

Concluding Report of the OSCE Project

Effective Criminal Justice Strategies and Practices to Combat
Gender-based Violence in Eastern Europe (2018–2020)

Key Findings, Best Practices and Recommendations



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Alliance for Protection from Gender-based Violence/Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation

Center for the Study of Democracy

Hungary:

National Police

Budapest Prosecutor's Office

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National Public Health Institute

National University of Public Service, Faculty of Law Enforcement

National Crisis Management and Information Telephone Service

Romania:

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Introduction

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is the world's largest regional security organization. It works on ensuring peace, democracy and stability for more than a billion women and men between Vancouver and Vladivostok. *The inherent dignity of the individual is at the core of comprehensive security*, as stated by the OSCE Heads of State or Government in the 2010 Astana Summit Declaration.¹

It is estimated that globally, one in three women² experience forms of gender-based violence³ in their lifetime. Gender-based violence (GBV) endangers the security and dignity of individuals and puts their social, economic and political participation at risk. It is a barrier to achieving comprehensive security for all, which is the OSCE's main goal.

Police are at the frontline of the criminal justice system and often first-responders to GBV. Their approach, attitude and responses are cornerstones, since they ensure that violence is prevented, victims are protected and perpetrators are punished. This is recognized also in the OSCE's Strategic Framework for Police-related Activities (2012), which tasks the TNTD/SPMU, as part of its efforts to strengthening national criminal justice systems, to assist authorities of participating States, at their request, to develop professional police services that protect and aid their citizens, facilitate the exchange of best policing practices and improve police co-operation.

With this in mind, the TNTD/SPMU piloted the regional project *Effective Criminal Justice Strategies and Practices to Combat Gender-based Violence in Eastern Europe* in Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania between 2018 and 2020. The aim of the project was to assist law enforcement authorities in enhancing the professional skills and attitudes of practitioners in preventing and responding to GBV.

The project was launched on 20 September 2018 at a kick-off event that took place at the Hofburg in Vienna. It consisted of three phases: multisectoral co-ordination (by addressing not only law enforcement, but also judicial authorities, civil society organizations and academia), training (for first-responder police officers, investigators and prosecutors) and awareness raising (for general public and law enforcement practitioners). The project was implemented with the support of a dedicated co-ordination mechanism consisting of national Steering Committees, Working Groups and Reference Groups established in each beneficiary country as part of the project, with the aim of ensuring local ownership and improving multisectoral co-ordination.

This report concludes the implementation of the project. It captures the best practices and lessons learned, and also offers further recommendations for preventing and combating GBV. It is primarily intended to further assist the three beneficiary countries of the project in their endeavours to fight GBV, thus ensuring professional police services that are effective and trusted by citizens. Practitioners from the entire OSCE area and beyond can also use the examples of the best practices and recommendations laid down in this report, since further efforts are needed worldwide in making police services more public oriented to ensure greater security and more effective crime prevention.

To this end, the report consists of two chapters. In Chapter 1, a summary is presented of the situational analyses conducted at the beginning of the project in Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania. These analyses, the first of their kind, may be of use in the further development of legislation, strategies, action plans, procedures and projects in the area of preventing and combating GBV. Chapter 2 includes the best practices gathered during the project's implementation, as well as tailored recommendations. To conclude, the report presents materials developed during the project, such as training methodology, curriculum, case studies and promotion materials for awareness raising.

The report has been prepared by the OSCE Secretariat's TNTD/SPMU. The best practices and recommendations encompassed in this report were discussed during the Closing Conference of the project, which took place 5–6 March 2020 at the Hofburg in Vienna.

¹ <https://www.osce.org/mc/74985?download=true>

² <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/socialdevelopment/brief/violence-against-women-and-girls>

³ As defined by the European Commission (https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-based-violence/what-gender-based-violence_en). This term and definition has not been agreed upon by all OSCE participating States and is therefore not endorsed by OSCE.



OSCE representatives at the launch of the project, Vienna, Austria, 20 September 2018. (OSCE/Micky Kroell)



Transnational Threats Department
Strategic Police Matters Unit



Chapter I Situational Analysis

1. METHODOLOGY

A situational analysis was conducted in Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania at the beginning of the project in 2018. The aim of each analysis was to identify the strengths, weaknesses and behavioural levers of the respective criminal justice infrastructure, as well as the responses provided to victims of GBV.

The analyses were conducted by national Steering Committees, with the support of national Working Groups and national Reference Groups. The work of these committees was guided by the project team. Other government agencies, bodies, institutions and organizations that were consulted or contributed to the preparation of the analysis (including at regional or local levels) were specified as contributors/sources.

The methodology consisted of a triangulation of primary and secondary data. The primary source of data was a questionnaire-based self-assessment conducted by the national committees. Summaries of these self-assessments can be consulted below. The secondary data sources were desk research, questionnaire-based needs assessments and focused group discussions with law enforcement and judicial practitioners (conducted by the project team).

The collected data was instrumental for programming the project's activities. Moreover, the process of conducting the analyses initiated public discussion and opened dialogue with and between key institutional and civil society actors. As indicated by the project stakeholders during the Closing Conference, the analyses were important for two main reasons: they brought together all stakeholders (criminal justice, civil society and academia) in a first attempt to analyse the phenomenon of GBV, and they contributed to the development of multisectoral co-operation and co-ordination on this subject. Further, following the development of the analyses, certain legislative and procedural amendments on the topic were introduced in the involved countries, which can also be attributed in part to the project.

In the process of conducting the analyses, all of the national committees used a pre-defined questionnaire. It was adapted from the questionnaire⁴ on legislative and other measures giving effect to the provisions of the Council of Europe's Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), adopted by the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO) on 11 March 2016. The reason for using this questionnaire as a model was to avoid the duplication of efforts and to support the reporting process of the beneficiary countries that ratified the Istanbul Convention.

All requests for data and information applied to the years 2016–2017 (the two complete calendar years prior to conducting the analyses). Financial data was requested in euros. Administrative and judicial data was requested to be disaggregated by sex, age, type of violence, as well as the relationship of the perpetrator to the victim, geographical location and any other factors deemed relevant. All the information was collected and analysed in the national languages. At a later stage, the analyses were translated into English.

For the purpose of these analyses, GBV was defined as “violence directed against a person because of that person's gender or violence that affects persons of a particular gender disproportionately”. The term included but was not limited to domestic violence, physical violence, sexual violence (including rape, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, forced abortion, forced sterilization and sexual harassment), psychological violence and stalking.

⁴ This questionnaire can be found at: <https://rm.coe.int/16805c95b0>

2. GBV Analysis in Bulgaria

2. GBV Analysis in Bulgaria

A situational analysis of GBV was conducted in Bulgaria in 2018 by the Bulgarian Steering Committee, with the support of the Bulgarian Working Group and the Bulgarian Reference Group.⁵ Following the development of the analysis, a number of legislative amendments relevant to the topic were introduced in the country.

I. INTEGRATED POLICIES AND DATA COLLECTION

1. Action plans and policies

The Bulgarian authorities address domestic violence through national programmes for the prevention of and protection from domestic violence. These national programmes are adopted on a yearly basis by the Council of Ministers, in accordance with the Regulation for Implementation of the Law on Protection Against Domestic Violence (LPADV). In addition, multidisciplinary teams of experts work at the level of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Agency for Social Assistance, the State Agency for Child Protection, the Ministry of Interior (Mol), municipalities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to take action on any incident of domestic violence in any form, including against children.

2. Co-operation with civil society organizations

The Mol co-operates with NGOs on projects aimed at preventing domestic violence, training police officers, as well as awareness-raising campaigns. In addition, the Mol passes its own related bylaws.⁶

3. Official bodies for co-ordination

There is no officially designated body for the co-ordination and implementation of policies and measures to prevent and combat GBV in Bulgaria. Within the Mol, a national co-ordinator on issues of domestic violence operates at the National Police General Directorate (NPGD). The criminal justice response to acts of domestic violence qualifying as crime is carried out by the prosecutor in pre-trial proceedings and the court in court proceedings, the actors entrusted with directing criminal proceedings and the decision-making functions within them.

4. Data collection

The collection of data on cases of GBV is decentralized in Bulgaria, with different institutions using various types of data collection methodologies. For example, the Mol gathers gender-disaggregated data on various types of crime, including rape and sexual abuse. The Prosecutor's Office maintains its own statistical data (represented in the judicial data section below) and employs its own unified information system that keeps records of the victims and perpetrators of all criminal proceedings initiated *ex officio* (for criminal offences of a general nature), including data on offences within the working definition of gender-based crimes. There are plans to create a centralized unified information system on GBV.

5. Population-based surveys

The last study on GBV was carried out in the period 2015–2016 by the Partners-Bulgaria Foundation and the Center for the Study of Democracy within the project “National Study of Domestic and Gender-based Violence and Elaboration of a Victims Support Model”, funded by the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009–2014.⁷

⁵ These groups were established within the framework of the project and included representatives from the National Police General Directorate; Supreme Cassation Prosecutor's Office; National Institute of Justice; Alliance for the Protection from Gender-based Violence/Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation; Centre for the Study of Democracy; and Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, Faculty of Law.

⁶ As for example, the “Instruction on joint action for protection from domestic violence”, jointly with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, of 30 November 2010.

⁷ More information can be found at: <https://partnersbg.org/en/domestic-and-gender-based-violence/>
https://csd.bg/search/?id=33&tx_kesearch_pi1%5Bsword%5D=gender&x=0&y=0&tx_kesearch_pi1%5Bpage%5D=1&tx_kesearch_pi1%5BresetFilters%5D=0&tx_kesearch_pi1%5BsortByField%5D=&tx_kesearch_pi1%5BsortDir%5D=asc

II. PREVENTION

1. Awareness-raising campaigns

Various awareness campaigns are conducted by NGOs in Bulgaria on a yearly basis with the support of national authorities. For example, between 2015 and 2017, the Alliance for Protection from Gender-based Violence organized a series of awareness activities on GBV with a focus on Roma communities as part of the project “There are Many Ways to Cope with Violence”, implemented under the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009–2014.

Moreover, during 2016, a series of awareness campaigns were organized by national NGOs in partnership with local municipalities, also with support from the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009–2014, as part of the project “Organizing campaigns for improvement of public awareness with special focus on Roma and other vulnerable groups”.

Due to lack of funding, no dedicated campaigns were conducted by the Bulgarian authorities, but the topic of GBV was included in other general campaigns (as for example, campaigns for the prevention of trafficking in human beings).

2. Training

The two tables below indicate the number of professionals who received training in the period 2016–2017 on topics related to prevention and detection of forms of GBV, standards of intervention, gender equality, needs and rights of victims, prevention of secondary victimization, and multi-agency co-operation.

a) Basic/initial training:

Initial training	Prevention and detection of GBV	Standards of intervention	Gender equality	Needs and rights of victims	Prevention of secondary victimization	Multi-agency co-operation
Police	540	480	250	420	420	60
Junior Prosecutors	61	61	61	61	61	61
Junior Judges	55	55	55	55	55	55
Social workers	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data

b) In-service/professional training:

On-going training	Prevention and detection of GBV	Standards of intervention	Gender equality	Needs and rights of victims	Prevention of secondary victimization	Multi-agency co-operation
Police	270	320	150	140	140	20
Prosecutors	128	128	95	128	27	127
Judges	193	190	136	190	39	188
Social workers	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data

3. Media standards for reporting on gender-based violence

The Code of Ethics of the Bulgarian media specifies caution when disclosing the identity of victims of crime, particularly of sexual violence, as well as restraint in reporting crimes. Despite this, in practice the media does not always adhere to the Code.

4. Other preventive measures

The topic of GBV is part of Bulgaria's National Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2016–2020.

III. PROTECTION AND SUPPORT

1. Support services and legal measures

Websites containing information, contact details and recommendations for people looking for protection are part of the efforts being taken by national institutions in Bulgaria to ensure that victims of GBV receive information on existing support services and the legal measures available to them. In addition, legal services and support are actively delivered by various NGOs. Under some circumstances, this is provided without charge.

2. Active specialized support services

A list of all organizations working with victims of GBV has been gathered by the Center for the Study of Democracy in Sofia and can be found on their website⁸.

In addition, the protection of victims of domestic violence is ensured by social support centres, although this is not their primary function. Such support centres provide social services as a state-delegated activity.

In total, there are over 150 support centres in Bulgaria: 21 crisis centres; 9 mother and baby units; 111 community support centres; 15 street children centres; and 131 family-type centres for children/young people with no disabilities. In addition, mother and baby units offer pregnant women and mothers at risk of abandoning their children temporary accommodation for a maximum of six months, as well as social, psychological and legal advice and support for teen-age mothers. Moreover, community support centres offer specialized support to victims and work on special programmes for psychosocial support, legal aid and advice.

3. Telephone helplines

Two hotlines are available for the victims of GBV: (1) operated by the “Animus Association” Foundation with funding from the Ministry of Justice, available 24/7; and (2) operated by the Alliance for Protection from Gender-based Violence, available 24/7 for victims of domestic violence, with funding from AVON Cosmetics Bulgaria.

