



**Fund for bilateral relations at national level on the EEA Financial Mechanism
and the 2009-2014 NFM**



*Everywhere, every day
women and children fall victims of violence*

Non-violence can truly flourish when the world is free of poverty, hunger, discrimination, exclusion, intolerance and hatred – when women and men can realize their highest potential and live a secure and fulfilling life. Until then, each and every one of us would have to contribute – collectively and individually – to build peace through non-violence

Anwarul Chowdhury

FINAL REPORT ON THE PROJECT:

Better protection of children against domestic violence and gender - based violence by sharing good practices between Norway and Bulgaria

Grant Contract

Nº BG 01- 007 / 06. 07. 2015

Contents

- 1. Presentation of the project and main results and recommendations.....4
- 2. Results of the empirical research.....6
- 3. Legislation and policies for protection of children from violence and protection from gender -based violence in Bulgaria.....13
- 4. Norwegian legislation and policies for protection against violence.....26
- 5. Annexes: tables for one-dimensional frequency distribution of data from the survey and questionnaire for additional information, case studies and good practices, list and card of services provided by the NGOs members of the Alliance for Protection against gender-based violence, others.....34

1. Presentation of the project and main results and recommendations

In July 2015 the Association "Alliance for protection against gender-based violence" (APGBV)¹ and HEDDA Foundation- Norway² started the implementation of the joint project *"Better protection of children against domestic violence and gender-based violence through sharing best practices between Norway and Bulgaria"*. The project, implemented within 12 months, has been financed by the Fund for bilateral relations at national level on the EEA financial mechanism and NFM 2009-2014 (Grant Contract № BG 01- 007/06.07.2015 concluded with the "Monitoring of EU funds" Department to the Administration of the Council of Ministers).

Among the main objectives of the project are: capacity building and sustainable bilateral partnership between institutions and organizations from Bulgaria and Norway in the field of prevention and protection from child abuse and gender-based violence. The project enabled the realization of a survey among NGOs in the country and among Bulgarian institutions at local and central level in the field of prevention and protection from violence, and the identification of effective models and problem areas in the implementation of legislation in this area.

The initiative was essential particularly for experts from different Bulgarian institutions and organizations who had the opportunity to learn about best practices from Norway and to establish sustainable partnerships and cooperation. The project gave an opportunity to increase knowledge and capacity in the area of protection from domestic violence and create good conditions for future actions aimed at changing attitudes towards domestic violence and gender-based violence in the society as a whole.

Project activities were aimed at supporting the process towards the elaboration of a national program against domestic violence and gender - based violence and development of services for the protection of women and children victims of violence.

Other objectives of the project:

- To increase awareness of domestic violence and gender-based violence;
- To increase knowledge among representatives of the Bulgarian institutions and NGOs on violence against children, domestic violence and gender-based violence through the exchange of best practices with Norway;
- Implementation in practice and development of effective cooperation between Bulgaria and Norway to exchange good practices on implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Specific project objectives:

- Identification of problems encountered by NGOs in their work in providing services to women and children victims of violence;
- Establishment of a Joint Plan/Recommendations by the partners for better prevention and protection of women and children, victims of domestic and gender-based violence.

¹<http://www.alliancedv.org/articles/>

²<http://heddafound.no>

During the project a study of the Bulgarian legislation and practice in the field of protection and prevention of domestic violence and gender-based violence was realized. The study includes empirical research, and its results are an integral part of this report.

The survey results were among the leading topics during the international conference held in the period 25-27 May 2016 at the residence of Her Excellency Hon. Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway to Bulgaria. Participants in the conference were representatives of institutions at central and local level and NGOs from Bulgaria³ and experts from Norway⁴. The conference provided an opportunity to exchange knowledge and experience through the presentation of various service models, policies and legislation; introduction to the Norwegian legislation and practice in this area, showing the patterns of interaction of the institutions and NGOs in Norway. During the conference, participants discussed their experiences, results, key issues and challenges, shared ideas on how to build an effective model for prevention and protection from domestic violence and gender-based violence.

The study - preparation and conduction of the empirical research and initial data processing, was implemented by Mrs. Iliana Stoycheva, project manager from APGBV; Mr. Jorgen Lorentzen, expert from the partner HEDDA Foundation; Mrs Hristina Georgieva - expert from APGBV and Chairman of the Association "Ekaterina Karavelova" - Silistra, organization member of APGBV. Updates on the empirical research, the additional processing and final report as a whole are the result of the work of all members of the Alliance, the Chair of APGBV Mrs. Genoveva Tisheva, as well as experts from the team of another member of APGBV - the Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation, the contribution of other experts, consultants and volunteers.

Key findings and recommendations

The conclusions and recommendations made at the end of the project are the result of the study and recommendations prepared during the international conference. They are aimed at:

- **Increasing the responsibility of the State** through the creation of an inter-departmental group at ministerial level to coordinate activities against domestic violence, through implementing changes in the Criminal Code of the Republic of Bulgaria and raising the competence of the police in cases of domestic violence
- **Better protection of victims of violence** through providing effective support for crisis centers and centers providing services and by improving the competence of the experts in these centers
- **Development of programs and work with perpetrators of violence** through the establishment of centers for offenders and providing training of psychologists working in this area
- **Effective and continuous action aimed at preventing and raising awareness of domestic violence** issues through the implementation of national campaigns against violence against women and children and national research on domestic violence.

³Participants from Bulgaria were experts from NGOs from all over the country, from the "Social assistance" department, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Justice, from departments for child protection from more than 12 districts in the country.

⁴Mr. Jorgen Lorentzen - Director of HEDDA Foundation; Ms. Line Nersaens from the Ministry of Justice and Public Security of Norway; Clinical psychologist and director of a program for perpetrators of violence to the organization "Centre Alternative to violence" - Oslo Mr. Morten Nystrøm; Inger - Lise Larsen's Walmsness - Director of the Oslo Crisis Centre for Victims (the largest and oldest such center for victims of violence in Europe). Special guest of the conference was H.Ex. the Ambassador of Norway to Bulgaria.

2. Results of empirical research

2.1. Introduction

During the project, collection and analysis of qualitative data was carried out among non-governmental organizations and institutions in the field of prevention and protection from violence against women and children at national and local level. The survey covered the following topics:

- Key characteristics of the support (specialization of activities, children, travel);
- Work with refugees /migrants/ asylum seekers and children from these groups;
- Working with parents/family of the child;
- Perpetrators of violence and work with them;
- Maintaining statistical information and analysis of the collected information;
- Major obstacles in the work of assisting children affected by violence;
- Possible actions to overcome obstacles and improve services offered.

Collection of information was conducted between September 15 - end of December 2015, and at the end of the project the information was updated and amended. The information was gathered through:

- Questionnaires sent to institutions and NGOs;
- Individual meetings, in-depth interviews and group discussions.

The survey covers 14 NGOs nationwide /11 of which including their branches are members of the APGBV/, with activities in the field of prevention and protection from violence against women and children, 16 departments for Child Protection to the Agency for Social Assistance, 2 medical facilities as well as the State Agency for Child Protection (SACP). NGOs from APGBV participated in additional research to update the information.

2.2. Key features of the support for children and women victims of violence

The key responsible institutions are the Child Protection department, specialized in providing support to children victims of domestic and sexual violence or witnesses of domestic violence. The departments for Child Protection (CPD) are structures of the Agency for Social Assistance (ASA).

The State Agency for Child Protection (SACP) is the only specialized body for the management, coordination and control of the implementation of state policy and child protection-related activities in Bulgaria. SACP organizes inspections of all state, municipal and private schools, kindergartens and servicing units, hospitals, directorates "Social assistance" to the ASA and non-profit organizations working in the field of protection of children and their rights for compliance with children's rights. SACP performs methodological guidance and supervision of the activities of the departments for Child Protection (CPD).

Due to the specifics of their activities, naturally most persons served by the CPD are children. The average monthly number of persons seeking help for all 16 respondent CPD is 5-6, but a significant disproportion is observed in the number and this would need an explanation in the

future by planning a quantitative documentary research (for ex. the number much higher than the average for some CPDs in Southwestern, Southeastern and Northwestern Bulgaria).

What is typical for those working in non-governmental organizations is that they specialize in providing protection and services to a wider range of customers without strictly focusing on children, unlike the CPD. This allows for a holistic approach to the problems of violence against children, as far as in most cases it is not isolated, and is combined with domestic violence against mothers and/or children witnessing domestic violence.

Surveyed NGOs provide services to women and children victims of domestic violence and/or other forms of gender-based violence. Eleven (11) of them are members of the Alliance for protection from gender-based violence (APGBV) including their branches. Alliance members work closely and co-operate in the field of prevention and fight against violence, provide legal, psychological and social counselling to victims and shelter in crisis centers, work towards better protection and prevention; development of standards for social services; development of legislation and monitoring of its implementation in the country, cooperation between NGOs and institutions; advocacy for adoption of effective standards for prevention and protection of women and children from domestic violence and other forms of gender-based violence; educational initiatives and working with youth audiences; international cooperation and exchange of best practices on the issue.

Most NGOs respondents have up to 10 employees. Only 4 of them have a staff of between 10 and 20 people.

Among the surveyed NGOs, the average monthly number of people seeking counselling/support is about 30, among them women predominantly (2/3) and the rest are children. Just like the surveyed institutions, this number varies considerably and its precise identification can be done on the basis of quantitative analysis of documents. Clearly, however, there is a trend in both state institutions and NGOs, that over 80% of children seeking support come with an accompanying persons - in most cases their parents or other accompanying person and the share of children brought by the police or other representatives of state power is relatively small. This information corresponds to the established link between domestic violence against the mother and the child.

Some respondents reported having male clients who have been consulted.⁵ Non-governmental organizations provide services to both women and men, but it is important to emphasize that the centers provide shelter only to women who are being placed together with their children.

Just as in the case with the institutions, among the clients of the NGOs those who have come directly and those referred by another organization or institution are equally distributed.

The support that respondent NGOs provide to victims is mostly early intervention and short-term counselling. Many redirect victims to other institutions. In addition to these services, NGOs provide accommodation in their crisis centers (7 respondent NGOs) and two NGOs maintain a hotline for victims of domestic violence. The period of accommodation for victims

⁵According to statistics within APGBV, these are mainly cases of elderly people who are victims of their children and other relatives.

in crisis centers in most cases is up to six months and two centers provide shelter up to 1 year.⁶

The State Agency for Child Protection (SACP) has an average of 60 clients per month and this includes phone consultations. The agency maintains a free telephone line for children victims of violence, receiving signals and complaints by telephone, as well as offering advice and redirecting customers to other institutions.

2. 3. Work with refugees /person seeking international protection and migrants

Individuals seeking help for cases of gender- based violence, belonging to the groups of refugees/seeking international protection and migrants are relatively low. In the NGO community interviewed, the average monthly number of migrants seeking help for the past year was 3 women and 5 children. Representatives of the institutions do not indicate a single individual - refugee/asylum seeker or migrant who have sought help from them. This is probably due to the deficiencies in institutional mechanisms and the unwillingness and insufficient level of confidence among this group of customers - in some cases because of unclear status, bad experiences with other institutions or concerns of such. The important role of NGOs is reaffirmed in relation to this specific group of people - refugees/asylum seekers and migrants/. Almost all participants in the survey and the discussions share that refugees and migrants have no information on where to turn for help in cases of domestic violence or other forms of gender-based violence. These individuals do not have access, including to organizations and institutions that provide support to victims of domestic violence and other forms of gender-based violence.

Another major problem that is identified in working with representatives of these groups is the language barrier. In many cases, organizations can not provide a translation, which is particularly true for some of the less common languages (Arabic, Farsi and others.), and this becomes a serious precondition for failure to provide sufficient quality service.

In some of these cases, the institutions receive support from NGOs that accommodate victims in crisis centers managed by them - for example, 8 women and children have been placed by an organization working in the Southwest of the country, 5 women and children are accommodated in the North-East region of Bulgaria.

⁶We note, that in the country there are large areas, where there is no crisis center for women victims of domestic violence - such an example is the region of Blagoevgrad, located in southwestern Bulgaria, with a population of 324,110 people.

According to data of the National Statistic Institute, Census 2011 -
<http://www.nsi.bg/census2011/pageen2.php?p2=179&sp2=209>/in English/;
<http://www.nsi.bg/census2011/pagebg2.php?p2=175&sp2=190>/in Bulgarian/

The findings from this survey confirm the results from another pilot detailed study and report, containing the situation on issues related to protection and services for victims of gender-based violence who are seeking international protection, which was prepared for the UNHCR by APGBV representatives.⁷

2. 4. Work with parents/family of the child

Working with parents/family of the child is an integral part of the overall process of protection, and this is an established necessity and practice for the institutions and organizations working in the field:

"Work with the parent is required (usually the mother). In the case of domestic violence, the mother also attends psychological counselling. If the mother does not request such work with her and if she is not affected by the violence, the child's consultant sees her once a month to inform her on the progress with the child. In some cases, family counselling is held."

"In cases of violence against children, counsellors work alongside their parents and family; individual programs for social inclusion of children victims of violence are prepared and implemented."

2. 5. Perpetrators of violence and programs for offenders

Representatives of all institutions and NGOs indicate that in their work it is always clear who the perpetrator of violence against the child is. According to their opinion, in the cases of domestic violence it is most often the father of the child (in 90% of cases). On rare occasions, domestic violence against children is committed by a partner of the mother, who is not the father of the child, by other relative, acquaintance or peer, and in more rare cases, by the mother. Accordingly, in cases, where the child has witnessed domestic violence, in most cases it comes to violence against the mother by her husband or partner.

