



The Other Side of the Story  
PERPETRATORS IN CHANGE

# Country Report: Greece





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## ***The Other Side of the Story: Perpetrators in Change***



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# Organizational Information

## 1. European Knowledge Spot

European Knowledge Spot (hereinafter EKS) is an independent social non-profit organization with its basis in Athens. It was founded in March 2019 and it is mostly active in issues concerning, discrimination, human rights, social ecology, and free, equal and quality education for all. Activities include the design, implementation and evaluation of capacity building, training, educational and awareness-raising activities. Further, EKS conducts research and promotional activities aiming to sensitising on domestic violence (DV) issues, encourage zero tolerance on the issue and guaranteeing equal opportunities and equal treatment for all persons without any discrimination. In this framework, the organisation aims to give visible expression to EU and national policy on equal opportunities for women and men (visibility) and to encourage debate and open dialogue on the progress to be achieved and policies to be developed in order to ensure equal treatment between women and men, both in law and in practice.

## 2. The Union of Women Associations of Heraklion Prefecture

The Union of Women Associations of Heraklion Prefecture (UWAH), is an NGO, established in 2001, that belongs to the Voluntary Non-Governmental Organizations, operating at Heraklion Municipality, Crete, Greece. UWAH is active at the promotion and protection of women's and children rights; while it also engages with raising awareness and advocating for human rights. In this context, its main mission is to promote, implement and supervise the application of the Istanbul Convention (Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, 2011), at local, national and European level. The major activity of the organisation is to provide support services to victims of domestic and intimate partner violence. It has been recently certified for its counselling services under the ISO 9001:2008 protocol. It operates the 24/7 emergency help line, the Shelter for women victims of DV, the Counselling Centre, and the Homeless Unit to provide an array of social services for people victims of economic crisis.



UWAH is active in the following fields:

- Protection of women rights and the promotion of gender equality to Heraklion municipality and Crete region of any ethnicity. It has a special focus is on migrant women, and is in constant communication with the formal migrant communities (Albanian, Russian, catholic, Muslim, and any other ethnicity);
- The operation of a Counselling Centre for women aimed at the scientific provision of services (psychological support, legal advice, return of abused women to the labour market etc). The provision of counselling and social services to women in danger and children. Focus is given to the support of migrant women who live permanently in Crete;
- The provision of shelter assistance and psycho-social support services abused women and children;
- The provision of an SOS helpline operation for reporting DV incidents and support (everyday operation);
- Actions of dissemination, awareness raising and education for the abused women either at private level or social level (work etc.);
- Mentoring to women on re-entering the labour market (women victims of DV), and promotion of women entrepreneurship;
- Supporting women self-help groups in Heraklion;
- The protection of abandoned children of age 0-6;
- The promotion of Foster Families within society; awareness raising of public, training of executives;
- Provide actions of added value to the immigrant women of the region. Mobilization and awareness raising on the topic of female migrants' victims of DV. The Association will mobilize local stakeholders and social service departments in order to focus also to DV of immigrant women;
- Provision of services to homeless persons and persons that face poverty problems.

The main challenge UWAH is dealing with is the mobilisation of local communities (urban and rural communities) against Gender Based Violence, introduce and establish a collaborative – multiagency spirit among stakeholders on dealing with increased effectiveness the phenomenon of Gender Based Violence at local level. What is been realised is that the collaborative spirit is at very low levels especially when multiagency collaboration is to be in



place. Another challenge lies to the extent that a perpetrators programme needs to be developed and piloted at regional level, the first organised programme in Greece.

## Overview of Greece's Response to DVA

### 3. The Current Picture

According to recent EU data derived from the gender equality index 2017<sup>1</sup> measuring the complex concept of gender equality, Greece's score for the domain of violence is 27.4, which is in line with the EU average of 27.5, while at 2020 Gender Equality Index it scored 52.2 ranking last in the EU. Its ranking has remained the same since 2010. At the same time, the 25% of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence at least once since the age of 15. In the EU-28 the average is 33%. 21% of women who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by any perpetrator in the past 12 months have not told anyone. This rate is 8 p.p. higher than the EU average of 13%. At the societal level, violence against women costs Greece an estimated EUR 5 billion per year through lost economic output, service utilisation and personal costs<sup>2</sup>. In addition, statistical data are collected by the Observatory of Gender Equality, a mechanism set up in the General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality (G.S.F.P.G.E) responsible for the coordination of data collection on all forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention<sup>3</sup>. The observatory aims to support Public Administration and Local Authorities to design, implement and evaluate policies concerning gender equality, through detailed gender-segregated data on equality issues. In the tables below (2-1,2), you

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<sup>1</sup> European Institute for Gender Equality (2017), Gender Equality Index, Retrieved from <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2017/domain/violence/EL>, for data of 2020 <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2020>

<sup>2</sup> European Institute for Gender Equality (2014), Estimating the costs of gender-based violence in the European Union, All data were retrieved from an EU-wide survey conducted by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) in 2012 based on interviews with 42.000 women across the 28 Member States in European Union. No EU-wide survey on gender-based violence has been carried out since then. Until the completion of the next survey, the scores cannot be updated.

<sup>3</sup> Ratified in Greece by Law 4531/2018 (OJ A 62/5.4.2018)



can find the Greek observatory's presentation of the collected data from the Police and Justice system<sup>4</sup>.

Table 3-1 Police Statistics on Domestic Violence

Indicators that we have at our disposal	Year								EIGE's Indicators
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	
Annual number of women victims of domestic violence			1630	1818	2302	2321	2696	3196	Indicator 1: Annual number of women victims of intimate partner violence (aged 18 and over) committed by men (aged 18 and over)
Number of reported offences related to domestic violence	1303	2005	2455	2896	3512	3572	3839	3134	Indicator 2: Number of reported offences related to intimate partner violence against women (aged 18 and over) committed by men (aged 18 and over)
Number of men perpetrators of domestic violence (percentage of male population that are perpetrators)			1620	1886	2351 (3%)	2428 (2,9%)	2891 (3%)	2395 (2,5%)	Indicator 3: Number of men (aged 18 and over) perpetrators of intimate partner violence against women (and percentage of male population that are perpetrators)
No records for the type of violence until 2018									Indicator 4: Annual number of women (aged 18 and over) victims of physical intimate partner violence committed by men (aged 18 and over)
No records for the type of violence until 2018									Indicator 5: Annual number of women (aged 18 and over) victims of psychological intimate partner violence committed by men (aged 18 and over)
Women victims of sexual assault (337 PC)					191	259	263	224	Indicator 6: Annual number of women (aged 18 and over) victims of sexual intimate partner violence committed by men (aged 18 and over)
No records for the type of violence until 2018									Indicator 7: Annual number of women (aged 18 and over) victims of economic intimate partner violence committed by men (aged 18 and over)
Annual number of women victims reporting rape	264	220	245	216	182	163	205	223	Indicator 8: Annual number of women (aged 18 and over) victims reporting rape committed by men (aged 18 and over)
Women victims of intentional femicide (299PC) in combination with the law of domestic violence	11	12	6	13	12 (44,4%)	11 (36,7%)	13 (50%)	7 (30,4%)	Indicator 9: Women (18 and over) victims of intimate femicide committed by a male intimate partner (18 and over), as a share of the women victims of homicide (aged 18 and over)

<sup>4</sup> European Institute for Gender Equality, Observatory -E-bulletin-no-23- gender -based – violence (2020), retrieved from <http://www.isotita.gr/en/observatory-e-bulletin-no-23-gender-based-violence>



## Justice Statistics on Domestic Violence

For the collection of the Court data, the Observatory of the GSFPGE addressed the 63 First Instance Courts of the country, through the Supreme Court. All Courts responded. However, some of the First Instance Courts did not have all the required data.

Table 3-2 Justice Figures

Indicators recorded by the justice sector	2016		2017		2018		Matching with EIGE's Indicators
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	
Annual number of granted restraining orders (according to Article 18 of Law 3500/2006)  <i>Available data from 16 out of 63 First Instance Courts (25.4%)</i>	17	2	45	2	33	3	Indicator 10: Annual number of protection orders applied and granted in cases of intimate partner violence against women by type of courts
Annual number of prosecutions against men (aged 18 and over) for committing a crime against a member of their family (Articles 6, 7, 8, 9 of Law 3500/2006)	2890	463	3628	688	4082	697	Indicator 11: Number of men (aged 18 and over) prosecuted for intimate partner violence against women
Annual number of convictions against men (aged 18 and over) for committing a crime against a member of their family (Articles 6, 7, 8, 9 of Law 3500/2006)  <i>Available data from 57 out of 63 First Instance Courts (90.5%)</i>	634	49	797	58	785	66	Indicator 12: Number of men (aged 18 and over) sentenced for intimate partner violence against women
Annual number of men (aged 18 and over) who serve a sentence of deprivation of liberty in a prison for committing a crime against a member of their family (Articles 6, 7, 8, 9 of Law 3500/2006)  <i>Available data from 14 out of 63 First Instance Courts (22.2%)</i>	22	0	14	0	11	0	Indicator 13: Annual number of men (aged 18 and over) sentenced for intimate partner violence against women held in prison or with a sanction involving a form of deprivation of liberty
Annual number of cases that have been submitted in the process of penal mediation (Article 11 of Law 3500/2006)  <i>Available data from 56 out of 63 First Instance Courts (88.9%)</i>	493	60	589	100	529	94	This particular indicator has emerged after a proposal of the General Secretariat for Human Rights and does not match any of EIGE's suggested Indicators



The statistics listed above do not fully match with EIGE's proposed indicators, as they do not record the gender and age of the victim, as well as the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator. However, they are a significant reflection of the phenomenon of DV in Greece.

Available data on violence against women are also collected by the General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality (former GSFPGE) on the basis of requests for the Network of Counselling Centres and the support of line 15900 operating nationwide. In particular, from April 2012 to November, 2018, 25.079 women addressed the 41 Counselling Centres across the country, in person and through third parties. 22.183 of the cases concerned violence. During the same period, 1.352 women victims of violence were accommodated in the 21 Shelters. 18.938 women out of all women who addressed the Counselling Centres during 2012-2018 reported DV. For the women that were accommodated in the Shelters, the victims of DV for the same period amounted to 1.125<sup>5</sup>.

From January 2019 to December 2019, 5.037 women addressed the 41 Counselling Centres across the country, in person and through third parties. 3.632 of the cases (namely 83%) concerned DV. Available data for 4.317 cases shows that in 58% of the cases the offender was the husband (current or ex); in 13% of the cases the offender was the partner (current or ex) and in 10% of the cases the offender was another family member<sup>6</sup>.

Another important source of data was offered from the Counselling Centre and Safe Shelter administered by the UWAH. For the year 2018, 110 women victims of violence and 3 men addressed the Counselling Centre of UWAH, whilst 7 women were accommodated by UWAH's Shelter. Amongst them, 38 women were also referred to the Hellenic Police, 64 were referred to lawyers, 32 to the hospital, 15 to psychiatrist and 41 to other services. For the year 2019, 126 women victims of violence addressed the Counselling Centre of UWAH, whilst 5 women were accommodated by UWAH's Shelter. Amongst them, 54 women were also referred to the Hellenic Police, 73 were referred to lawyers, 37 to the hospital and 24 to

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<sup>5</sup> European Institute for Gender Equality, Observatory -E-bulletin-no-23- gender -based – violence (2020), retrieved from <http://www.isotita.gr/en/observatory-e-bulletin-no-23-gender-based-violence>

<sup>6</sup> European Institute for Gender Equality (2019). Gender violence. Retrieved on September, 20, 2020 Retrieved from: [http://paratiritirio.isotita.gr/genqua\\_portal/?fbclid=IwAR2FyMdqAhH4ALUX9REnY9RThBtemJQeebZdBL6sQgbxwsVC7uEN5ODuD5s](http://paratiritirio.isotita.gr/genqua_portal/?fbclid=IwAR2FyMdqAhH4ALUX9REnY9RThBtemJQeebZdBL6sQgbxwsVC7uEN5ODuD5s)



psychiatrist. From January 2020 until May 2020 138 women victims of violence addressed the Counselling Centre of UWAH, whilst 7 women were accommodated by UWAH's Shelter. Amongst them, 74 women were also referred to the Hellenic Police, 102 were referred to lawyers, 12 to the hospital and 7 to psychiatrist.

The SOS Hotline 15900 is a national service that enables women victims of violence or third parties to communicate directly with a gender-based violence agency and it operates under the General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality (GSFPGE). Of the 5,088 calls in 2018, 4,116 (81%) concerned complaints of cases of gender-based violence. Specifically, 2864 calls (70%) concerned complaints from the abused women themselves, while 1252 calls (30%) concerned complaints from third parties (mainly from friends 26%, parents 11%, other relatives 10 %, brother / or 12%, neighbour 15% and other people (17%). Of the 2864 calls concerning complaints by the abused women themselves, 2519 calls (87%) concerned DV with the perpetrator mainly being the husband, 110 calls (4%) sexual harassment, 28 calls (1%) rape, 2 (0%) calls trafficking and 146 calls (5%) concerned complaints of other forms of violence<sup>7</sup>.

The SOS helpline 15900 in the period 1/1/2019 to 31/12/2019 received 5,984 calls. Of the total number of calls, 4,619 (77%) concerned cases of gender-based violence. Of these, 3,103 calls (67%) concerned complaints of the abused women themselves while 1,516 calls (29%) concerned complaints from third parties (mainly friends 24%, parents 13%, other relatives 12%, brother / or 12%, neighbour 14% and other people 17%). Of the 3,103 calls concerning complaints by the victims themselves 2,828 calls (90%) were about DV, 77 calls (2%) referenced sexual harassment, 35 calls (1%) were rape cases, 2 (0%) calls reported trafficking and 146 calls (5%) concerned complaints of other forms of violence<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Γενική Γραμματεία Ισότητας Φύλων (2019), Στατιστικά στοιχεία τηλεφωνικής γραμμής sos 15900 1-1-19 έως 31/12/2019, Retrieved from <http://www.isotita.gr/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/%CE%A3%CF%84%CE%BF%CE%B9%CF%87%CE%B5%CE%AF%CE%B1-%CE%93%CF%81%CE%B1%CE%BC%CE%BC%CE%AE%CF%82-SOS-01-01-2019-%CE%AD%CF%89%CF%82-31-12-2019.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Γενική Γραμματεία Ισότητας Φύλων (2019), Στατιστικά στοιχεία τηλεφωνικής γραμμής sos 15900 1-1-19 έως 31/12/2019, Retrieved from <http://www.isotita.gr/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/%CE%A3%CF%84%CE%BF%CE%B9%CF%87%CE%B5%CE%AF%CE%B1-%CE%93%CF%81%CE%B1%CE%BC%CE%BC%CE%AE%CF%82-SOS-01-01-2019-%CE%AD%CF%89%CF%82-31-12-2019.pdf>



UWAH's SOS helpline operating under the UWAH in the period 1/1/2018 to 31/12/2018 received 102 calls, while 3 women contacted UWAH through email, 5 through Facebook and 3 through third parties. UWAH's SOS helpline in the period 1/1/2019 to 31/12/2019 received 134 calls, while 9 women contacted UWAH through email, 13 through Facebook and 6 through third parties.

UWAH's SOS helpline in the period 1/1/2020 to 31/05/2020 received 117 calls, while 13 women contacted UWAH through email, 9 through Facebook and 19 through written messages (this service was provided due to the communication difficulties posed by quarantine).

### **Sociodemographic data of female victims**

Of the 25,079 women who contacted the Counselling Centres from the beginning of their operation (2012-2018), 18,938 (84%) related to cases of DV with the perpetrator being the spouse / partner. Of these women, 18,567 (74%) are mothers. Regarding the working status of women, 7,833 (31%) are employed, while 11,920 (48%) are unemployed. Regarding their marital status, 12,317 (49%) are married, 3860 (15%) are single, 3049 (12%) are divorced, 2343 (9%) are divorced, 590 (2%) are widowed, and 737 (3%) in cohabitation. Regarding their age, 1759 (7%) are up to 25 years old, 4785 (19%) are from 26 to 35 years old, 7440 (30%) are from 36 to 45 years old, 4757 (19%) are from 46 to 55, 1336 (5%) are from 56 to 60 years old and 1550 (6%) are from 60 years old and up. In terms of their educational level, 331 women (1%) are illiterate, 5170 (21%) have completed primary education, 8,888 (35%) have completed secondary education, 5157 (20%) have completed higher education. From all the women who applied to the Counselling Centres, it appears that 20,289 (81%) are Greek, 406 (3%) are refugees, 131 (1%) are disabled and 161 (1%) are Roma.