4. Other measures for protection and support

Additional assistance is provided by the Social Assistance Agency, which is entrusted with supporting adult and child victims of violence by providing counselling and assistance to overcome the negative consequences of their experience, as well as referring them to relevant social services.

⁸ <https://csd.bg/bg/publications/publication/directory-of-institutions-and-organizations-working-with-selected-vulnerable-groups/>

IV. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

1. Legal framework addressing gender-based violence

Under Bulgarian legislation, GBV does not have a separate definition. However, legal definitions of domestic violence are contained in the special non-criminal LPADV⁹ and the bylaws regulating the matter in connection with child protection and the prevention of violence against children, as well as the definitions and interpretations of court practice. In particular:

Article 2, Para. 1 states: “Domestic violence shall denote any act of physical, sexual, mental, emotional or economic violence, as well as attempts of such violence, coercive restriction of personal life, personal liberty and personal rights committed against individuals, who are related, who are or have been in a family relationship or in de facto conjugal cohabitation.”

Article 2, Para. 2 states: “Any domestic violence committed in the presence of a child shall be considered mental and emotional violence against said child.”

After the project analysis was completed, the National Assembly adopted a package of amendments to the Criminal Code that criminalized, for the first time, certain aspects of domestic violence. A legal definition of “crimes committed under the conditions of domestic violence” was also introduced: Article 93, Item 31, declares that a crime is considered committed in conditions of domestic violence “if it is preceded by systematic physical, sexual or psychological violence, placing the person in economic dependence, coercive restriction of personal life, personal liberty and personal rights, and is enforced against [a parent or child], a spouse or ex-spouse, a person with whom one shares a child, a person with whom one is or has been in a de facto marital cohabitation, or a person with whom one lives or has lived in a common household.” The term “systematic” in the Criminal Code requires a victim to document three prior instances of violence by the same perpetrator in order for a public prosecution, i.e., *ex officio* prosecution, to be opened against the abuser.

2. Criminal law

Although GBV is not specifically criminalized under Bulgarian law, a set of newly introduced amendments to the Criminal Code have intensified and broadened the scope of criminal law protection against domestic violence. While an instance of GBV can be simultaneously a criminal offence under the Criminal Code and an act of domestic violence under special non-criminal laws, the two types of legislation have different purposes and provide different means of prosecution with different procedures; however, the measures under them are compatible, rather than representing opposites or alternatives. The state must avail itself of them in combination, whereby non-penal defence has a wider field of application. In order to establish grounds for imposing a more severe penalty for a crime related to domestic violence or GBV, the Criminal Code takes into consideration the circumstances of both victim and perpetrator, as well as the relationship between the two. A number of criminally punishable features of GBV, such as forms of slavery and exploitation, acts aimed at damaging an individual's self-esteem or reputation, and violent crimes, are already criminalized, despite not being specifically defined as acts of GBV.

In February 2019, the Bulgarian National Assembly adopted the above package of amendments to the Criminal Code with the intention of enhancing protection from acts of domestic violence by means of criminal law. The amendments were subject to parliamentary debate at the time the project analysis was conducted. They expand the definition of domestic violence to include psychological violence and certain elements of coercive control. They also provide for greater criminal penalties for violent crimes committed “in conditions of domestic violence”. Crimes with greater penalties include homicide, bodily harm, kidnapping, illegal constraint, compulsion, threats or stalking, as well as certain forms of violence against women, such as forced marriage.

⁹ https://www.legislationline.org/download/id/8183/file/Bulgaria_law_protection_domestic_violence_2005_am2015_en.pdf

3. Guidance for professionals on implementing legislation

Law enforcement professionals (including police officers, investigators and prosecutors) implement the above legislative framework as per special guidelines provided by the Prosecutor's Office. The aim of these guidelines is to establish uniform responses in cases of domestic violence and provide information on: 1) the actions required by the Prosecutor's Office upon receiving information about a case of domestic violence; 2) the circumstances that must be met to classify the case; 3) requirements for prosecutor intervention in an already initiated/opened pre-trial procedure; 4) interaction with other institutions as well as other organizational measures.

4. Civil law remedies

As per civil law, victims are provided with legal means of protection against a perpetrator. Courts can issue protection orders subject to immediate enforcement, which are executed by the police authorities. Violations of protection orders constitute a crime.

5. Compensation

Victims can claim damages from a perpetrator on tort grounds. When the tort also constitutes a crime, it is possible to claim damages by filing for a criminal case in court. No data is available on the number of victims who have claimed compensation in Bulgaria.

6. Administrative and judicial data

a) Cases resulting in the death of a woman

According to the official police statistics in Bulgaria, in 2016 there were a total of 21 cases of lethal violence against women and 12 attempted murders, and in 2017 - a total of 25 such cases and 9 attempts. In 2018, 35 cases of women and children killed in domestic violence cases were publicly linked by leading sociologists to the fact that the country did not ratify the Istanbul Convention.

b) Cases of attempted murder

The number of perpetrators convicted only for attempted murder cannot be established from the general data, because according to the Bulgarian Penal Code, in an attempt the perpetrator is punished with the punishment provided for the completed crime.

c) Number of complaints made by victims or third parties

The number of complaints made by victims or third parties could not be derived from the available statistical data.

d) Number of criminal proceedings or other legal action

Time/Period	Lewdness against women/girls	Rape	Body injury - women	Forced abortion	Crimes as per Article 296 CC against wife/female cohabitant	Other cases of crimes as per Article 296 CC	Crimes as per Article 191 CC
2016	111	466	358	4	310	154	648
2017	136	472	513	3	298	151	676

e) Number of perpetrators convicted for the cases above

Time/Period	Lewdness against women/girls	Rape	Body injury - women	Forced abortion	Crimes as per Article 296 CC against wife/female cohabitant	Other cases of crimes as per Article 296 CC	Crimes as per Article 191 CC
2016 r.	78	185	153	0	132	66	483
2017 r.	38	184	103	0	128	63	498

V. INVESTIGATION, PROSECUTION, PROCEDURAL LAW AND PROTECTIVE MEASURES

1. Measures to ensure prompt and appropriate responses

In order to ensure appropriate responses to acts of GBV in Bulgaria, law enforcement agencies operate in accordance with existing methodological guidelines (as for example, guidelines for prosecutorial interventions). According to the law, a victim has the right to apply directly to a court of law for a protection order. If obtained, a copy of the order is sent to the victim's local police station, which then implements the protective measures.

In addition, training for professionals, organized jointly with NGO representatives, has addressed inter-operability and multisectoral co-operation in GBV cases.

2. Number of interventions carried out by law enforcement

Although there is no available information on the number of interventions carried out by law enforcement officers, it should be noted that the national criminal justice system provides for registration and proper action upon each complaint about domestic and GBV lodged with the police.

3. Risk assessment procedures

A procedural assessment for lethality risk, the seriousness of the situation, or the risk of repeated violence is not yet in place. The capacity of assessing these risks depends on the professional skills of the first-responders. However, procedures for assessing such risks are contained in the guidelines for prosecutors on files and pre-trial cases filed in response to alerts of domestic violence, murder threats, and violations of protection orders.

4. Implementation of directives and regulations

The European Union (EU) Directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, the Directive 2011/99/EU on the European Protection Order, and Regulation 606/2013 on mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters have been transposed into Bulgaria's national legislation.

5. Emergency barring orders

According to the law, emergency barring orders cannot be issued by a non-court authority, even in cases of immediate danger. In such cases, regional courts can rule in closed sessions without summoning the parties and issue an immediate protection order within 24 hours from the receipt of the application. The order is then sent via official channels to the police authorities, with instructions for immediate execution.

In the absence of the clear indication of a committed crime or, respectively, grounds for starting a criminal investigation, first-responders can issue only warnings.

6. Data on protection orders

A total of 2,323 protection orders were issued by Bulgarian Regional Courts in 2016, and 2,440 in 2017. These came as the result of a total of 3,045 hearings in 2016 (of 3,060 applications), and a total of 2,968 hearings (of a total of 2,991 applications) in 2017.

According to national legislation, the violation of a protection order constitutes a crime of a general nature. For the year 2016, there were 385 cases of protection orders violations, and 373 cases in 2017. Of these, 31 cases were submitted to courts in 2016, and 30 cases in 2017. In 2016, 28 sentences were pronounced, in 2017, 35.

7. *Ex parte* legal proceedings

Bulgarian criminal law distinguishes between crimes of a general nature, which are subject to prosecution upon initiative of the public prosecution, and crimes of a private nature, which are subject to prosecution upon a private plaint of the victim submitted to the court. Only within the criminal prosecution of the first type is there a pre-trial procedural phase, where the leading/decision-making role lies with a prosecutor. In case of crimes of a general nature, the outcome does not depend on the position of the victim or his/her intent to withdraw his/her statements or claim. The testimony of the victim is evaluated alongside all other pieces of evidence on the case.

If a crime is of a private nature, the criminal prosecution is left to the initiative of the victim and his/her readiness to submit and maintain a private plaint before the court. The victim also bears the burden of providing evidence. Crimes of a private nature include negligence causing bodily harm and some crimes of deliberate minor or moderate bodily injury, if the perpetrator and victim are relatives in ascending or descending line, spouses or siblings. In such cases, criminal prosecution depends in principle on the initiative of the victim and the procedure is not *ex parte*. The victim can exercise his/her right to turn to court within six months from the moment the crime has been committed or she/he has become aware of it. Only in exceptional cases can the prosecutor open or continue criminal prosecution, cases in which it is established, following a plaint of the victim, that a crime has been committed but the victim cannot protect his/her rights or legal interests due to incapacity or a state of dependence on the perpetrator. This possibility is used, albeit to a limited extent, in domestic violence cases. After a prosecutor has exercised their right to open criminal proceedings and carry out investigation into a crime based on a plaint of a victim, the case is heard according to the general procedure and cannot be suspended due to lack of a plaint.

There are also so-called crimes of a private–public nature, in which criminal prosecution follows the general procedure. Here, the pre-trial phase is under the supervision of a prosecutor, however, only if the victim has submitted a plaint to the Prosecutor's Office (Article 161, Para. 2 Criminal Code). In certain circumstances these crimes can be linked to the notion of GBV, inasmuch as they involve negligence causing moderate bodily harm as per Article 135 CC, or defamation as per Article 139 CC. In such cases, the initiation of a criminal prosecution as per general procedure is done based on a plaint submitted to the office of the prosecutor. This depends on the desire and willingness of the victim. Once initiated, however, the criminal prosecution follows the general procedure and cannot be terminated due to the withdrawal of the plaint by the victim or upon his/her request.

8. Support for victims in legal proceedings

Under Bulgarian legislation, NGO representatives or other individuals are not allowed to take direct part in criminal procedures or court proceedings, nor may they provide support to a victim unless they are acting as legal representatives or legal aid providers.

Nevertheless, NGO representatives may provide psychological and practical assistance to a victim parallel to criminal proceedings in the form of due service. This is possible if the victim has suffered property or non-economic damages that fall within the scope of the Law on support and financial compensation for victims of crime. The authorities must inform the victim about his/her right to receive such support from victim support organizations. The prosecutor ensures the fulfilment of this obligation.

9. Protection measures available during investigations and judicial proceedings

a) Temporary protection of a witness or victim

Rendering protection of a witness/victim during investigations and judicial proceedings depends on two categories of assessment and the existence of certain prerequisites. First, the opinion of a witness¹⁰ with regard to their need for protection must always be taken into account. For instating protection measures, the witness must submit an explicit request or express unequivocal consent to protection measures. It is possible that the competent authority (court or prosecutor) decides that protection is required, even without a request from the witness. The authority must bring this to the notice of the witness and request the explicit consent of the latter to receive protection. The measures provided by the law can be taken only if the witness gives consent. Second, the competent authority may arrive at the conclusion that the witness or his/her next of kin is at risk due to the witness's capacity in the criminal prosecution. When rendering protection to a witness, he/she must sign a statement that he/she will keep this circumstance confidential, as well as other facts about the case that he/she becomes aware of (as related to the protection he/she receives). Provided all needed prerequisites are met, protection of a witness can be rendered with immediate effect. It can be provided in two forms, applicable jointly or separately.

b) Special programmes for protection of persons at risk

A Special Programme for the protection of persons at risk involves a complex of gradual measures, ranging from personal security all the way to the full change of identity. It is carried out by Bulgaria's Bureau for Protection within the Office of the Prosecutor General and depends on the level of risk. Protection can be applied for any person taking part in criminal prosecution if that criminal prosecution creates a danger for his/her life or health, regardless of his/her procedural quality. Inclusion in the Programme requires a motion of the prosecutor in charge of the court submitted to the Prosecutor General, who requests an expert opinion on the level of risk and reports the motion to the Interagency Council for Protection. This Council, comprised of senior officials from relevant ministries, must pronounce a decision within three days from the date the motion for inclusion in the Programme has been submitted by the Prosecutor General. When a person is included in the Programme, protection is provided by the Bureau for Protection based on an agreement defining the type and the duration of the protection measures, the rights and obligations of the parties, and the conditions for the agreement's cancellation. Depending on the level of risk, the implementation of the Programme may continue until the grounds for protection no longer exist, or the agreement term expires. Cancellation of the agreement is also possible in the case of non-compliance of the protected person without valid reason.