In cases of sexual violence the group of fathers constitutes a considerably small share, and contrary in most cases the perpetrator is the partner of the mother/stepfather, as well as representatives of the social environment of the child (peers/classmates).

Regarding follow-up actions of the perpetrator of violence and programs aimed at changing their behavior, NGOs are relatively more engaged, which is natural with a view of the wide range of their actions. To the extent that this is an extremely important aspect of the whole process of improving the protection of children, the need for stronger cooperation between the specialized governmental institutions and NGOs is reaffirmed.

"When measures under the Law for protection against domestic violence (LPDV) are imposed to the abuser, he attends a program for abusers, aiming at adjustments and control over this behavior and prevention of further violence."

"Perpetrators of domestic violence are included in a special program for perpetrators of domestic violence when such measure is imposed under the LPDV by the court."

⁷Genoveva Tisheva and Anna Nikolova - Monitoring Report for 2014 on sexual and gender-based violence in the context of international protection in Bulgaria- <http://www.unhcr - centraleurope.org/bg/pdf/resursi/publikacii/sgbv - report - bulgaria - 2015.html>

The survey results show that the number of such programs in the country is too small, despite the fact that such a measure issued by the court - obliging the perpetrator of domestic violence to attend specialized programs, is provided for in the Bulgarian legislation under the Law on protection against domestic violence.

2. 6. Maintaining statistics and analysis of the collected information

Almost all respondent institutions and NGOs keep records and accordingly have statistics on the cases, which they have worked on. Also almost all NGOs indicate that they carry out further analysis of the collected data, where such analyzes are used to improve the quality of work and services, to achieve more efficient allocation of its resources and provide those analyzes to consultants and other institutions, if necessary. Among the institutions surveyed, a relatively small share belongs to those who manage to analyze the collected data and to use the analysis in their work, which is probably due to some kind of lack of administrative capacity (eg. the performance of analyzes is not included in the job descriptions of employees and/or there is a lack of human resources, etc.). Departments for child protection provide the data to the Agency for social assistance.

Regarding the existence of a system for long-term monitoring of interventions, about half of the institutions and NGOs indicate that such monitoring exists, and it includes mostly social work with victims and their families up to six months after completion of the cases.

The State Agency for Child Protection keeps track of the cases, while monitoring and controlling institutions and organizations, which provide services to children victims of violence. The agency analyzes statistics collected from regional institutions and from complaints, obtained directly from the SACP. It also uses collected data for making proposals for changes in legislation, as well as to improve coordination mechanisms for cooperation between different stakeholders – governmental institutions and NGOs.

2. 7. Major obstacles in the work of protection of children victims of violence

The barriers cited by representatives of NGOs and institutions in the interviews and discussions can be organized into three main groups:

1. In relation to the **capacity of institutions involved**: difficulties regarding identification of violence-especially sexual violence and cases of early marriages, lack of sensitivity on the topics;
2. In connection with the **cooperation mechanisms**: insufficient coordination and cooperation between institutions; insufficient cooperation between institutions and the NGO sector;
3. Difficulties caused by the **parents**: problems at obtaining the parents' agreement to be consulted; persistent aggressive actions by the abuser.

2. 8. Possible actions to improve the services provided

1) Amendments in legislation

The majority of respondent representatives of institutions (60%) and NGOs (80%) share that changes of legislation are needed. As more general recommendation is mentioned the adoption and ratification of the Istanbul Convention⁸ and as quoted to be crucial in general -

⁸Convention of the Council of Europe on preventing and fighting violence against women and domestic violence, pdf<http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/rms/090000168008482e>

full practical implementation of its standards and the international standards to prevent and combat violence against children and gender-based violence. Specifically, the proposed changes include:

- Need to increase the standards of services provided to survivors of violence, both women and children, by regulating the opening of a sufficient number of crisis centers (shelters) and counselling centers with all the necessary resources ensured;
- Criminalization of domestic violence and heavier penalties for offenders of domestic violence;
- Priority in moving the oppressor out of the home in cases of domestic violence, creating a registry of files of perpetrators of violence;
- Changes in procedures and hearing of children; introduction of procedures that take into account the specific situation of children. Often they do not have a legal representative or if they have one, he or she has not built a trusted relationship with the child; the aims of the process and the rights of the child are not explained in an appropriate language for the age of the child;
- Introduction of specialization in services for children and specialized services for protection from violence - a new law on social services;
- Adoption of new legislation on child and family or other legislation, corresponding to modern realities, adoption of amendments to the Law on protection from domestic violence;
- Improving methodological manuals and other regulatory acts;
- Profiling crisis centers for children;
- Introducing more opportunities for social services that give an opportunity for shared accommodation/sheltering/social work for the mother and her child;
- Overcoming the problems of formal nature - for example, difficulties in placing children in schools or hospitals, as the employees of the shelter are not guardians of the child.

2) **Raising the level of qualification**

There is a need to conduct specialized training sessions of employees from institutions involved and the representatives of other interested parties regarding the specifics of prevention and fight against violence against children and gender-based violence:

- Legislation in the field of prevention and fight against the consequences of domestic and sexual violence against children;
- Identification of signs of violence - domestic, sexual, early marriages etc.;
- Psychological characteristics and special needs of children in the process of social work with them;
- Specificities of the work with parents, ways and methods for their involvement in the process, tailored to the characteristics of the groups to which they belong;
- Trainings for capacity building and development of the qualification;
- Other topics, further identified in the implementation of the project;
- Activities to increase motivation and involvement of employees/social workers.

An important aspect, which outlines the need for special emphasis, is working specifically with medical professionals to identify the signs of domestic and sexual violence against children and to increase sensitivity to the phenomenon.

All NGOs note that they organize at least once a year a training for their employees. The training is usually realized within the project work and most often participants come from different institutions (social workers from departments for child protection, judges, representatives of the police and others.). The institutions participating in the study confirm the fact that they do not provide training for professionals, and in cases, when their representatives participate in such trainings they are organized mainly by civil society organizations.

3) **Establishment/improvement of cooperation mechanisms**

Respondent representatives of institutions and NGOs share that currently they have built a relatively good cooperation with the court, child protection departments, medical facilities, etc., based on contacts and work meetings in connection with the cases they work on.⁹

Respondents assess that coordination between institutions needs improvement. In this regard, the development of new inter-agency mechanism is recommended, which includes a wide range of stakeholders and allows improvement of the existing coordination between the various institutions and the cooperation between institutions and NGOs, which would allow even a better use of its potential to improve the protection of children and prevention of violence.

Thanks to the established cooperation, NGOs exchange information on opportunities for accommodation of victims and thus are able to accommodate clients in crisis centers/shelters, where at a certain moment they do not have vacancies in the crisis centers managed by them.

4) **Activities for increasing sensitization and raising awareness**

Activities for increasing sensitivity and awareness are stated unanimously by the representatives of institutions and NGOs as essential element for creating an atmosphere supporting prevention and combating the consequences of child abuse. The main role in this process is played by the NGOs because for them this is their usual activity, as they have the experience to provide funding for various projects, while exactly the funding remains the main problem for conducting this type of activities. The following good practices for raising sensibility and awareness have been identified by this study:

⁹One NGO described the *mechanism for cooperation* established within the municipality of Silistra. In 2015 several institutions and the Women's Association "Ekaterina Karavelova" initiated the establishment of the Regional Council of Experts on Domestic Violence. Members of the Board are representatives of the Regional Directorate of Minister of Internal Affairs, of District Court, Regional Court, Department "Social assistance", the Bar Association, NGOs. The regional Expert council holds regular meetings and works for effective prevention and protection from domestic violence, and also provides conditions for cooperation between institutions and organizations on specific cases.

- Training by NGO representatives of social pedagogues, psychologists, school counsellors and teachers;
- Successful annual campaigns by NGOs within the 16 days dedicated to fight against violence against women /25 November - 10 December/;
- Trained professionals hold lectures for students in different high school age – focus is on students to acquire knowledge and skills to recognize violence, on ways for coping, about institutions to which they can turn for help, important phone numbers;
- Establishment of a volunteer club of young people aged 15 - 19, trained in the method "peer education" on various topics, related to violence;
- Starting a youth club "Let's be friends" as part of a prevention program for young people to cultivate intolerance towards different forms of violence.

5) Financial resources for implementation of the activities

Securing the necessary funding to carry out these activities has been identified as a major problem by all respondent representatives of state institutions, due to lack of budget for training and information activities. This is stated also by NGOs which do not have the planned resources, and depend on projects with fixed start and end, a fact that threatens the sustainability of the results. It could be recommended that the opportunities for the development of a large project at national level with EU funding should be explored, which would bring together the development of legislative changes, conducting training, dissemination activities and capacity building mechanisms, which in the future will ensure synergy and sustainability.

Providing a holistic approach to fight violence against children and gender-based violence, including all the elements mentioned, is identified as the main direction for future action by the SACP.

The APGBV plans in the future, based on the results of this study and on the basis of the differences found in the number of clients of NGOs and child protection directorates in different regions, as well as based on other available information, to formulate research hypotheses and conduct a detailed quantitative research on this topic.

3. Legislation and policies for protection of children from violence and gender-based violence in Bulgaria

1. Legislation

Bulgarian legislation provides protection of children from all forms of violence.

The Law on Child Protection governs the rights, principles and measures for child protection, the bodies of the state and municipalities and their interaction in the implementation of activities related to child protection, and the participation of legal entities and individuals in such activities.¹⁰ Art. 1, paragraph 2 of the Law states that "The state shall protect and guarantee the fundamental rights of the child in all spheres of public life for all groups of children according to age, social status, physical, health and mental status, providing all appropriate economic, social and cultural environment, education, freedom of expression and security."

¹⁰Law on Child Protection, <http://www.lex.bg/laws/ldoc/2134925825>

The National Strategy for Children for the period 2008-2018 examines violence in many of its manifestations such as domestic violence, sexual and labour exploitation, trafficking, violence in schools, child pornography, etc., and in response sets activities, targeting prevention of violence and reintegration of children victims of violence.¹¹

The State bodies for child protection pursuant to Art. 6 of the Law on Child Protection are:

- the Chair of the State Agency for Child Protection and the administration, which assists him in carrying out his/ her powers;
- Directorates "Social Assistance";
- Minister of Labour and Social Policy, the Minister of Interior, Minister of Education and Science, Minister of Justice, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Culture, Minister of Health and the mayors.

The specialized body of the Council of Ministers for management, coordination and control in the field of child protection is the Chair of the State Agency for Child Protection. The State Agency for Child Protection (SACP) is managed and represented by the Chair, who is nominated by the Council of Ministers and appointed by the Prime Minister.¹² The Agency shall develop and monitor the implementation of national and regional programs for child protection, monitor and analyze the implementation of state policy for child protection, provide guidelines to Child protection departments in the directorates "Social assistance" and provide methodological guidance for compliance and protection of child's rights.

The National Council for Child Protection (NCCP) is an advisory and coordinating body to the SACP and it assists the Chair of SACP in the development and implementation of the National Strategy for Children and the National Programme for Child Protection.¹³ The Council supports the synchronization of legislation in the field of protection of children; provides preliminary opinion on draft legislation that contains provisions, relating to the rights of children before being submitted to the Council of Ministers, monitors and makes suggestions for changes in the objectives and activities of implementation of national, regional and international child protection programs in accordance with the priorities and programs of the European Union.¹⁴

At the regional level, the bodies for child protection are the Departments for Child Protection and the Regional Structures of the Social Assistance Agency (RSSAA).

There are 28 Regional "Social assistance" Directorates and within them there are a total of 147 "Social assistance" directorates.