In 2019 the socio-demographic profile has not changed a lot as the marital status in combination with a situation of unemployment of the female victims plays an important role. From all the women who were assisted by the Counselling Centres 3142 (73%) had Greek citizenship, 138 (3%) had EU citizenship, 665 (16 %) had non-EU citizenship and 7 (0%) had foreign citizenship. From the women who answered the question about their educational level, it seems that 879 (21%) had completed primary or lower secondary education, 929 (22%) higher secondary education, 482 (11%) post-secondary education - non higher education, 823



(19%) had a University or technical educational institution's degree, 96 (2%) had a Master's degree, while 64 (2%) were typically illiterate.

From the female victims of violence who answered the question about their marital status, it seems that 2082 (46%) were married, 647 (17%) were unmarried, 429 (11%) were divorced, 487 (11%) were separated, 85 (3%) were widowed and 117 (3%) were in cohabitation. Amongst them, 3043 (70%) had children and 1274 (30%) did not have children. From the female victims of violence who answered the question about their employment status, it seems that 1502 (32%) were employed, 1862 (47%) were unemployed and 234 (5%) were retired. From the women who answered the question about their age, it seems that 330 (8%) were under 25 years old, 865 (20%) were between 26 and 35 years old, 1254 (29%) were from 36 to 45 years old, 835 (20%) were from 46 to 55 years old, 212 (5%) were from 56 to 60 years old and 284 (7%) were aged 60 and over.

The profile of the women in shelters changes slightly driving the attention to the economic dependence of the victim. Of the 1518 women who were hosted in shelters from the beginning of their operation, 1125 (76%) related to cases of DV with the perpetrator spouse / partner (71 /%). Of these women, 1196 (79%) are mothers. Regarding the working status of women, 192 (13%) are employed, while 1084 (71%) are unemployed. Regarding their marital status, 680 (45%) are married, 328 (22%) are single, 203 (13%) are divorced, 122 (8%) are divorced, 33 (2%) are widowed and 70 (5%) in cohabitation. Regarding their age, 243 (16%) are up to 25 years old, 492 (32%) are from 26 to 35 years old, 399 (26%) are from 36 to 45 years old, 192 (13%) are from 46 to 55, 58 (4%) are from 56 to 60 years old and 60 (4%) are from 60 years old and up. Regarding their educational level, 83 women (5%) are illiterate, 563 (37%) have completed primary education, 474 (31%) secondary education, and 168 (12%) higher education. From the total number of women hosted in the hostels, it appears that 767 (51%) are Greek, 224 (14%) are refugees, 13 (1%) are disabled and 40 (2%) are Roma<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> Γενική Γραμματεία Ισότητας Φύλων (2018), ΔΕΛΤΙΟ ΤΥΠΟΥ Στατιστικά στοιχεία του δικτύου δομών της Γ.Γ.Ι.Φ. για την εξάλειψη της βίας κατά των γυναικών, retrieved from <http://www.isotita.gr/%CE%B4%CE%B5%CE%BB%CF%84%CE%AF%CE%BF-%CF%84%CF%8D%CF%80%CE%BF%CF%85-%CF%83%CF%84%CE%B1%CF%84%CE%B9%CF%83%CF%84%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AC-%CF%83%CF%84%CE%BF%CE%B9%CF%87%CE%B5%CE%AF%CE%B1-%CF%84%CE%B7%CF%82/>



Sociodemographic data from the 24-hour SOS helpline operated under the General Secretary for Family Policy and Gender Equality (GSFPGE) in 2018 can offer similar conclusions regarding the profile of victims. Of the 2864 calls of female victims of DV, 1823 (64%) are mothers. From the female victims of violence who answered the question about their employment status, 857 (30%) are employed, 587 (20%) are unemployed (of which 62 (11%) are long-term unemployed) and 288 (10%) are inactive (of which 23 (8%) attend education or training).

From the female victims of violence who answered the question about their marital status, 1504 (53%) are married, 317 (11%) are unmarried, only 204 (7%) in separation status and 189 (7%) divorced. From the women who answered the question about their age, 106 (4%) are from 15 to 24 years old, 677 (24%) are between 25 and 39 years old, 735 (26%) are from 40 to 54 years old, 227 (8%) are from 55 to 64 and 115 (4%) are aged 65 and over. From the women who answered the question about their educational level, 41 (1%) have completed primary or lower secondary education, 75 (3%) upper secondary education and 290 (10%) higher education. From all the women who called the hotline, it appears that 2208 (77%) are Greek women, 262 (9%) are immigrants and 18 (1%) are disabled. Regarding the financial situation, from the women who answered the respective question, 368 (13%) describe it as moderate, 339 (12%) report it as bad, 152 (5%) as good, 58 (2%) as very poor and 17 (1%) as very good.<sup>10</sup>

In 2019, from 3,103 women who called the line, 1,965 (63%) are mothers. From the female victims of violence who answered the question about their employment situation it seems that: 981 (32%) are employed (of which 79 (8%) are self-employed); 590 (19%) are unemployed (of which 78 (13%) are long-term unemployed) and 336 (11%) are inactive (of which 33 (10%) attend educational programme or training).

From the female victims of violence who answered the question about their marital status, 1.614 (52%) are married 400 (13%) are unmarried; 244 (8%) divorced; 52 (2%) widowed; 229

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<sup>10</sup> Γενική Γραμματεία Ισότητας Φύλων (2018), ΔΕΛΤΙΟ ΤΥΠΟΥ Στατιστικά στοιχεία του δικτύου δομών της Γ.Γ.Ι.Φ. για την εξάλειψη της βίας κατά των γυναικών, retrieved from <http://www.isotita.gr/%CE%B4%CE%B5%CE%BB%CF%84%CE%AF%CE%BF-%CF%84%CF%8D%CF%80%CE%BF%CF%85-%CF%83%CF%84%CE%B1%CF%84%CE%B9%CF%83%CF%84%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AC-%CF%83%CF%84%CE%BF%CE%B9%CF%87%CE%B5%CE%AF%CE%B1-%CF%84%CE%B7%CF%82/>



(7%) in cohabitation. From those that were married, 98% were married only once; while 2% had been married two or three times. From the female victims of violence who called the helpline, 63% had children and 17% did not. 40% of those who had children, had 2 children, 35% one child, 13% three children, 4% four children, 1% at least five children and 1% of them were pregnant.

The women who answered the question about their age show that: 150 (5%) are under 24 years old; 787 (25%) are from 25 to 39 years old; 805 (26%) are from 40 to 54 years old; 220 (7%) are from 55 to 64 and 130 (4%) are from 65 years and over. From the women who answered the question about their educational level it appears that: 4 (0%) are typically illiterate; 47 (2%) have completed primary or lower secondary education; 110 (4%) upper secondary education; 66 (2%) post-secondary education of non-tertiary level and; 388 (12%) higher education. From all the women who called the hotline it appears that: 2,356 (76%) are Greek; 270 (9%) are immigrants; 1 (0%) belongs to a minority; 15 (0%) are women with disabilities 11.

### **Socio-demographic data of male perpetrators**

Research on the issue of DV in Greece is generally scarce in academic journals. One study tries to systematically approach the issue of the individual characteristics of DV offenders. Papadakaki et al. (2009) conducted a cross-sectional study among 1,122 men and women, aged 18–65 years, and found that low self-esteem and violent childhood experiences were associated with increased risk of perpetration of physical violence against a partner.<sup>12</sup>

According to the national study titled: "The quantitative and qualitative assessment of violence against women in the period 2008-2016 and the connection of qualitative and quantitative aspects with the economic crisis. New vulnerable population groups and policy challenges" conducted by General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality victims' relationship with the perpetrator was mainly the former or the current spouse / partner, so we are talking

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<sup>11</sup>Γενική Γραμματεία Ισότητας Φύλων (2019), Στατιστικά στοιχεία τηλεφωνικής γραμμής sos 15900 1-1-19 έως 31/12/2019, retrieved from <http://www.isotita.gr/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Στοιχεία-Γραμμής-SOS-01-01-2019-έως-31-12-2019.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> Papadakaki, M., Tzamalouka, G. S., Chatzifotiou, S., and Chliaoutakis, J. (2009). 'Seeking for Risk Factors of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in a Greek National Sample the Role of Self-Esteem.' *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 24(5): 732–750.)



primarily about marital / partner violence (60 women or 82%) and secondarily a first degree relative (father, child, brother), while 3% of the cases concerned incidents that occurred in the workplace with perpetrators the employer or the client. Respectively, the profile of the perpetrators, according to what the researched of the same study themselves reported, does not differ from that of the female victims. Specifically, they are Greeks (95.7%), aged 35-44 years (37.31%), and separated (41.9%). 33.3% are graduates from college and post-secondary education, university graduates (27.54%), reflecting the middle and upper level education. 66.7% are employees, while there are marginally positive answers (52.3%) compared to those that did not show any change (47.7%) in the working status of the perpetrators. It is notable that, according to the respondents, the perpetrators had been victims of violence (46.4%) or had experienced mental health problems (21.4%).

In addition, Katsos et al. (2020)<sup>13</sup> analyzed all the data gathered from the clinical examinations at the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology of the School of Medicine of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. During a five-year period (2012-2016), 2466 forensic examinations took place and 664 of them were analyzed as related with DM. All of the cases concerned heterosexual couples. According to them, the majority of the offenders were men (86.75%), namely 576 men and 88 women. The prevalence and age characteristics of the DV (DV) offenders were as follows: among 18-29 years old: 4.34% men & 4.54% women, among 30-39 years old: 17.88% men & 34.09% women, among 40-49 years old: 35.07% men & 34.09% women, among 50-59 years old: 18.58% men and 11.36% women, over 60 years old: 4.86% men and 11.36% women, with a mean age of 41.73 years for men and 46.37 years for women. The higher rates of DV perpetration were among 40-49 for men and 30-39 and 40-49 for women. As for the employment factor, 61.46% of male perpetrators were employed, 12.50% unemployed and 6.77% retired. Also, 43.18% of female perpetrators were employed, 29.55% unemployed and 6.82% retired. This survey also showed that the allegations made by men were mostly referring to divorced couples, while the allegations made by women were mostly referring to cohabitation. The 85.99% of the cases (n=571) had the same nationality, and most of them (n=528) were Greek citizens. Finally, the 67.71% of the male perpetrators and the 69.32% of the female perpetrators had re-exacerbated violence in the past.

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<sup>13</sup> Katsos, K., Sakellidis, E. I., Zorba, E., Tsitsika, A., Papadodima, S., & Spiliopoulou, C. (2020). Intimate partner violence in Greece: a study of 664 consecutive forensic clinical examinations. *Family practice*.



Another robust research on the offenders of DV was that of Petropoulos et al. (2016)<sup>14</sup>, which gathered DV data from 19 police directorates across Greece and characteristics of DV offenders (n=13) under the Penal Mediation Programme of Via-Stop. According to this research, offenders were typically males (77%), the majority of them was between 30 and 45 years, had middle/high socioeconomic status and had a prior history of abuse that was unreported to authorities. Most of the offenders were employed (53%), the 39% of were unemployed and 8% were retired. As for the economic status, only 15% of the offenders were living under the current poverty line in Greece (<5000 euro per annum), while 23% earned more than 50,000 euro per annum. The majority of the offenders maintained middle to high income, 31% earning from 10,000 to 15,000 and 23% earning from 15,000 to 25,000 euro per annum. According to the offenders, their financial status, was described as 'bad' (31%), 'adequate' (54%), and 'good' (15%). Despite the theory that correlates DV with low educational level, the majority of the offenders (62%) were high school graduates, 15% had university and other college graduates, 8% had post-graduate degree, while 8% had only completed an elementary level school. Interestingly, high rates of very active athletic background had been evidenced in this survey. 46% of the offenders used to be or are professional athletes or they trained at a high daily level. Additionally, all the offenders in this study were white, Greek citizens. As for the familiar characteristics, 46% of the offenders were married, 31% were separated, 15% were divorced and 8% were in relationship. Furthermore, 69% of the offenders lived in domiciles with a greater than or equal number of four residents. The majority of offenders had children (85%), with a mean value of 1.8 children, while 38% reported that they had been witnesses of DV within their paternal families. Moreover, 46% of the perpetrators reported incidents of bullying during their school years, identifying themselves as the 'bully'. About 54% of the examined cases had an age difference of greater than 4 years with their victim category. Additionally, 54% of the offenders had already broken the law at least once, mostly due to traffic violations. 38% of the offenders had been convicted for an offence - mostly pertaining to debt and other non-violent petty crimes. 38% were diagnosed with a psychiatric condition and 38% were abusing alcohol and/or drugs.

Some of the qualitative characteristics of the offenders of DV include their attitude towards the violent incidence and the DV in general. As a result, most of the perpetrators claimed they

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<sup>14</sup> Petropoulos, N., Fotou, E., Ranjan, S., Chatzifotiou, S., & Dimadi, E. (2016). Domestic violence offenders in Greece. *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice*, 10(4), 416-431.



were provoked by the victim before the assault. They initially blamed the victim for the disintegration of the family, as well as their predicament, refusing to accept responsibility for their actions. They did not view themselves as an offender; rather they viewed themselves at the receiving end of sanctions because of the victim's actions (Petropoulos et al., 2016). There is a variation of the reasons which caused the conflict that led to DV: 23% of offenders claimed financial reasons, extra-marital affairs and matters pertaining to the children, such as custody conflicts, 15% blamed alcohol, and 8% blamed psychiatric disorder (8%) or a fight as the cause of the abuse. Most offenders that got into offenders' therapy had never been to any form of therapy before, and at the beginning of the perpetrators' programme were suspicious and resistant, trying to belittle the programme.

In cases of children's physical abuse, the perpetrator is mainly the father (55%), the mother (24%), the caregiver 12%, parents' partner (7%) and both parents (2%) (Antoniadou et al., 2017)<sup>15</sup>. The offender's sex seems to be related to the age of the child as male offenders abuse older children, while female offenders abuse younger children (Antoniadou et al., 2017)<sup>16</sup>. Once again, the psychiatric profile and the use of alcohol and/ or drugs from the offenders seem to be correlated with abuse<sup>17</sup>.

Last but not least, some other qualitative characteristics of the offenders are the low self-esteem and the violent childhood experiences (Papadaki et al., 2009)<sup>18</sup>. Offenders' low self-esteem is related to their inadequacy in other fields of their life- occasionally DV perpetration is their effort to counterbalance the stress, anger and suppression deriving from their job or/ and to retrieve their sense of worth and significance (The Daphne project, 2013). Additionally, offenders frequently face multiple cancellations, are stressed by the autonomy of their spouse/ wife; which tends to fulfill all of their emotional needs,- and suffer from intense feelings of jealousy (The Daphne project, 2013)<sup>19</sup>. Moreover, offenders seem to have lack of

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<sup>15</sup> Antoniadou, E., Dardavesis, T., Pavlou, E., & Zaggelidou, E. (2017). Child physical abuse in northern Greece: A retrospective study based on forensic protocols. *J Forensic Biomed*, 8(135), 2.

<sup>16</sup> Antoniadou, E., Dardavesis, T., Pavlou, E., & Zaggelidou, E. (2017). Child physical abuse in northern Greece: A retrospective study based on forensic protocols. *J Forensic Biomed*, 8(135), 2

<sup>17</sup> Antoniadou, E., Dardavesis, T., Pavlou, E., & Zaggelidou, E. (2017). Child physical abuse in northern Greece: A retrospective study based on forensic protocols. *J Forensic Biomed*, 8(135), 2

<sup>18</sup> Papadakis, M., Tzamalouka, G. S., Chatzifotiou, S., and Chliaoutakis, J. (2009). 'Seeking for Risk Factors of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in a Greek National Sample the Role of Self-Esteem.' *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 24(5): 732–750.