¹⁰ Under the Bulgarian Criminal Procedure Code, the key qualifying characteristic for the application of temporary protection is the person serving as a witness. Since under Bulgarian law, a single person often holds the characteristic of both victim and witness, temporary protection in such cases applies to victims as well.

10. Availability of free legal aid and eligibility criteria

Legal aid free of charge for GBV criminal or civil cases is provided in accordance with Bulgaria's Legal Aid Act. It is rendered by lawyers and funded by the state. The body in charge of co-ordination and implementation of the policy for granting free legal aid is the Ministry of Justice. Bulgaria's local Bar Associations also offer legal aid in regional legal advice centres.

Legal aid is provided in the form of legal advice, preparation of documentation for filing a case in court, procedural representation before a court or a pre-trial authority, and representation in the case of arrest.

Criteria have been developed for providing free legal aid to individuals and families depending on their social, economic and civil status, as well as the presence of measures for protecting a child at risk or in a situation of vulnerability. Victims of domestic violence, sexual violence, or human trafficking who state that they have no available funds and wish to have legal representation are explicitly included in the list of persons who free receive legal aid, thus satisfying the specific eligibility criterion (Article 22, Para. 1, Item 7 of the Legal Aid Act).

In the case need for procedural representation is established by a pre-trial authority, court or any other state authority, the decision for free legal aid is taken by the authority in charge of the procedural action. Any refusal must be in writing, motivated and subject to appeal. In emergencies related to procedural enforcement cases, interviews in front of a judge, or quick procedures as per the Criminal Code or under the Health Act or the Child Protection Act, an on-duty attorney-at-law is appointed by the regional Bar Association. These attorneys-at-law are appointed from the National Legal Aid Register's list of attorneys who have submitted their explicit consent; the Bar Associations draft the respective monthly timetables.

In addition to the general procedure for providing legal aid, the following services are available:

a) National Legal Aid Hotline – for advice in non-critical situations.

b) Regional Legal Advice Centres, which have been established upon the decision of local Bar Associations. Each Centre is operated by the National Legal Aid Bureau together with the local Bar Association that opened it. Only individuals whose documented income is below a particular threshold (minimum wage) are entitled to use the services of these Centres.



Bulgarian Police and National Institute of Justice representatives at a joint press conference marking the beginning of the Awareness Campaign on Gender-based Violence organized between 25 November and 10 December 2019. (Bulgarian Police)

ENCIAPATIKA

**A CSEND A LEGHANGOSABB SIKOLY
HALLD MEG!**

**HÍVD A 06 80 20 55 20-AS KRÍZISVONALAT,
HOGY JELEZD A KAPCSOLATI ERŐSZAKOT!**



3. GBV Analysis in Hungary

3. GBV Analysis in Hungary

A situational analysis of GBV was conducted in Hungary in 2018 by the Hungarian Steering Committee, with the support of the Hungarian Working Group and the Hungarian Reference Group.¹¹

I. INTEGRATED POLICIES AND DATA COLLECTION

1. Action plans and policies

National legislation in Hungary does not use the term GBV, nor does it address the topic directly. Consequently, there is no comprehensive strategy or action plan in effect relating to this topic.

However, there are several strategies that cover forms of GBV. One of the most important is Decision VII.7, adopted by the Hungarian Parliament in 2015, on the national strategy to support the effective combating of intimate partner violence. This decision sets strategic objectives in the area of combating intimate partner violence and provides guidance on planning and implementing all strategic documents and measures on this matter. For instance, the decision emphasizes the importance of prevention, the need to provide continuous education and training for experts dealing with victims and perpetrators, the development of a care system, and the need for transforming societal attitudes.

The Hungarian National Crime Prevention Strategy for the period 2013–2023 has also set various related objectives and identified needed concrete measures. Included are measures on child, youth and family protection, as well as victim protection and support. Moreover, a set of internal rules has been developed by the police on how to deal with domestic violence cases.

2. Co-operation with civil society organizations

In Hungary, the police often conclude co-operation agreements with other organizations, among them NGOs and other civil society organizations.

3. Official bodies for co-ordination

The Women's Policy Department of the Hungarian Ministry of Human Capacities is the designated official body working on the matter.

4. Data collection

a. Law enforcement/criminal-civil justice services (police, prosecution services, courts)

In terms of collection and storage of statistical data, relevant data can be retrieved from the database of the Integrated Criminal Statistics of the Investigation Authorities and Prosecutor's Office.

The Integrated Criminal Statistics of the Investigation Authorities and Prosecutor's Office collects crime-related data. This data is disaggregated by: time and date, scene of crime, method, instruments and legal definition, data on the perpetrator (nationality, family status, level of education, address, criminal record and capacity in which the crime was committed), as

¹¹ These groups were established within the framework of the project and included representatives from the Hungarian National Police; National Criminology Institute; Criminal Chamber of the Budapest Metropolitan Regional Court; Central District Court; Budapest Metropolitan Prosecutor's Office; Faculty of Law at the National University of Public Service; National Crisis Management and Information Telephone Service (OKIT); Western Transdanubian Regional Crisis Management Ambulance; and National Public Health Institute.

well as data on the victim (gender, age, nationality, relationship to the perpetrator, employment status). Data on gender-based motivation of crimes is not collected. The system includes *ex post* statistical data, meaning that the data related to a particular prosecution enters the system after the case is closed.

Additional data is collected by the Prosecutor's Charge Representation IT System, the National Office of the Judiciary, and the Prison Service Headquarters.

b. Health care, social services and specialist victim services (state and NGOs)

The Act CXXXV of 2005 on Crime Victim Support and State Compensation regulates data collected by victim support organizations. These organizations collect the following information: identification data, address, nationality, details of the offence constituting grounds for the application (description of the offence, scene and date of the offence, and its circumstances), injuries suffered by the applicant, in particular any bodily or emotional harm, mental shock or economic loss, and the type of support provided to the victim.

c. Other official bodies mandated for data collection (e.g. statistics office/bureau)

Within the framework of the Hungarian National Data Collection Programme, the Central Statistics Office collects data from guardianship authorities. District guardianship authorities are mandated with the co-ordination of family protection in cases of suspected abuse, with information on these cases sent to the Collection Programme.

5. Population-based surveys

A survey conducted in 2011 in schools within the framework of the Pandora's Box international project collected information on sexual violence from a sample of pupils enrolled in high school (446 students). According to the survey results, 17% of the pupils had been abused or sexually molested, most between the ages of 12 and 14 (8.7%) and 10 and 12 (4%), respectively. When identifying the crime scene, in addition to "another person's home" or their own home, many also mentioned the Internet.

According to a 2014 survey¹² conducted by the European Union's Agency for Fundamental Rights, 28% of women in Hungary have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a partner and/or non-partner. Moreover, 9% of the women interviewed had experienced violence by a partner and/or non-partner in the 12 months before the survey took place. The survey also revealed that 50% of the women interviewed had experienced psychological violence from their previous partner, and 49% from any partner, either current or previous. Lastly, according to the survey, 12% of the participants had experienced stalking at some time since the age of 15.

A survey¹³ on GBV conducted by the European Commission in 2016 revealed that 53% of those interviewed considered domestic violence against women to be a fairly common phenomenon in Hungary. In contrast, domestic violence against men was viewed as not common.

Lastly, a survey on gender equality¹⁴ requested by the European Commission in 2017 revealed the common belief among the Hungarian population that gender inequality exists in politics, at the workplace, and in leadership positions of companies and other organizations.

¹² <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/violence-against-women-eu-wide-survey-main-results-report>

¹³ <https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/ResultDoc/download/DocumentKy/7583>

¹⁴ <http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/yearFrom/1974/yearTo/2017/surveyKy/2154>

II. PREVENTION

1. Awareness-raising campaigns

The Hungarian national police and Prosecutor's Office have not yet introduced any awareness campaigns regarding the prevention of GBV.

Between 2014 and 2017, the Ministry of Human Capacity implemented an awareness campaign on domestic violence entitled "the Notice".

NGOs and other civil society representatives organize awareness campaigns on a yearly basis, in particular during the 16 Days of Global Activism against Gender-based Violence (25 November–10 December).

Additionally, awareness activities about child abuse are organized by the government as well as faith-based organizations. For example, between 2017 and 2018, the Hungarian Baptist Aid Foundation provided special care programmes for minors engaged in or exposed to prostitution, including long-term mentoring and monitoring.

2. Training

No special training on the topic of GBV has been provided to the Hungarian police or prosecutors. However, police officers do receive regular training on the prevention of violence within the family. For example, 600 officers trained within the framework of such a project implemented in 2010 continue to work as local mentors and trainers. In 2018, a network of 245 new trainers in the area of crime and public order was created. Moreover, within the framework of an EU programme implemented in 2014, 85 police officers were trained on topics such as prevention of child abuse and domestic violence.

Annually, 60 to 70 judges and deputy prosecutors receive training that includes references to forms of GBV, such as assault, human trafficking and sexual crimes.

3. Media standards for reporting on gender-based violence

Concerning media regulatory standards existing in Hungary on the matter of GBV, the Association of the Forum of Chief Editors, the Association of Hungarian Publishers, and the Association of Hungarian Content Providers operate a system for self-regulation of the media. This self-regulation is based on the Ethical Codex, which is widely adopted by media professionals. The Codex includes the protection of individual rights. The national Media and Communication Authority has signed protocols with content providers that also provide for the protection of human dignity.

4. Other preventive measures

The Hungarian Equal Treatment Authority supports the recognition and prevention of discrimination through information dissemination and publications, as for example a brochure issued in 2017 titled "Prevention of Harassment at the Workplace and Ways of Enforcing One's Rights". This brochure provides detailed information about forms of harassment (including sexual harassment), formulates recommendations for employers aimed at suppressing this phenomenon, and introduces conditions for legal remedy.

Other preventive programmes include: 1) awareness raising among youth (implemented by 17 private organizations in Hungary based on a unified methodology); 2) the campaign "Be Aware!", implemented with the support of the Ministry of Human Capacities with a focus on intimate partner violence.

III. PROTECTION AND SUPPORT

1. Support services and legal measures

In Hungary, victim assistance operates based on an opt-in system. Police officers are required by law to inform every victim verbally and in writing about the possibility of receiving specialized support. This information includes the following: available victim support providers; types of support and conditions, including contact information (telephone and e-mail) and the number of the toll-free Victim Assistance Hotline; information about further tailored support upon first contact with support providers.

Furthermore, should victim support services be informed of a victim's need for assistance, they contact victims directly to inform them of their eligibility for receiving support. Support is then only provided if requested by the victim. The support services provide victims with information, legal assistance, emotional support, as well as many other types of assistance. Moreover, victim protection police officers regularly monitor the crimes that have occurred within their jurisdictions and contact victims to provide them necessary information.

2. Active specialized support services

Specialist support services for women are operated by the Hungarian Government, NGOs and faith organizations. These include: 7 crisis clinics, 16 crisis centres, 2 secret shelters and 2 temporary accommodation centres for victims of human trafficking. In addition, halfway houses for victims of domestic violence and human trafficking operate at various undisclosed locations. The annual number of people who sought help from these service providers was the following: in the first ten months of 2018: 1,141 referrals; 2017: 1,011 referrals; 2016: 850 referrals, and 2015: 1,112 referrals.

Any individual who has become the victim of a crime, including a victim of GBV, may benefit from the services provided by the various victim support organizations (shelter, immediate financial aid, verification of their status as victims, and provision of witness care as well as protection). These services are free of charge and can be provided without examining an individual's financial status. Moreover, victims of serious, intentional violent crimes may also take advantage of state mitigation of damages if they meet specific conditions.

Victim support organizations are trained to provide appropriate care to victims, with particular emphasis on approaches that are empathetic and supportive in order to reduce secondary victimization.

3. Telephone helplines

Hungary's National Crisis and Information Telephone Line (OKIT) is a free, 24/7, nationwide helpline (also receiving calls from outside of Hungary). It provides help and support to victims of domestic abuse and human trafficking (psychological, legal counselling, and information on available help, benefits, as well as "rapid case management", as for example, making referrals to shelters if needed). Calls are confidential. Help seekers are informed that they can remain anonymous unless a referral needs to be made.

OKIT receives about 8,000 calls annually, one third of these calls related to domestic violence cases. The annual number of people who called OKIT was the following: in the first 10 months of 2018: 1,141 referrals; 2017: 1,011 referrals; 2016: 850 referrals; 2015: 1,112 referrals.

4. Other measures for protection and support

In 2016, a working group was created at the Hungarian National Rehabilitation and Social Agency with the objective of analysing the phenomenon of child prostitution, with a focus on prevention and reduction, as well as the formulation of methodological materials and recommendations.

Further enhancement of Hungary's OKIT database management system is expected as part of the governmental Human Capacity Development Operational Programme 1.2.4-16 "Development of Crisis Management Services", as well as the development of crisis management clinics as part of the Human Capacity Development Operational Programme 1.2.5-16 "Safe Refuge".