¹¹<http://www.strategy.bg/StrategicDocuments/View.aspx?lang=bg-BG&Id=464>

¹²http://sacp.government.bg/media/filer_public/2016/01/26/ustroistven-pravilnik-na-darzhavnata-agentsia-za-zakrila-na-deteto.pdf

¹³Law on the Protection of the child, Art. 18. (1) <http://www.lex.bg/laws/ldoc/2134925825>

¹⁴<http://nmd.bg/aktualiziran-e-sastavat-na-natsionalniya-savet-za-zakrila-na-deteto/>



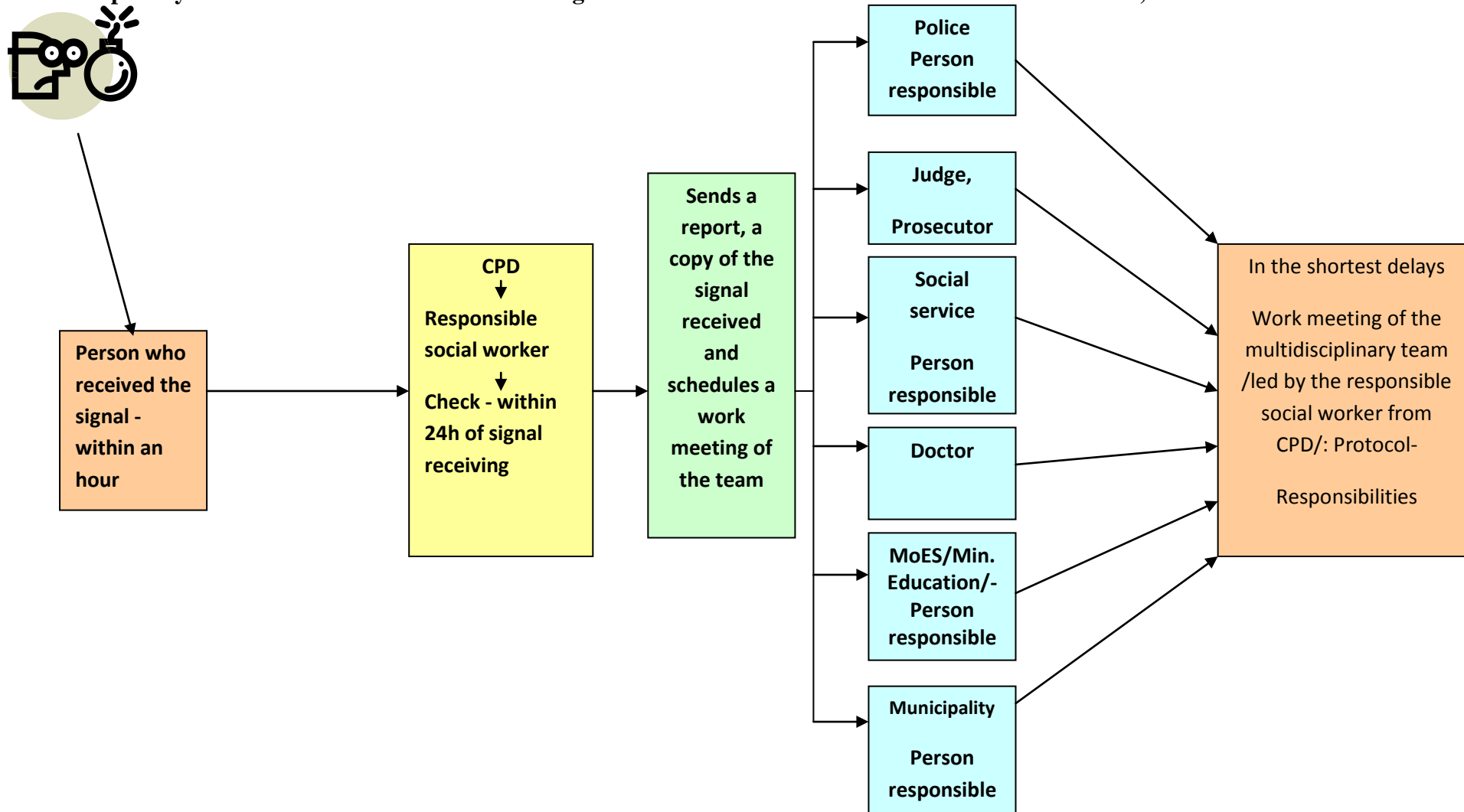
Child protection at local level is implemented by the Child protection departments (CPD) within the Social assistance Directorates (SAD), according to their competences and powers to define and implement specific measures to protect and carry out inspections on complaints and signals and to take appropriate measures for protection in case of violated rights of children. In the case of identified risk for the child, the authorities initiate the measures envisaged in the Law on Child Protection. At the directorates for social assistance, signals for children at-risk may be submitted by: the child, a physical person, a legal entity or NGO or government authorities.

According to Art.20 and the Law on Child Protection, a Commission on Child issues with advisory and coordinating functions is established in each municipality, and the following representatives take part: the municipal administration, the regional directorate of the Ministry of Interior, the regional department of education, the Regional Health Inspectorate, Directorate "Social assistance," the local commission to fight against delinquency of minors, as well as non-profit organizations and others which implement activities for child protection. The Chair of the committee is the mayor or an authorized officer. The Commission is a consolidating and coordinating unit of child policies in the municipality and ensures the implementation of local policies on child protection.

Upon receipt of a signal for child abuse, emergency measures are implemented to protect the child, according to the Coordination Mechanism for interaction in cases of children victims of violence (or children at risk of becoming victims of violence) and for interaction for crisis intervention.

Signals for children, who are at risk or victims of violence may be submitted to SACP, the Ministry of Interior or SAD, where a social worker from the Department "Child Protection" starts a check. An initial assessment of the signal and the risks to the child are performed, when necessary in cooperation with the police, medical personnel and other professionals. Within 24 hours of receipt of the signal, the responsible social worker from the CPD initiates the convening of a multidisciplinary team with representatives of relevant institutions and experts.

Multidisciplinary mechanism for interaction when a signal for a child victim of violence or at risk of violence, is received¹⁵



¹⁵ Multidisciplinary mechanism for interaction when a signal for a child victim of violence or at risk of violence is received, Schema contained in the Agreement on cooperation and coordination of the work of the territorial structures of the bodies for protection in case of children, victims or at risk of violence and in crisis intervention, http://Projects-namrb.org/images/zanas_documenti/sporazumenie2010.pdf

Definitions of violence and types of violence against children are given in the Regulation for Implementing the Law on Child Protection:

"Violence" against a child is any act of physical, psychological or sexual violence, neglect, commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to health, life, development or dignity of the child, perpetrated in a family, school and social environment.

"Physical violence" is causing bodily harm, including causing pain or suffering without serious health damage.

"Psychological violence" includes all actions that may have a damaging impact on mental health and child development such as underestimation, mocking, threats, discrimination, rejection or other negative attitude and the inability of the parent, guardian or the person caring for the child to provide appropriate and supportive environment.

"Sexual violence" is the use of a child for sexual satisfaction.

"Neglect" is the failure of the parent, guardian or person caring for the child to ensure the child's development into one of the following areas: health, education, emotional development, nutrition, providing home and safety when able to do so.

"Child at Risk" is a child:

- a) whose parents are deceased, unknown, deprived of parental rights or whose parental rights are limited or if the child is left without their care;
- b) who is a victim of abuse, violence, exploitation or any other inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment inside or outside his family;
- c) for whom there is a risk of harm to the child's physical, mental, moral, intellectual and social development;
- d) suffering from disabilities or diseases that are difficult to be healed, which are identified by a specialist;
- e) for whom there is a risk of dropping out of school or who has dropped out of school.

"Domestic violence" means any act of physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or economic violence, as well as the attempt of such violence, forced restriction of privacy, personal freedom and personal rights committed against persons who are in a relationship, who are or have been in a family relationship or de facto marital cohabitation. Any act of domestic violence committed in the presence of the child is considered also as mental and emotional violence against the child.

Specialized and quick, even immediate judicial protection against domestic violence, including in cases of violence against children, is provided by the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence, in force since April 1, 2005.¹⁶

¹⁶Law on Protection from Domestic Violence, <http://lex.bg/laws/ldoc/2135501151>

The Law on Protection from Domestic Violence /LPDV/ creates a remedy for victims of domestic violence in Bulgaria, allowing them to apply for protection before the regional court. Law Article 2 defines domestic violence as stated in the definitions above - any act of physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or economic violence, as well as the attempt of such violence, forced restriction of privacy, personal freedom and personal rights committed against persons who are in relationship, who are or have been in a family relationship or de facto marital cohabitation. Any domestic violence committed in the presence of the child is considered as a mental and emotional abuse.

Any person affected from domestic violence can seek protection under this law when the violence is committed by:

1. spouse or former spouse;
2. a person, who is or has been a in de facto marital cohabitation;
3. person with whom they have a child;
4. ascending;
5. descending;
6. person, with whom there is kinship under lateral line up to the fourth degree included.;
7. person, with whom there is or has been in affinity up to the third degree;
8. guardian, trustee or adoptive parent;
9. ascendant or descendant of the person, with whom they are in a de facto marital cohabitation;
10. A person with whom a parent is or has been in a de facto marital cohabitation.

The application for protection may be submitted within one month from the act of violence. There is no official form for applying for protection in Bulgaria, but the law regulates its necessary requisites. Under the law at the request of the victim every doctor is obliged to issue a document to certify in writing the bodily harm identified by him/her or signs of violence. There is no fee for submitting an initial application, but depending on the outcome, the applicant or the defendant pays the costs of the case. Where there is an application for protection, the court must schedule a hearing within thirty days. In cases of direct, immediate or consequent risk to life or health of victims, they can apply for immediate protection, in which the court shall decide within 24 hours in a closed session. The procedure for issuing the order for protection may be formed at the request of: 1. the injured person, if above 14 years of age or placed under partial guardianship; 2. brother, sister or a person who is in kinship in a straight line with the victim; 3. guardian of the victim; 4. Director of Directorate "Social assistance" when the victim is a minor, is placed under guardianship or is with disabilities.

Access to justice under the law is easier for victims because it stipulates that in the absence of other evidence, the court shall issue a protection order based solely on the statement of the victim and the allegations described in the application and relating to domestic violence. If a protection order is issued, the defendant must pay a fine of 200 to 1,000 leva. The judge may order one or more of the measures for protection against domestic violence provided in the LPDV, which are the following:

1. oblige the perpetrator to refrain from committing domestic violence;
2. the removal of the offender from the jointly occupied dwelling for a period determined by the court;
3. ban the offender from approaching the victim, housing, workplaces and places for social contacts and leisure of the victim under terms and conditions determined by the court;

4. determining temporarily the domicile of the child at the parent who is victim or the parent who has not committed violence under terms and conditions determined by the court, if it does not contradict the interests of the child. This measure is not necessary in pending legal cases between parents for custody, for determining the residence of the child or the regime of personal relationships;
5. obliging the perpetrator of violence to attend specialized programs;
6. directing victims to rehabilitation programs.

Measures under paragraph 2.3 and 4 are imposed for a period of three to up to 18 months.

The order is immediately enforceable. The police is responsible for execution of the order issued by the measures of p.1 to 3 mentioned above. The state is also responsible for: the introduction of programs to prevent domestic violence and assist victims, selection and training of personnel in the field of protection from violence; working with individuals and legal entities registered under the Social Assistance Act, and supporting non-profit organizations for activities on prevention and protection in the implementation of the LPDV. Annually, with the State Budget of the Republic of Bulgaria and within the budget of the Ministry of Justice, funding for projects of non-profit organizations is allocated, in case the projects meet the following thematic requirements - programs for prevention and protection from domestic violence; programs providing assistance to victims of domestic violence; training of professionals who carry out protection under the law; specialized programs for persons who have committed domestic violence, which include social and psychological counselling.

As of January 11, 2015, victims of domestic violence can obtain protection throughout the whole European Union. The national legislations of Member States have introduced provisions of Regulation (EU) 1215/2012 on jurisdiction and the recognition and enforcement of judgments in civil and commercial matters (Recast)¹⁷ and Regulation (EU) 606/2013 on mutual recognition of measures and protection in civil matters. The aim of the respective changes in the Civil Procedural Code, respectively the LPDV, is to ensure protection for victims of domestic violence as well, even when moving, travelling or working in the EU, and to provide procedural safeguards for affected persons.

Indeed, with the amendments of the LPDV since July 2015, Chapter III on mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters is introduced. A person who has a measure of protection stipulated in a country of the European Union, may request issuance of a protection order in the country by the Sofia City Court /Art. 23 of the LPDV/.

2. Statistics

According to data by the SACP for 2015, 108,852 calls have been answered at the national phone line (116-111) for children. A 40% increase from the previous year marks the number of signals for children at-risk received so far at the line - 649 signals in 2015. The calls received for different forms of violence most often refer to instances of physical violence, followed by psychological violence and, to a lesser extent, to sexual abuse. In its annual report for 2015 the SACP reports the following data about numbers of signals for child abuse received by the Child protection services (CPS) in the country:

¹⁷Regulation (EU) 1215/2012 on jurisdiction, recognition and enforcement of judgments in civil and commercial cases, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/bg/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32012R1215&qid=1407743170260&from=DE> .

- Physical violence – 236
- Psychological violence – 162
- Sexual violence – 37
- Neglect – 220
- Abandonment – 52
- Begging – 34
- Exclusion from the educational system - 75
- Witnessing domestic violence – 96

The report states that the signals are submitted in connection with cases of various forms of violence, which are usually combined, as well as cases of neglected children, at risk of abandonment and begging. One signal is usually associated with several forms of risk for children with common causes, such as low parental capacity, lack of educational approach and such of disciplining children, as well as recourse to violence, economic hardship, etc.¹⁸

According to data collected by the SACP for the previous period 2012 - 2014, 48,518 consultations have been conducted at the national phone, of which 5,273 were for child abuse (physical, mental, sexual, neglect).¹⁹ There have been a predominant number of cases of domestic violence, and parents are cited as the most frequent perpetrators.

According to information from the SACP on the activities of the multidisciplinary teams in the country in 2015, the teams examined a total of 1,104 signals. The largest number of signals is for children at risk, submitted by parents - 18%, and at second place are the signals received via the national hotline for children - NHFC 116-111-14%. The share of signals reported by the general practitioners for children is less than 1%, and by the health care institutions - 7%. (These are namely the professionals who have contact with families and children, especially during early childhood). According to a monitoring report by the SACP, the signs of child abuse committed within the family are hardly noticeable from the outside. This is due to the fact that during early childhood, the child is in a relative isolation within the family. It is the general practitioners that have the competence to recognize the signs of domestic violence and they also have the opportunity to monitor the child (due to the specifics of the medical profession).²⁰

According to data from the SACP regarding the checks on signals of violence in 2014, in most cases children become subject to physical or psychological violence in the family, in the education or specialized institutions, with a trend of increase in the cases of neglect.²¹

In 2015, the National Council for Child Protection approved the implementation of the National Plan for prevention of child abuse for the period 2012 - 2014 and the structure for the development of a new strategic document has been discussed.