<sup>19</sup> The Daphne project (2013), Handbook for preventing domestic violence in Greece, retrieved from [https://www.exchangehouse.ie/userfiles/file/reports/Sunia%20Geel%201/SuniaGeel\\_output\\_WS4\\_4\\_1\\_5\\_HandbookForPreventingDomesticViolence\\_GR\\_el.pdf](https://www.exchangehouse.ie/userfiles/file/reports/Sunia%20Geel%201/SuniaGeel_output_WS4_4_1_5_HandbookForPreventingDomesticViolence_GR_el.pdf)



adaptability and coping as well as problem resolving strategies, while at the same time they have internalized violent patterns, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors that conquer at the community and society (The Daphne project, 2013<sup>20</sup>; Union of Women Associations of Heraklion, 2020<sup>21</sup>).

The Institute for the Prevention and Treatment of Violence and the Promotion of Gender Equality: Via-Stop, an NGO specialized in batterer programmes under the Penal Mediation Programme explored DV data in coordination with the local District Attorney. In their research it collected data from 19 out of the 53 police directorates that provided DV data. The profile of the offender emerging from national and local (Kavala) police and Via-Stop offender data is as follows: offenders were typically male, were aged predominantly 30–45 years, had middle/higher socio- economic status, and had a prior history of abuse that was unreported to authorities. Data on relationship status of offenders is not available at a national level; however, in the local and Via-Stop data sets DV incidents occur mainly between married couples<sup>22</sup>.

According to the National Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality, data deriving from the calls at the National helpline SOS (15900) for the year 2019<sup>23</sup>, show that 43% of the offenders of sexual crimes were living in the biggest prefecture of Greece, Attica. Regarding the nationality of the offenders of sexual crimes, the vast majority of them, namely the 79%, were Greeks (1.818), followed by Albanians (51), Egyptians (4), Afghans (3), Pakistanis (3), Polish (3), Romanians (3), Russians (3), Bulgarians (2), British (2), Armenian (1), Georgian (1), from the USA (1), Iraqi (1), Indian (1), Palestinian (1), Moroccan (1) and Syrian (1). In addition, most of the offenders, i.e. 24% were between 40 and 54 years old , 19% were between 25 and 39 years old , 8% were between 55 and 64 years old, 7% were older than 65

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<sup>20</sup> The Daphne project (2013), Handbook for preventing domestic violence in Greece, retrieved from [https://www.exchangehouse.ie/userfiles/file/reports/Sunia%20Geel%201/SuniaGeel\\_output\\_WS4\\_4\\_1\\_5\\_HandbookForPreventingDomesticViolence\\_GR\\_el.pdf](https://www.exchangehouse.ie/userfiles/file/reports/Sunia%20Geel%201/SuniaGeel_output_WS4_4_1_5_HandbookForPreventingDomesticViolence_GR_el.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> The Daphne project (2013) Handbook for preventing domestic violence in Greece, retrieved from [https://www.exchangehouse.ie/userfiles/file/reports/Sunia%20Geel%201/SuniaGeel\\_output\\_WS4\\_4\\_1\\_5\\_HandbookForPreventingDomesticViolence\\_GR\\_el.pdf](https://www.exchangehouse.ie/userfiles/file/reports/Sunia%20Geel%201/SuniaGeel_output_WS4_4_1_5_HandbookForPreventingDomesticViolence_GR_el.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> Petropoulos, N., Fotou, E., Ranjan, S., Chatzifotiou, S., & Dimadi, E. (2016). Domestic violence offenders in Greece. *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice*, 10(4)

<sup>23</sup> General Secretariat of Family Policy and Gender Equality (2019), *Gender violence*. Retrieved on September, 20, 2020 from: [http://paratiritirio.isotita.gr/genqua\\_portal/?fbclid=IwAR2FyMdgAhH4ALUX9REnY9RThBtemJQeebZdBL6sQqbxwsVC7uEN5ODuD5s](http://paratiritirio.isotita.gr/genqua_portal/?fbclid=IwAR2FyMdgAhH4ALUX9REnY9RThBtemJQeebZdBL6sQqbxwsVC7uEN5ODuD5s)



years old and 3% were between 18 and 24 years old. Regarding their working status, 43% were employed, 9% were unemployed and 8% occupationally inactive. Out of the 198 offenders that were unemployed, 17% were unemployed for a long time. 4% of the offenders were dealing with health problems, while 96% had a good health condition.

## **Characteristics of the abused experienced**

According to the national study entitled: "The quantitative and qualitative assessment of violence against women in the period 2008-2016 and the connection of qualitative and quantitative aspects with the economic crisis: New vulnerable population groups and policy challenges" conducted by General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality victims', the form of violence against women is mainly psychological / emotional (30.6%), verbal (29.36%), physical (22.4%) and financial violence (15.8%), while the duration of violence women with the perpetrator is long (12.82 years). In 31.75% of women, violence was perpetrated from the beginning of the relationship / marriage, through psychological violence, while then the acts escalated with financial and / or physical violence. The perpetrators accused the women themselves (45.7%) of not understanding them or of not behaving properly, while 25.7% considered their behaviour normal, which is probably related to the model of social acceptance of violence. Incidents occur on a daily basis (62.7%) or at least once a week (20.9%) and mainly in a private area (52.9%). 40% of women reported that violence was related to various forms of addiction (alcohol 38.2%, drugs, 17.6%, gambling 17.6%, psychotropic drugs 11.8%).

The vast majority of women (87.1%) did not report or report incidents of violence, while reasons for silence included reluctance (29.5%), insecurity (24.4%), and threats from the perpetrator (16.7%). 43.9% left the violent relationship after many years, after one year 29.3% and 26.8% immediately after the manifestation of the behaviour. Women were pushed into this decision either because they were afraid (25%) or because they could not stand it anymore (18%) or wanted to protect the rest of the family (20%) and especially the children.

68.9% stated that the supportive environment (parents, siblings) helped them in the decision to leave the relationship, while 59.5% stated that the support from the structure of the GSIF Network contributed positively to this decision, through the provision of a range of services. In fact, 58.3% say that at the time of the survey they would like to leave the relationship either through legal proceedings or after finding a job. On the other hand, 41.7% who answered



negatively regarding the abandonment of the relationship, cited as reasons the possibility of change in the behaviour of the perpetrator, feelings of love that they nurture, the lack of financial / work independence.

An important finding of the research is that 28 out of 70 cases (i.e. 40% of the sample) reported that violence was associated with various forms of addiction that triggered the manifestation of violent behaviour, most notably alcohol abuse (38.2%), followed by drug use (17.6%), gambling addiction (17.6%) and the use of psychotropic drugs (11.8%), while to a lesser extent the use of violence was recorded as a possible correlation to the addiction from the internet (8.8%) and electronic devices (5.9%).

Additionally, as part of the research, 49 representatives were interviewed by a total of 30 bodies responsible for implementing policies to prevent and address the phenomenon of violence against women: 65.3% say that the existing structures and services provided to serve women victims of violence are significantly sufficient at local, regional and national level, while the vast majority support the institution of criminal mediation and law enforcement. DV is not effective in combating the phenomenon. 47.8% believe that women in Greece are moderately informed about the existence of support structures for victims of violence, although the majority claim that the bodies involved in supporting victims of violence and their executives have a fairly high level of scientific knowledge and training to support victims. On the contrary, 61.7% express the opinion that other public services (e.g. police, hospitals, justice) involved in issues of gender-based violence respond modestly to the needs of victims.

According to the National Secretary for Family Policy and Gender Equality, data deriving from the calls at the National helpline SOS (15900) for the year 2019, 7% of the offenders were dealing with mental health problems and 21% did not have any mental health problems, and for 71% there is no available data. 16% of the offenders had addiction problems, 19% did not have any addiction problems, and for 65% there is no available data. From those addicted, 61% were addicted to alcohol, 36% were addicted to drugs, 8% were addicted to gambling and 2% were addicted to the internet.

## **Overview of laws for domestic violence**

In Greece the problem of DV has been addressed rather late in comparison to the actions taken by international organizations<sup>24</sup> and other countries such as the USA. The empirical

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<sup>24</sup> Artinopoulou, V. (2006). Domestic abuse of women. Athens: Nomiki Bibliothiki: 67



research of the phenomenon was initiated in the middle 1990s, while during the previous time the relevant references are attributed to non-governmental feminist organizations<sup>25</sup>.

In March 2nd, 1982 Greece has signed the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and ratified it by the Law No 1342/1983 in 17th June 1983, while by the Law No 2952/2001 ratified also the Optional Protocol of the Convention.

Until 2006 crimes of violence in family were not specifically criminalized and the bodily injury or insult of the spouse fell into the provisions of the penal code as in other cases. Additionally, the sexual abuse of the spouse could not be punished as rape, since the formulation of the crime of rape referred to forced sexual intercourse between unmarried persons<sup>26</sup>.

Nevertheless, as a result of all the efforts of NGOs but also of official bodies, struggles, investigations, findings and proposals Law '**3500/2006**<sup>27</sup> entitled « Tackling domestic violence and other provisions» entered into force, and has set out the criminal “aspects” of DV. This law was the first systematic attempt to deal with DV in Greece and establishes that any violent activity occurring within family boundaries is criminal in nature and should be treated as an inherent offense. An inherent offense means that public authorities, from the moment they receive any sort of notification regarding such an offense, even if there is no formal report placed by the victim(s), are mandated to begin to investigate the incidents, and possibly proceed to an arrest. In addition, the 2006 Bill, charges spousal rape as a felony, provides for ex-relation prosecution (prosecution by force of law) for all DV crimes, sets civil consequences for DV, provides judicial guarantees for the protection of victims of DV, introduces penal mediation and describes the extrajudicial aid to victims by the police, hospitals, shelters etc.

The Law No 3500/2006 was introduced in fulfilment of the European obligation based on the Council Framework Decision of 15 March 2001 on the standing of victims in criminal proceedings (2001/220/JHA). The Law was voted in October 2006 and entered into force after three months. The alterations and the innovations introduced by the new provisions were

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<sup>25</sup> Artinopoulou (2006)

<sup>26</sup> Milioni, F. (2009). Criminology and gender: Special issues. In N. Couraki (Ed.), Gender Criminality, Criminal and Criminological approach of the gender (pp. 463). Athens- Komotini: Ant. N. Sakkoulas.2009: 482

<sup>27</sup> Law 3500/2006, Tackling domestic violence and other provisions (OJ A 232/24.10.2006)



indeed subjected into criticism, but on the other hand, created also great expectations on the effectiveness of the law<sup>28</sup>.

The criminalization of DV was welcomed, although, some of the provisions were held either very strict or unrealistic<sup>29</sup>. More specifically, the definition of the term family (Article 1 par. 2a of the Law No 3500/2006) was characterized as very wide, given the fact that includes not only spouses and ex-spouses, partners, children, siblings and elder members such as grandparents, but, on the condition of cohabitation, it could be applied also to uncles, aunts, nephews and cousins<sup>30</sup>.

The legislator also intended to mobilize the teachers, thus reinforcing the revealing of cases of DV. According to Article 23, when the teacher suspects by any means that one of his students is possibly subjected to DV, he/she is obliged to inform immediately the school director. Then it is the school director's responsibility to inform the state's prosecutor or the police in order to investigate the incident. If the case of DV can be proved by other evidence, the teacher and the school director do not need to testify. However, as no sanction is further provided for the inert teachers, their activation is still a matter of sensibility and social awareness<sup>31</sup>.

Victims' rights have been further strengthened since the enactment and publication of the **Law 4478/2017**<sup>32</sup> (Part 4) establishing the minimum standards on rights, support, and protection of victims of crime, which was adopted on 23 June 2017, harmonizing the national legal system with the Directive 2012/29/EU (hereinafter the Victims' Directive).

Greece took also the important step to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic **Violence (Istanbul Convention)**, the first legally-binding instrument providing a comprehensive prevention, protection, prosecution and support framework to combating gender-based violence against women. The ratification took place in **March 2018** and was incorporated into the Greek legal order by Law

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<sup>28</sup> Grozos, St. (2010). Domestic violence; From the traditional suppression to the penal mediation. In National School of Judges, Contemporary Penal Law, protective factor or measure of freedom? (pp. 174-180). Nomiki Bibliothiki.2010: 174

<sup>29</sup> Artinopoulou, V. (2006). Domestic abuse of women. Athens: Nomiki Bibliothiki.: 80

<sup>30</sup> Georgiakaki, E. E. (2007). Domestic violence, Athens-Komotini: Ant. N. Sakkoulas. 2007: 10, 14)

<sup>31</sup> Buckley, H., Holt, S. & Whelan, S. (2007). Listen to me! Children's experiences of domestic violence. Child Abuse Review, 16, 296.

<sup>32</sup> Law 4478/2017 Victims' Directive (OJ 91/23.6.2017)



**4531/2018**<sup>33</sup>. The new Greek Penal Code ratified by **Law 4619 /2019**<sup>34</sup> has also reformed the legal framework on DV, bringing Greek legislation in line with the Istanbul Convention. It has also reformed the legal framework on rape, bringing Greek legislation in line with Article 36 of the Istanbul Convention.

More recently, (March 2019), Greece adopted a new law called **Enhancement of Substantive Gender Equality, Prevention and Combating of Gender Based Violence (Law 4604/2019)**, which provides a comprehensive legal framework for gender equality enhancing the concept of equal treatment by focusing on outcomes across all aspects of women's lives. This law addresses gender-based violence and mainstreams gender across public administration through the establishment of equality bodies at the regional and local levels. It considers intersecting forms of discrimination, including sexual orientation and gender identities. With respect to gender-based violence, it mandates the formulation of a network of permanent structures all over the country for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and institutionalizes the PanHellenic sexual and gender-based violence network by the General Secretariat for Gender Equality (GSGE) and counselling centres, hostels, and a 24-hour hotline. Further, it identifies the GSGE, located within the Ministry of Interior, as the governmental body dedicated to gender equality with a broad mandate of designing, implementing, and monitoring the implementation of gender equality policies in all areas, including DV.

#### ***Law 3500/2006, Tackling DV and other provisions (OJ A 232/24.10.2006)***

In 2006, Law 3500/2006, as introduced and, despite its weaknesses, it is considered a significant step in confronting the crime of DV. The term "DV" is used by the law (Article 1) to define the commission of a series of punishable acts against a family member or members. These are the penal offences of domestic injury, domestic illegal violence and threat, domestic insult of sexual dignity, rape and indecent assault. The same piece of legislation defines the term 'family', and expands it to include domestic partners, former partners and other members of the family. D, under this bill, needed to be ex officio prosecuted (by force of office), making the police officer legally obliged to arrest the perpetrator of a DV act even if the victim would not pursue the perpetrator's prosecution. Other significant parameters of the bill include the

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<sup>33</sup> Law 4531/2018 on Ratification of the Council of Europe on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence and adaptation of the national legislation etc. (OJ A 62/5.4.2018)

<sup>34</sup> Law 4619/2019 'Ratification of the Penal Code' (OJ A 95/11.06.2019)



prohibition of the use of violence on minors as a disciplinary method, and the prohibition of violence witnessed by minors. Finally, the law stresses the educators' obligation to report any implied or suspected violence they become aware of, to proper authorities.

In general terms, the most significant reforms introduced by the law include:

- More severe sanctions imposed for committing certain culpable acts within family (especially corporal injuries and illegal violence or threat)
- Establishment of the procedure of penal mediation for misdemeanors of DV
- Definition of forced sexual intercourse without the consent of both spouses as a crime
- Explicit prohibition of corporal violence against minors as a means of correction
- Extension of the scope of application of the law to the permanent cohabitation of an unmarried couple
- Protection of victims by means of facilitating their access to judicial procedures, and, on the other hand, guaranteeing their security within and outside family. In particular, the immediate expulsion of the perpetrator from the residence and the prohibition for him to have access to the places of residence and work of the victim, to the residence of the victim's closest relatives, to the shelters and to the children's schools, so as to ensure the most effective protection of victims and their children
- More severe punishment of acts of DV against a pregnant woman
- Provisions for award of damages because of moral prejudice against the victim of DV which cannot be less than 1000 euros, unless the victim itself asks for a lower sum. The same applies in the Hellenic Civil Code general provisions that provides for the payment of financial compensation in every case of moral prejudice or mental distress.
- Domestic violence equates with adultery, bigamy and the attempt on someone's life and thus, constitutes a presumption for the shaking of marriage. In other words, if the victim of DV wishes to end the marriage due to an extreme shock he/she does not need to present any other incident to obtain the resolution of the marriage.