IV. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

1. Legal framework addressing gender-based violence

National legislation in Hungary does not use the term GBV, nor is GBV addressed directly. Forms of GBV that involve intimate partner violence, sexual assault, sexual coercion, harassment, violence against members of the community, murder, physical assault, violation of personal liberty, and slander are addressed in the chapters of the 2012 Act C of the Criminal Code. This includes crimes against life, physical integrity, and health; crimes against human liberty; crimes against the freedom of sexual life and sexual morals; crimes harming the interests of children and the family; crimes against human dignity or fundamental rights.

Act V of 2013 of the Civil Code sets down the requirement to honour human dignity and regulates the individual rights arising from this, including rights related to life, physical integrity, health and personal liberty, as well as the prohibition of discrimination. This law includes the claims that can be made in cases of violation of individual rights and the possibility of demanding damage compensation.

Additional frameworks, such as Act XXXI of 1997 on the protection of children and the administration of guardianship affairs, and Act CXXXV of 2003 on equal treatment and the promotion of equal opportunity, set down requirements for child protection and equal treatment. Moreover, the Victim Assistance Act defines the framework of state assistance for victims. Last but not least, Act LXXII of 2009 provides for restraining orders in cases of intimate partner violence.



Participants at the National Specialized Training on Gender-based Violence, Budapest, Hungary, 10 May 2019. (OSCE/Alina Munteanu)

2. Guidance for professionals on implementing legislation

No special units have been set up at either the police or Prosecutor's Office to deal with matters of GBV.

As of 2009, temporary preventive restraining orders can be issued in cases of intimate partner violence. Detailed regulations and directives on the process of issuing such orders are in place, as for example in Directive 2/2018, which was issued by Hungary's National Police Headquarters.

Special guidelines also exist at the prosecutorial level, as for example guidelines on cases of harassment and human trafficking, including prostitution as a method of exploitation.

3. Civil law remedies

Within the framework of criminal procedures, the injured party – as a private party – may assert civil legal claims against the perpetrator. Civil legal claims that can be asserted are primarily demands aimed at compensation for damages that have arisen as a direct result of the act, which is the subject of the accusation. The payment of other non-property damage (injury claims) that can be linked to the crime can be demanded by the injured party from the perpetrator through civil litigation procedures.

4. Compensation

Victims who have suffered physical damage or persons directly related to victims of a crime can qualify for damage mitigation from the state. This applies for crimes committed on the territory of Hungary. If the crime was committed in another Member State of the European Union, Hungary's victim assistance service provides support to the victim in the process of claiming forms of damage mitigation in that country. A victim can also submit a civil legal claim during criminal proceedings, and based on the Civil Code can launch a civil suit against the perpetrator in the interest of asserting claims arising from the crime. No statistical data is available on victims who have requested and/or received such compensation in Hungary.

5. Administrative and judicial data

Information collected in Hungary's Integrated Criminal Statistics of the Investigation Authorities and Prosecutor's Office is available for the following forms of GBV: homicide (Criminal Code section 160); voluntary manslaughter (Criminal Code section 161); intimate partner violence (Criminal Code section 212/a); indecent exposure (Criminal Code section 205); sexual assault (Criminal Code section 197); sexual coercion (Criminal Code section 196); and sexual abuse (Criminal Code section 198).

The collected data¹⁵ is disaggregated by sex, age, type of violence, relationship to the perpetrator and geographical location.

Of cases resulting in the death of a woman and falling within the scope of the term GBV, a total of 76 cases were registered for the year 2017, and a total of 93 cases for the year 2016. These are part of the total number of homicides and voluntary manslaughter cases, which numbered 177 in 2017, and 301 cases in 2016.

No information was available on the number of cases of attempted murder, the number of complaints made by victims or third parties, the number of criminal proceedings, or the number of convicted perpetrators.

¹⁵ Tables with further information on the number of cases disaggregated by sex, age, type of violence, relationship to the perpetrator and geographical location can be consulted in the Annex Situational Analysis in Hungarian.

V. INVESTIGATION, PROSECUTION, PROCEDURAL LAW AND PROTECTIVE MEASURES

1. Measures to ensure prompt and appropriate responses

In cases that require prompt responses, investigative authorities in Hungary may perform procedural actions, but they are obliged to inform the investigative authority with competence and jurisdiction immediately. Police may issue temporary preventative restraining orders when their evaluation of the dispute between the involved individuals renders such measures necessary, even in cases where no crime or transgression has yet occurred. As a preventive measure, individuals subject to such orders may be removed from the scene until a further decision has been made.

2. Number of interventions carried out by law enforcement

The number of temporary preventative restraining orders issued by the police in Hungary was 1,427 in 2017, and 1,410 in 2016.

3. Risk assessment procedures

Procedures for analysing immediate danger or re-victimization are in place. These are followed before the investigative authority decides on emergency measures, such as issuing a temporary restraining order.

4. Implementation of directives and regulations

The EU Directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, the Directive 2011/99/EU on the European Protection Order, and Regulation 606/2013 on mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters have been transposed into Hungary's national legislation.

5. Emergency barring orders

In cases of intimate partner violence, the police have the power to issue a temporary preventative restraining order. This measure can be taken as a response to the circumstances of the case, in particular the facts as presented by the victim or the perpetrator, observations at the crime scene, indications of intimate partner violence, and the behaviour of the victim and the perpetrator. The police issue a temporary preventative restraining order for 72 hours. Extension or termination of the order is to be decided by the court within three days.

6. Data on protection orders

The number of temporary preventative restraining orders issued in Hungary by the police was 1,427 in 2017, and 1,410 in 2016. As per data collected by the Prosecutor's Office, the number of restraining orders was 141 in 2017, and 154 in 2016.

7. Ex parte legal proceedings

In Hungary, there is a differentiation between crimes pursued through public prosecution and crimes pursued through private prosecution. Misdemeanours for minor bodily harm and slander, for example, belong to the latter group. In procedures for private prosecution, the victim acts as a private accuser. If the private accuser decides to drop the accusation even without a solid reason, the criminal proceeding cannot continue and is terminated by the court.

If a victim decides to launch criminal proceedings, that is, public prosecution, against a perpetrator, this can be done based on a private motion, which is understood as any victim statement according to which they want the perpetrator to be criminally liable. Once submitted, this motion cannot be retracted. The criminal proceedings must continue even if the victim decides at a later stage to drop the charges. As per recent changes in Hungarian legislation, any earlier statement can be used as evidence, even if the witness denies the statement at a later stage.

8. Support to victims in legal proceedings

In Hungary, victims may receive legal support as per the decision of the public guardianship authority, who may participate in criminal proceedings with the aim of protecting the best interests of the victim.

9. Protection measures available during investigations and judicial proceedings

The current criminal procedural law provides special protection to victims, both in the investigation and trial phases. These measures apply to minors and disabled persons. They also apply to victims of crimes against freedom of sexual life or sexual morality, as well as other categories of victims and witnesses, as per the decision of the authorities.

The most important measures that fall under special protection are the following:

- Increased protection of the victim's personal data;
- Immediate performing of investigative actions that require the presence of the victim;
- Avoidance of unnecessary contact between the victim and others during proceedings;
- Use of specially equipped listening rooms, with video and audio recordings of procedural actions;
- Interaction with the victim through telecommunication tools during court proceedings;
- Restriction in certain cases of the rights of the accused and their defenders;
- Elimination of confrontation, with the victim registered as a specially protected witness;
- Presence of a forensic psychology expert during procedural actions;
- Hearings conducted by officers of the same gender (for victims of crimes against freedom of sexual life or sexual morality).

10. Availability of free legal aid and eligibility criteria

As per current legislation in Hungary, parties with property interests or other interests may request representation by a public defender. Depending on the financial status of the requester, the supervisory fee of the public defender is advanced or covered by the state.

Victim support services provide victims with information, legal advice, emotional support, and other types of necessary assistance. Victims are entitled to these services free of charge, with no assessment of their financial status.

Victims of GBV may receive legal assistance for launching proceedings necessary to avert damage caused by the crime, or damage to their rights or interests arising in connection with the crime, as well as their representation in these proceedings. This representation is available throughout the proceedings, including the investigation, indictment and court hearing.



4. GBV Analysis in Romania

4. GBV Analysis in Romania

A situational analysis of GBV was conducted in Romania in 2018 by the Romanian Steering Committee, with the support of the Romanian Working Group and the Romanian Reference Group.¹⁶

I. INTEGRATED POLICIES AND DATA COLLECTION

1. Action plans and policies

The law in Romania for preventing and combating domestic violence covers all forms of violence, including verbal, physical, psychological, sexual, economic, social and spiritual violence.

Additionally, national legislation includes tools for ensuring the protection of victims' human rights, as derived from Romania's ratification of the Istanbul Convention, as well as the European Directive 29/2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, which has been transposed into Romania's national legislation.

Moreover, a National Strategy on "promoting equal opportunities for women and men and preventing and combating domestic violence" is in place for the period 2018–2021, with a subsequent Operational Plan for the strategy's implementation.

2. Co-operation with civil society organizations

National legislation in Romania¹⁷ regulates the co-operation with NGOs and other civil society actors when addressing forms of GBV. The relevant ministries and other specialized institutions of the central public administration, local public authorities, NGOs and other civil society organizations can sign co-operation agreements in the areas of prevention and intervention. Moreover, the law provides for intersectorial working groups, established at the national level under the auspices of the general departments of social assistance and child protection. These working groups can be comprised of representatives from the police, gendarmerie, public health providers, social assistance and child protection services, active NGOs, as well as representatives of probation offices and other institutions with relevant responsibilities in the field.

3. Official bodies for co-ordination

An Interministerial Committee for preventing and combating domestic violence was established in Romania to ensure the co-ordination between all actors responsible for transposing and implementing the provisions of the Istanbul Convention. The Committee has the following main responsibilities: to ensure co-operation between institutions and organizations in the implementation of public policies and the joint Operational Plan for preventing and combating domestic violence; to support the process for implementing and monitoring the Istanbul Convention; and to support proposals on improving the normative framework in preventing and combating domestic violence.

4. Data collection

As per national legislation, law enforcement agencies and justice institutions gather data on: 1) cases of domestic violence; 2) protection orders issued by courts; and 3) cases pending with first instance courts, cases with decisions issued by first instance courts, and means of settlement, including admission, denial or other solutions. This data is disaggregated by location, sex, age, relationship between perpetrator and victim, and means of settlement.

¹⁶ These groups were established within the framework of the project and included representatives from the General Inspectorate of the Romanian Police; Prosecutor's Office at the High Court for Cassation and Justice; Iasi Court; National Agency on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men; Sensiblu Foundation; Anais Association; and Necuvinte Association.

¹⁷ Law no. 217/2003.

The Romanian Ministry of Health collects data based on the following criteria: cause of death, sex, age and geographic area.

The National Agency on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men (ANES) manages a national database of domestic violence victims and offenders who benefit from social services, with data extracted from the departments for social assistance and child protection (DGASPC). The statistical data refers to cases of domestic violence recorded by each DGASPC during the reporting period and is disaggregated by: gender, citizenship, age, types of intervention, services offered, types and level of settlement, legal measures, safety and protection measures, typology of solutions, and risk factors.

NGOs in Romania collect statistical data on beneficiaries, disaggregated by: geographical area, crime type, solution/ services offered, sex, age, and source of reference.

In addition, the National Institute of Statistics collects data on GBV cases.

5. Population-based surveys

According to a 2015 questionnaire conducted by the FILIA Centre on sexual harassment in universities, one out of two women reports sexual harassment in universities.

Moreover, according to an opinion poll organized by ANES in 2017, nine out of ten Romanians consider domestic violence to be a problem for the society.

Lastly, the 2015 and 2016 public safety questionnaires conducted by the National Institute of Statistics and the General Police Inspectorate show that overall, domestic violence is little tolerated in Romania, although a certain level of acceptance of the phenomenon still remains in the society.

II. PREVENTION

1. Awareness-raising campaigns

In regard to awareness campaigns on GBV, several initiatives have been conducted or promoted by the authorities in Romania.

Between 2015 and 2017, ANES was the promoter and implementer of the “National Awareness and Public Information Campaign on Domestic Violence”, a project financed by the Norwegian Financial Mechanism for 2009–2014. Activities of the campaign included: debates at the regional level; the creation and broadcasting of TV and radio spots; promotion materials; public debates on TV and radio; and an opinion poll on attitudes towards domestic violence and the awareness level of institutional actors. Moreover, in March 2017, ANES organized an online campaign, with a unique representative story being posted every day. The heroines of those stories were common women who had taken a stand, asked for help in order to overcome a crisis, and made the first steps towards a decent and autonomous life. Another campaign implemented by ANES in 2017 targeted gender stereotypes and discrimination. It was organized during the International Wrestling Tournament, in partnership with the national Wrestling Federation. During the reporting period, further awareness activities were organized by ANES in partnership with Romania’s Ministry of Youth and Sport.

The police, in partnership with civil society organizations, have implemented another awareness campaign on domestic violence, called “Broken Wings”. Within the framework of the campaign, the organizers distributed preventive materials reaching out to all counties in the country. In addition, a safety guide for victims was produced, along with posters displaying the numbers of unreported cases of violence. The highlight of the campaign was the “Broken Wings” caravan, which travelled to 15 counties.