¹⁸ Report on the activities of the State Agency for Child Protection, page34
http://sacp.government.bg/media/filer_public/2016/03/15/sacp_report_2015.pdf

¹⁹Report on the implementation of the National Plan for Prevention of Child abuse for the period 2012-2014, http://sacp.government.bg/media/filer_public/2015/11/27/otchet-izpalnenie-na-natsionalna-plan-za-preventsia-na-nasiliето-nad-detsa-2012-2014.pdf.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹The creation of the National Program for Prevention of Violence against Children 2015 - 2017 was discussed at an inter-ministerial meeting (Analysis of the results of the audits performed by the State Agency for Child Protection (SACP) on responses to signals of violence in 2014), 16.01.2015, <http://nmd.bg/sazdavaneto-na-natsionalna-programa-za-preventsia-na-nasiliето-nad-detsa-2015-v-2017-g-be-obsadeno-na-mezhdovedomstvena-sreshta/>

3. Social services in Bulgaria

Crisis centers for victims of domestic violence and human trafficking are not specialized by the type of violence suffered, but according to the criterion of the target group. In the country there are 15 centers for children and 5 centers for adults (including cases of mixed accommodation for mothers with children), the services are free of charge and designed to meet the persons' individual needs.²² Special attention is paid to cases where the victim of domestic violence is a pregnant woman or mother of a child under three years, and at risk of abandonment. In such cases action is taken for the immediate accommodation of the mother and the child. Ten of the crisis centers are assigned for management to non-governmental organizations through activities delegated by the state.²³

The Community Support Centers in the country also develop activities related to the prevention and response to violence against and children. Their number is 98, and 85% of them operate as state-delegated activities. Many of them are the result of successfully completed projects and thanks to that they continue to function as a state-delegated activity.²⁴

Around 5,000 persons sought help from organizations participating in the APGBV from 2014 onwards, over 700 persons were placed in crisis centers of these organizations and over 800 cases were brought under LPDV with their support.

Organizations of the Alliance for protection from gender-based violence manage a total of 10 crisis centers for women and children, victims of domestic violence and trafficking, with a capacity of more than 100 persons. In almost all organizations providing services, children are also a target group. Not all centers benefit from state support by means of delegated state budgets, there are organisations that function thanks to support on a project basis.²⁵

4. Problem areas in existing policies and recommendations at national and international level

Bulgaria still lacks a unified information system for registering cases of violence against children.²⁶ According to official statistics from the regional registries, there are no cases of domestic violence - neither against women, or against children.

Violence against children is associated with and entails poverty and social exclusion. According to the National Network for Children, children are among those most affected by poverty and social exclusion and are more vulnerable to their effects. In 2015, more than one in four children in Europe (27.7%) is at risk of poverty or social exclusion, while in Bulgaria the figure is almost twice as high - 45.2%, which means that our country is one of the first in this sad ranking.²⁷ According to expert opinion, the focus of the whole society should be the

²²<http://eurogender.eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/events-files/140617%20BG%20Ag%20Soc%20Ass.pdf>

²³Ibid.

²⁴Report on the implementation of the National Plan for Prevention of Violence against children for the period 2012-2014, http://sacp.government.bg/media/filer_public/2015/11/27/otchet-izpalnenie-na-natsionalna-plan-za-preventsia-na-nasiliето-nad-detsa-2012-2014.pdf.

²⁵For example, the Crisis Center of the Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation - Haskovo branch for women and children victims of violence

²⁶No one collects adequate information on child abuse in Bulgaria, www.news.bg, 22.03.2016
<https://news.bg/society/nikoy-ne-sabira-adekvatna-informatsiya-za-nasiliето-nad-detsa-u-nas.html>

²⁷<http://nmd.bg/natsionalna-mrezha-za-detsata-predlaga-prioritet-po-vreme-na-balgarskoto-predsedatelstvo-na-es-da-badat-investitsiite-v-detsata/>

treatment of the risk instead of applying preventive activities. Services for children's mental health do not even exist.²⁸

At the end of 2015, SACP published a report "Monitoring the implementation of the Coordination mechanism for interaction in cases of child victims of violence or at risk of violence and interaction in crisis intervention" that identifies these problems and difficulties faced by institutions in their work: insufficient development of social services and lack of specialists; lack of locations to provide police protection for emergency placement of children at risk or crisis center, insufficient or missing social services in the municipality; difficulties in securing cooperation with medical institutions; lack of psychologists as a major difficulty; lack of specialists and services aimed at working with perpetrators of violence against children.

The report contains the following recommendations:

- Due to lack of social services at the disposal of the society, it is recommended that: *„during the update of the municipal and regional strategies, each municipality shall analyze the existing services for children victims of violence and based on specific needs shall define a minimum package of social services for working with children and families, and at the district level it is necessary to plan the operation of at least one crisis center and implemented programs for work with perpetrators of violence”*;
- To plan and implement measures to promote the fulfilment of the obligations of general practitioners to promptly report cases of children at risk;
- To conduct trainings of social workers for professional support in dealing with child victims of violence and their families;
- To secure specialists - a child psychologist and psychiatrist, as well as joint training of multidisciplinary teams working together under the Coordination Mechanism;
- Material and technical support of the work of the teams - eg. providing resources for the transportation of children to the place of service and/or accommodation;
- Effective implementation of the Law on protection from domestic violence;
- To develop a program to work with perpetrators of violence;
- Introduction of the term "temporary custody" in the Family Code, which will solve problems related mostly to the representation of children victims of violence;
- Inclusion of reported problems with specific solutions to address them in the draft National Programme for prevention of violence and child abuse.

This is as well the direction of the decision adopted in 2015 for drafting and submission for approval by the Council of Ministers of a 5-year National Programme for the protection of children from violence for the period from 2016 to 2020, at the 29th regular session of the National Council for Child Protection /NCCP/.²⁹ The report on implementation of the National Plan for Prevention of Child abuse 2012 - 2014 has also been approved, and during the meetings of the NCCP a general agreement has been reached about the

²⁸Georgi Bogdanov from the National Network for Children – <http://dnesplus.bg/News.aspx?n=756173>

²⁹<http://sacp.government.bg/bg/presenterar/novini/zapochva-podgotovka-na-5-godishna-nacionalna-progr/>

following basic principles, actions and measures which must be contained in the National Programme for the Protection of children from violence in the period 2016 - 2020:³⁰

- Analysis of existing services for children associated with violence in relation to the future regional and municipal planning;
- Strengthening the capacity of the system of child protection;
- Support to the development of existing services and creation of new services for children who have experienced violence;
- Update the methodologies for work of the services for children victims of violence and perpetrators of violence;
- Development and introduction of standards for working on cases of children for different types of violence;
- Raising the sensitivity of the protection system and of the society on the issues related to violence against children;
- Introduction of a national information system for children under approved methodology and comparable indicators and a mechanism to update and synchronize the Coordination mechanisms.

Sexual exploitation of children in Bulgaria

According to a study done in Bulgaria in 2015³¹ by Association "Demetra" on the topic of sexual exploitation of children, among 160 children and young people living in institutions or alternative social services surveyed (of which 79.3% are students, 15.5 percent of whom are engaged in educational or employment process, 44.8% male and 55% female.), 62% of respondents recognized that they have heard about this phenomenon and are familiar with the issues of trafficking and sexual exploitation of children, and have an idea about it. 84% of them associate child prostitution with sexual exploitation of children and 90% of respondents know what is sexual exploitation and the categories pimp and prostitutes.

45.7% deny or fluctuate and do not recognize high risk of falling into sexual exploitation related to the advertisements for high-paying jobs and 19.4% have agreement or hesitation in relation to be photographed naked by an adult.

The percentage is relatively lower- 11.6% and less recognizable for the risk of receipt of gift as well as in the consumption of alcohol or drugs

The respondents assess as a relatively lower the risk of exploitation from receiving presents - 11,6% and from receiving alcohol or drugs - 10.25%.

To the question "In which cases is it acceptable for someone to sell her/his body for money?" -43% responded negatively, while others are willing to make a compromise in cases: -when the person is forced to do this -48.2%, -22.4% respond that if people are poor and want to get rich quickly, -18.9% in cases one wants to help his/her relatives with money, -15.5% respond that it is acceptable in cases when someone sees no other perspective, -8.6% respond that this is acceptable if the person wants to achieve professional success. The behavior of being victim, poverty and social exclusion, the desire to get rich quickly, the lack of support from family and relatives, the lack of perspective - all those factors shape the behavioral attitudes of children in institutions or in alternative care.

The highest percentage - 81% refers to the response to issues concerning suicidal thoughts and intentions, which gives an idea of the difficult psychological state of depression these

³⁰Ibid.

³¹"Sexual exploitation of children - study, conducted among children and youth, involved in the process of deinstitutionalization in terms of knowledge, attitudes and beliefs on sexual exploitation"- Demetra Association 2015.<http://demetra-bg.org/seksualna-eksplataciq-nad-deca/>

children have. On the question related to the mental health problems as a consequence of this kind of violence, 72.4% respond affirmatively, which suggests that the majority of respondents consider themselves as victims of such crime.

More than half of the respondents do not recognize education as an opportunity to address the problems of sexual exploitation and opportunity to reduce the risks of falling into it. On the one hand, clearly the education system does not provide sufficient information about the risks and does not promote values of non-violence and mutual understanding. On the other hand, education is not a value and an incentive for respondents.

The recommendations as a result of this research are in the direction of provision of services for children and youth at risk:

- Enhancing of psychological work in schools towards the prevention of sexual violence, of human trafficking, sexual exploitation. Enhancing the awareness of children and young people
- Creating incentives for higher education - demonstrating new opportunities for making money, work and so on.
- Create specialized programs of multidisciplinary teams that work with young people to increase general, behavioral and sexual culture, improve communication skills and prevention of all forms of violence and exploitation.

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child made in its most recent Report with Concluding observations of June 2016 the following recommendations to the government of Bulgaria (Committee on the Rights of the Child, Concluding observations in relation to the consolidated Third, Fourth and Fifth periodic reports of Bulgaria)³²:

In connection with the abuse and neglect of children:

The Committee is concerned about the increasing number of children victims of violence or abuse, including physical, mental and sexual abuse and that only a negligible number of these cases are brought before the court.

The Committee recommends to the State party:

- To develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to prevent child abuse and neglect while undertaking awareness campaigns and providing adequate support to children and families at risk;
- To develop and implement an effective system for reporting cases of abuse and neglect of children by providing training for all professionals working with/for children;
- To strengthen the psychological and legal support for child victims of abuse and neglect;
- To ensure that the perpetrators of such crimes will be prosecuted and convicted;
- To provide access and sustainability of the free 24-hour helpline for children and for this line to be a three-digit telephone number.

³²http://sacp.government.bg/media/filer_public/2015/12/14/zakluchitelni-preporaki-komitet-po-pravata-na-deteto-na-oon.pdf

In connection to the problem of sexual exploitation and abuse, the Committee is concerned about the increasing number of children subjected to sexual exploitation and abuse and that only a small number of cases reached the court.

The Committee recommends that the State party:

- Conduct thorough research and studies to identify the scope, extent and root causes of sexual exploitation of children and to facilitate the implementation of effective strategies;
- Intensify information campaigns to raise public awareness regarding sexual exploitation, prostitution and child abuse with a focus on the gender perspective in these campaigns and in public education;
- Take measures to prosecute perpetrators of sexual exploitation and abuse of children; Implement appropriate policies and targeted programs for prevention, recovery and social reintegration of child victims, in accordance with the Declaration and Agenda for Action and the Global Commitments adopted in 1996, and in accordance with the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children from 2001.

During the first Universal periodic review of Bulgaria in 2010 at the Human Rights Council of the United Nations recommendations were made to Bulgaria to "*Ensure continued emphasis on children's rights and welfare in Bulgaria's budget policy and consider increasing budget allocations for the implementation of the Convention of the Rights of the Child, including in the areas of health, education and family support*", as well as "*Put in place sound policies to ensure a safer environment for children, and implement a more effective system for addressing cases of violence against children*".³³ In connection with the Second periodic review in 2015 the following recommendation is made by Poland and subsequently approved for implementation by Bulgaria: "*Promote non-violent methods of child rearing and education and ensure that the law prohibiting corporal punishment is enforced.*"³⁴

Istanbul Convention

In the framework of the Council of Europe, gender - based violence against women is defined as "*violence against a woman because she is a woman or that affects predominantly women.*" Violence against women is defined as "*a violation of human rights and discrimination against women*" and means "*any act of gender-based violence that result in or is likely to result in physical, sexual, psychological violence or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether it happens in public or private life.*"³⁵

These definitions are contained in the most recent regional standard– the Istanbul Convention adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on April 7, 2011, which is the first legally binding instrument in Europe in this matter and scope and contains the highest standards in this area. It is aimed at achieving zero tolerance of violence against women and domestic violence and is an important step forward in making Europe and European region a safer place. It was opened for signature on 11 May 2011 in Istanbul and so far has been signed by 20 countries, with another 22 countries that have ratified it. The

³³Corporal punishment of children in Bulgaria, Report prepared by the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children (www.endcorporalpunishment.org), last June 2016
<http://www.endcorporalpunishment.org/assets/pdfs/states-reports/Bulgaria.pdf>

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Convention of the Council of Europe on preventing and fighting violence against women and domestic violence, Art. 3 <http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/convention-violence/convention/Convention%202010%20Bulgarian.pdf>

Convention entered into force on August 1, 2014. Its monitoring mechanism (a group of independent experts – GREVIO) will monitor and safeguard the implementation of the Convention. Bulgaria signed the Convention on April 21, 2016, and for the purpose of ratification a working group at the Ministry of Justice was formed by Ordinance of the Minister of 25. 05. 2016 /Working Group to introduce into Bulgarian legislation the principles and requirements of the Istanbul Convention within the end 2016/.³⁶

Parties have obligations to provide specialist support services for women victims of sexual and other forms of violence based on gender, as there should be conditions for immediate, short- and long- term support. Services must provide recovery for women after violence as they take the form of telephone helplines, legal and psychological counselling, financial assistance, housing, education, training and assistance in finding work. Parties should provide appropriate and timely information about women victims in a language they understand. Moreover, States must ensure access to legal assistance and justice for women. Istanbul Convention provides for the establishment and sustaining in the countries of specialized programs for perpetrators of violence that are related to ensuring the safety of women victims. It requires a coordinated and interdisciplinary approach and response to all forms of violence.