However, the biggest novelty of Law 3500/2006 was the institution of penal mediation in the Greek penal system which signified the introduction of a restorative procedure in the Greek penal system. Under this system, the public prosecutor has to examine the possibility of penal mediation before following the penal procedure, otherwise the latter is null and void. In the framework of this law, the prosecutor will decide if mediation is feasible and will request the permission of the victim. If the victim consents, the prosecutor will invite the perpetrator for



mediation proceedings. More specifically, the prosecutor may initiate penal mediation proceedings if the perpetrator (a) promises that he/she never to commits in the future any crime of DV (“give his word of honour”) and removes from the victim’s residency on the victim’s request; (b) follows a State assigned therapeutic counselling and treatment programme to address DV, for a duration deemed necessary by the responsible therapists; (c) the perpetrator should remove the negative consequences of his/her behavior and pay reasonable financial compensation to the victim. The prosecutor may also require a medical report of the victim to investigate the merits of the complaint; examine witnesses, as well as family members, or order them to be investigated by competent investigating officers. In case the offender complies with the terms of the penal mediation, then the case is closed, archived and prosecution is no longer possible. If the offender violates the terms of their mediation, the prosecutor is informed of the violation, and they have the right to interrupt the mediation and to initiate prosecution.

In practice, the cases of mediation in DV misdemeanours are referred to the National Centre for Social Solidarity (E.K.K.A. 2012). The Penal Mediation Programme of E.K.K.A. is implemented only in Attica and Thessaloniki in cooperation with the Prosecutorial offices of Athens, Piraeus and Thessaloniki. In other cities the prosecutor will contact various organizations in order to find one that might accept a specific case.

Overall, given the small sample sizes and scant research on the penal mediation provision embedded in the legal system of Greece for more than 12 years, there is no way to evaluate the ramifications. So far, the research related to penal mediation in Greece has yielded important contributions on the shortcomings of the penal mediation provision in its current form.<sup>35</sup>

### ***Penal mediation***

Based on the European Directive on mediation in criminal proceedings, Law 3500/2006<sup>36</sup> on ‘The Tackling of Domestic Violence’ provides mediation for DV cases. The procedure is only applied for misdemeanors either before or after prosecution, namely crimes of simple bodily harm, threat, insult or coercion. Three conditions have to be met in order for penal mediation procedure to take place, i.e. that the offender had agreed: (1) not to commit any further DV,

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<sup>35</sup> Sheetal Ranjan (2020) Domestic Violence Legislation in Greece: Analysis of Penal Mediation, Women & Criminal Justice, 30:1, 42-68, DOI: 10.1080/08974454.2019.1646192

<sup>36</sup> Law 3500/2006, Confrontation of domestic violence (OJ A 232/24.10.2006)



(2) to participate in a special counselling/ therapy programme, and (3) to undertake reparation to the victim, where possible. The procedure falls under the authority of the state's prosecutor, and, apart from the prosecutor's suggestion, it can also be initiated on the perpetrator's/defendant's request.

In any case, a Prosecutor's Order is issued to validate the procedure, which is considered on-going for three years. (The Prosecutor's Order is also being recorded in a special section/part of the penal record). During these three years the prosecution, or the trial, are suspended under the said conditions and the counselling programme should be conducted and completed by a qualified psychologist. If any condition is deliberately violated, the State's Prosecutor's Order is recalled and the trial is being continued based on the regular provisions, since the repetition of the mediation is prohibited (article 13 par. 3 Law No 3500/2006). To the contrary, if the mediation is successful, the criminal procedure and imposition of penalty are cancelled.<sup>37</sup>

In Greece, the National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA) is the only governmental body where public prosecutors send perpetrators to therapeutic counselling and treatment programmes. These programmes are implemented in Attica (Athens-Piraeus) and Thessaloniki and are addressed to the alleged perpetrators of acts of DV. The referral is made by the local Prosecutor's Offices of the Court of First Instance. In other cities the prosecutor will contact various organizations in order to find one that might accept a specific case.

According to the last activity report of the National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA) in 2018<sup>38</sup>, public prosecutors across the country sent to the EKKA services in Athens and Thessaloniki in total 127 cases. In particular, in Athens 35 cases were referred during 2018 while in Thessaloniki 92. For 2017, 24 cases were sent in Athens while 88 in Thessaloniki and in total 112 cases. However, evidence on actual practice with these cases is scarce and there is no information about the progress of penal mediations that have been undertaken. The psychologist of the National Center for Social Solidarity gave an insight of the counselling programme. The sessions are weekly and last an hour, thus this approach could be considered only consulting, not therapeutic, and of limited contribution to the prevention of

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<sup>37</sup> Pitsela A., Chatzisprou T., Domestic Violence and Mediation in Greece: Findings from the implementation of the restorative procedure (2013) *Interne journal of Restorative Justice*:15-16

<sup>38</sup> E.K.K.A, Απολογισμός λειτουργίας 2018 (2019), retrieved from <http://www.ekka.org.gr/images/%CE%A0%CE%A1%CE%9F%CE%A5%CE%A0%CE%9F%CE%9B%CE%9F%CE%93%CE%99%CE%A3%CE%9C%CE%9F%CE%99%20%CE%95%CE%9A%CE%9A%CE%91/%CE%91%CE%A0%CE%9F%CE%9B%CE%9F%CE%93%CE%99%CE%A3%CE%9C%CE%9F%CE%A3%202018.pdf>



recidivism. The workload combined with the lack of staff cause delays and blockades the conduction of follow-up sessions after the completion of the programme. Furthermore, in some cases of foreigners the communication with the persons was difficult due to language boundaries.<sup>39</sup>

The lack of staff in combination with the adopted psychological approach, namely the use of the systemic model that requires the presence of both the perpetrator and the victim during the counsels, led to the inability of servicing more incidents. Also, the duration of the programme due to the systemic model tends to be very long, while in many cases the victims are reluctant to participate. The mediation is either fast or direct, as the State Prosecutor's order needs months to be issued. The conduction of the counselling programme faces delays as the perpetrator waits at least two to six months before the first session. The absence or the reluctance of other state institutions to undertake the counsels and the lack of staff in the National Center for Social Solidarity cause difficulties in the more efficient application of the mediation.<sup>40</sup> In that sense, the cooperation with other institutions is considered vital, as not only the conduction of the counselling programme would be facilitated, but also there would be the possibility of specialized treatment in cases of mental illnesses, drugs or alcohol abuse.<sup>41</sup>

In general terms, the implementation of restorative justice in Greece faced a series of problems and contradictions. These refer mainly to a lack of a wider public dialogue on mediation and restorative justice (RJ) as well as the potential diffusion of roles between the public prosecutor and the mediator. In an evaluation carried out in 2008, Giovanoglou indicated that the way in which RJ was introduced for DV cases was flawed from the start. This was attributed largely to the role of prosecutors, who are expected to act as mediators despite lack of training. By the time the law was introduced, the absence of public institutions, capable of conducting the above-mentioned counselling programme, has also been a strongly controversial matter. According to Artinopoulou, there is also a lack of consistent legislative guidance, lack of public knowledge of the programme, unclear guidelines for all concerned, and poor infrastructure for support and follow-up.<sup>42</sup> Examples of shortcomings in the

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<sup>39</sup> Pitsela A., Chatzisprou T.: 24-25

<sup>40</sup> Pitsela A., Chatzisprou T., Domestic Violence and Mediation in Greece: Findings from the implementation of the restorative procedure (2013) *Interne journal of Restorative Justice*:15-1

<sup>41</sup> Pitsela A., Chatzisprou T.: 24-25

<sup>42</sup> Artinopolou, 2015; Pitsela & Chatzisprou, 2013; Wasileski, 2017



implementation of RJ relate also to the reporting system, the lack of coordination on the part of social services and the evaluation and follow-up strategies for assessing progress. The enforcement of penal mediation is also often hampered by offender's own unwillingness to co-operate.<sup>43</sup>

Via-Stop is also a non- governmental organization in Greece that offers specialized DVA perpetrator programmes in the city of Kavala in coordination with the local prosecutor to meet the requirements of legislation no. 3500/2006 for penal mediation.

### ***Law 4478/2017 Victims' Directive (OJ 91/23.6.2017)***

The Greek Law 4478/2017 establishes the minimum standards on rights, support and protection of victims of crime, harmonizing the national legislation with the European Victims' Directive, and sets the basis for a holistic support and protection of victims' rights in Greece and provisions the majority of the Victims'.

Within the framework of Law 4478/2017 police officers are expected, among other duties, to inform victims without undue delay and by any means available, on the terms and conditions of admissibility of a criminal complaint, and on the right to join the civil proceedings as a civil party seeking damages; on how and under what conditions they can obtain legal assistance, lodge a claim for damages, or obtain translation and interpretation services; on the RJ available, and the authorities that can work towards restoring the damage by mediating between them and the offender; on how and under what conditions expenses incurred as a result of their participation in the criminal proceedings can be reimbursed; and how they can make a complaint against an authority if they feel their rights have not been respected. In addition to their rights in the criminal proceedings, victims will also be informed about access to medical care, and any specialist support, including psychological assistance and alternative accommodation, and about how and under what conditions protective measures may be applied.

General and special victim support services may be provided by the Police and any other competent authority and public agencies, such as local authorities, mental health services, community centers, counselling centers operated by the General Secretariat for Gender Equality, services offered by the National Center of Social Solidarity, the Independent Child

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<sup>43</sup> Gavrielides T., Artinopoulou V. (2010), Restorative Justice and Violence Against Women: Comparing Greece and The United Kingdom, Asian Criminology DOI 10.1007/s11417-011-9123-x



Victims' Protection Offices of the Juvenile Probation and Probation Services of the Ministry of Justice, and other (voluntary) organizations. Special attention is given to the children of women victims of sexual abuse, exploitation, DV, trafficking, and racism<sup>44</sup>.

In particular, Law 4478/2017 defines victim support services as the public services, as well as non-governmental organizations providing general or specific support and care services. The victims' right to access victim support services is safeguarded in Article 61. However, victim support services in Greece are limited in number and offer services only to specific groups of victims, which implies that a considerable number of victims may eventually not receive the support needed<sup>45</sup>.

***Law 4531/2018 on Ratification of the Council of Europe on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence and adaptation of the national legislation etc. (OJ A 62/5.4.2018)***

In 2018, Greece ratified by national Law the Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and DV (Law 4351/20183), which is so far the most far-reaching legal instrument to prevent and combat violence against women and DV as a violation of human rights. Introducing modifications to the existing legal framework [e.g. the law on DV (Law 3500/2006) and the Greek Penal Code], the new law underlines the obligation of the state to fully address gender-based violence in all its forms and to take measures to prevent violence against women, protect its victims and prosecute the perpetrators.

Regarding the changes introduced by the Istanbul Convention (IC), it is worth mentioning that Article 2 Law 4531/2018 made the amendments to the Greek Penal Code (PC) which were necessary for its alignment with the IC. In particular:

- the customs and traditions followed by the perpetrator, as well as his/her religion cannot reduce the sentence (amendment to Article 79(3a) PC with a view to aligning it with Article 42 IC).

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<sup>44</sup> Iro M., (2019) VOCIARE - Victims of Crime Implementation Analysis of Rights in Europe, Retrieved from [https://victimsupport.eu/activeapp/wpcontent/uploads/2019/08/VOCIARE\\_National\\_Report\\_Greece\\_interactive.pdf](https://victimsupport.eu/activeapp/wpcontent/uploads/2019/08/VOCIARE_National_Report_Greece_interactive.pdf)

<sup>45</sup> Iro M., (2019) VOCIARE - Victims of Crime Implementation Analysis of Rights in Europe, Retrieved from [https://victimsupport.eu/activeapp/wpcontent/uploads/2019/08/VOCIARE\\_National\\_Report\\_Greece\\_interactive.pdf](https://victimsupport.eu/activeapp/wpcontent/uploads/2019/08/VOCIARE_National_Report_Greece_interactive.pdf)



- Article 315B was added to the PC (in accordance with Article 38 IC) providing that anyone who causes or incites a woman to undergo genital mutilation and anyone who publicly provokes or stimulates that act is punished with imprisonment.
- Forcing a person to enter into a marriage is added to the criminalised aims of human trafficking; Article 323A PC is thus aligned with Article 37 IC.
- Stalking is criminalised for the first time by Article 333(1) PC, which implements Article 34 IC.

Article 3 Law 4531/2018 amended Law 3500/2006 'on domestic violence'. In particular:

- The concept of 'family' was broadened so as to comprise the parties to a life partnership (including same-sex partners) provided by Law 4356/2015.
- The procedure of penal mediation provided by Article 11(2b) Law 3500/2006 is amended. In the event that the person attending a special consultative therapeutic programme run by a public entity deliberately chooses not to complete it, the Public Prosecutor interrupts the penal mediation with retrospective effect and the penal prosecution continues. This provision was adopted to ensure the effective compliance of the perpetrator with the procedure of penal mediation.
- When the victim is a minor, the statute of limitation of the offence of DV is suspended until the victim reaches the age of majority and for one year thereafter in the case of a misdemeanour and for three years thereafter in the case of a felony. Article 56 Law 3500/2006 is thus harmonised with Article 58 IC.

In addition, Law 4531/2018 designates the General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality (GSFPGE) as the co-ordinating body for monitoring the application of the IC, in accordance with Article 10 IC.

The signing of the IC was enthusiastically accepted as an important step in promoting equality and combating DV in Greece and in principal, the new Act is evaluated positively. Although important, the changes it achieved were characterized as fragmentary. In fact, it is criticised for not providing: (i) the introduction into schools of educational material on the fight against violence and the elimination of gender stereotypes; (ii) the training of professionals dealing



with the victims of violence (e.g. doctors, psychologists, teachers) and of the police officers, regarding the treatment of violence incidents<sup>46</sup>.

***Law 4619/2019 'Ratification of the Penal Code' (OJ A 95/11.06.2019)***

The new Greek Penal Code (hereinafter PC) was ratified by Law 4619/2019 and came into force on 1 July 2019, replacing the previous Penal Code of the year 1950. According to its explanatory report, the new Law aims to incorporate into the Penal Code the acts of DV, whereas maintaining in force Act 3500/2006.

Article 312 PC entitled 'Physical harm against weak persons' covers DV by providing more severe punishment for all kinds of physical harm (simple, dangerous, heavy and lethal) against a spouse during the marriage or against a partner during the relationship.

Prior to the entry into force of the new Penal Code (Act 4619/2019), DV had been governed by Act 3500/2006 'on DV'. Act 3500/2006 was strongly criticised by legal theory as creating serious dogmatic problems by requesting, inter alia, the ascertainment of the perpetrator's continuous rough behaviour. It has been also criticised as inadequate and ineffective, the more so given that its provisions had remained outside of the PC (and the other relevant Codes), creating legal uncertainty and difficulties in implementation. The new PC (Act 4619/2019) does not make any explicit reference to Act 3500/2006. However, the Explanatory Report of the new Law clearly states that the new Article 312 was meant to cover the crime of DV, until then covered by Act 3500/2006. It is argued that Article 312 of the new PC should prevail over the provisions of Law 3500/2006, which will continue to apply only to the victims or behaviours of DV which are not covered by Article 312 PC; as to the procedural provisions of Law 3500/2016, it is argued that they continue to apply for all criminal offences described in Law 3500/2006, even if some of them are punished with the punishments provided by Article 312 PC.<sup>47</sup>

The new PC also reformed the legal framework on rape, bringing Greek legislation in line with Article 36 of the Istanbul Convention. The new Article 336(1) PC covers use of physical violence or psychological violence (threat). This changes the former provision of Article 336(1) PC, which was interpreted in the case law to require a 'serious' and 'direct' threat against a

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<sup>46</sup>Petroglou P., Country report Gender Equality Greece (2020), Retrieved from: <https://www.equalitylaw.eu/downloads/5235-greece-country-report-gender-equality-2020-1-92-mb>.