2. Training

a) Basic/initial training:

All police officers, prosecutors, judges and social workers in Romania receive general basic/initial training on the topic of GBV.

b) In-service/professional training:

	Prevention and Detection of Violence	Standards of intervention	Gender equality	Needs and rights of victims	Prevention of secondary victimization	Multi-agency co-operation
Police	200	200	200	200	200	200
Prosecutors	90	90	90	90	90	90
Judges	90	90	90	90	90	90
Social workers	13	13	13	13	13	13

3. Media standards for reporting on gender-based violence

Media standards for reporting on GBV are regulated in Romania through the following provisions: Article 317 in the Criminal Code on issues related to discrimination; audio-visual Law 504/2002; Decision 220/2011 on the code for regulating the audio-visual content; Law 148/2000 on publicity; Ordinance 137/2000 on preventing and punishing all forms of discrimination; Art. 18 and 19 of Law no. 202/2002 on equal opportunities for women and men, republished; and Law 217/2003 on preventing and combating domestic violence.

Through a decision of Romania's Supreme Court of Justice in 2016, Facebook and other online social network platforms are to be considered public space. As a result, users can be held criminally liable for any act that consists of distributing content that is the object of a crime. It has thus become possible to legally punish persons creating posts leading to public provocation, inciting hatred or discrimination, or disturbing the peace and public order, or that contain explicit sexual content, child pornography, and so on.

4. Other preventive measures

In Romania, a Network for Preventing and Combating Violence against Women was established in 2011 and comprises over 25 NGOs active in the field of domestic violence. The objective of the Network is to ensure protection for victims of violence by advocating improved legislation, services, and access to education and information, and to prevent victimization and re-victimization through education, information, lobbying and advocacy.

III. PROTECTION AND SUPPORT

1. Support services and legal measures

A support service operated by ANES is available nationwide, 24/7, free of charge, at the unique number 0800 500 333. Additionally, a map with all support services for victims according to their place of residence is available on the ANES website.¹⁸ The map includes contact information of county police stations, available social service providers, emergency medical assistance units, and forensic medical centres.

¹⁸ www.anes.gov.ro

2. Active specialized support services

According to data provided by ANES, there are 61 special support centres operating in 41 counties of Romania, as well as 6 in the municipality of Bucharest. These centres provide housing, care, legal and psychological counselling, personal and professional counselling, as well as support for social rehabilitation; 45 centres are emergency centres (37 public and 8 private), and 16 are recovery centres (11 public and 5 private). In addition, there are 32 day-time service centres operating nationwide, of which 25 are centres for preventing and combating domestic violence (16 public and 9 private), and 7 public centres for information and public awareness. Furthermore, 4 day-time centres provide services for aggressors (2 public and 2 private).

The following data was reported on the number of victims who requested assistance from these services: in 2017: 13,102 cases; in the first quarter of 2018: 6,756 cases.

Specialized rape and sexual aggression centres are in the process of being developed.

3. Telephone helplines

A free-of-charge nationwide telephone helpline is available for victims of violence: 0800 500 333. Until 18 October 2018, the helpline had registered a total number of 6,133 calls.

4 . Other measures for protection and support

Cases of domestic violence can also be reported by telephone to the district departments for social assistance and child protection in all counties in Romania as well as in Bucharest.

IV. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

1. Legal framework addressing gender-based violence

Several regulations in the area of GBV have been established at the national level in Romania, as primary, secondary and tertiary national legislation:

Primary legislation:

- 1) Law no. 202/19.04.2002, republished, modified through Law no. 232/02.08.2018, on equal opportunities and treatment for women and men;
- 2) Law no. 682/19.12.2002, republished, modified, on witness protection;
- 3) Law no. 217/22.05.2003, republished, modified through Law no. 174/13.07.2018, on prevention and combating domestic violence;
- 4) Law no. 30/17.03.2016, on ratifying the Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention.

Secondary legislation:

- 1) Government Decision no. 197/09.02.2006, modified, on approving the programmes of national interest in the field of protection of the rights of disabled people, as well as in the field of social assistance for the elderly, homeless people, and victims of domestic violence;

2) Government Decision no. 49/19.01.2011, for approving the Framework methodology on preventing and intervention with a multidisciplinary team as part of a network in cases of violence against children and domestic violence, and the Methodology for the multidisciplinary and inter-institutional intervention in cases of children who are exploited and are at labour exploitation risk, children victims of trafficking in persons, as well as migrant children who are victims of other forms of violence in other countries;

3) Government Decision no. 365/24.05.2018, for approving the National strategy for 2018–2021 for promoting equal opportunities and treatment for women and men and prevention and combating domestic violence and its Operation Plan.

Tertiary relevant legislation:

Orders of the Minister of Labour, Social Solidarity and Family from 2004 on approving:

- 1) Quality standards for social services in the field of protecting victims of domestic violence;
- 2) Procedures for co-operating in preventing and monitoring cases of domestic violence;
- 3) Guidelines for organizing social services for preventing and combating domestic violence.

2. Guidance for professionals on implementing legislation

In 2017, the Romanian National Institute of Magistracy¹⁹ started placing a greater focus on practical exercises and supplementary courses for future prosecutors of domestic violence.

Between 2014 and 2017, as part of a project implemented by the police and financed through the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009–2014, a manual of good practices for professionals fighting domestic violence was developed and disseminated. Moreover, 42 professionals were trained as trainers (23 police officers, 10 prosecutors, and 9 judges).

In 2016, five training courses on domestic violence were organized and attended by 379 police officers, prosecutors, and judges. Moreover, within the framework of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009–2014, a total of 72 judges and prosecutors attended train-the-trainer courses on managing domestic violence cases.

3. Civil law remedies

Protection orders are regulated in Romania by Articles 23-35 of Law no. 217/2003.

There is no statistical data in place regarding forms of violence, the number of cases appealed in a civil court, or the number of solutions adopted. According to a data system of the Supreme Council of Magistracy, the statistical data on protection orders is the following:

Minors and family – Protection order	2016	2017
First instance court	5577	6430
Appeal	1198	1291
Review	85	81
Issued	2170	2894
Total	6860	7802

¹⁹ Activity Report of the National Institute of Magistracy for 2017, p. 8, http://www.inmlex.ro/fisiere/d_2110/Raport%20de%20activitate%20al%20INM%20pe%20anul%202017.pdf.

4. Compensation

According to Romanian legislation, the ways a victim can demand compensation from a perpetrator are the following:

- 1) Demand compensation within the criminal proceedings, in accordance with the Criminal Code;
- 2) Initiate a separate action after a criminal proceeding has started or has been finalized, in accordance with the provisions of Law no. 211/2004;
- 3) Introduce an action in civil proceedings for reparation of damage caused as a result of a crime.

No data is available on the number of victims who demanded compensation from perpetrators, or on the number of victims who received such compensation.

5. Administrative and judicial data

a) Cases resulting in the death of a woman

According to the Romanian police, in 2016, 64 homicide cases resulted in the death of 42 female victims. In 2017, 84 homicide cases and 72 attempted murder cases resulted in the death of 22 female victims.

No data is available on the number of cases in which the authorities had prior knowledge of the woman's exposure to violence.

Regarding perpetrators convicted in relation to these cases, a total number of 191 defendants were sent to trial for homicide in 2016, and 138 defendants in 2017. No correlation could be made between perpetrators of homicide and those who attempted murder from 2016 and 2017, because it could not be stated with certainty whether the defendants sent to trial in that period were actually the authors of the crimes committed in those years. The duration of criminal investigation activities can exceed the period taken into consideration.

b) Cases of attempted murder

According to the Romanian police, there were 64 attempted murder cases in 2016, and 72 cases in 2017.

No data is available on the number of cases in which the authorities had prior knowledge of the woman's exposure to violence.

c) Number of complaints made by victims or third parties

There were a total of 35,202 complaints made by victims or third parties in 2016, and 36,245 complaints in 2017.

d) Number of criminal proceedings or other legal action

A total of 35,202 criminal proceedings were initiated in 2016, and 36,245 criminal proceedings were initiated in 2017.

e) Number of perpetrators convicted for the cases above

No correlation could be made between the number of criminal proceedings and the number of perpetrators convicted.

V. INVESTIGATION, PROSECUTION, PROCEDURAL LAW AND PROTECTIVE MEASURES

1. Measures to ensure prompt and appropriate responses

The main measure for ensuring prompt and appropriate response in Romania is the temporary protection order, which can be issued on the spot by police officers in cases of immediate danger.

2. Number of interventions carried out by law enforcement

The police intervened in all reported cases in 2016 and 2017. No further data was available.

3. Risk assessment procedures

When issuing a temporary protection order, police officers follow a risk assessment procedure involving a series of questions to determine the existence of imminent risk.

In addition, a person whose life or whose physical or psychological integrity or freedom is at risk due to an act of domestic violence can request a protection order from the court for a maximum of six months. This protection order can be renewed.

4. Implementation of directives and regulations

The EU Directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, the Directive 2011/99/EU on the European Protection Order, and Regulation 606/2013 on mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters have been transposed into Romania's national legislation, through amendments to the Criminal Code, the Criminal Procedure Code and in the special laws: Law no. 211/2004, Law no. 217/2003, Law no. 192/2006, Law no. 302/2004, and Law no. 206/2016.

5. Emergency barring orders

The police can issue a temporary protection order for a period of 5 days (or 120 hours). The initial period can be extended, *de jure*, with the time necessary to carry out the judicial procedures for issuing a protection order. The perpetrator is informed of this procedure.

6. Data on protection orders

Year	2016	2017
Protection orders issued by courts	2170	2894
Number of breaches of protection orders issued by courts	743	1011



Participants at the National Specialized Training on Gender-based Violence, Brasov, Romania, 31 May 2019. (OSCE/Alina Munteanu)



7. Ex parte legal proceedings

In Romania, the law does not allow for the continuation of legal proceedings *ex parte*. The existence of a formal complaint determines whether a criminal case is opened. If the criminal action was initiated *ex officio* within the law, withdrawal of a complaint can have an effect only if accepted by the prosecutor (Art. 158, Para. 4 of the Criminal Code).

8. Support to victims in legal proceedings

NGOs can offer assistance and support to victims of violence according to Law no. 217/2003, as well as based on accreditation as a social service provider.

9. Protection measures available during investigations and judicial proceedings

During criminal investigations, the following protection measures can be ordered *ex officio*, or on request:

- a) Surveillance and protection of the victim's household, or provision of a temporary household;
- b) Physical protection of the victim or members of the victim's family during investigations;
- c) Personal data protection, whereby a pseudonym is provided for the victim to use when signing statements;
- d) Measures such as interviewing the victim without their physical presence via audio-video transmission, using distorted voice and image.

During a trial, the court can order the use of one or more of the following measures:

- a) Surveillance and protection of the victim's household, or provision of a temporary household;
- b) Physical protection of the victim or members of the victim's family during investigations;
- c) Court hearings behind closed doors when the victim is interviewed;
- d) Provision of measures such as interviewing the victim without their physical presence via audio-video transmission, using distorted voice and image;
- e) Personal data protection, whereby a pseudonym is provided for the victim to use when signing statements.

After a conviction is finalized, a perpetrator can receive a corresponding or an auxiliary punishment in the form of a prohibition to communicate with the victim or members of the victim's family, or to keep a certain distance from these persons.

10. Availability of free legal aid and eligibility criteria

According to the provisions of the Criminal Code of Romania, the injured party has the right to be represented by one or more defence attorneys during the entire period of the criminal investigation, preliminary hearings, and court hearings. The judiciary authorities are obliged to inform the victim of this right.

Moreover, according to the provisions of Article 14-30 of Law no. 211/2004 (with subsequent amendments and additions) on measures for ensuring the protection of crime victims, legal assistance is available to a victim free of charge upon request.

1. ENHANCING MULTISECTORAL CO-ORDINATION

The following section focuses on two main points:

- a) Findings and best practices from the project implementation in enhancing the multisectoral co-ordination.
- b) Further recommendations on maintaining and enhancing the multisectoral co-ordination beyond the project timeframe.

a) Findings and best practices in the area of multisectoral co-ordination

Gender-based violence is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. Dealing with the different forms of GBV in isolation is not sufficient for tackling such a deeply entrenched problem. Any attempt to prevent and address all forms of violence requires co-ordinated and comprehensive measures by all key actors (law enforcement, courts, ombudspersons, health services, social services and civil society organizations) that comprise standardized operating procedures and multisectoral frameworks.

One of the project's goals was to enhance the co-operation and co-ordination between all relevant agencies (governmental and non-governmental), thus to contribute to a multisectoral approach to GBV with an emphasis on the reinforcement of referral mechanisms.