For ensuring special protection for children, besides the protection due to any person affected by domestic violence, special rights and best interests of the child should be at the centre of all interventions of the authorities in cases of domestic violence. It should be ensured that the child witness of violence and of a model of domestic violence in the family is properly protected. Istanbul Convention ensures such protection by providing even deprivation of parental rights, if necessary to protect the best interests of the child /Art. 26 and 45 of the Convention/.

Convention highlights the close link between protecting women from all forms of violence and protection of children. It requires special protection of children in such situations, including psycho-social consulting, appropriate crisis centers and shelters for shared accommodation of women and their children. The Convention also requires legal protection against gender-based violence to be associated with decisions on custody and contact with the child. Namely, because of child safety and the safety of the parent who is victim of violence, the Istanbul Convention excludes mediation in cases of violence.

In order to provide qualified assistance to women and children victims, the Convention requires States to recognize, encourage and support at all levels the work of the NGOs that are active in combating violence against women, and stresses that the States should allocate adequate financial resources for this purpose.

4. Legislation and policies of Norway for protection of children from violence and gender-based violence

Children in Norway are protected by law against violence and abuse. The Criminal Code contains provisions for protection of the citizens, as well as children against felonies and criminalizes physical and sexual violence against children.³⁷ The Criminal Code contains regulations about the felonies related to family relations (chapter 20) and they apply in cases when the members of the family are not willing to provide support to children under their

³⁶Norway also signed the Istanbul Convention on 7 July 2011

³⁷Janneke Stoffelen, Stéphanie Van Den Broeck, Children's Rights in Norway, Protection from domestic violence and abuse, Report nr. 16/200, Senior p.14
<https://samforsk.no/SiteAssets/Sider/publikasjoner/Childrens%20Rights%20in%20Norway.pdf>

care, or who neglect or abuse the child.³⁸ Chapter 19 of the Penal Code refers to sexual crimes, including those that take place in the family and contains penal provisions not only for the offender, but also for those who assist or encourage another person to commit these crimes. Violation of the law leads to imprisonment.

The Act relating to Children and Parents (the Children Act) in Norway regulates the relations between children and parents and its Section 5 provides for parents' responsibility and for the explicit ban of corporal punishment.³⁹

The legislation related to Child Welfare Services (the Child Welfare Act) was adopted in Norway in 1992 with the main objective to protect children from all types of violence and abuse in the home.⁴⁰ The act defines the functions of child welfare services at local, regional and national level. All reports/signals for violence against children (in all its forms) must be reported to the child welfare services:⁴¹

- In cases of suspicion for abuse or ill-treatment of a child at home
- Physical persons may report cases for children at risk of harm
- Citizens may report if they consider that the daily care and security are not sufficient for the child or if someone suspects that child's health or development may be in danger because of the lack of parental responsibility or
- In cases if parents are not able to care for a child with special needs or disability

The office of the Ombudsman for children was established in 1981 in Norway as an institution for protection of children's rights. The Convention of the Rights of the Child was incorporated into the Norwegian legislation and the Ombudsman makes efforts to influence the government to fulfill the provisions of the Convention. The ombudsman is an independent body and receives financial support from the government.⁴²

Norway has a National Action plan against forced marriage, female genital mutilation and severe restrictions on young people's freedom (2013–2016).⁴³ The country undertakes efforts to promote gender equality and equal services for all the citizens - regardless of age, gender, educational background and place of residence. The Action Plan encompasses three main areas: Prevention, Adequate public assistance: developing expertise and good coordination of public services, Research and development of practice.

Forced marriage and female genital mutilation are considered as domestic violence and human rights violations.

The ambition of the Plan by the end of 2016 is that its efforts be well rooted in both the public sector and in the work of voluntary organisations.⁴⁴

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Action plan against forced marriage, female genital mutilation and severe restrictions on young people's freedom(2013–2016),

https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/BLD/IMA/tvangsekteskap/Handlingsplan_2013_ENG_web.pdf

⁴⁴Ibid.

In the overview part of Action plan, the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion presented considerations about the progress and gaps in the field of forced marriage and female genital mutilation:⁴⁵

- The existing support services are more frequently used by young people
- The awareness on the issue is nowadays higher, as well is the knowledge about forced marriage and female genital mutilation among the support services
- The number of support measures has increased.

The identified remaining challenges are related to the prevention of forced marriages and female genital mutilation and the efforts to combat the phenomena should be in line and in parallel with the efforts for combating domestic violence and sexual abuse against children.

The active work on the problem of domestic violence in the Kingdom of Norway started in 1997 and up to the present moment the following documents have entered in force:

- Strategy against physical and sexual violence against children (2013-2016)
- Action plan to combat intimate partner violence (2014-2017)
- Action Plan to Combat Rape (2012-2014)
- Action Plan to combat Human Trafficking (2005-2006)
- Action Plan to combat Human Trafficking (2006-2009)
- Action Plan to combat Human Trafficking (2011-2014)
- Action Plan for the implementation of Resolution 1325 (2000) of the UN Security Council on the role of women in peace and security.

Actions under these plans are funded by the ministries and civic organizations receive funding on a project basis for their implementation. For implementation of the last 3-year period, the State has provided 80mln. euros. Twice a year a report is prepared on the implementation of measures identified in the plans, and the reports are published on the Internet. The Ministry of Justice and Public security has the main coordinating role. An inter-institutional group to work on the problem of domestic violence involving the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Inclusion, representatives of local authorities, police and the Ministry of Justice.⁴⁶

Actions under these plans are funded by the ministries and civic organizations receive funding on a project basis for their implementation. For implementation of the last 3-year period, the State has provided 80mln. euros. Twice a year a report is prepared on the implementation of measures identified in the plans, and the reports are published on the Internet. Main coordinating role have the Ministry of Justice and Police. An inter-institutional group to work on the problem of domestic violence involving the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Inclusion, representatives of local authorities, police and the Ministry of Justice was formed.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Domestic violence – Norwegian experiences, Line Nersnæs and Hilde Marit Knotten, http://www.mddsz.gov.si/fileadmin/mddsz.gov.si/pageuploads/dokumenti__pdf/enake_moznosti/NFMStudijski2NasiljeNorveska.pdf

A programme for parental guidance was initiated in 1995 with the purpose to support parents in the care and upbringing of their children, developing caregiving skills and prevention of psycho-social problems. The programme is used by Norwegian local authorities, health centres, family centres, psychological services, child welfare services and nursery schools.

Efforts to strengthen competences – national level

A National Centre of Competence on Violence and Traumatic Stress was established in January 2004.⁴⁷

- The purpose of this centre is to strengthen research, education and guidance for the public services in the field of violence and trauma. The centre has a special section for violence, family violence and sexual abuse.
- The centre has approximately 50 employees educated in the fields of social work, psychiatry, psychology, pediatrics, sociology, social anthropology, pedagogy, sexology, criminology and philology.
- Five Regional Resource Centres in the field of violence and trauma have also been established, and they assist the service providers with information, guidelines and expertise development, and create networks between all relevant partners in the region.
- The regional centres has drawn up a standard for municipal/inter-municipal action plans against domestic violence and assist municipalities that wish to develop local action plans in this area.

The Government has adopted new legislation which involves the introduction of a statutory municipal duty to provide shelter services for its population irrespective of gender. The law entered into force on January 1st 2010.

Legal framework

Domestic violence is defined as a specific offence in Norway from 2006. Violent attacks in the private sphere are regulated by the provisions of the Penal Code article § 219.⁴⁸

- Unconditional prosecution is introduced in domestic violence cases since 1988. A criminal case may be brought before the court, even if the victim withdraws the formal report.
- Free legal aid for abused women includes women victims of violence from spouses and cohabitants, as well as prostitutes when they are victims of violence perpetrated by their pimps.

Victims of violence, including sexual abuse, benefit from protection against repeated violence from the abuser. In an amendment from 1st of January 1995 to the Criminal Procedure Act (§

⁴⁷Line Nersnaes and Hilde Marit Knotten, Domestic violence – Norwegian experiences, presentation in Sofia, 26-27 May 2016, at the conference “Better protection of children against domestic and gender-based violence through sharing good practices between Norway and Bulgaria” (organized by Alliance for protection against gender-based violence)

⁴⁸Line Nersnaes and Hilde Marit Knotten, Domestic violence – Norwegian experiences, presentation in Sofia, 26-27 May 2016, at the conference “Better protection of children against domestic and gender-based violence through sharing good practices between Norway and Bulgaria” (organized by Alliance for protection against gender-based violence)

222a), an individual can be banned from entering a specific area, following, visiting or otherwise contacting another person (restraining order/ban of visit).⁴⁹ If a ban on visiting another person is violated, then the violator, if certain conditions are met, is arrested and remanded in custody.

The Criminal Procedure Act (§ 22a Chapter 17 a regarding “ban on visits etc.”) was revised in 2002 and 2003; on 10 January 2003, changes in the rules regulating ban on visits took place.⁵⁰ The objective is to provide better protection for persons at risk of violence from others in their own household. Section 222 of the Norwegian Criminal Procedure Act contains clear legal provisions for prohibiting a person subject to such a ban from staying in his own home.

Any person who by threats, duress, deprivation of liberty, violence or any other wrong attitude grossly or repeatedly maltreats:⁵¹

- a) his or her former or present spouse,
- b) his or her former or present spouse’s kin in direct line of descent,
- c) his or her kin in direct line of ascent,
- d) any person in his or her household, or
- e) any person in his or her care

shall be liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years.

If the maltreatment is gross or if the victim dies or sustains considerable harm to body or health as a result of the treatment, the penalty shall be imprisonment for a term not exceeding six years. In deciding whether the maltreatment is gross, particular importance shall be acknowledged to whether it has lasted for a long time and whether such circumstances as the ones referred to in section 232 are present.

Children vulnerable to trafficking

In 2012 amendments of the Child Welfare Act entered into force and they envision that if a child is at risk of trafficking, he/she may be placed in an institution temporarily even without the child’s consent.⁵²

Crisis centre services

Norway has adopted an Act on Crisis centers, where the role of the public-sector is enshrined to ensure that people suffering from domestic violence receive protection, help and follow-up services.⁵³ Municipalities bear the duties to provide crisis centre services to women, men and children and measures tailored to meet individual needs, including services for disabled persons. Those centers offer support, guidance and assistance, as well as a referral to other

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Norway: Children's Rights References in the Universal Periodic Review, <https://www.crin.org/en/library/publications/norway-childrens-rights-references-universal-periodic-review-0>

⁵³Ibid.

service agencies, as well as safe temporary housing, a day-time programme, a 24-hour telephone service and follow-up measures during the rehabilitation phase.⁵⁴ All services are free of charge and there is no need of referral to use the services. The financing of the crisis center in Oslo is 18 million Norwegian Kroner annually. The work of the center is not bound by licenses or other administrative regime that can hamper its activities.⁵⁵

Annually, the shelters in Norway provide accommodation to about 2,500 women and 1,800 children. In Norway, every tenth child has personal experience with the problem of domestic violence as a witness of physical violence between his/her parents.⁵⁶

An open 24-hour telephone line operates in the country. There are crisis centers or an equivalent of a crisis center for temporary accommodation, there are children's houses (which are not shelters or internates/ institutions) but places for safe accommodation for children who have been victims or witnesses of violence. The child stays there and the representatives of various institutions come to the place to do interviews and ask questions in an adequate and sparing way, avoiding revictimisation. By November 2013, ten children's houses of this kind were built in Norway.⁵⁷

Norwegian government adopted a decision on systematically developing treatment services for perpetrators of domestic violence within the system of Family guidance centres. There is also a growing link between clinical practice and research.⁵⁸ Three agencies work with perpetrators of violence.

1) Anger management - The Brøset model

A Cognitive therapy group is held in Trondheim.

The method is provided as an outpatient service to the public and is part of the psychiatric health care system.

Special training of mainly nurses/social workers/family therapists is conducted.

2) Public Family Guidance centers (FGC) of Norway (51 in number)

Their work is based on a Governmental decision on systematically developing treatment services for offenders of DV within the FGC system.