<sup>47</sup> Petroglou P. (2019), New penal provisions on domestic violence in line with the Istanbul Convention, retrieved from <https://www.equalitylaw.eu/downloads/4945-greece-new-penal-provisions-on-domestic-violence-in-line-with-the-istanbul-convention-pdf-93-kb>



'substantial right' of the victim<sup>48</sup>; thus, the field of application of the crime of rape was considerably restricted. Most importantly, Article 336(5) PC acknowledges for the first time in Greek law that the crime of rape is not only committed by the use of physical violence or psychological violence (threat), as provided in the above-mentioned Article 336(1) PC, but also in the absence of the victim's consent, in line with Article 36 of the Istanbul Convention. In this sense, all forms of rape are a felony and for the first-time rape is defined on the basis of the absence of the victim's consent and not on the degree of violence applied by the perpetrator. This constitutes a felony, punishable with imprisonment of up to 10 years.

### **Law 4604/2019: Enhancement of Substantive Gender Equality, Prevention and Combating of Gender Based Violence ( OJ 50/26.3.2019)**

The new law introduces a comprehensive legal framework on gender equality and the elimination of discrimination against women, which applies horizontally to all sectors of life and covers legal relations of both public and private law. More specifically, the law:

- constitutes an integral legal framework on gender equality and elimination of discriminations against women.
- provides for the operation of an integrated network of structures and services for women victims of gender violence (The PanHellenic gender-based violence network by the GSFPGE and the Municipalities is institutionalized and includes Counselling Centres, Safe Shelters, a 24-hour SOS 15900 helpline).
- encourages public and private enterprises to draft and implement "Equality Plans" with specific targets, strategies and practices and the General Secretariat for Gender Equality of the Ministry of Interior can award "Equality Labels" to them as a reward for their engagement in favour of equal treatment and equal opportunities for their male and female employees.
- establishes as disciplinary offences the violation of equality, equal opportunities and equal treatment between men and women in work and employment, as well as the use of gender discriminatory language;

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<sup>48</sup> The former provision of Article 336(1) PC on rape, adopted by Article 8(1) Act 3500/2006 'on domestic violence', OJ A 232/24.10.2006, read: '1. Anyone who by physical violence or threat of serious and direct danger forces another person to engage in sexual intercourse or to other lascivious act or to tolerate it, is punished by imprisonment



- introduces a quota of 40% for the lists of candidates to parliamentary elections at the level of electoral circumscription, which represents a significant increase from the current 33% quota. It is to be noted that the 40% quota already applies to local government elections;
- establishes an Autonomous Equality Office in each of the 13 Regions of the country, the Central Union of Greek Municipalities and the Union of Greek Regions, while the Municipal and the Regional Equality Committees are upgraded;
- -mainstreams gender in the fields of education, health and social solidarity, mass media and advertising;
- creates a national mechanism for gender equality, comprising mechanisms and bodies at the central, regional and local level for the realization of substantive gender equality; more generally, the new law mainstreams gender across the public administration, by assigning all Ministries the task to present annually relevant actions, programs and progress reports, to adopt qualitative and quantitative gender indicators and gender impact assessments and to collect gender-disaggregated data;
- encourages the involvement of civil society actors and women organizations.

## **Domestic violence and COVID-19**

The General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality (G.S.F.P.G.E.) acknowledges that home quarantine and movement restrictions aimed at minimizing the spread of the coronavirus, resulted in DV being more frequent, more serious, and more dangerous for women and their children. Many women found themselves in a dangerous situation, with the pandemic being a perfect storm for controlling them and increasing isolation with violent husbands/partners, behind closed doors, separating them from the people and resources that can best help them<sup>49</sup>.

A significant increase in complaints of DV was recorded during the days of "quarantine" and forced confinement at home due to the coronavirus pandemic, according to data presented to the special parliamentary committee on Equality, Youth and Human Rights, by the Secretary General of Family Policy and Gender Equality, Maria Syrengela.

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<sup>49</sup> General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality: Bimonthly Report Newsletter: Policies and Actions of the G.S.F.P.G.E for the Prevention and Response to Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, During the Movement Restriction Due to the Pandemic of the Covid-19 in Greece. Analysis of Gender-Based Violence Data from the Network of Structures and the SOS Hotline 15900 (March 2020 -April 2020)



In March 2020, in total 246 women survivors of GBV and Multiple Discrimination received specialised support from the Counselling Centres of the Network throughout Greece, with an increase of 23,2 % (303) in reported cases for April 2020 (totals March 2020 & April 2020: 549 unique cases). On April 30th, 2020, Safe Shelters were accommodating in total 79 women, covering about 37,6% of the total capacity of the Network of Structures across the country<sup>50</sup>.

The SOS 15900 hotline of the General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality received an increased number of calls. According to the G.S.F.P.G.E, the number of calls for incidents of violence in April reached 1,070, while the corresponding calls in March were 325. Equally worrying is the increase in calls for incidents of DV in April, with 648 calls. Calls for incidents of DV almost quadrupled in the month of "quarantine" compared to the previous month, in March, when 166 calls for similar incidents were recorded.

The same data show that seven out of ten incidents of violence were reported by the victims themselves and three out of ten were reported by third parties, such as parents, children, siblings, neighbours and friends. "It is clear that the information campaign in support of women victims of violence mobilized the beneficiaries, as well as third parties, to contact the SOS hotline and report incidents of violence," said the Secretary General for Family Policy and Gender Equality. Maria Syregela, emphasizing that it is particularly important that nine out of ten people who called the SOS 15900 line, dared for the first time to report the incident of violence, to ask for support and in turn to send the message to all women "We stay home but we do not remain silent".

Data from UWAH are in line with those of G.S.F.P.G.E., both acknowledging that the posed restrictive measures for pandemic COVID-19 resulted in an increase in DV. In particular, while for the whole year 2019, the total number of women victims of violence that were assisted by UWAH's Counselling Centre was 126, for the first 5 months of 2020 was 138. At the same time, while for the whole year 2019 UWAH's SOS helpline received 134 calls, for the first 5 months of 2020 UWAH's SOS helpline received 117 calls. According to UWAH's data, there was a sharp rise on calls received at UWAH's help lines (40% rise) at the first 2 weeks of lockdown, accompanied by a decrease of number of calls in due time, however being at higher

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<sup>50</sup> General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality: Bimonthly Report Newsletter: Policies and Actions of the G.S.F.P.G.E for the Prevention and Response to Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, During the Movement Restriction Due to the Pandemic of the Covid-19 in Greece. Analysis of Gender-Based Violence Data from the Network of Structures and the SOS Hotline 15900 (March 2020 -April 2020)



levels than the same period last year (March 19, 2020 to May 19, 2020). Qualitative characteristics of these calls show that the communication was fragmented due to the threat of the perpetrator, isolation of women, and tight control. As a result, UWAH had to be flexible and established an additional service, the communication through written messages, as the control exercised by perpetrators may have expanded also in the use of electronic devices (such as cell phones), internet and social media posing additional restrictions and limiting women's ability to seek help. The main characteristics of those emails or messages (written or through Facebook) is that the vast majority of them could be characterised as "desperate" messages.

## **Existing policies and organisations on domestic violence prevention**

### ***General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality (G.S.F.P.G.E.)***

The General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality (G.S.F.P.G.E) is the competent governmental agency responsible to plan, implement, and monitor policies on equality between women and men in all sectors. It was founded in 1985 as an independent public service and today belongs to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. In particular, the G.S.F.P.G.E. is part of the National Mechanism for Gender Equality at central national level<sup>51</sup>, with the following competences: (a) to draft and implement the National Action Plan for Gender Equality, after consulting with women's and feminist NGOs and other public and private sector bodies, and to monitor its implementation; (b) to draft and submit the national report to the UN CEDAW Committee; (c) to support and coordinate actions for the promotion of gender equality by the central and regional administration, legal persons governed by public law and legal persons governed by private law attached to the Central Government; (d) to coordinate, implement, monitor and evaluate policies and measures for preventing and eliminating any form of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention.

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<sup>51</sup> Together with (KETHI), the Gender Equality Units of all ministries and the Ombudsman (Equality Section), Article 4(1) Act 4604/2019, OJ A 50/26.3.2019



In the framework of its duties the G.S.F.P.G.E. General Secretariat for Gender Equality (GSGE) published a National Action Plan (NAP) 2016-2020 in February 2017<sup>52</sup> which is of national scope and comprises a roadmap for gender equality policy as follows:

- Social inclusion of women facing multiple discrimination;
- Combating violence against women;
- Labour market, reconciliation of professional and family life;
- Education, training, stereotypes, media, culture, sports;
- Health;
- Equal participation in decision-making

The NAP 2016-2020 sets out objectives and describes/proposes actions for each of these six areas. It encompasses a variety of horizontal interventions in public policy and vertical actions/policies targeting women and men in areas where inequalities prevail. Its main objectives in the field of combating violence against women are:

- implementation and review of the existing legislation
- holistic and multi-sectoral support of women who are victims of gender violence and / or multiple discrimination (e.g. immigrants, refugees, women with disabilities, Roma, single mothers, etc.)
- awareness-raising among the overall population and networking development
- monitoring of gender violence
- coordination and evaluation of the implemented NAPGE 2016-2020 policies.

Within this programme a network was established and operates for women victims of gender-based violence.

The network includes:

- A 24-hour SOS 15900 helpline. The helpline is nation-wide, operates 365 days per year on a 24-hour basis, with local charge, and it offers counselling services both in Greek and English. It is also supported by the e-mail address: [sos15900@isotita.gr](mailto:sos15900@isotita.gr).

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<sup>52</sup> General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality (2017), retrieved from <http://www.isotita.gr/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/NationalAction-Plan-for-Gender-Equality-2016-2020.pdf>



- forty two Counselling Centres operated by the General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality at the capitals of the corresponding Regions of the country. The Counselling Centres provide: psychosocial support (specialized counselling for women victims of gender-based violence); legal counselling and information on victims' rights, relevant legislation, procedures required to file a complaint, etc.
- legal aid (in cooperation with the local Bar Associations); labour counselling and enhancement of women's skills to enter the labor market, in cooperation with other organizations (e.g. Hellenic Manpower Organization, OAED, Employment Promotion Centers, Municipal Social Services, etc.); counselling on sexual and reproductive health; referral of women victims accommodated to Shelters, to police and prosecution offices, courts, hospitals or health centers, social policy agencies, employment agencies, childcare facilities, etc., while implementing actions to prevent, communicate and raise awareness of local society.
- twenty Safe shelters for Abused Women; they provide bilingual (Greek and English) services of shelter, psychological and social support to women victims of violence and their children. Safe shelters have a total capacity in hosting approximately 400 women survivors and their children or women at increased risk of violence<sup>53</sup>.

All services of the Network are offered for free.

The purpose of these services is to empower women victims of violence and to help them regain their self-esteem, so that they can take responsibility for their professional, personal and family life and make the best decisions for their own future.

The Network of Structures is funded by the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF), the European Union and national resources. While the G.S.F.P.G.E. is politically responsible and provides scientific supervision and support to the staff of the Counselling Centers, Safe Shelters and the SOS Helpline 15900, the Municipalities across Greece that host the structures, the National Centre for Social Solidarity<sup>54</sup> and the Research Centre for Gender

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<sup>53</sup> General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality, Bimonthly Report Newsletter #1: Policies and Actions of the G.S.F.P.G.E. for the Prevention and Response to Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, During the Movement Restriction Due to the Pandemic of the Covid-19 in Greece. Analysis of Gender-Based Violence Data from the Network of Structures and the SOS Hotline 15900 (March 2020 -April 2020)

<sup>54</sup> <http://www.ekka.org.gr>



Equality Issues (K.E.TH.I.) are the state bodies that have undertaken the implementation of the above project (Counselling Centers and Safe Shelters).

Apart from this, the G.S.F.P.G.E. has a long-term cooperation (Memorandum of Cooperation) and undertakes joint actions with the UNHCR/United Nations Refugee Agency in Greece for the protection, temporary accommodation, provision of information and support to refugee women in danger and their children, victims of violence or multiple discrimination (disabled women and girls included). Finally it should be mentioned that In November 2019, a special Task Force for the Treatment of Domestic Violence was established within the Greek Police aiming at the effective protection and support of the victims and the prevention of their secondary victimization; the encouragement and better management of the complaints; the prevention and the treatment of DV crimes; the coordination of all the authorities involved and the systematic monitoring of the cases; the education and ongoing training of the police force and the sensitization of citizens. The establishment of this Task Force was the result of a fruitful cooperation of the General Secretariat of Equality and the competent Ministry of Citizen Protection since the beginning of 2019, upon the acknowledgement that there were serious problems concerning the treatment of victims of DV at local police stations.

### ***The National Council for Gender Equality***

The National Council for Gender Equality was established in 2019 under Law 4604 (Article 9), as an advisory body composed of the most representative women's and feminist organizations (two representatives of women or feminist organizations, will alter in each subsequent composition), movements and social actors in the public and private sectors, and representatives of local governments and independent authorities. The Council discusses and evaluates existing gender equality policy, as well as proposing policies and actions to the General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality. Article 10 of Law 4606 on promoting substantive gender equality, preventing and combating gender-based violence also introduced the establishment of an Autonomous Gender Equality Office in each Ministry. Autonomous Gender Equality Offices are tasked with

- collecting and processing data on the incorporation of gender equality into the Ministry's policies, and formulating gender indicators;

drawing up a gender impact assessment report of each bill; and providing an overview of activities for the annual report of the government to parliament.



## **Organisations that carry out domestic abuse perpetrator work**

The Perpetrators work in Greece follow the mode of “Penal Mediation” under the Prosecutor’s Order.



A number of organizations are engaged into this process are presented (Table 2-3) as follows:

Table 3-3 Organisations that follow the “Penal Mediation” under the Prosecutor’s Order.

Organisation	Programme/type of intervention e.g. counselling, group support, peer support, one-to-one work, online groups	Evaluation method (if applicable)	Any support or interaction with female partners/survivors? (if yes, please detail)
National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA)	During 2018, Public prosecutors across the country sent to the EKKA services in Athens and Thessaloniki in total 127 cases. In particular, in Athens 35 cases were referred during 2018 while in Thessaloniki 92. For 2017, 24 cases were sent in Athens while 88 in Thessaloniki and in total 112 cases. However, evidence on actual practice with these cases is scarce and there is no information about the progress of penal mediations that have been undertaken.	N/A	
The Institute for the Prevention and Treatment of Violence and the Promotion of Gender Equality: Via-Stop	<p>The treatment programme of VIA-STOP is legally based on the provisions of Law 3500/06 on DV, and specifically on articles 11-13 for penal mediation. The perpetrators contact the organization following an order from the prosecutor or on their own initiative. The major objectives of Via-Stop’s Penal Mediation Programme are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) hold the offender accountable for his aggressive behaviour(s),</li> <li>(ii) continually assess the risk the offender poses to the victim, and</li> <li>(iii) communicate with local agencies and services regarding each specific case. The programme comprises of three stages as follows.</li> </ul> <p>Stage 1: assessment—at this stage the offender is introduced to the goals and responsibilities of penal mediation and a thorough assessment of the individual and his environment is conducted.</p>	<p>The treatment programme of VIA-STOP started in 2013. In 2015, 10 people - perpetrators of DV with a duration of 3 years were referred to the programme. In 2016, 12 perpetrators of DV with a duration of 3-6 years were referred. In 2017, 16 perpetrators of DV with a duration of 3-6 years were referred. The first indicator for the success of the programme is the fact that there is no reported</p>	<p>The victims can select the level of involvement they desire, from minimal (1–2 sessions with the psychologist or the legal advisor) to a full psychotherapy session. Most frequently, the victims attend psychotherapy session for 2 months, and then contact ‘Via-Stop’ at every instance when the perpetrator’s behavior becomes aggressive.</p>



	<p>Stage 2: integration—stage two commences typically at the 6-month mark, lasting from 12 to 18 months. The activities and goals at this stage include Biweekly Individual Psychotherapy, On-going Risk Assessment, Resolution of legal and/or custody matters, Couples Counselling if deemed necessary. Stage 3: enrichment and completion—this stage begins at the second year mark of the Penal Mediation Programme and lasts until the individual completes the programme.</p>	<p>case so far where the perpetrator has reoffended.</p>	
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# OSSPC Research Study: Greece

## 4. Research Methodology

### Ethics Procedure

Prior to any fieldwork being carried out the fieldwork methods and associated documents (see appendices) went through the rigorous Bournemouth University's ethics procedures. The fieldwork protocol in the UK was repeated in the data collection processes in the partner countries (Greece, Cyprus, Italy, and Romania) and which will be reported on in more detail as a collective in *the OSSPC Time to Change Report* (Forthcoming).