Best practice: Austria

During the closing conference of the project, a representative of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Justice gave examples of best practices in the area of multisectoral co-ordination and GBV, with a focus on victim-centred approaches. The representative presented the structure and work of two interministerial working groups (IMAG/Interministerielle Arbeitsgruppe) – one on victim support in proceedings, and a second on the protection of women against violence – as examples of efficient practices in the area of co-ordination between the Government and victim support organizations. During the meetings of these working groups, discussions are held regarding general problems as well as individual cases, with the aim of developing measures to improve the co-operation and co-ordination between all relevant stakeholders and increase efficiency in responses for the benefit of victims. The NGO representatives thus have the opportunity to give general and case-specific feedback to the Government, which contributes to improvements in working methods and approaches.

The project aimed at strengthening multisectoral co-ordination by establishing national Steering Committees, Working Groups and Reference Groups in each of the project's beneficiary countries (Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania). High-level managers and practitioners from the respective police authorities, prosecutorial offices, courts and victim support services were identified and nominated to be members of the national Steering Committees and Working Groups. Moreover, civil society representatives (from NGOs and academia) were identified and nominated to be members of the national Reference Groups. The formation of these groups contributed not only to multisectoral co-ordination, but also to the sustainability of the project activities and their local ownership.

In Bulgaria, representatives of the following institutions/organizations were members of the national Steering Committee, Working Group and Reference Group: the National Police General Directorate; the Supreme Cassation Prosecutor's Office; the National Institute of Justice; the Alliance for the Protection from Gender-based Violence/Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation; the Centre for the Study of Democracy; and Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Faculty of Law.

In Hungary, these groups were formed with representatives from the Hungarian National Police; the National Criminology Institute; the Criminal Chamber of the Budapest Metropolitan Court; the Central District Court; the Budapest Metropolitan Prosecutor's Office; the Faculty of Law of the National University of Public Service; the National Crisis Management and Information Telephone Service; the Western Transdanubian Regional Crisis Management Ambulance; and the National Public Health Institute.

In Romania, the national committee and the groups consisted of representatives from the General Inspectorate of the Romanian Police; the Prosecutor's Office at the High Court for Cassation and Justice; the Iasi Court; the National Agency on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men; the Sensiblu Foundation; the Anais Association; and the Necuvinte Association.

All project activities were designed and implemented in close co-operation with the national committees, thus ensuring maximum impact and sustainability. For example, the members of the committees were engaged in the process of conducting the baseline needs assessments and situational analysis, the development of the training curriculum and materials for the regional train-the-trainers courses, the adaptation of these materials for national specialized trainings, the choosing of trainees, the design and dissemination of promotion materials during the awareness campaigns, as well as the monitoring of all activities. Moreover, the national committees contributed to the impact and sustainability of all project activities. They advocated the institutionalization of the curriculum and training materials, the rostering of trainers for future training activities, and the promotion of the awareness materials beyond the project's timeframe.

Multisectoral co-ordination in conducting the situational analysis

The representatives of the national committees joined forces and conducted a situational analysis in each of the beneficiary countries. The objective of this analysis was to identify the strengths, weaknesses and behavioural levers of the existing criminal justice infrastructure related to responses provided to victims of GBV, the reporting of such cases, and secondary victimization. Summaries of all of the situational analyses can be found in Chapter I of this report.

Best practice: Bulgaria

In Bulgaria, the establishment of the national Steering Committee, Working Group and Reference Group was highlighted as an added value of the project. Their establishment revealed the benefits of multisectoral co-ordination, not only between state bodies but also with civil society.

The involvement of all stakeholders in the process of conducting the situational analysis was crucial in understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the responses provided to GBV as a direct result of the level of interaction between key actors. While it emphasized the downsides of working in silos, it also highlighted the existing connecting mechanisms between criminal and civil law.

During the Closing Conference of the project, the members of the Bulgarian Steering Committee indicated that the findings in the situational analysis were "eye opening", especially in the areas of legislative framework, collection of data, investigation, and protection. For example, the analysis supported a better understanding of the legal framework and contributed to legislative changes (as for example, the criminalization of stalking in 2019). Moreover, the analysis revealed the need for improving data collection. The findings in this area will feed into a new project led by the authorities on establishing a unified information system that will store data on domestic violence and GBV. The new system will include information related to risk assessments, follow-up, and support provided to victims. The system will be accessible by all relevant authorities and will include additional information on cases of domestic violence committed by armed personnel.

Multisectoral co-ordination in conducting training activities

The training activities organized during the project targeted mostly police officers, investigators and prosecutors. To highlight the need and benefits of multisectoral co-ordination, an adjacent workshop for judges, lawyers, social workers and victim support organizations was organized on the last day of the training courses. These workshops explored the responses to GBV from a multidisciplinary perspective. A focus group methodology was used during the workshops. Participants were divided into three multidisciplinary groups, each including police officers, investigators, prosecutors, judges, social



Participants at the Regional Training of Trainers, Budapest, Hungary, 25 - 29 March 2019
(OSCE/Aina Munteanu)

workers and representatives of victim support organizations. A moderator was assigned to each group, who introduced a real-case story, in three stages. At each stage of the case story, the moderators introduced dedicated questions and steered the discussions to find answers to the following questions: *What would the ideal response to this phase be? What tools and resources are available in real life? What could be done to close the gap between ideal and real life?* At the end of the workshop, each group was tasked with the presentation of how one phase of the case could be managed, in multidisciplinary teams. The groups not presenting had the opportunity to add their approaches to the management of the phase, which opened the floor to discussion and exchange of best practices. This methodology was piloted during the train-the-trainers course, and was also included later in the methodology of the national specialized training courses. For the latter, the case study was adapted to national legislation. Both the participants and the observers at these training courses evaluated the workshop as innovative and useful, considering the challenging nature of GBV cases. The methodology and case stories used during the workshops can be found in the annexes to this report, in each of the national languages (Bulgarian, Hungarian and Romanian).

Multisectoral co-ordination in conducting awareness campaigns

One of the objectives of the awareness activities implemented during the project was to encourage the reporting of cases of GBV. To this end, posters were designed and disseminated through traditional and social media during the 16 Days of Global Activism against Gender-based Violence in 2019. The key messages on the posters referred to the two reporting mechanisms: “112” for reporting cases to the police, and the “national hotline number” to ask for help or counselling. The posters were jointly disseminated by the national police directorates, prosecutorial offices, courts and NGOs. This level of multisectoral co-ordination in conducting awareness raising was a premiere in the three beneficiary countries. It not only encouraged the reporting of cases by displaying the existing reporting mechanisms, but it also underlined the improved multisectoral co-ordination and progress made towards unifying provided responses.

b) Recommendations in the area of multisectoral co-ordination

Co-ordination and data collection

- Create a framework for multisectoral co-ordination between agencies and designate a particular body/institution to lead the co-ordination, as well as to monitor and evaluate the implementation and efficiency of the co-ordination.
- Maintain the national mechanisms established within the framework of the project (national Steering Committees, Working Groups and Reference Groups) to continue benefiting from co-operation that has now been functional for more than two years.
- Ensure co-operation, communication and information sharing among key agencies, with a mandate to prevent, investigate, prosecute and follow up on GBV cases.
- Ensure participatory/inclusive approaches to law and policy-making by incorporating knowledge and feedback from NGOs and others working directly with victims and perpetrators.
- Ensure availability of data on GBV cases and improve its quality and reliability by systematically collecting, recording and centralizing data. Consider the need of data disaggregated by the sex of victim and perpetrator, the type of violence, and the relationship between victim and perpetrator.
- Collect data to monitor case progress and outcomes, and to identify good and poor practices.

Training for professionals

- Use the best practices from the project on organizing workshops with all key actors involved in preventing, investigating, prosecuting and following up on GBV cases (the methodology and examples of case studies can be found in the annexes to this report).
- In training programmes, involve key professionals from all sectors, both as participants and as trainers.

Intervention and support

- Develop or review and institutionalize specific protocols, guidelines, procedures and quality standards to govern responses to GBV cases by key sectors, with a focus on the sharing of information and the co-ordination of efforts aimed at reducing secondary victimization and preventing further incidents.
- Ensure clear reporting and referral procedures, agreed upon by all actors.

Awareness raising

- Consider taking a unified, co-ordinated approach when designing and implementing awareness activities by consulting and involving all key actors not only in the design process, but also in the dissemination of materials.
- Ensure that awareness activities send a clear and unequivocal message of zero tolerance regarding GBV, informing victims of their rights, and empowering them to recognize the various forms and consequences of GBV. All actors should endorse these key messages.

2. TRAINING PRACTITIONERS

The following section focuses on two main points:

- a) Findings and best practices from the project implementation in the area of enhancing the knowledge, skills and attitudes of professionals concerning GBV.
- b) Further recommendations in the area of training on GBV.

a) Findings and best practices in the area of training practitioners

The first response of professionals to victims of GBV often determines whether a victim chooses to pursue legal action, or withdraws accusations due to fears of secondary victimization. Due to shortcomings in the response of criminal justice systems to forms of GBV, many victims are at risk of further abuse. Such shortcomings can include but are not limited to inappropriate police responses, ineffective restraining orders, legal and policy gaps, or poor co-ordination with victim support services. The under-reporting of GBV cases can be linked to lack of trust in criminal justice systems due to negative public perceptions of the quality of such systems' response to GBV. Competent and empathetic responses from law enforcement and justice practitioners can instil a sense of trust in victims and lead to an increased number of reported cases.

One of the main goals of the project was to enhance the knowledge, skills and sensitivity of police officers, investigators and prosecutors regarding GBV, and thus to improve their responses to cases of GBV. A further goal was, consequently, to increase the number of reported cases as a direct result of increased trust in the criminal justice response.

Towards these goals, the project envisaged the design and delivery of a regional train-the-trainers course and three subsequent national specialized trainings on GBV for police officers, investigators and prosecutors, with the emphasis on the need to ensure a victim-centred approach when responding to such cases. On the last day of the training activities, adjacent workshops with judges, social workers and victim support organizations were organized, with the aim of underlining the need for a multisectoral approach.

Development of training material for the regional train-the-trainers course

Experts from the Institute of Police Education of Linnaeus University (Sweden) developed the curriculum for the regional train-the-trainers course. The aim of this training was to create an informal regional network of trainers equipped with the necessary teaching skills, theoretical knowledge and practical experience to develop and deliver national training courses for police officers and prosecutors dealing with cases of GBV.

The train-the-trainers course focused mainly on the development of soft skills, since effective responses to GBV cases require active listening. The syllabus included the following topics: forms, causes and factors of GBV; victimology and crisis development, victim-centred approach, attitudes toward victims, victim's rights and victim support (soft skills); modern interview techniques and communication skills; threat, risk assessments and safety plans; co-operation with civil society; and pedagogy, course planning and training methodology. The curriculum of the training can be found in the annexes to this report, in Bulgarian, Hungarian and Romanian.

Learning took place in the form of lectures, discussions, case studies, exercises and reflections, both individually and in groups. These included, among other things, exercises on crisis communication and conflict resolution, active listening, and sharing of knowledge and ideas. The "world café method" was used to provide the participants with a relaxed, informal and creative atmosphere.

Best practice: Linnaeus University

Tips on adult learning from the experts at the Institute of Police Education of Linnaeus University (Sweden)

The regional train-the-trainers course was developed and conducted by two expert trainers from the Institute of Police Education of Linnaeus University (Sweden). The main principle of this training was "learning by doing". This approach is based on the fact that participants understand and learn faster through high participatory activities (resulting in so-called deep learning) rather than through lectures. The main principles of deep learning are:

1. Learning by doing and being self-active;
2. Learning from context and from different understandings;
3. Learning through dialogue and co-operation with others;
4. Learning through motivating tasks adapted to the participant's level;
5. Learning by receiving feedback on performance;
6. Learning by reflecting on the learning.

In addition to these principles, the experts from Linnaeus University highlight the importance of selecting the right people as participants (motivated, positive, curious, with a mandate for change), keeping the commitment and interest high (both the organizational and personal commitment), and ensuring the passing on of knowledge and skills to others.

Choosing the right participants

The participants in the regional train-the-trainers course were prepared to become national trainers, with the plan to return to their respective countries and deliver training courses to their fellow staff members. Long-term commitment and contractual arrangements supporting the passing on of knowledge and skills were among the main criteria of nomination and selection.

Best practice: Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania

To ensure the transfer of knowledge and skills at the organizational level, the Romanian authorities decided to nominate as participants in the train-the-trainer course police officers and prosecutors whose mandate is to deliver in-service training. In addition, specialists from national police schools and the national Police Academy were nominated to participate in the train-the-trainer course in light of their mandate to influence national police education curricula and disseminate knowledge and skills to police students.

The same approach was taken by the Bulgarian authorities, who nominated police officers and prosecutors with a mandate for change in their respective departments, as well as lecturers at the Police Academy. For example, one of the participants at the training was the Bulgarian Deputy General Prosecutor, who has a say in the development of future training materials and activities. Another prosecutor who participated in the regional course passed on the information acquired during the training by producing brochures and incorporating them in the work of police patrols. In addition, as a best practice, members of NGOs, social workers and victim support officers were engaged in the training activities.