3) The organization "Alternative to Violence" (ATV)

ATV started work in 1987, as the first specialized treatment centre for male batterers in Europe. This is the oldest and largest European organisation to work with perpetrators of

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵Presentations made during the conference "Better protection of women and children against domestic violence and gender based violence through sharing of good practices between Norway and Bulgaria" (organized by the Alliance for protection against gender-based violence, Sofia, 26-27 May 2016)

⁵⁶Presentation of Morten Nyström made during the conference "Better protection of women and children against domestic violence and gender based violence through sharing of good practices between Norway and Bulgaria" (organized by the Alliance for protection against gender-based violence, Sofia, 26-27 May 2016)

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Working with people using violence in intimate relationships, presentation of Morten Nystrøm, NGO Alternative to Violence, Sofia 26 May 2016 during the conference organized by Alliance for protection against gender-based violence

domestic violence (DV).⁵⁹ Nowadays, ATV is a research and therapy centre for DV with 11 offices in Norway, working with:

- adult offenders, adolescent offenders
- adult victims and children
- NGO funding and public funding

The work in ATV is based on:

- An understanding of the gendered power structures of society
- The stories of battered women, battering men and children being exposed to family violence
- Professional clinical psychology/Research.

The organization has 11 offices in Norway. Clients are adolescents, mostly boys. 80 % have experienced violence when they grew up. The philosophy of the organization is that violence is dangerous and it is important to be ended. First focus when meeting perpetrators and victims of violence is safety.

The organisation fulfills three main goals:⁶⁰

- Treatment services
- Conduct research and continuously improve treatment models
- Promote and share knowledge about domestic violence.

The overriding objective of ATV is stopping the violence. 40% of the men refer themselves to the service, other 45% are referred by the child welfare services, doctors, police, psychiatry, other services.⁶¹ The team of the organization conducts supervision and consultations, educates practitioners, and takes part in a bi-annual Nordic conference.

The treatment approach is based on:

- **focus on violence.** Detailed reconstruction of the violence. Assessing the “size” of the problem, danger and safety issues
- **focus on responsibility.** Focus on active choices and intentions. Control strategies Intentional vs. causal explanations
- focus on the client’s **personal history, on consequences of the violence.**

The Center organizes the cases when men seek help in three main groups: Loss of control over his partner, Loss of control over his social performance, Loss of control over his own actions (use of serious violence).⁶²

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Ibid.

Violence and abuse against children

Norwegian government demonstrates strong commitment in the prevention of violence and abuse against children.⁶³ The related measures are declared in an Action plan against domestic violence for the period 2014–2017 and in the National strategy to combat violence and sexual abuse against children and young people in the period 2014–2017.

The Committee of the Rights of the Child recommended to Norway to “continue to implement appropriate policies and programmes for prevention, recovery and social integration of child victims of sexual exploitation and abuse; establish more Children’s Houses”.⁶⁴ Another recommendation to Norway is to “*strengthen the domestic legislation in accordance with international law to prevent and address violence against women and girls*” (Maldives).

Corporal punishment is prohibited in Norway in all settings, including the home.

A study launched among 1 199 students aged 12-16 shows that:

- 82.4% think that “a child should never be corporally punished”;
- 8% say “a child can be corporally punished using mild forms of punishment (e.g. smacking)”;
- 86% do not admit that “parents have a right to use mild forms of corporal punishment on their children (e.g. smacking)”;
- 91.9% have consensus that “children must be protected from all forms of violence”.⁶⁵

Special penal provisions refer to violence and sexual abuse against children and young people.⁶⁶ Chapter 19 of the Penal Code contains texts on sexual offences and chapter 22 on felonies against another person’s life, body and health. Section 219 of the Penal code has a provision on maltreatment in close relationships. Section 139 of the Penal Code has a text on the duty to prevent a criminal act. The provision imposes a duty, which is subject to a penalty, to prevent a variety of criminal acts, including sexual abuse of children under 14 years and maltreatment in close relationships.⁶⁷ Section 68 of the Penal Code contains provisions on extension of the period of prescription in cases related to sexual abuse of children and female genital mutilation. The period of prescription in such cases does not begin to run until the aggrieved person reaches the age of 18.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, Country report for Norway
<http://www.endcorporalpunishment.org/progress/country-reports/norway.html>

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Ibid.

Annex 1

Research project "Better protection of children against domestic violence and gender- based violence by sharing good practice between Norway and Bulgaria"

One-dimensional frequency distribution data

frequency

Table1. Map

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	2.5	2.5	2.5
	2	1	2.5	2.5	5.0
	3	1	2.5	2.5	7.5
	4	1	2.5	2.5	10.0
	5	1	2.5	2.5	12.5
	6	1	2.5	2.5	15.0
	7	1	2.5	2.5	17.5
	8	1	2.5	2.5	20.0
	9	1	2.5	2.5	22.5
	10	1	2.5	2.5	25.0
	11	1	2.5	2.5	27.5
	12	1	2.5	2.5	30.0
	13	1	2.5	2.5	32.5
	14	1	2.5	2.5	35.0
	15	1	2.5	2.5	37.5
	16	1	2.5	2.5	40.0
	17	1	2.5	2.5	42.5
	18	1	2.5	2.5	45.0
	19	1	2.5	2.5	47.5
	20	1	2.5	2.5	50.0
	21	1	2.5	2.5	52.5
	22	1	2.5	2.5	55.0
	23	1	2.5	2.5	57.5
	24	1	2.5	2.5	60.0
	25	1	2.5	2.5	62.5
	26	1	2.5	2.5	65.0
	27	1	2.5	2.5	67.5
	28	1	2.5	2.5	70.0
	29	1	2.5	2.5	72.5
	30	1	2.5	2.5	75.0
	31	1	2.5	2.5	77.5
	32	1	2.5	2.5	80.0
	33	1	2.5	2.5	82.5
	34	1	2.5	2.5	85.0
	35	1	2.5	2.5	87.5
	36	1	2.5	2.5	90.0
	37	1	2.5	2.5	92.5
	38	1	2.5	2.5	95.0
	39	1	2.5	2.5	97.5
	40	1	2.5	2.5	100.0
Total		40	100.0	100.0	

2. What type of institution do you represent?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	NGO	22	55.0	55.0	55.0
	Department for Child Protection	16	40.0	40.0	95.0
	Health institution	2	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

3. How many employees do you have in your institution/organization?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-5	7	17.5	17.5	17.5
	5-10	1	2.5	2.5	20.0
	10-20	30	75.0	75.0	95.0
	over 20	2	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

4. What is the average monthly number of people seeking advice/help from your institution/organization?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	3	7.5	7.5	7.5
	2	3	7.5	7.5	15.0
	3	2	5.0	5.0	20.0
	4	1	2.5	2.5	22.5
	5	2	5.0	5.0	27.5
	6	1	2.5	2.5	30.0
	8	5	12.5	12.5	42.5
	10	1	2.5	2.5	45.0
	13	2	5.0	5.0	50.0
	20	2	5.0	5.0	55.0
	25	1	2.5	2.5	57.5
	30	5	12.5	12.5	70.0
	35	1	2.5	2.5	72.5
	36	1	2.5	2.5	75.0
	40	1	2.5	2.5	77.5
	50	1	2.5	2.5	80.0
	80	3	7.5	7.5	87.5
	100	1	2.5	2.5	90.0
	162	2	5.0	5.0	95.0
	300	1	2.5	2.5	97.5
	350	1	2.5	2.5	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

5.1. How many of them are victims/victims of violence per month - WOMEN

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	3	7.5	11.5	11.5
	2	4	10.0	15.4	26.9
	5	2	5.0	7.7	34.6
	7	2	5.0	7.7	42.3
	8	1	2.5	3.8	46.2
	10	1	2.5	3.8	50.0
	15	1	2.5	3.8	53.8
	19	1	2.5	3.8	57.7
	20	1	2.5	3.8	61.5
	21	2	5.0	7.7	69.2
	23	1	2.5	3.8	73.1
	25	1	2.5	3.8	76.9
	27	1	2.5	3.8	80.8
	30	1	2.5	3.8	84.6
	35	3	7.5	11.5	96.2
250	1	2.5	3.8	100.0	
	Total	26	65.0	100.0	
Missing	System	14	35.0		
Total		40	100.0		

5.2. How many of them are victims/victims of violence per month - MEN

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	2	5.0	14.3	14.3
	2	5	12.5	35.7	50.0
	3	4	10.0	28.6	78.6
	5	2	5.0	14.3	92.9
	100	1	2.5	7.1	100.0
		Total	14	35.0	100.0
Missing	System	26	65.0		
Total		40	100.0		

5.3.How many of them are victims/victims of violence per month - CHILDREN

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	1	2	5.0	6.5	6.5	
	2	5	12.5	16.1	22.6	
	3	4	10.0	12.9	35.5	
	5	2	5.0	6.5	41.9	
	7	3	7.5	9.7	51.6	
	8	6	15.0	19.4	71.0	
	10	1	2.5	3.2	74.2	
	12	2	5.0	6.5	80.6	
	13	1	2.5	3.2	83.9	
	15	1	2.5	3.2	87.1	
	16	1	2.5	3.2	90.3	
	25	3	7.5	9.7	100.0	
	Total		31	77.5	100.0	
	Missing System		9	22.5		
Total		40	100.0			

5.4. How many children have come to you with their parents or other accompanying persons?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	1	3	7.5	13.6	13.6	
	2	3	7.5	13.6	27.3	
	3	2	5.0	9.1	36.4	
	4	1	2.5	4.5	40.9	
	5	2	5.0	9.1	50.0	
	7	2	5.0	9.1	59.1	
	8	1	2.5	4.5	63.6	
	11	1	2.5	4.5	68.2	
	12	2	5.0	9.1	77.3	
	13	1	2.5	4.5	81.8	
	15	1	2.5	4.5	86.4	
	23	3	7.5	13.6	100.0	
	Total		22	55.0	100.0	
	Missing System		18	45.0		
Total		40	100.0			

5.5. How many children came unaccompanied?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	2.5	12.5	12.5
	2	6	15.0	75.0	87.5
	5	1	2.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	8	20.0	100.0	
Missing	System	32	80.0		
Total		40	100.0		

6.1. How many of them are refugees / migrants/asylum seekers – per month -WOMEN

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	2.5	25.0	25.0
	2	1	2.5	25.0	50.0
	3	2	5.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	4	10.0	100.0	
Missing	System	36	90.0		
Total		40	100.0		

6.2. How many of them are refugees / migrants/asylum seekers - per month - MEN

		Frequency	Percent
Missing	System	40	100.0

6.3. How many of them are refugees / migrants/asylum seekers - per month - CHILDREN

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	1	2.5	33.3	33.3
	5	2	5.0	66.7	100.0
	Total	3	7.5	100.0	
Missing	System	37	92.5		
Total		40	100.0		

7.1. How many sought help from you coming directly to you?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	5	12.5	17.2	17.2
	2	2	5.0	6.9	24.1
	3	3	7.5	10.3	34.5
	4	1	2.5	3.4	37.9
	5	5	12.5	17.2	55.2
	7	1	2.5	3.4	58.6
	10	1	2.5	3.4	62.1
	15	3	7.5	10.3	72.4
	20	1	2.5	3.4	75.9
	24	1	2.5	3.4	79.3
	25	3	7.5	10.3	89.7
	29	1	2.5	3.4	93.1
	98	1	2.5	3.4	96.6
	120	1	2.5	3.4	100.0
	Total	29	72.5	100.0	
Missing System		11	27.5		
Total		40	100.0		

7.2. How much sought help from you - referred by another organization /institution - average per month

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	1	4	10.0	13.8	13.8	
	2	1	2.5	3.4	17.2	
	3	1	2.5	3.4	20.7	
	4	2	5.0	6.9	27.6	
	5	1	2.5	3.4	31.0	
	7	2	5.0	6.9	37.9	
	8	5	12.5	17.2	55.2	
	10	2	5.0	6.9	62.1	
	15	4	10.0	13.8	75.9	
	16	1	2.5	3.4	79.3	
	20	1	2.5	3.4	82.8	
	30	1	2.5	3.4	86.2	
	35	3	7.5	10.3	96.6	
	230	1	2.5	3.4	100.0	
	Total	29	72.5	100.0		
	Missing System		11	27.5		
	Total		40	100.0		

8.1. What type of support does your organization provide - early intervention/support in a crisis situation

	Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	27	67.5	100.0	100.0
Missing System	13	32.5		
Total	40	100.0		

8.2. What type of support does your organization provide - short term intervention/consultation

	Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	30	75.0	100.0	100.0
Missing System	10	25.0		
Total	40	100.0		

8.3. What type of support does your organization provide - intervention in traumatic condition

	Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	11	27.5	100.0	100.0
Missing System	29	72.5		
Total	40	100.0		

8.4. What type of support does your organization provide - treatment

	Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	8	20.0	100.0	100.0
Missing System	32	80.0		
Total	40	100.0		

8.5. What type of support does your organization provide - a referral to another institution/organization

	Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	29	72.5	100.0	100.0
Missing System	11	27.5		
Total	40	100.0		

8.6. What type of support does your organization provide - family counselling

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	23	57.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	17	42.5		
Total		40	100.0		

8.7. What type of support does your organization provide - another type

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	10	25.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	30	75.0		
Total		40	100.0		

9.1 Victims continue consultations/other intervention because they: drop out of the program

		Frequency	Percent
Missing	System	40	100.0

9.2. Victims continue consultations/other intervention due to: give up by themselves

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	23	57.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	17	42.5		
Total		40	100.0		

9.3. Victims continue consultations/other intervention because of: practical problems

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	4	10.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	36	90.0		
Total		40	100.0		

9.4. Victims continue consultations/other intervention because: directed to another institution/organization

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	23	57.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	17	42.5		
Total		40	100.0		

9.5. Victims continue consultations/other intervention due to: the intervention is over

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	21	52.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	19	47.5		
Total		40	100.0		