The following data collection methods were conducted:

- Interviews with perpetrator of domestic violence and abuse (DVA)
- Focus groups with professionals working in the field of DVA
- Online survey with survivors of DVA
- Analysis of available national crime data

### Data Collection and Analysis Process

With regards to the data collection process from those who have experienced DVA, a standard approach was followed across the five countries involved in the OSSPC Time to Change Report (Forthcoming). Three types of participants were recruited to the study:

- Survivors: Recruited via local services, keyworkers and also social media using OSSPC social media feeds, where appropriate.
- Perpetrators: Recruited via support service organisations. Perpetrators working with each organisation will be contacted by keyworkers and invited to take part
- Keyworkers: Recruited through local support service organisations and connections.



As with all forms of data collection, participants were provided with an information sheet and consent form.

**Victims/ Survivors of DVA:** A questionnaire was devised to seek out survivors' perspectives on their own experiences of interacting with support services, and their views on and experiences of the support offered to the abuser. The anonymous questionnaire consisted of both quantitative and qualitative questions. The questionnaire was completed by 20 participants.

**Perpetrators of DVA:** As this is an understandably secretive and potentially high-risk population and for the safety of unidentified potential victims and the researchers, participants will be accessed via gatekeepers, where participants are or were receiving support from services. A semi-structured interview questionnaire was designed to seek out participants views about their knowledge and experiences of support, and how potentially it could be improved. Perpetrators were also asked to complete a short questionnaire to obtain some simple demographical information. We interviewed 3 male perpetrators, due to the fact that many of potential interviewees declined to participate, or local judicial services denied access to the profiling data of perpetrators. Therefore, we analysed the profile of perpetrators engaged at UWAH's cases of the 2020 and only. It is noteworthy that in Greece there is not an organised perpetrators programme, and only actions of penal mediation are carried out under the General Prosecutor's Order.

**Keyworkers:** The aim of the focus groups was to engage with stakeholder and key informant professional participants to gauge their opinions on best practice and challenges in addressing DVA in their respective fields. A semi-structured questionnaire was designed for use with focus groups of professionals who either worked with victims/survivors or perpetrators of DVA. Three short vignettes were also developed to aid discussion of how those impacted by/or who perpetrate DVA are supported. 3 focus groups were conducted in the Greek study, with a mix of professionals including: psychiatrists, psychologists, lawyers, and a juvenile probation officer.

**Data Analysis Process:** Descriptive statistical analysis was used for quantitative data. The qualitative data was coded thematically according to the project outcomes, and dominant themes that occurred using a coding framework developed by Bournemouth University.



## 5. Findings Victims/Survivors' Survey

Twenty participants who self-identified as victims/survivors of DVA answered the questionnaire. All had been given the questionnaire by their UWAH counsellor.

### Demographics

Of the 20 participants, all were female, 17 self-described as Greek, and 3 Albanian. With an age range between 24 and 54 (see figure 4-1). All described the abusive partner as male and 19 stated they had children and 1 did not. Table 4-1 shows the employment status of the participants. All participants had only one abusive partner in their lifetime.

#### How old are you (in years)

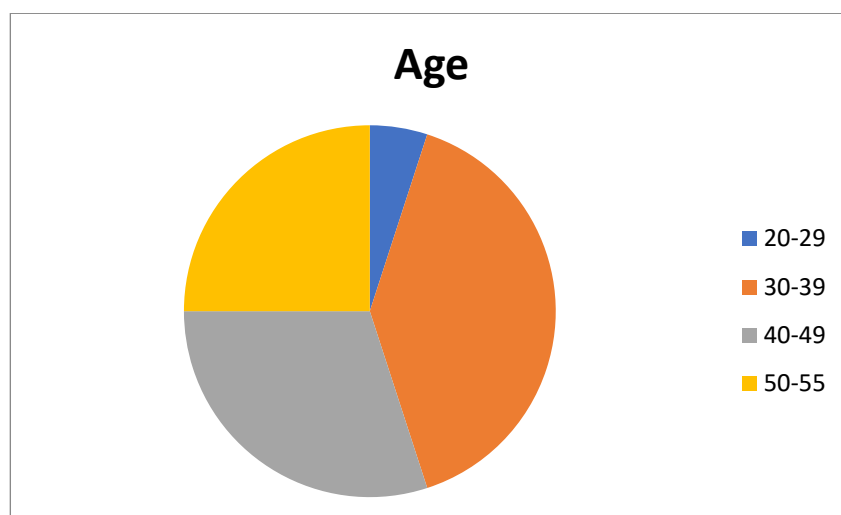


Figure 5-1 Age of participants

Table 5-1 Employment Status

Employment Status (no. in that role)	
Economist & Rentier	Businesswoman
Freelancer	Private employee (3)
Nurse (2)	Employee at public sector (3)
Saleswoman (2)	Cleaning lady (2)
Housewife (4)	Unemployed (3)
Teacher	

The findings are reported aligned to the coding framework provided by BU, under the following overarching themes:



- Barriers to Accessing Support
- Effective Support
- Attitudes to Perpetrator Interventions

### **Barriers to Accessing Support**

The majority of participants either did not feel (45%) or were unable to say (25%) if they felt there was a good awareness of DVA as a social problem in their community. Only 50% of participants knew where to access help, however, 60% of participants stated they were able to access help when they needed it, and 70% stated that the help was offered at the right time.

*‘The social services, who knew and said they could not do anything’*

### **Victim Blaming and Patriarchal Value Judgements**

Two participants noted that they had experienced being blamed one noting that it was by a police officer:

*‘In one case, the police officer blamed me for the domestic violence.’*

However, for the other it was couched in terms of the positive experience they had received from their counsellor:

*‘My counsellor was very protective; she was always there to hear and support me. She was kind and friendly. It had been years since somebody treated me that way; I was used to anger, blaming, shouting and hitting. It was a nice surprise, something I had forgot, to treat me with respect and kindness.’*

One participant noted that the gender of the perpetrator impacted the impartiality of the judge:

*‘The judge was a man and clearly took offender’s side of the story.’*

Moreover, it was not just patriarchal values that were noted but in one incident the participant noted that protectionism was also an issue:

*‘The police because my husband had a friend in a high position there. They were not helpful and even lost some of my reports for violent incidents.’*



### ***Criminal Justice System Interventions***

55% of participants stated that when they experienced DVA criminal justice agencies were involved, however, 45% felt that the criminal justice responses were ineffective, and only 30% stated they were effective. Moreover, 30% agreed that the criminal justice system was helpful, 40% disagree and 30% neither agreed nor disagreed. The picture becomes even more opaque when considering the question as to whether the participants felt that the criminal justice response was vital to their safety with 45% neither agreeing or disagreeing, 30% agreeing and 25% disagreeing. 55% of participants felt that the perpetrator was not held accountable through the criminal justice system, and only 10% felt they were.

In the qualitative responses there was mixed experiences relating to criminal justice interventions. One participant spoke about the impact of receiving support through the criminal justice system:

*'Honestly, my perception about Criminal Justice System and its professionals wasn't the best; I wouldn't have recommended to a woman victim of violence to go on a trial, but after my experience, I would definitely suggest it. This experienced changed my mind; I saw such a support, that I would never imagine that it exists. I gained power; I gained respect, although I didn't expect these things to arise/ happen; when beginning the process (criminal/legal procedure) my perception was that I just wanted to have justice, nothing more.'*

However, another spoke of a less than positive experience when asked about the worst things they had experienced when seeking help:

*'The negativity of the police officers and the way they behaved to me; I think that this behavior re-traumatised me. The long time it took for legal procedure s to go through. The fact that he (the abuser) is not in prison.'*

Another noted that the police were reluctant to arrest the abuser, and another raised the point about father's rights despite the abusive behaviour:

*'He (the abuser/ offender) was given the right to file/ fight for our children's custody, even though he was very abusive'*

Several participants noted that there needed to be improvements in the legal systems approach to DVA, noting the behaviour of some officers, the lengthy process, racism encountered, the large amounts of paperwork that needed to be completed and the failure to empower the victim as barriers to support. One participant explained the negative psychologically detrimental effect of using the criminal justice route:



*'My break down while having to testify the same things many times. It was exhausting, emotionally demanding, stressful and abusive as well.'*

One participant's statement exemplifies the lack of equity in the criminal justice system:

*'The legal system can be partial depending on the judge. Some of my trials were objective and some of them were not.'*

## Effective Support

When it came to seeking help, 13 years was the mean for participants seeking help. Figure 4-2 shows the number of years for each participant. 60% of participants called the police. The average number of calls to police was 2 times, however 2 participants called them, more than 4 times.

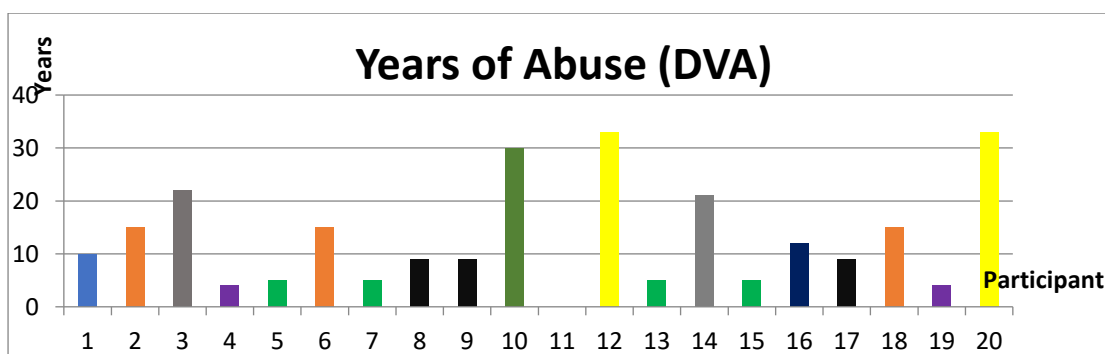


Figure 5-2 Years of Abuse prior to accessing help

When it came to accessing help, participants were asked to comment on the types of help that had been most effective. Included in the answers were: access to training and qualifications, support to search for possible solutions, psychological support, counselling, being listened to, support to enable them to feel empowered and boost their confidence, to find work, legal advice, realising that they were not alone in experiencing abuse, their family and friends, police officers, lawyers and judges, the marriage ending.

A number also noted things that related to self-efficacy such as a desire to be financial independent, a desire to have autonomy, feeling safe, and development of self-esteem. The quotes from participants at Table 4-2, exemplify some of the more psychologically linked changes the victims faced and sought to change:



Table 5-2 Psychologically linked changes the victims faced

<i>'Trying to define myself, to set limits and boundaries on myself and others regarding what I accept/allow and what I do not accept/allow'</i>
<i>'Acknowledging my problem that I have been abused for so many years. I would not have used the word abuse for myself in previous years... I managed to find myself- I have changed my feelings in relation to what I have experienced and see and changes of others as a result of this change of mine.'</i>
<i>'Through this support I found myself again; I saw things inside me that I had forgotten that they existed. I am smiling again.'</i>
<i>'I felt that there is definitely a problem; that somebody else understands my (my counsellor) and sees it as abuse; that it wasn't things of my imagination'</i>
<i>'The ability to feel calm as I feel now'</i>

### Attitudes to Perpetrator Interventions

75% of participants stated that their abusive partner was not offered support by the services to change their behaviour, and 15% stated they were. Only 35% of participants stated that if their abusive partner was not violent, then most of the time their relationship was fine, with 40% disagreeing. 35% also stated that if the abuse had stopped, they would have stayed in the relationship, however the rest of the participants either disagreed (45%) or neither agreed nor disagreed. Participants were also asked whether they agreed with the statement: If there had been help for my abusive partner, things might have been different, here 70% agreed, and 20% disagreed. 95% of participants agreed that for an abuser to accept help, they need to realise there is a problem with their behaviour. 95% of the participants agreed with the statement: I would have preferred to have accessed support for myself, my abusive partner, and (if applicable) children and 75% agreed that their abusive partner could have been helped if the right help had been available.

Understandably, when it came to perpetrator interventions some participants focussed on a desire for justice, their own safety and changes to the legal processes to protect victims and children, for example:

*'The fact that he was able to walk around us free after doing such horrible things to me'*

*'Absence of threats to my physical integrity in case of a possible meeting with my abuser.'*

*'I would enforce the penal mediation because that is the only way abusers might truly change'*



One participant noted that it was important for her abusive partner to be helped:

*'I would like my husband to seek and receive help. I liked that my counsellor empowered me in order to convince him to get help and prepared me for his negativity regarding getting help'*

A number noted that they wanted and to change their abusive partners in a number of ways to improve their situation at home, and/or potentially accept help see Table 4-3.

Table 5-3 Victims comments on wanting abusers to change

<i>'For my husband, not to have an extra-marital relationship.'</i>
<i>'I would like to change my husband's willingness about getting help for him.'</i>
<i>'If I could I would like to put a "chip" on his head so I can make him think more positively of his family people.'</i>
<i>'I would like to stop using drugs and alcohol; be more interested in me and our son. Maybe if these things could change, we would still be together and fine as well.'</i>
<i>'I would like him to have more willingness and motivation about changing his behaviour. Mainly, not to drink. Because this is his only problem. When he doesn't drink he is totally another person; he is not violent but he is kind and warm. Now that we are together in this effort, things are getting way better.'</i>

One participant did state there was a need to seek professional help to support perpetrators to change, yet they also noted the lack of willingness to accept help and address his behaviours:

*'I would like him to understand his responsibilities towards me and our children as a husband and a father. I mean, ok, he may has some problems with me but our children are not to be blamed for anything. He has to separate things in his mind and I think he needs some professional help. I was there was something available and he was willing to go.'*

However, three participants felt that nothing would help, for example:

*'I don't believe that the perpetrators can change. My husband certainly doesn't.'*

## Conclusion: Victim Surveys



The threads that ran through the experiences of the victims were that some of those of reporting DVA to the criminal justice system felt that the system itself did not empowered victims and the support received was dependent on individuals within the system rather than effective and supportive process and procedures. When victims were asked about their views of perpetrator interventions, key messages from the victims' perspective urged for the perpetrator to be penalised, a focus on the perpetrator needing to be willing to access support and victims to be offered both practical and emotional support.

## **6. Findings: Professional focus groups**

Three focus groups, with a total of 39 participants, were conducted in the Greek study. The mix of professionals included: psychiatrists, psychologists, cultural mediators, a social worker, a mental health counsellor, a researcher, a legal advisor, and a juvenile probation officer. The focus groups were approximately 1 hr 25 minutes in length.

### **Successful interventions and programmes**

Participants agreed that interventions worked best when they were tailored to the individual involved and where practitioners were given the appropriate training and skills to be able to assess and evaluate each case and refer them to the right services. They advocated that professionals should keep in their minds the structural context of domestic violence including gender stereotypes, patriarchy, gender issues and toxic masculinities. They agreed that interventions worked best when perpetrators were motivated to seek for help. Unfortunately however they noted that there is very limited data related to perpetrators treatment and support.

### **Inter-agency collaboration**

One participant stated there needed to be a good and effective organization of all involved institutions and effective and properly trained experts. The issue of a lack of cooperation between the corresponding services (e.g. police, criminal justice system, victims support



services and perpetrator programmes) was also noted. A major problem is identified in the coordination between the available services in terms of a reference system.

### **Educational interventions**

The importance of early education through engaging in schools was raised by one participant in terms of preventing potential violence and reporting possible allegations of violence against school children. From a macro-level, participants made references to the wider culture of the society and the misinterpretation of “traditional” influences. They discussed how best to change traditional culturally accepted norms through greater awareness raising, promotion and project of information and education related to DV in society.

### **Barriers to Accessing Services**

Participants highlighted the importance of the role of family, and the age of perpetrators and victims in response to broader issues and expectations around gender stereotypes. A lack of awareness was a common concern, with one participant noting that health care professionals may not be aware of the existence of counselling programmes appropriate to refer the victim or the perpetrator, which could be a potential barrier. There was also reference made to the importance of school staff in terms of reporting allegations (as mentioned above) as participants felt there was a lack of sufficient training for teachers and principals to have the confidence to report and manage such cases.