In Hungary, a lecturer from the National University of Public Service Faculty of Law Enforcement participated in the train-the-trainers course. This supported changes in the curriculum and training methodology. Various new topics were added to the syllabus, including victimology, forensic interviews (using the PEACE model²⁰), active listening and interrogation techniques. Moreover, a number of students from the Faculty of Law Enforcement are addressing the topics of best practice in victim interview techniques for their final theses. These developments will contribute to changing attitudes and behaviours of practitioners toward GBV.

The train-the-trainers course created a platform for dialogue and exchange for practitioners from the three countries. For example, during group exercises with participants of different nationalities, best practices were exchanged in the areas of multisectoral co-ordination, risk and threat assessment, protection orders, referral mechanisms, and the prevention of violence.



Participants at the Regional Training of Trainers, Budapest, Hungary, 25-29 March 2019
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²⁰ PEACE Model of Investigative Interviewing (P-plan and preparation; E-engage and explain; A-account; C-closure; E- evaluate).

Development of training material for the national specialized training courses

For the national specialized training courses, the trainers (participants of the regional training course) adapted the curriculum and materials to the local context and needs.

For example, when delivering the specialized training in Bulgaria, the trainers put emphasis on the procedures to be followed in cases of protection order violations and the initiation of pre-trial proceedings. Moreover, cases received from the United Nation's Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) were used as case studies and basis for discussion and group exercises. In Hungary, the training focused mostly on interview techniques, attitudes towards victims and protection measures. During the training activity in Romania, particular attention was given to the temporary protection order measure (which had been recently introduced as a protection measure) and its practical application. The customization of the general curriculum to the local contexts ensured the relevance, impact and sustainability of the training activities.

Choosing the right trainers and participants

The practitioners trained during the regional train-the-trainers course adapted the curriculum and materials and delivered the national specialized training courses. Representatives of the national Steering Committees and the project team monitored the delivery of the training activities.

Best Practice: Hungary

The Hungarian Steering Committee decided to engage in the national specialized training all participants of the regional course. This group of trainers included police officers, investigators, psychologists, prosecutors and lecturers from law enforcement faculties. This approach highlighted the complexity of GBV cases and the need for improved multisectoral co-ordination for better prevention and responses to cases. The focus of the training was on interview techniques, communication, support, protection measures and attitudes towards victims. This approach was due to the recognition that developing the soft skills of responders was more needed than a consolidation of their investigative skills. The trainers followed good practices for adult learning from the regional train-the-trainers, allocating more time to case studies, role-play and discussions, as well as to modalities of passing on knowledge, skills and correct attitudes to peers. The participants evaluated the training as highly innovative and effective. The Hungarian Steering Committee has continued to monitor the activity of the trainers and trainees beyond the project period, and has reported the transfer of knowledge and skills to peers through information sessions and peer-to-peer exchange.

In all three countries, special emphasis was put on the need to protect the rights and interests of victims and witnesses during all stages of investigation and judicial proceedings. This includes the importance of engaging promptly and appropriately in the prevention and protection of victims of violence, employing preventive operational measures, and collecting evidence. For the safety and well-being of victims, better co-ordination between police officers, prosecutors, lawyers and social workers was highlighted as necessary from the beginning of any investigation and judicial process.

Best Practice: Romania

In Romania, a significant part of the national specialized training was dedicated to the newly instituted preventive and protection measures (risk assessment and temporary protection orders), and the challenges encountered when applying these measures. At the initiative of the Romanian Steering Committee, a judge was invited to participate as a trainer during the specialized training in Romania. This approach triggered fruitful discussions and exchanges. The first-responder police officers had the opportunity to analyse their actions from the perspective of the entire criminal justice system. This provided a more holistic picture of the topic, and increased practitioners' awareness of the implications of their actions on a larger scale. In addition, it contributed to a better understanding of the complexity of GBV cases and their cycles of violence. The judge stressed the need to protect the rights and interests of victims and witnesses at all stages of investigations and judicial proceedings. This included the importance of engaging promptly and appropriately in the prevention of and protection from violence, of employing preventive operational measures, and collecting evidence. Further discussions were held on *ex parte* and *ex officio* proceedings. Participants agreed that within the limitations of the law, agencies should ensure that investigations into offences and their prosecution should not be wholly dependent upon a report or complaint filed by the victim, and that proceedings should continue even if a victim withdraws their statement or complaint.

Keeping the commitment and interest high, at both the organizational and personal level, was another good practice transferred from the regional train-the-trainers to the national specialized training courses.

Best Practice: Bulgaria

For example, in Bulgaria, the presence during the national specialized training of the Deputy Director of the National Police General Directorate and the National Domestic Violence and Gender Equality Co-ordinator leveraged the importance of the topic and reassured the trainees of leadership commitment to adequately prevent and respond to the phenomenon of GBV. During her remarks, the Deputy Director of the National Police stressed the need to protect the rights and interests of victims and witnesses at all stages of investigation and judicial proceedings by responding promptly and appropriately, employing preventive operational measures, and collecting adequate evidence. Moreover, she emphasized the importance of co-ordination between police officers, prosecutors, lawyers and social workers, which should be in place from the beginning, so victims do not feel alone in the process. In the feedback forms, participants emphasized that they were more motivated upon seeing that senior police management is taking this topic seriously, adding that this would also influence their decision to transfer the gained knowledge, skills and attitudes to their peers.

Ensuring the passing of knowledge and skills to others

Best Practice: Romania

In Romania, participants at the national specialized training took the initiative to pass on the acquired knowledge and skills to their colleagues. To do so, they organized training sessions at the county level. A testimonial from a participant at the national training reads: *Today we organized the first training session with the community police officers from Bihor County on GBV. We used the same materials from the national specialized training. We elaborated on the following topics: communication techniques, risk assessment, victimology and crisis development, protection and support. The highlight was working on real cases in small groups, just as we did at the national training. In total, we had 40 community police officers, who engaged in constructive debates. From August onwards we plan to organize further meetings. We want to make sure that the skills and knowledge we acquired during the national training reach all police officers in our county.*

b) Recommendations in the area of training practitioners

- Provide regular and institutionalized training to officials involved in the prevention, investigation and prosecution of GBV cases, to ensure that they respond to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of victims and conduct accountable and effective investigations and prosecutions.
- Perform regular training needs assessments and ensure training delivery upon legislative and procedural changes.
- Pay particular attention to training first-responder police officers, since they are the first people to have contact with victims.
- In the criminal justice education complex (for police officers, prosecutors and judges, both basic and in-service training), include a number of mandatory courses and/or lectures on topics such as victim-centred approach, attitudes towards victims, victim protection and support (soft skills), with particular emphasis on the root causes, factors, dynamics and consequences of GBV.
- For in-service training activities, allocate resources for creating audio/video materials that can be easily distributed to all police officers, prosecutors and judges on attitudes, victim-centred approach, and investigation and interrogation techniques.
- Involve all justice actors (police officers, investigators, prosecutors and judges) as well as victim support and NGO representatives in training activities, and highlight the need for multi-agency co-operation and co-ordination in all phases of investigation.
- Leverage the importance of NGOs and encourage criminal justice practitioners to work more closely with NGO representatives in the prevention, investigation and prosecution of GBV cases.
- During training activities, conduct awareness activities among criminal justice actors with the aim of creating zero tolerance toward GBV, reducing secondary victimization, and increasing accountability.
- Maintain the networks formed during training (to enable participants to keep exchanging good practices) and roster trainers for future activities; encourage them to replicate the knowledge and skills they acquired during the course.
- Enhance measures on prevention, protection and support by adopting threat and risk assessment protocols and standard operation procedures for first-responders, and by institutionalizing a multi-agency co-ordination/monitoring body to ensure a victim-centred approach.
- Establish, where appropriate, specialized and multidisciplinary units within the police, provide prosecution services with specific expertise and sufficient human and financial resources, and encourage the courts to gain specific expertise in GBV.
- Minimize the risk of secondary victimization during criminal investigations, prosecutions and trials, *inter alia*, through testimonial aids and assistance for victims and witnesses.

3. RAISING AWARENESS

This section focuses on two main points:

- a) Findings and best practices from the implementation of the project in the area of GBV awareness raising.
- b) Further recommendations in the area of GBV awareness raising for practitioners and the public.

a) Findings and best practices in the area of awareness raising

Gender-based violence is deeply embedded in the social structure of communities. Once seen as a private matter, GBV is becoming a public health matter of global concern. Despite many efforts to root it out, the prevalence of GBV remains high. Paradoxically, the number of GBV cases remains low. This is due to low levels of awareness, prejudices, gender

stereotypes and gender-biased traditions that lead to under-reporting. Raising awareness of the different forms of GBV is a crucial aspect that can contribute to the prevention of violence. These measures should be understood as an important element in a wider set of comprehensive measures, as a piece of the puzzle and a first step in changing attitudes and behaviours that perpetuate the various forms of violence. To be effective, they should be designed as long-term measures and as an integral part of a package of comprehensive policies.

The project's third goal was to raise the awareness of signs, signals and effects of GBV among criminal justice practitioners, civil society and the public, and thus to contribute to sustainable organizational and cultural change.

An awareness-raising campaign was implemented in 2019 during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence (25 November–10 December). It targeted not only criminal justice practitioners, to raise their awareness of preventing and eradicating secondary victimization, but also the general public, to provide information about victims' rights and available support services, and to encourage the reporting of cases. Promotion materials were designed and disseminated, reaching out to the approximately five million people and fifteen thousand practitioners in the three beneficiary countries. The two types of promotion materials were: 1) posters for the general public (disseminated in print, on social media networks, and TV and radio stations); and 2) pocket cards for first-responder police officers (disseminated in print and integrated into the police information systems).

What works and what does not in awareness-raising campaigns on gender-based violence?

Best Practice: European Union's Agency for Fundamental Rights

A communications expert from the European Union's Agency for Fundamental Rights participated in the Closing Conference of the project and briefly introduced, in the discussion with representatives of the beneficiary countries, what works and what does not work in GBV campaigns. Her presentation drew on the Agency's "10 keys to effectively communicating human rights", and focused on key 3, which recommends "triggering people's core values" via stories and "frames". When communicating about GBV, such stories create responses in people that go beyond mere altruistic values. Moreover, emphasis was put on the need to co-ordinate awareness activities with all actors involved in the prevention and investigation of cases, and to provide a single key message. Furthermore, key 8, "strengthen communication with the media" was explained to highlight the importance of establishing and maintaining a strong media relationship, of involving newsrooms in campaigns as a partner from the beginning, and working jointly with the media as an ally. Also, when designing and implementing campaigns, it is important to remember the particularities of GBV. One is shame – many victims do not want to talk about GBV. Another is the potential backlash of increased violence when women become more aware and assertive about their rights. And third, the normalization of GBV generates tolerance towards it. When designing and implementing a campaign, these particularities of GBV can be managed through a co-ordinated approach with all actors.

Choosing partners - local ownership

One of the biggest achievements of the campaign was the design and delivery of key messages in a co-ordinated and co-operative manner. In all three beneficiary countries, the campaign was implemented by the respective national police directorate (as the main promoter), in direct partnership with other justice institutions (prosecutorial office; courts), social services and victim support organizations (NGOs). This level of co-operation and co-ordination between actors ensured a unified message, maximum outreach and visibility, as well as the sustainability of the awareness-raising activities.

For example, in Bulgaria, the campaign was implemented jointly by the National Police General Directorate, the Supreme Cassation Office, the National Institute of Justice, and the Alliance for the Protection from Gender-based Violence. In Hungary, the campaign was a joint endeavour of the National Police and the National Crisis Management and Information Telephone Service. Last but not least, in Romania, the promoters of the campaign were the National Police, the Agency on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men, the Anais Association and the Sensiblu Foundation.

Choosing messages, key visuals and audience

The main concept of the campaign was to break the silence and contribute to establishing the understanding that GBV is a public issue that must be addressed by the government and society as a whole. Data from the European Union's Agency for Fundamental Rights survey on violence against women (2014) and the Special Eurobarometer report on domestic violence against women (2010) were used as sources of information regarding changes in awareness and attitudes towards GBV.

Poster for the general public

Whereas changes in attitudes and behaviour were envisaged as campaign objectives, they were not envisaged as direct results. These were formulated more realistically and focused on dispelling myths, clarifying the legal implications of this type of violence, and providing suggestions on how and where to report GBV for both victims and bystanders. To raise the awareness both of vulnerable groups and bystanders, the project envisaged posters for the general public aimed at raising the awareness of violence and at encouraging the reporting of cases to specialized authorities, be it the police (through the 112 emergency telephone number) or victim support organizations (through dedicated hotline numbers). To ensure local ownership and impact, the main messages were formulated by the national committees. National institutions and civil society organizations were involved in designing the key messages, since these require not only expertise in communications, but also on the topic of GBV. For this reason, expertise from women's NGOs specialized in combating GBV was used when developing the key messages. Ensuring that the messaging was suited to the respective national context was key. The focus was on providing accurate information about the consequences of domestic violence, in particular legal remedies, available support for those affected, and the actions bystanders can take. With regard to the key visual, the three beneficiary countries decided on a joint key visual for all countries. The messages focused on: 1) encouraging victims to seek help (by calling the emergency number or hotlines); and 2) encouraging bystanders to intervene and speak up. For example, in Bulgaria, the message displayed on the posters was: *Violence starts with screams and must never end in silence. Stop domestic violence! Call 112, 0800 18676 or 02 981 7686.* In Hungary, the message was: *Silence is the loudest scream. Hear it! Call 06-80-20 55 20 crisis phone to report relationship violence.* Finally, in Romania, the key message was: *Say no to domestic violence. Call 112 to report a case or 0800-500-333 to receive counselling. Don't be passive; your attitude can save lives!*

The notion of "general public" includes all groups in the society, independent of age, class, gender, ethnicity, or whether victim or perpetrator. The campaign's poster was aimed at raising the awareness of the general public of the existence of GBV, the need to stop it, and the available support services.