10. Have you established cooperation with other institutions/organizations working with victims of violence?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	40	100.0	100.0	100.0

11.1. Have you established cooperation with: GPs

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	20	50.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	20	50.0		
Total		40	100.0		

11.2. Have you established cooperation with: other medical institutions

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	22	55.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	18	45.0		
Total		40	100.0		

11.3. Have you established cooperation with: CSC /Community support centres/ - counselling, emergency reception

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	28	70.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	12	30.0		
Total		40	100.0		

11.4. Have you established cooperation with: departments for children and other institutions, working with children

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	25	62.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	15	37.5		
Total		40	100.0		

11.5. Have you established cooperation with: police

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	31	77.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	9	22.5		
Total		40	100.0		

11.6. Have you established cooperation with: court

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	26	65.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	14	35.0		
Total		40	100.0		

11.7. Have you established cooperation with: crisis centers

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	30	75.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	10	25.0		
Total		40	100.0		

12. Do you have a routine of meetings with these institutions in order to provide more effective support for victims of violence?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes, in every single case	18	45.0	48.6	48.6
	Yes - only in some cases	19	47.5	51.4	100.0
	Total	37	92.5	100.0	
Missing	System	3	7.5		
Total		40	100.0		

13. How would you characterize your organization's cooperation with other institutions/organizations?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	good	37	92.5	92.5	92.5
	Not very good	3	7.5	7.5	100.0
Total		40	100.0	100.0	

14. Do you think the services/treatment you offer is sufficient and appropriate enough?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	28	70.0	70.0	70.0
	partly	12	30.0	30.0	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

15.1. What are the main reasons why you cannot provide better support - insufficient financial and/or other resources?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	31	77.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	9	22.5		
	Total	40	100.0		

15.2. What are the main reasons why you cannot provide better support - insufficient competence in certain situations?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	7	17.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	33	82.5		
	Total	40	100.0		

15.3. What are the main reasons why you cannot provide better support - lack of cooperation with other institutions/organizations

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	5	12.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	35	87.5		
	Total	40	100.0		

15.4. What are the main reasons why you cannot provide better support - other

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	2	5.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	38	95.0		
	Total	40	100.0		

16. Is there a system for long-term follow-up of cases after your intervention?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	20	50.0	51.3	51.3
	No	19	47.5	48.7	100.0
	Total	39	97.5	100.0	
Missing	System	1	2.5		
Total		40	100.0		

17. If there is such, please briefly describe the area

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Surveillance	1	2.5	5.3	5.3
	Social work 6 months after the closing of the case	7	17.5	36.8	42.1
	Maintaining contact with customers and other organizations, working	8	20.0	42.1	84.2
	Register and analysis	2	5.0	10.5	94.7
	Long- term accommodation - 1 year - and monitoring our establishment	1	2.5	5.3	100.0
	Total	19	47.5	100.0	
Missing	System	21	52.5		
Total		40	100.0		

18. Do you have statistics on cases in which you are working?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	36	90.0	90.0	90.0
	No	4	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

19. Do you perform an analysis of statistics collected by you?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	26	65.0	65.0	65.0
	No	14	35.0	35.0	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

20. How do you use the analysis to improve your work?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Adequately	5	12.5	21.7	21.7
	Provide consultants and other institutions	5	12.5	21.7	43.5
	in practice	1	2.5	4.3	47.8
	Consultations	2	5.0	8.7	56.5
	Improving performance and services	8	20.0	34.8	91.3
	Analyzes the ASA	2	5.0	8.7	100.0
	Total	23	57.5	100.0	
Missing	System	17	42.5		
Total		40	100.0		

21. Do you have problems in dealing with refugees / migrants/asylum seekers in terms of language communication?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	8	20.0	38.1	38.1
	No	13	32.5	61.9	100.0
	Total	21	52.5	100.0	
Missing	System	19	47.5		
Total		40	100.0		

22. Are you willing to provide translation when communicating with them?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	7	17.5	35.0	35.0
	No	13	32.5	65.0	100.0
	Total	20	50.0	100.0	
Missing	System	20	50.0		
Total		40	100.0		

23. Do you have problems with some less common languages?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	18	45.0	90.0	90.0
	No	2	5.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	20	50.0	100.0	
Missing	System	20	50.0		
Total		40	100.0		

24. Do you think that your services are not good enough, because of language problems in communicating with these categories of individuals?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	9	22.5	50.0	50.0
	No	9	22.5	50.0	100.0
	Total	18	45.0	100.0	
Missing	System	22	55.0		

Total	40	100.0	
-------	----	-------	--

25. Do you know who the perpetrator of violence is?

	Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	40	100.0	100.0	100.0

26.1. Which of the following is the most common group - Male

	Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Spouse / partner	18	45.0	51.4	51.4
Father	10	25.0	28.6	80.0
Relative	7	17.5	20.0	100.0
Total	35	87.5	100.0	
Missing System	5	12.5		
Total	40	100.0		

26.2. Which of the following is the most common group - Female

	Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Spouse / partner	5	12.5	31.3	31.3
Mother	6	15.0	37.5	68.8
Relative	5	12.5	31.3	100.0
Total	16	40.0	100.0	
Missing System	24	60.0		
Total	40	100.0		

26.3. Which of the following is the most common group - Child

	Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Brother / sister	2	5.0	14.3	14.3
Other	12	30.0	85.7	100.0
Total	14	35.0	100.0	
Missing System	26	65.0		
Total	40	100.0		

27. Is there a system for monitoring the actions of the perpetrator?

	Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	20	50.0	51.3	51.3
No	19	47.5	48.7	100.0
Total	39	97.5	100.0	
Missing System	1	2.5		
Total	40	100.0		

28. Is there a program for perpetrators of violence aimed at changing their behavior?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	25	62.5	65.8	65.8
	No	13	32.5	34.2	100.0
	Total	38	95.0	100.0	
Missing	System	2	5.0		
Total		40	100.0		

29. Do you provide such a program?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	21	52.5	53.8	53.8
	No	18	45.0	46.2	100.0
	Total	39	97.5	100.0	
Missing	System	1	2.5		
Total		40	100.0		

30. Have you heard of an organization / institution providing a program for perpetrators of violence? If yes, which one?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Crisis centre for women and children- Pleven	1	2.5	3.2	3.2
	Centre for social rehabilitation and integration/CSRI/ CSRI Open Door - Pleven	1	2.5	3.2	6.5
	" BGRF"- Association. „Demetra " - Burgas	10	25.0	32.3	38.7
	Center for Community Support	4	10.0	12.9	51.6
	NGO	6	15.0	19.4	71.0
	Association "NAYA" " – Targovishte	5	12.5	16.1	87.1
	Center Dynamka - Ruse	1	2.5	3.2	90.3
	SOS Families at Risk - Varna	2	5.0	6.5	96.8
	Total	1	2.5	3.2	100.0
	Total	31	77.5	100.0	
	Missing	System	9	22.5	
Total		40	100.0		

31. Does your organization provide training/courses to improve the qualification of specialists?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	25	62.5	62.5	62.5
	No	15	37.5	37.5	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

32. If granted, how often do you organize this type of training?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Once a year	6	15.0	22.2	22.2
	More frequently than once a year	16	40.0	59.3	81.5
	Less than once a year	5	12.5	18.5	100.0
	Total	27	67.5	100.0	
Missing	System	13	32.5		
Total		40	100.0		

33. Where do you get support for such training from?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	ASA, Crisis centre for women and children	1	2.5	3.1	3.1
	ASA, Crisis centre of Open Door NGO	1	2.5	3.1	6.3
	ASA	1	2.5	3.1	9.4
	NGO	8	20.0	25.0	34.4
	Projects	15	37.5	46.9	81.3
	Programs	1	2.5	3.1	84.4
	government subsidies	3	7.5	9.4	93.8
	Foundation " PULSE " – Pernik	1	2.5	3.1	96.9
	External and internal trainers	1	2.5	3.1	100.0
	Total	32	80.0	100.0	
Missing	System	8	20.0		
Total		40	100.0		

34. Do you collaborate locally with other organizations in organizing and conducting training?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	27	67.5	77.1	77.1
	No	8	20.0	22.9	100.0
	Total	35	87.5	100.0	
Missing	System	5	12.5		
Total		40	100.0		

35. Who do you cooperate with?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Crisis centre for women and children	1	2.5	4.0	4.0
	Crisis centre of Open Door	1	2.5	4.0	8.0
	NGO	7	17.5	28.0	36.0
	Ministry of Justice, Court	7	17.5	28.0	64.0
	police	3	7.5	12.0	76.0
	SNS "Knowledge, success, change " - Dupnitsa	1	2.5	4.0	80.0
	schools	1	2.5	4.0	84.0
	Burgas municipality	1	2.5	4.0	88.0
	" Demetra " - Burgas	1	2.5	4.0	92.0
	Bulgarian Centre for Gender Studies /BGRF/	2	5.0	8.0	100.0
	Total	25	62.5	100.0	
Missing	System	15	37.5		
Total		40	100.0		

36. Do you think that the national legislation regarding protection and prevention of domestic violence is good?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	11	27.5	27.5	27.5
	No	29	72.5	72.5	100.0
Total		40	100.0	100.0	

37. If you think that is not good, please specify which part needs improvement?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Displacing the abuser, not the victim	2	5.0	9.5	9.5
	Public awareness	1	2.5	4.8	14.3
	Following international standards for the prevention and combat violence	1	2.5	4.8	19.0
	Additions and changes in the LPADV	12	30.0	57.1	76.2
	Criminalization of domestic violence	2	5.0	9.5	85.7
	Ratification of the Istanbul Convention	1	2.5	4.8	90.5
	Change in the trial and hearing of children	1	2.5	4.8	95.2
	More strict measures against perpetrators	1	2.5	4.8	100.0
	Total	21	52.5	100.0	
Missing	System	19	47.5		
Total		40	100.0		

38. Do you organize any special events / other, aimed at raising public awareness about domestic violence?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	26	65.0	66.7	66.7
	No	13	32.5	33.3	100.0
	Total	39	97.5	100.0	
Missing	System	1	2.5		
Total		40	100.0		

39. Do you collaborate with schools /universities in your area in order to increase knowledge regarding domestic violence?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	25	62.5	65.8	65.8
	2	13	32.5	34.2	100.0
	Total	38	95.0	100.0	
Missing	System	2	5.0		
Total		40	100.0		

40. If you look ahead and see Bulgaria without domestic violence, which are the most important measures to be taken?

		Frequency	Percent	valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Tougher sanctions	5	12.5	18.5	18.5
	Prevention programs	10	25.0	37.0	55.6
	Social programs for perpetrators and victims	4	10.0	14.8	70.4
	Ratification of the Convention of the Council of Europe – Istanbul Convention	1	2.5	3.7	74.1
	Publicity and awareness of the problem	2	5.0	7.4	81.5
	Synchronization of legislation in connection with DV	4	10.0	14.8	96.3
	Ratification of the Istanbul Convention	1	2.5	3.7	100.0
	Total	27	67.5	100.0	
Missing	System	13	32.5		
Total		40	100.0		

Annex 2: Questionnaire for further information

1. Does Your organization provide support for children, victims of domestic or sexual violence ?

1) Yes

2) No

2. If yes, please specify what kind of support is provided and for how long ?

Type of support, provided to children, victims of domestic or sexual violence	For how long do you provide this support?

3. In how many cases of violence against children has your organization provided assistance and support over the past year? And for the previous year?

Last year - (2015) number	For the previous year (2014) - number

4. And for how many cases have you provided help and accommodation to women, victims of domestic violence, along with their children?

Last year - (2015) number	For the previous year (2014) - number

5. In cases of violence against children, in your assessment, who carried out the violence and in what part of the case?

perpetrator	Approximately in what percentage of the cases he/she carries out the violence - DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	Approximately in what percentage of the cases he/she carries out the violence - SEXUAL VIOLENCE
The father		
The mother		
Other relative		
Acquaintance, friend of the family		
Someone from the social environment of the child - same age, classmate and so on		
Other - please specify!		

6. Who usually brings children to you?

--

7. In cases of violence against children and/or when a child has witnessed violence, do you work with the parents/family of the child? If so, what forms of work do you apply?

Forms of work with parents/family child

8. When taking care of women and children victims of violence, how do you ensure the relation of measures and care taken against the violence against the mother and those against violence against a child/children ?

--

9 Which are the most serious obstacles to your work in assisting children, victims of violence?

--

10 And what are the urgent actions which should be taken to improve working with and assisting children, victims of violence ? Who is responsible for the implementation?

Action	Who is responsible for its implementation ?
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

11. Do you meet obstacles particularly by public authorities and institutions in your actions? If yes, please indicate the nature of those obstacles

12. What in your opinion is needed for overcoming these obstacles - eg. to improve the legislation, staff training, increased motivation, something else that you consider important based on your experience?

13. If we talk specifically about legislation in the system of services for children victims of domestic and sexual violence, which are the main problems that you see? What needs to be improved and in which regulations?

14. How do you assess the level of inter-institutional cooperation in your region in order to effectively protect women and children from violence?

- 1) *excellent*
- 2) *very good*
- 3) *good*
- 4) *satisfactory*
- 5) *unsatisfactory*

15. Do you have projects and initiatives to raise public awareness about violence against women and children, and especially for the link between violence against women and

violence against children? If so, please list these projects and initiatives and approximately when they were executed?

Project	Period	Another initiative	Period
1.		1.	
2.		2.	
3.		3.	

