudswoman for Gender Equality reports that the number of violations and crimes committed in the family has been increased by 40 percent since the first lockdown, and the number of victims by 12, 13.%

Femicide is the most extreme form of gender-based violence and is defined as "the murder of women because they are women.".

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), "most cases of femicides are committed by partners or former partners, often there is abuse, threats or intimidation, sexual violence, or situations where women have less power or fewer resources than their partners."

According to official data, 4 women were killed by intimate partners in 2018 and in 2020 this number increased to 9 cases of femicides intimate partners. The situation is even worse during the first eleven months, of 13 murdered women, 10 were killed by partners.

European protection order (EPO) plays an important role in the prevention of femicide and general protection of woman victims of violence, as it is used to provide protection and security in case of relocation in other member state, which is very important in the context of global migrations.

Thanks to the efforts of Autonomous women house of Zagreb, significance and value of EPO has been recognized on a national level. A roundtable will be organized in March 2022 at the Croatian parliament on the role of the EPO in preventing violence against women and femicides.

It will represent an opportunity to further mainstream the use of EPO in Croatia among the decision makers and other relevant stakeholders.