An additional barrier was that of ‘social stigma’, particularly in smaller or more rural communities. Perpetrators with a history of drug addiction were difficult to engage with as many refuse to admit that they have an issue and ask for help. Those in the second focus group all agreed that the drug addiction problem should be prioritised and treated prior to any intervention programmes for DVA.

Another element that impacted upon access to services was the legal framework. In practice perpetrators are not required to admit responsibility or accountability for their acts. Several participants commented on the Greek penal mediation system and its obstacles particularly related to confidentiality and argued that whenever there is an incident of violence or someone



is hurting themselves, professionals should lift the confidentiality, and notify the relevant authorities.

## **Typology of Victims**

Participants focused not so much on the specific typologies of victims but did note several pertinent points. One noted that the current legal framework does not sufficiently protect the victims. One participant also noted that children were often the forgotten victims of DVA and they themselves could end up suffering psychological impacts. One participant noted that there was also need for support for the victims particularly related to the importance of networking and the provision of supportive structures for the victims such as within the school environment. All the participants in focus group 2 agreed that the most important factor in the continuation of domestic violence is the lack of supportive parental environment for victims. The lack of parental support, within conservative and authoritarian family environments play a vital role. One participant noted that female asylum seekers in Greece grow up with specific values where women live in an environment that tolerates abuse. They do not even have rights on the custody of their children. For those in Greece, where the legal framework and the values for women are different, asylum seekers still do not feel protected and safe as in many cases the institutional framework does not work in an efficient way. The group considered that a more comprehensive “escape plan” should be put in place and that unilateral approaches do not work.

## **Conclusion: Focus Groups**

In Greece, there is a need for more specialised and broader interventions to perpetrators of abuse, as well as better cooperation by all the corresponding services (e.g. police, criminal justice system, victims support services and perpetrator programmes). There is a need for changes at the legal framework due to the fact that in practice, it does not protect the victims and does not hold perpetrators responsible for their acts. Provisions must be in place to protect perpetrators and victims, particularly those who have other legal issues. For example, victims without a legal residence permit in the country would not report a violent incident to the police as they would be arrested. Similarly, perpetrators are unlikely to seek support without the motivation to do so.



## 7. Findings: Perpetrator Interviews

Three male perpetrators were interviewed in Greece. Other potential interviewees declined to participate, or local judicial services denied access. Currently, there is no organised perpetrator programme in Greece, and only actions of 'penal mediation' are carried out under the General Prosecutor's Order.

Thematic analysis identified some common themes and sub-themes. The over-arching themes considered the journey to understanding DVA and Self-awareness and behaviour change. There were a number of sub-themes discussed below. There were also some examples of '*typical presentation*' – of perpetrators as recognised from the literature.

### The Journey to Understanding DVA

This theme considered what perpetrators thought worked, or could work, in order to modify their behaviour. The responses ranged from the need for supportive networks, both on an interpersonal level as well as in effective service provision which is non-stigmatising.

#### ***Supportive Networks***

Having a support system was highlighted as key, and all three highlighted the positive role of the specialist psychologists particular who were described as "*supportive*" GP3 and as ,

*"friendly and she explained things" GP1*

*"I liked that I was talking, ... someone listened to me and understood me and he was not constantly whining and criticizing" GP1*

*"The psychologists there do a very good job, they really care about you. They do not see you as the evil, the savage who beats his wife. They see inside you. They listen to you." GP2*

The last comment here emphasises the need for non-stigmatising support to be offered to perpetrators who are help-seeking.



### **Gaps in Service provision**

Linking to the theme of stigma in help-seeking, the same participant who noted above that they had received a positive response from the GP noted the contrast when they were dealt with by the police. They said that they felt “humiliated” by the police response which made them feel like a “criminal”. This contrast reveals that the participant themselves felt more comfortable framing their problematic behaviour as a health issue which required help, rather than as a criminal justice issue.

#### *Current organisational response*

*There were some negative comments in relation to the police response,*

*“I was humiliated in the neighbourhood; the patrol car came as if I was a criminal.” GP2*

*“We can solve our problems on our own; there is no need for the police to intervene” GP1*

and of the court system;

*“there is an ongoing trial, which is unfair in my opinion.” GP3*

It seems there were differences in knowledge of support services and where to find it for both women (victims) and men (perpetrators). There was a perception among the participants that there was a disparity, with more resources being levelled towards victims of DVA rather than the perpetrators. They felt there was a significant amount of publicity around victims services, particularly in urban areas. One participant found the level of publicity “excessive”.

*“many services that one can turn to. Especially in big cities ... and people know it. There are advertisements, posters” GP1*

And services are known about

*“to an excessive degree. You hear it everywhere” GP3*

However, in relation to support for men (perpetrators) there was a relative lack of awareness, highlighted in comments such as;

*“I never went to a perpetrators programme, what is that?” GP1*

Other feedback received was that in some participants experiences programmes for perpetrators do not exist, and other support is difficult to access, or came too late.

**Access:** Differences in access to services for women/men; victims/perpetrators was noted. As well as the differences in regional support offered, with one participant having to travel a significant distance to access support services. This has both financial and time implications and could impact on the ability of service users to attend support programmes and maintain their involvement.

*“For men there is almost nothing ... Nobody cares.” GP1*



*"All I would suggest is to make more services for men." GP2*

*"I drive 65 kilometres each time to go to the program. I did this once a week for the first few months, maybe for a whole year... If they force us ... they have to make structures/programs everywhere." GP2*

*Timing:* The need for early, proactive rather than late, reactive treatment was also highlighted. This was both in terms of the need for early intervention prior to the acts of violence and abuse themselves, as well as in schools, perhaps in sex and relationship education classes. There was also the need for shorter waiting times noted, as one participant shared that they waited for six months after initial help-seeking, before they received support.

*"You have to manage/treat these issues early, before they arise, before the violence takes place. In schools." GP1*

*"They make an appointment for you after months." GP1*

Further potential barriers are explored below.

*Barriers to accessing or engaging with services*

*Physical barriers:* Other factors including engagement, the legitimacy of staff, possible preference for gender-specific male support workers. When they did not receive effective help they noted the need to explore multiple options (some of which may have cost implications) were also raised.

*"When you told me that you do not accept men, ... I went alone to another service. At first in a Mental Health Centre, but I did not like it .... There was also a young lady there. What can she tell me? What does she know ... Then I went to a private psychologist ... how much money goes there? Where is the state?" GP1*

*Psychological barriers:* Not liking it and feeling uncomfortable (and therefore being less likely to engage) was also highlighted by GP2, who (unlike GP1) was required to attend.

*"At first I did not like it, I was angry. I did not want to go there" GP2*

*Recognition of their behaviour as violence:* Another potential barrier to engagement for GP1 involved the labels used to describe him.

*"What does 'abusively' mean?" GP1*

*"Why should there be something special? What perpetrators? Aren't we all human?" GP1*

*"domestic violence' has become fashionable now. You cannot say a word or raise your voice and immediately "domestic violence". GP1*



This labelling and identification as ‘perpetrator’ effects how the person may see themselves, and how others may perceive them.

*“I did not want my family to be afraid of me, to hate me. This was upsetting me...Of course I did not like to hear what I did.” GP2*

### **Self-awareness and behaviour change**

The second overarching themes was around self-awareness and behaviour change. In addition to others, the importance of self-regulation and awareness was recognised.

*“I talk. I discuss what bothers me...not jealous so much ” GP2*

*“The most helpful intervention was to learn to control my anger. To calm down before I break out, to beat it from the beginning, before it all erupts.” GP2*

*“I re-examined my behaviour and was helped to better understand myself” GP3*

### **Future relationships**

There was awareness of how this had positively impacted their interpersonal relationships, both with their intimate partners as well as their children.

*“the whole house is better. My wife does not moan like before and I do not shout. I did not raise my hand again. And the kids are calmer and spend more time with me.” GP1*

### **Typical presentation of perpetrators**

*Minimisation:* As seen in previous research, perpetrators often attempt to minimise their actions and the affect their behaviours have on others.

*I never hit them, especially my children. It happened to the woman 1 or 2 times, I do not remember. But it was nothing important. GP1*

*Stress and potential externalisation of blame:* A key, repeated theme was stress, anger and frustration as a trigger. This was also articulated as an assumed lack of understanding by others.



*“Do you know what it means to be 12 and 13 and 14 hours behind the wheel? To be endangered by every clueless (man) and every idiot (woman) on the street?” GP1*

*“I was angry very easily, I felt that no one supported me and no one understood me.” GP3*

*Socially learnt violence:* The current participants recalled the physical abuse they experienced when young.

*“If our father did not raise his voice we would not listen. Sometimes he was beating us, . cope with them We may have feared my father but we respected him. Now listen to the little ones talking to their parents.” GP1*

*“Oooo, yes. I have been beaten by my parents lots of times... [Laughs]. My dad was a very tough man; he was constantly beating me and ...used woods, belts ... shouted and cursed all day. And me and my mom and my siblings. ... I was hiding and saying I would never be like him.” GP2*

## **Conclusion: Perpetrator Interviews**

The interviews with perpetrators of DVA focused on the importance of early intervention, suggesting interventions in schools, as well as opportunities to find support before the violence and abuse escalated. There was also a connection being made for some participants between experiences of child abuse and their later behaviour, which again could raise the issue of early intervention opportunities needed with children who experience abuse at home. There was a focus on the resources that they needed in order to access effective support. They raised the need for an increase in publicity about perpetrator programmes, as well as a non-stigmatising and supportive response. Once a referral to a specialist service had been made, they noted that to improve the help seeking experience a shorter waiting time as well as services available closer to home would be preferable. One participant discussed preferring a male support worker, which resulted in him seeking private support in order to find a service that suited him. The stigma of DVA and the increased popular understanding of this concept was discussed, which indicated an ongoing discomfort with the labelling associated with perpetration of abuse. When the participants did access help though it seemed to have been effective in changing the dynamics of their relationships. Participants discussed having better emotional regulation and control of their emotions such as anger and jealousy, which resulted in them being a better partner and parent.



## 8. Findings Greek Police Data

The Hellenic Police (EL.AS) publishes an annual assessment of its overall activity, as well as statistics showing the overall police response to offenses provided by the penal code and special penal laws<sup>55</sup>. Examining the relevant file available on the website of EL.AS. we observed that there is no mention on the perpetrators' characteristics, no information about the victims is included and, finally, no reference is made to the crime of DV as a separate one.

However, upon our request the General Police Directorate of the Hellenic Police Headquarters for Combating Domestic Violence provided the following demographic data which comprised only of the ethnicity of the perpetrators and victim.

Table 8-1 2018 Date: Ethnicity of perpetrators and victims

DATA 2018					
with data on the offense of Law 3500/200606 On Domestic Violence year 2018					
INDICATOR	CRIMES				
CATEGORIES	Committed	Attempts	Offenses		
Total			4722		
INDICATOR	PERPRETATORS				
CATEGORIES	Total	Arrested	Greek ethnicity	Other ethnicity	
Total	5068	1867	4.248	820	
INDICATOR	VICTIMS				
CATEGORIES	Total victims	Dead	Injured	Greek ethnicity	Other ethnicity
Total	5145	0		4254	891
DATA 2019					
with data on the offense of Law 3500/200606 On Domestic Violence year 2019					
INDICATOR	CRIMES				
CATEGORIES	Committed	Attempts	Offenses		
Total	5204	16	5220		
INDICATOR	PERPRETATORS				
CATEGORIES	Total	Arrested	Greek ethnicity	Other ethnicity	
Total	5491	2041	4491	1000	
INDICATOR	VICTIMS				
CATEGORIES	Total victims	Dead	Injured	Greek ethnicity	Other ethnicity
Total	5540	0	1557	4523	1017

<sup>55</sup>[http://www.astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo\\_content&lang=%27..%27&perform=view&id=93706&Itemid=2425&lang=](http://www.astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&lang=%27..%27&perform=view&id=93706&Itemid=2425&lang=)



It is understood that even from the existing data presented to date by EL.AS. we cannot get a clear picture of the true extent of DV in Greece. Additional indicators (gender, age, etc.) would significantly contribute to a better understanding of the forms of crime and the taking of preventive and other measures to address them.

We strongly believe that the establishment of a department of domestic violence in EL.AS. announced during the first months of 2019 is directly related to the need for better recording and fuller support for survivors who decide to file a complaint. The new operational structure will include 73 services (staff Division for Combating Domestic Violence of the General Police Directorate of the Hellenic Police Headquarters and Offices for Combating Domestic Violence at the headquarters of the General Police Directorates in each of the fourteen Police Departments in each country).

## **Needs**

Based on the above data, the competent authorities are called to take the following measures throughout Greece by sector of action to strengthen the current framework and provide more effective support:

- Increase the number of agencies with the capacity and knowledge to provide Batterer Intervention Programmes in communities across Greece.
- Increase funding, improvement of legislation and policies with respect to Batterer Intervention Programmes
- Evaluation of the already Batter services provided (from EKKA and VIA Stop), in order to facilitate the improvement of the existing interventions in the specific population and to allow the planning of new activities and programs.
- Organisations specializing in the management of cases of gender and DV (G.S.F.P.G.E, EL.AS, EL.STAT, Courts, Hospitals) to adopt a common methodology for collecting statistics and to work together to establish a recording mechanism. The



Gender Equality Observatory with updated indicators can play an important role in measuring the phenomenon.

- Coordinated, interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral (horizontal and vertical) action of public and non-governmental bodies, cooperation of the involved services and utilization of the complementarity of the structures (multi-agency approach), as well as expansion of bodies active in the field of social solidarity and care.
- Investigate and highlight good practices for methods, tools and best practices of stakeholders and their executives in resolving difficult and complex situations based on the level of scientific knowledge and training adequacy they possess.
- Undertake actions and measures to encourage the reporting of incidents of gender-based violence and the fight against fear, complacency and concealment of incidents of any form and type of violence against women, through targeted information and awareness programmes.
- Conducting community-based social surveys to identify high-risk groups in a timely manner and address them promptly. This can be helped by the systematic recording of incidents of abuse by police, hospitals and social services - where victims usually seek refuge and the information, awareness and mobilization of scientific teams involved in tackling DV (hospital social services, doctors, etc.) with the aim of timely connection of the victims or their families with the competent social services.
- Ensure the viability of the integrated nationwide Network of structures (Telephone Line 15900, Counselling Centres and Hostels), as well as strengthening and enriching the services and actions they develop.
- Awareness and training of "intermediaries" and professionals in contact with women (e.g. police officers, judges, doctors, nursing staff, etc.), so that on the one hand they are able to detect violence and on the other hand to support women victims in many ways and levels, in order to report the abuse and to claim their rights, but also to prevent their secondary victimization.
- Strengthening the implementation of the Protocols of cooperation for common framework for tracking, referral and hosting procedures, as well as the provision of counselling services and actions to refugee women victims or potential victims of violence and their children.

## **Best practice**



The Institute for the Prevention and Treatment of Violence and the Promotion of Gender Equality, Via-Stop, was founded in Kavala in 2008. It has since been actively involved in handling DV incidents and has worked in close collaboration with local authorities at all levels, to ensure a speedy, efficient and successful handling of incidents. Via-Stop is comprised of academics, healthcare workers, forensic experts, police officers and psychologists who specialize in DV and are experts in their respective fields. After years of actively supporting victims, Via-Stop formed a large network among local authorities. This was made possible by the recognition the organization earned in handling incident.

When a victim first makes contact with police authorities, legal authorities, or health/social services, key individuals at these posts contact Via-Stop. An appointment is arranged, during which the incident is assessed, and a hierarchy of needs is established. An exit plan for the victim is then devised, a plan for psychological treatment is drawn and all additional information is provided to the victim. The principal objectives of this procedure are: a) to ensure the bodily safety of the victim, b) to support them in exiting the process of violence, c) to provide them with psychological support and assistance, d) to ensure safe exit from the abusive environment and e) to ensure full cooperation with local authorities in terms of informing the victim of their rights and safeguarding them. The exit plan is a specialized method for exiting the violent/abusive environment, custom built for every individual who reaches out and seeks assistance. It is shaped around the victim's needs and requirements, outlining clear steps that the individual can follow safely and legally. It should be noted that many victims, even after seeking assistance, eventually return to the abusive relationship. The exit plan can be valuable to those individuals in the future, when they make the decision to finally quit the relationship, making the exit plan a useful tool in many situations<sup>56</sup>.