Pocket cards for first-responder police officers

The need to raise the awareness of first-responder police officers on GBV was highlighted as necessary in the initial needs' assessment, as well as throughout the project and during the implementation of the campaign activities. The project envisaged designing and disseminating pocket cards to help first-responder police officers in their response to violence indicators, and to provide guidance on appropriate ways of approaching and receiving victims. This includes treating them with respect and applying referral methods. The police representatives of the three beneficiary countries established the contents of the pocket cards. Common to all versions was the importance of maintaining a victim-centred approach, collecting all relevant evidence, informing the victim of available support and protection options, and conducting a threat/risk assessment to ensure that there is no risk of re-victimization. Before the final text for the pocket cards was decided, the national committees conducted a pre-test with target groups of first-responder police officers to ensure the usefulness of the cards.

Means and media to convey the message

Dissemination of posters for the general public

The campaign was implemented during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence (25 November–10 December 2019), which ensured momentum as well as the quick multiplication of main messages. To convey the message to as many people as possible, in both urban and rural areas, the dissemination strategy for the posters included both traditional and social media. The posters were printed in 15,000 copies and disseminated in the three countries by the local promoters. They were hung in public spaces such as police stations, post offices, pharmacies, hospitals, etc. In addition, the posters were disseminated through social media networks. Digital banners were created and placed on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Google Display Network. Last but not least, TV and radio spots were created with the purpose of promoting the poster. The spots were aired on national television and radio channels, as well as on private stations, either *pro bono* or as paid advertisements.

Best practice: Bulgaria

In Bulgaria, the promotion of the general public poster on social media was done through the official page of the National Police General Directorate, which was used as a pivot for the dissemination of the social media ads. This effort maximized the number of people reached (656,767 unique users with 1,731,427 impressions through Facebook and Instagram, and 405,896 unique users with 3,399,624 impressions through Google Display Network). The poster was also heavily promoted on TV and radio channels, reaching more than 1,336,000 people (23.1% of the total population) in the two weeks of implementation. The voice-over used for both the TV and radio spots was that of a well-known Bulgarian public figure. According to the opinion of individuals who participated in the testing of the spots, this aspect increased the impact of the spots considerably.

As a result of the major involvement of local stakeholders in the campaign, the posters were disseminated nationwide. Press releases were issued by the police and other governmental authorities, as well as NGOs, and these were also picked up by the media nationwide.

Best practice: Romania

In Romania, the dissemination of the posters to the general public and the pocket cards to first-responder police officers went an extra mile. The Romanian police engaged police structures in all 41 counties in the country, placing the 5,000 posters in public spaces and ensuring that the 5,000 pocket cards reached first-responder police officers nationwide. Moreover, police officers working on prevention and public order organized flash mobs, thematic competitions, information stands and public debates in schools, universities, libraries, culture halls and shopping malls. TV and radio spots promoting the poster were broadcast on both national and local stations, as well as on digital billboards and public screens in public transportation, train stations, airports and shopping malls. Local police departments took the initiative to print and disseminate an additional 4,000 posters, which were hung in public spaces in both urban and rural areas. These activities were implemented in partnership with various civil society organizations, in particular the Sensiblu Foundation and the Anais Association.

Dissemination of pocket cards

Also for the pocket cards, both traditional and modern dissemination tools were used. A total of 15,000 pocket cards were printed and disseminated by the respective national police service to first-responder police officers nationwide. In addition, an electronic version of the pocket card was shared with national authorities, who multiplied the message by including the pocket card in the police intranet and information systems (as for example, in Hungary, where all police officers operate with ZTE mobile phones). This increased the number of practitioners reached considerably.

Best practice: Hungary

The Hungarian police took the initiative to include the contents of the pocket cards in its system of ZTE mobile phones, the device with which all first-responder police officers are equipped. The pocket cards included a list of the ten most important steps to be taken by a police officer when responding to a case of domestic violence. Among other things, the pocket cards raise awareness of the need to ensure the safety of victims, to inform them of all available support measures, to reduce the risk of re-victimization by performing a risk assessment, and to collect adequate forensic evidence. The inclusion of the pocket cards in the ZTE phone system ensures the sustainability of the campaign by extending the usage of the cards beyond the campaign's basic implementation period.

Evaluation of the campaign

Evaluation of posters for the general public

The initial target for the posters was 100,000 individuals in all three beneficiary countries. In the final evaluation, it was concluded that the campaign had reached more than 5 million individuals (approximately 3 million through social media, and another 2 million through TV, radio and printed material).

The impact of the posters was also evaluated through questionnaires conducted by police officers and/or hotline operators. The target was three per cent of those seeking help had seen the poster. According to reports from hotline operators, in all three countries, this target was met and even exceeded.

Evaluation of the pocket cards for first-responder police officers

The pocket cards reached the minimum established target: 15,000 first-responder police officers in all three beneficiary countries. By sharing the cards on the intranet pages of the national police services as well as their information systems, it was estimated that at least one third of all police officers with access to these services had read the contents of the card at least once.

Anonymous questionnaires were conducted to evaluate the usefulness of the pocket cards. The questionnaire contained the following five yes/no questions: 1) Do you consider the pocket cards useful in your everyday work? 2) Do you believe that you know better how to handle cases of violence now that you have the pocket card? 3) Do you believe that it is important to inform victims about available support services? 4) Will you use the card in the future? 5) Will you share your knowledge with your colleagues?

A total of 600 questionnaires were disseminated in each country, with a response rate of 80%. On average, 87% of responders found the pocket cards useful in their everyday work; 81% thought that they know better how to handle the cases of violence now that they have the pocket card; 98% believed that it is important to inform victims about available support; 86% will use the card in the future; and 96% will share their knowledge with their colleagues. On the initiative of the Bulgarian police, a sixth question was introduced at the national level, which asked respondents whether they thought the campaign should continue in the future; 83% of the responders were in favour of this. A detailed analysis of the provided responses can be seen in the table below.

	Do you consider the pocket cards useful in your everyday work? (Yes)	Do you believe that you know better how to handle the cases of violence now that you have the pocket card? (Yes)	Do you believe that it is important to inform victims of available support services? (Yes)	Will you use the card in the future? (Yes)	Will you share your knowledge with your colleagues? (Yes)	Do you think that the campaign should be continued in the future? (Yes)
Bulgaria	81%	78%	96%	80%	92%	83%
Hungary	93%	85%	99%	91%	97%	n/a
Romania	88%	81%	99%	88%	98%	n/a

b) Recommendations in the area of awareness raising

National policies, strategies and action plans

- Allocate resources for the prevention of forms of all GBV, and include recurrent awareness activities in annual prevention strategies and action plans, as opposed to one-off measures.
- Ensure that all awareness activities are understood as a part of a larger puzzle in efforts to prevent and combat GBV, and interlink them with other preventive measures taken as part of a comprehensive set of policies and strategies, this aimed ultimately at changing behaviour.
- Study examples from other countries on designing and implementing awareness campaigns on GBV, and use identified best practices at the national level.
- Allocate sufficient budget for the monitoring and evaluation of awareness activities with the aim of assessing what is working and what needs to be improved, and use these findings when designing policies, strategies and action plans in the area of prevention.

Partnership frameworks

- In the framework of strategies and action plans on crime prevention, develop prevention projects/activities in partnership with other sectors and civil society organizations involved in the prevention and combating of GBV.
- Create partnership frameworks with private entities and the media sector when conducting awareness campaigns in order to have a strong leverage effect and maximize the visibility of the campaign and its outreach (as for example, through negotiating in-kind contributions, such as pro bono advertising).
- Establish partnerships with high schools and universities, and conduct targeted awareness activities for pupils/students addressing the root causes of GBV, with emphasis on the de-normalization of violence and ways to recognize different forms of violence, speak out against them, and support victims.
- Partner with first-responders from the health sector, and conduct awareness activities targeted at both clients/help seekers and first-responders with the aim of de-normalizing violence and increasing the reporting of cases to specialized authorities.

Key messages and target audience

- Consider using the concept and materials of the project's campaign as a basis for developing further awareness campaigns targeting specific audiences with different messages, as part of a longer term awareness-raising strategy.
- When designing key messages, consider adapting them to different categories and age groups to ensure a targeted, strategic campaign.



Participants at a flash mob organized in Romania during the Awareness Campaign on Gender-based Violence, 25 November - 10 December 2019. (Romanian Police)



- For more evidence-based interventions, involve civil society organizations, in particular those specialized in women's rights, when developing key messages and identifying target audiences, specifically in the area of awareness raising, but also in general prevention.
- Ensure that key messages are formulated in a gender-sensitive and "do no harm" manner, and that they address not only the effects of violence but also root causes, such as gender inequality, discrimination, norms and stereotypes that tolerate and condone violence.
- Raise awareness among media professionals about all forms of GBV, and the need to improve reporting by avoiding images and messages that perpetuate myths or condone violence.
- Raise awareness among first-responders about all forms of violence, and the need to eradicate secondary victimization by promoting a zero tolerance policy toward GBV.
- Ensure that the general public is informed about all forms of violence, relevant signs and signals, as well as the available measures to prevent acts of violence.

Dissemination strategies

- Conduct an analysis of both traditional and social media infrastructures with the aim of identifying the best dissemination channels and maximizing the number of people reached.
- Consider using both traditional and social media channels as a means of communication and dissemination.
- Design multidimensional communication strategies by engaging all prevention and public order departments, and consider including innovative awareness activities such as flash mobs, public debates, videos/short movies, meetings and debates in cafes, libraries, high schools, universities, etc..
- Ensure that awareness-raising activities reach individuals in all regions and in both urban and rural areas, including very remote areas, by placing promotion materials in commonly frequented public spaces such as hospitals, pharmacies, educational establishments, entertainment spaces, commercial centres, police stations, etc.
- Identify and engage agents of change/gender champions to pick up the main messages of the campaign and disseminate them further through their own networks (traditional networks such as workplaces or public spaces, as well as social media platforms).
- Consider including pocket cards for first-responder police officers in basic education and in-service training curricula as a means for raising awareness of the need to maintain a victim-centred approach when responding to cases of GBV.

Monitoring and evaluation

- Monitor and evaluate awareness-raising activities to gain a better understanding of their impact, as well as to draw lessons learnt and good practices in implementation, with the purpose of feeding the findings in future activities and improving on them.

Annexes

The situational analysis, training curriculum, workshop methodology and promotion materials developed during the project can be found and downloaded from the OSCE POLIS Knowledge and Learning Platform at the following link:

<https://polis.osce.org/project-on-combating-gender-based-violence-eastern-europe-2018-2020>

A list of all materials that can be downloaded can be consulted below:

English:

Situational Analysis in Bulgaria
Situational Analysis in Hungary
Situational Analysis in Romania
Training Curriculum and Adjacent Workshop Methodology

Bulgarian:

Situational Analysis in Bulgaria
Training Curriculum and Adjacent Workshop Methodology
Pocket Card for First-Responder Police Officers (with source files)
Poster for General Public (with source files)
Radio Spot and Video Spot (with source files)

Hungarian:

Situational Analysis in Hungary
Training Curriculum and Adjacent Workshop Methodology
Pocket Card for First-Responder Police Officers (with source files)
Poster for General Public (with source files)
Radio Spot and Video Spot (with source files)

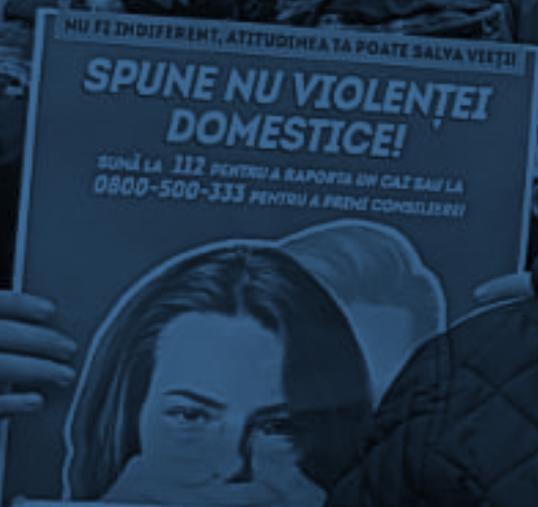
Romanian:

Situational Analysis in Romania
Training Curriculum and Adjacent Workshop Methodology
Pocket Card for First-Responder Police Officers (with source files)
Poster for General Public (with source files)
Radio Spot and Video Spot (with source files)



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