16. Do you know of such projects/initiatives of other organizations and institutions? If yes, please specify

Project / initiative	Which organization/ institution	When was it held
1.		
2.		
3.		

17. Do you have information about lessons in schools that teach children and young people on knowledge and skills to recognize violence and institutions, from which to seek help and how to obtain support? If yes, please specify

18. In your opinion, do social pedagogues and teachers from your area need additional training to recognize the signs of child abuse?

19. Do you know about trainings in this area, aimed at them? If yes, please specify

20. Are you aware of the existence of any programs or individual activities to enhance the knowledge and skills of the children and students to deal with risky situations in their daily lives? If yes, please specify

21. Is there a program in your area for the prevention of violence in kindergartens and/or other institutions, working with children? If yes, please specify

22. Is there anything else that you consider important for the topic?

Annex 3

Good practices of the organizations of the Alliance for protection from gender – based violence

Case 1

Description of the case:

T. is a victim of domestic violence under the meaning of the LPDV, 15 - years old, and from a small village. The mother and the child have been systematically, and for the last 12 years, subjected to violence from the side of her husband- physical, psychological, economic and sexual violence. Often family scandals have occurred in the presence of their two children. They were also constrained by the father to go outside the home, have not attended school regularly, they have been forced to help in the family farm (the father is a farmer). T. lived in this family, where respect, love and all family and moral values were not honoured by the father (he even lived in a house with another woman, by whom he had two children). During the childhood T. has undergone hardships, constraints and family scandals. She had never celebrated a birthday "with cake and candles". She grew up as a depressed child, with difficult communication with peers. Her only relief was music (she dreamed of becoming a singer). After an act of violence with beating, in September 2015 the mother and children sought for shelter and support for relatives in the neighbouring village. Bullying continued and they therefore sought assistance from the police. The victims were referred to the association "Center Dynamika" – Rousse and they received an accommodation in the Crisis center. Meanwhile, the father was able to dissuade his son T. (17 years) who remained under his care. The child T. was accommodated in the shelter for a long term according to prescription by the Directorate for Social assistance Rousse.

Psychological and social work with the child:

1. Crisis intervention and psychological counselling during the placement of the child.
2. T. was enrolled in full-time schooling in the city Rousse. Regular contacts with the school management and class teacher have been maintained to ensure a safe and secure environment. The staff of the crisis center has provided a pedagogical support, as well as stimulated the creative talents of the child. As a result of the combined efforts of the educational institution and the team of the center, T. began to show excellent results in the courses. She is included in extra-curricular activities in music. She participated in an Olympiad/competition in Bulgarian language at regional and district levels. She finished the school year with excellent success, without any absences.
3. The child was neglected in terms of his medical needs. Assistance was for the use of dental care and treatment was conducted during the period of stay in social service.
4. Within the social service, a secure and safe environment for T. has been provided (she was afraid that her father would take her home). The care, the friendly approach and psycho - social support provided, helped the child to achieve rehabilitation from the trauma suffered. The child began to communicate freely with the desire and interest for participation in the community life (visits to concerts, theatre performances, exhibitions, etc.). For the first time, T. celebrated her birthday with guests, gifts and had "a cake with candles".

Psychological and social work with the mother:

1. In the period of the crisis intervention the team recognised lasting symptoms of anxiety, instability, feelings of inferiority, and therefore sought specialized help at the Center

for mentalhealth in Rouse. As a result of the treatment and assistance by the team and the regular take of prescribed medications, as well as thanks to the psycho - social support throughout the period of stay in the social service, she reached improvement in psycho-motor calm, with increased self-esteem and activated personal resources to cope with life crises.

2. A lawyer at the Association "Center Dynamika" provided the mother with legal assistance, advice and representation. According to decision of the District Court - Rouse under the divorce case the custody of the girl T. is granted to the mother. After an appeal by the former husband, the decision was confirmed.

3. Assistance was offered by the team of the crisis center (registration at the Job placement office) for finding an employment (preparation for job interview, resume writing). A contract of employment for work on shifts was signed, which allowed an additional income from part - time employment and hiring a private housing after leaving the social service.

In the course of the case intensive interaction was carried out with the Directorate for Social Assistance, the Centre for mental health, the Regional Directorate of the Ministry of Interior, the District Court, the District Prosecutor, Job placement agency, educational and health institutions. Contacts and support from friends and relatives of the victims have been sought.

Case 2

Description of the case

Mrs. C. T. was married for 16 years. Within the marriage she has two children - D. 14 years and C. - 8 years.

Violence against C. T. dates from the very beginning of the marriage. Mr. T. demonstrates causeless jealousy, abusive language, limiting her contacts and her ability to lead a social life. In the last four months the family has financial difficulties, that is why Mrs. T. decided to start work. Her husband is not against, but deprives her of the opportunity to be independent, and accompanies her to and brings her back from the workplace, constantly asks her how her day was, he is jealous and creates tension.

Gradually, the violence escalated and the atmosphere at home became unbearable for Mrs. T. and her children. Her husband threatened her that he would kill her with a knife, will cut her with a chainsaw, he would choke her with a pillow, and because of all this she is afraid of falling asleep and lives in constant fear for her life. Children are often witnesses, they see and hear when their father is violent and beats their mother.

The last acts of violence continued for hours, during which Mr. T. didn't stop shouting at and hurting his wife. He smoked cigarettes and quenched them on her body, kicking her and tearing her hair. Mrs. T. says that she thought that she would not survive until the morning.

On the next day, together with their children, who during all this time have been in the next room and heard her crying, C. T. planned an escape.

Measures taken by NGOs and institutions

On 02/06/2016 T., with her daughters D. and C. were accommodated in the Crisis Center of the organisation "Open Door"- Pleven. They were directed there by another crisis center in the country because there were risks for their life and health in the city they were previously accommodated.

After being accommodated in the crisis center, the mother was examined by the team of professionals. Her wounds were documented and a medication has been prescribed. No evidence of physical violence against children was documented.

C. was assisted for filing an application under the LPDV. An order for immediate protection has been issued and a hearing of the legal case was scheduled on 08/07/2016.

The client and her children were provided with a safe and secure environment, with all their daily and humanitarian needs satisfied.

The police authorities cooperated for the collection of the documents and other essential belongings, which had remained at home after the escape of the client from there.

Directorate "Social Assistance" - Pleven assisted for collecting information from a national database, which was necessary for the processing of the application under the LPDV.

For the period of stay in the crisis center, C. and her children received intense social and psychological support to stabilize their emotional and mental health status.

On the day of her placement in the crisis center - Pleven, C. was informed that her husband was hospitalized in a psychiatric establishment.

On 20/06/2016 Mr. T. escaped from the psychiatric clinic.

Due to the increased risk of new violence by her husband, as of 21.06.2016, C. and her daughters are urgently referred to a crisis center in another city.

On 08/07/2016 the case under the LPDV was considered and decided despite of the fact that Mrs. T. was not present and the hearing of the District Court – Pleven. The court issued an order for protection according to all measures requested by the client under the LPDV.

Member organizations of the Alliance for protection from gender- based violence based are among the main organizations providing support and specialized services to women and children victims of violence.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ A list of community- based services, including services for persons victims of violence, is given on the website of the Agency for Social support- <http://www.asp.government.bg/ASP-Clients/Client>

List of member organizations of the Association "Alliance for protection from gender- based violence" and the services they provide

Varna, 21 "Sinchets " street
Tel : 052 609 677; 0888 436 754, Tel / Fax : 052 613 830
Sofia, bul. Levski № 33
02 96353757
E-mail:bulgarian_alliance@mail.bg,office@bgrf.org,
sos@mail.bg, sos@ssi.bg
www.alliancedv.org

1. "Bulgarian Gender Research" Foundation /BGRF/ - Sofia

CONTACTS :

Sofia 1142

bul. "Vasil Levski " 33

Phone : 02/963 53 57, Mobile : 087 9133021

Fax : 02/9635357

Email : office@bgrf.org

www.bgrf.org

Contact person: Genoveva Tisheva - Manager and Daniela Gorbounova - Director Legal advice

The Foundation has branches in Haskovo and Plovdiv and an office in Veliko Tarnovo

Petya Petkova - Manager Branch Haskovo

Haskovo 6300

Address: Haskovo, Pirin str. No 9

Telephone: 038/624 685

Mobile: 0878 567 659

e-mail: bgrfhaskovo@mail.bg

Contact person: Petya Petkova – Manager

Services provided: counselling centers for legal and social - psychological services for victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and other forms of gender based violence and for victims of discrimination. Program for working with perpetrators of domestic violence. Crisis center for women and children victims of violence BGRF - Haskovo - situated in Dimitrovgrad.

Contact phones for provision of services:

0879133021 - hotline for referral

0878567620

02/9635357

2. Women's Association "Ekaterina Karavelova" - Silistra

CONTACTS :

Silistra 7500

str. "Vaptsarov" 51 fl. 2

P.O.B 283

Phone :**086/820 487**

Fax: 086/820 487

E-mail: ceta@mail.bg

Website: www.ekaravelova.org

Contact Person: Hristina Georgieva - Chairwoman

Provided services: counselling center for legal and social - psychological services to individuals, victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and other forms of gender-based violence, child victims of violence. Program for work with perpetrators of domestic violence.

Crisis center for women and children victims of violence.

3. Foundation "Positive skills of the individual in the society" P.U.L.S - Pernik

CONTACTS:

Pernik 2300

str. "Sredets" 2

Phone : 076/60 10 10

Fax: 076/60 10 10

Email: pulse.women@gmail.com

Contact Person : Mariana Evtimova - board member

Provided services : counselling center for legal and social - psychological services to victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and other forms of gender based violence, child victims of violence.

Crisis center for women and children victims of violence.

4. Foundation "SOS - Families at Risk" - Varna

CONTACTS :

Address : Varna 9002; str. "Sinchets " 21

Phone : 052 609 677,

Tel./ Fax : 052 613 830

Email : sos@ssi.bg;

website : www.sos-varna.org

Person contact : Anna Nikolova - Manager

Provided services: counselling center for legal and social - psychological services for victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and other forms of gender based violence, child victims of violence.

Crisis center for women and children victims of violence.

Program for work with perpetrators of domestic violence.

Shelter for victims of human trafficking to the National Commission for fight against Human Traffic.

5. Foundation "H&D Gender Perspectives" – Haskovo and Dimitrovgrad

CONTACTS :

Dimitrovgrad 4600

Address: Dimitrovgrad, boul. Kliment Ohridski№ 1, fl. 1

Telephone: 0391 2 50 55
Mobile: 0878 567 659
Email: hdgender@gmail.com
Contact Person: Nevena Milcheva- Manager

Provided services: counselling center for legal and social - psychological services to individuals, victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and other forms of gender-based violence. Program for work with perpetrators of domestic violence.
Crisis center for women and children, victims of violence in Dimitrovgrad, together with BGRF - branch Haskovo.

6. Association "Demetra" - Burgas

CONTACTS :

Address: Burgas,
Str. "Shejnovno" 102 and
Phone: 056/81 56 18
Fax: 056 83 66 57; mob. 0896 82 15 91
Website: [http:// Demetra - bg.org/index.html](http://Demetra-bg.org/index.html)
Email :demetra@unacs.bg
Contact person : Anna Burieva - Chairman

Provided services: counselling center for legal and social - psychological services for individuals, victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and other forms of violence, gender and children, victims of violence. Program for work with perpetrators of domestic violence.
Crisis center for women and children, victims of violence. Crisis center for children affected by violence.
Two shelters for victims of human trafficking to the National Commission for fight against trafficking in human beings
New service offered - support center for victims of sexual violence.

7. Foundation "Association NAIA" - Targovishte

CONTACTS:

Targovishte 7700, str. "Antim I " No 37
Phone: 0601/6 28 89
Fax: 0601/6 28 89
Hotline 0601/ 6 70 25
Mobile: 0879 606 855
Email: naia_s@abv.bg
Webpage: www.naia.cf
Contact Person: Svetla Sivcheva - Chairwoman

Provided services: counselling center for legal and social - psychological services for individuals, victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and other forms of gender based violence, and for children, victims of violence. Program for work with perpetrators of domestic violence.

8. Association "Centre Open door" - Pleven

CONTACTS :

Center "Open Door"

Pleven 5800, str. "Neophyte Rilski" 55

Tel./fax 064 846 713

Email: opendoor_centre@hotmail.com

Contact Person: Zlatka Macheva - Chairwoman

Provided services: counselling center for legal and social - psychological services to individuals, victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and other forms of gender based violence and children, victims of violence. Program for work with perpetrators of domestic violence.

Crisis center for women and children, victims of violence.

9. Association "Center Dynamics" - Ruse

CONTACTS :

Ruse 7012

str. "Panayot Hitov" 9

Tel./Fax: 082/82 67 70

Email: centre_dinamika@abv.bg

Contact Person: Deana Dimova - Manager

Provided services: counselling center for legal and social - psychological services to individuals, victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and other forms of gender-based violence, and children, victims of violence. Program working with perpetrators of domestic violence.

Crisis center for women victims of violence.

10. Association "Knowledge, success, change" - Dupnitsa

CONTACTS :

Dupnitsa 2600, str. "Solun" 2

Tel.: 0895 76 22 93

Email: ksc_association@abv.bg

Contact Person: Sylvia Ovcharchenska - Chairwoman

With a branch in the town of Blagoevgrad

Provided services: counselling center for legal and social - psychological services for individuals, victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and other forms of gender-based violence, and children, victims of violence.