The first stage is an assessment/scheduling stage. It involves drawing up a case history, establishing a risk assessment for the incident and drawing up a hierarchy of the victim's needs. Then, further activities with the victim are scheduled, as is networking with other local resources. More importantly, the actions of immediate priority are implemented. These include reporting the incident to police authorities, establishing shelter for the victims and any dependants, and assisting with any medical needs the victim may have<sup>57</sup>.

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<sup>56</sup> Chatzifotou Sevaste, Fotou Eleni (2006), Democritus University of Thrace Moises Ignatios, Hellenic Police Force: Best practices in liaising between the police and social services in confronting incidents of domestic violence.

<sup>57</sup> Chatzifotou Sevaste, Fotou Eleni (2006), Democritus University of Thrace Moises Ignatios, Hellenic Police Force: Best practices in liaising between the police and social services in confronting incidents of domestic violence



The second stage is an implementation stage, aiming to implement all actions scheduled at the first stage. These could include legal actions, such as obtaining protective orders, legally safeguarding the victim, and taking legal measures for the custody of any minors. This stage also includes establishing a therapy plan, initiating individual and/or family counselling and finally scheduling further contact/actions with the victim<sup>58</sup>.

The final stage of the exit plan is an evaluation stage, and aims at reviewing the entire process, at assessing potential risks and the current situation. It also involves scheduling further contact/actions with the victim, in addition to contributing other, external social and legal resources. This stage also includes a therapy plan for the perpetrator. That is, the perpetrator receives therapy, either at the mandate of a court or at their own request. Finally, it is crucial that this plan be devised with the victim's best interests in mind. Furthermore, its success depends on the full assistance of other services such as the police, the public prosecutor and medical services. Although several victims respond by terminating the abusive relationship, some individuals decide to return to the relationship, for either finance related or family reasons. It should be noted that this plan is designed to empower the victims in any choice they make, to make that choice as informed as possible and to assist the victim in any course of action that they decide upon<sup>59</sup>.

The proposed plan was first implemented in 2009 in a series of different cases, with successful results. It has since been applied to most DV cases handled by Via-Stop. Since 2009, local and national networking with authorities, key officials and judicial authorities has led to the expedited handling of DV cases. In addition, community outreach programs designed to raise awareness regarding violence in general and DV in particular, have led to community involvement in confronting violent behaviours. It could be said that the proposed programme succeeded in its initial goals, as it is largely recognized by all stakeholders involved, including service users and the local community as a whole. However, future research should be carried out to raise further awareness among professionals and laymen at all levels.

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<sup>58</sup> Chatzifotiou Sevaste, Fotou Eleni (2006), Democritus University of Thrace Moisides Ignatios, Hellenic Police Force: Best practices in liaising between the police and social services in confronting incidents of domestic violence

<sup>59</sup> Chatzifotiou Sevaste, Fotou Eleni (2006), Democritus University of Thrace Moisides Ignatios, Hellenic Police Force: Best practices in liaising between the police and social services in confronting incidents of domestic violence



## Evaluation/feedback that evidences the effectiveness of the best practice

A study conducted by Via-Stop in order to explore and identify the characteristics of DV perpetrators under the Penal Mediation Programme comprised of 13 persons, convicted for DV. These participants (N=13) accepted Penal Mediation and its conditions and were referred to Via-Stop to undergo treatment under their Penal Mediation Programme. They represented 14% of the 108 reported incidents of DV in Kavala between the years 2011–15. The Penal Mediation Programme ranges from 3 to 6 years and none of the referred offenders have completed the treatment by that time<sup>60</sup>.

Records obtained from the psychologist(s) responsible for the Penal Mediation Programme at Via-Stop depicted the following results: At the onset of the programme it was found that most offenders had never been to any form of therapy before. They started out on the programme with an attitude of suspicion and resistance, attempting to belittle the programme. All the offenders blamed the victim for destroying the family and causing the conflict. They did not view themselves as an offender; rather they viewed themselves at the receiving end of sanctions because of the victim's actions. After a 6-month period in the programme, the attitudes of the offenders started to shift. Offenders started trusting the therapist and they started seeking advice on matters other than the DV incident. They began to have a better understanding of the consequences of their violent behaviour, especially its impact on their children. Offenders started to bring to therapy unresolved issues with their (ex) partners, rather than directly confronting them. This in turn helped keep conflicts at a minimum and prevented reoffending<sup>61</sup>.

Once group therapy began, the offenders who were initially apprehensive were surprised after meeting their fellow offenders, reportedly at the normalness of the individuals. After a 12-month period, the offenders reported an increasing awareness of responsibility for the disruption in the familial environment, as they are confronted by the long-term psychological consequences experienced by their children<sup>62</sup>.

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<sup>60</sup> Nikolaos (Nick) Petropoulos , Eleni Fotou , Sheetal Ranjan , Sevaste Chatzifotou and Evangelia Dimadi; Domestic Violence Offenders in Greece (2016)

<sup>61</sup> Nikolaos (Nick) Petropoulos , Eleni Fotou , Sheetal Ranjan , Sevaste Chatzifotou and Evangelia Dimadi; Domestic Violence Offenders in Greece (2016)

<sup>62</sup> Nikolaos (Nick) Petropoulos , Eleni Fotou , Sheetal Ranjan , Sevaste Chatzifotou and Evangelia Dimadi; Domestic Violence Offenders in Greece (2016)



## 9. Conclusion

The socio-demographic profile of female victims indicates a situation where the victims depends economically on the perpetrator who in most cases is the intimate partner. The vast majority of the women do not report on incidents of the violence because there are moderately informed about the existence of support structures and legislative framework. Additionally, public services (e.g. police, hospitals, justice) involved in issues of gender-based violence respond modestly to the needs of victims, making the victims reach out for help in their close environment (siblings, parents).

The legislation framework in Greece responded very late in identifying the seriousness of the situation. Until 2006 crimes of violence in family were not specifically criminalized. Additionally, the sexual abuse of the spouse could not be punished as rape, since the formulation of the crime of rape referred to forced sexual intercourse between unmarried persons. Law '3500/2006 establishes that any violent activity occurring within family boundaries is criminal in nature and should be treated as an inherent offense. The ratification of Istanbul Convention took place in March 2018 and was incorporated into the Greek legal order by Law 4531/2018. Although important, the changes it achieved were characterized as fragmentary. In fact, it was criticized for not providing the introduction into schools of educational material on the fight against violence and the elimination of gender stereotypes, the training of professionals dealing with the victims of violence and of the police officers, regarding the treatment of violence incidents.

The victims' right to access victim support services is safeguarded in Article 61 of Law 4478/2017. However, victim support services in Greece are limited in number and offer services only to specific groups of victims, which implies that a considerable number of victims may eventually not receive the support needed.

With the introduction of Law 3500/2006, restorative procedure in the Greek penal system was introduced. Unfortunately, the results are poor due the lack of staff in combination with the adopted psychological approach as well as the delays in the conduction of the counselling programme making the perpetrator wait at least two to six months before the first session. There is also the need to cooperate with other institutions, as not only the conduction of the counselling programme would be facilitated, but also there would be the possibility of specialized treatment in cases of mental illnesses, drugs or alcohol abuse. Last but not least, the role of prosecutors, who are expected to act as mediators despite lack of training. Various



needs have been identified such as skills and training of front-line professionals to be able to assess and evaluate each case correctly to be able to refer them to the correct service, the importance of school staff (teachers and principal) in terms of reporting even allegations of violence against children. Developing more perpetrator programmes in combination with improvement of legislation and policies for mediation programmes and evaluation of existing programmes needs to be also in the agenda. In parallel, a coordinated, interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral action of public and non-governmental bodies with intensive awareness strategies that will encourage the reporting of incidents of gender-based violence can be critical in combating gender-based violence.



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## 11. Appendices

### Appendix 1: Focus Groups Vignettes

#### Ιστορία 2: Χριστόφορος και Μικαέλλα

Ο Χριστόφορος είναι είκοσι δύο ετών και η Μικαέλλα δεκαεπτά. Είναι μαζί 6 μήνες. Η Μικαέλλα ζει με τους γονείς της, ενώ ο Χριστόφορος ζει μόνος.

Παρόλο που η Μικαέλλα ήταν επιμελής στο σχολείο, όταν άρχισε το κολλέγιο και γνώρισε τον Χριστόφορο έχασε το ενδιαφέρον της για τα μαθήματα. Μένει έξω μέχρι αργά το βράδυ και οι γονείς της ανησυχούν ότι άρχισε να πίνει αλκοόλ και ενδεχομένως να κάνει χρήση ναρκωτικών ουσιών. Οι γονείς της Μικαέλλα δεν γνωρίζουν ότι ζήτησε από τον γυναικολόγο της αντισυλληπτική αγωγή αφού η ίδια ξέρει πως δεν θα το εγκρίνουν. Οι γονείς της την έχουν απειλήσει ότι θα την διώξουν από το σπίτι αν συνεχίσει να συναντά τον Χριστόφορο. Η ίδια τους λέει ότι και να την διώξουν θα πάει να μείνει στον Χριστόφορο.

Ο Χριστόφορος είναι ένας πολύ συμπαθητικός τύπος και δημοφιλής στον περίγυρο του. Καθώς έχει αυτοκίνητο και μένει μόνος, τον επισκέπτονται συχνά στο σπίτι του φίλοι οι οποίοι διανυκτερεύουν εκεί. Είναι γνωστό ότι έχει πρόσβαση σε ναρκωτικά και ότι είναι στα πρώιμα στάδια του εθισμού. Η αστυνομία κλήθηκε να εξετάσει ένα περιστατικό ενδοοικογενειακής βίας στο σπίτι του Χριστόφορου καθώς οι γείτονες άκουσαν την Μικαέλλα να τσιρίζει. Δεν του ασκήθηκαν κατηγορίες. Σε μια άλλη περίπτωση περαστικοί είδαν σε ένα στενό δρομάκι στο κέντρο της πόλης τον Χριστόφορο να έχει βάλει τα χέρια του γύρω από τον λαιμό της Μικαέλλα και να τη σφίγγει. Η Μικαέλλα από τότε είπε σε μια σύμβουλο υγείας του κολλεγίου της ότι την κακοποίησαν σεξουαλικά αλλά δεν ήθελε να πει ποιος το έκανε.

Η σύμβουλος της Μικαέλλα παρατήρησε ότι στο κολλέγιο είναι πολύ ανήσυχη. Ο Χριστόφορος της τηλεφωνά συνεχώς και παρακολουθεί κάθε της κίνηση ακόμα και στην αρχή και στο τέλος των μαθημάτων της. Η σύμβουλος παρατήρησε επίσης, κάποιους μώλωπες στους καρπούς και το πρόσωπο της Μικαέλλα αλλά όταν την ρώτησε πώς προκλήθηκαν, η Μικαέλλα αρνήθηκε να απαντήσει.



Ο Χριστόφορος ζήτησε βοήθεια για την χρήση ναρκωτικών ουσιών από τον προσωπικό του ιατρό και αυτός τον παρέπεμψε σε μια υπηρεσία συμβούλων. Σε μια συνάντηση που είχε ο Χριστόφορος με τον σύμβουλό του, ανέφερε ότι όταν είναι υπό την επήρεια ναρκωτικών θυμώνει τόσο πολύ που βγαίνει εκτός ελέγχου. Τον παρέπεμψαν σε πρόγραμμα για δράστες ενδοοικογενειακής βίας αλλά όταν επικοινωνήσε με λειτουργούς του προγράμματος του είπαν ότι δεν μπορούν να τον δεχτούν λόγω της εξάρτησής του από τα ναρκωτικά. Νιώθει ότι βρίσκεται σε αδιέξοδο.

### **Ιστορία 3: Λουκία και Αμίλ**

Η Λουκία και ο Αμίλ είναι ζευγάρι εδώ και 13 χρόνια και έχουν τέσσερα παιδιά. Ο Αμίλ γεννήθηκε στο Ιράκ αλλά μετακόμισε στην Ελλάδα πριν από 18 χρόνια και διευθύνει μια μικρή επιχείρηση. Ο Αμίλ είναι αφοσιωμένος στην πίστη του και τις πνευματικές του πεποιθήσεις, και απαιτεί από τα παιδιά να ακολουθούν αυστηρά και σε καθημερινό επίπεδο συγκεκριμένα τελετουργικά. Η Λουκία δουλεύει σε πλήρη απασχόληση τώρα που τα παιδιά της πηγαίνουν σχολείο. Η Λουκία δεν θέλει άλλα παιδιά αλλά ο Αμίλ αντιτίθεται στην αντισύλληψη για θρησκευτικούς λόγους. Όταν η Λουκία του πρότεινε να προχωρήσει σε αγγειεκτομή αυτός αρνήθηκε να συζητήσουν τη συγκεκριμένη επιλογή καθώς είπε ότι θα τον έκανε να νιώσει λιγότερο άντρας.

Παρόλα αυτά η Λουκία έλαβε αγωγή για αντισύλληψη από τον γυναικολόγο της, κάτι το οποίο ποτέ δεν αποκάλυψε στον Αμίλ επειδή ήξερε ότι θα αντιταχθεί. Τον τελευταίο καιρό η Λουκία νιώθει μεγάλη πίεση σχετικά με διάφορα θέματα για τα οποία ο Αμίλ είναι κάθετος και νιώθει ότι δεν μπορεί να συζητήσει μαζί του χωρίς αυτός να αρχίσει τις φωνές. Μια φίλη της εισηγήθηκε να επικοινωνήσει με τη Γενική Γραμματεία Οικογενειακής Πολιτικής και Ισότητας των Φύλων. Η Λουκία ακολούθησε την συμβουλή της και όταν βρέθηκε με την λειτουργό της Γραμματείας της εξήγησε ότι ο Αμίλ ασκεί μεγάλο έλεγχο πάνω της και στα παιδιά τους.

Τα παιδιά προσεύχονται για ώρες πρωί και βράδυ, με αποτέλεσμα να αργούν για το σχολείο και την ολοκλήρωση της κατ'οικον εργασίας τους. Ο Αμίλ τους υπαγορεύει τον τρόπο που πρέπει να προσεύχονται και στη συνέχεια αλλάζει συχνά τους κανόνες χωρίς κάποια επεξήγηση. Εάν τα παιδιά δεν προσευχηθούν όπως ο ίδιος τους υπαγορεύει τα χτυπά στο πρόσωπο και το σώμα. Ο Αμίλ κατά διαστήματα χτυπούσε και την Λουκία, ενώ τα παιδιά ορισμένες φορές ήταν παρόντα και άκουγαν τον Αμίλ να απειλεί την μητέρα τους ότι θα της κάνει πολύ μεγαλύτερο κακό. Η Λουκία ανέφερε στην λειτουργό (Χριστίνα) συγκεκριμένα περιστατικά που ο Αμίλ την χτύπησε.



Η Λουκία είπε στην Χριστίνα πως νοιώθει σαν να περπατά πάνω σε μια λεπτή γραμμή. Δεν έχει φίλους, σπάνια βγαίνει από το σπίτι, και δεν έχει δικό της τραπεζικό λογαριασμό. Η Λουκία λέει ότι αγαπά τον Αμίλ και ότι δεν θέλει να χωρίσει, αλλά ότι θα ήθελε τον Αμίλ να δείχνει περισσότερη κατανόηση για τις ανάγκες της. Η Χριστίνα εισηγήθηκε στην Λουκία να μιλήσει με τις Υπηρεσίες Πρόνοιας καθώς τα παιδιά έχουν δεχτεί σωματική κακοποίηση. Η Λουκία καταλαβαίνει την ανάγκη, αλλά αναφέρει ότι δεν είναι έτοιμη να τους μιλήσει η ίδια. Οι Υπηρεσίες Πρόνοιας επικοινωνήσαν με την Λουκία η οποία αρνήθηκε οποιαδήποτε κακοποίηση λέγοντας ότι η ίδια δημιούργησε τις ιστορίες περί κακοποίησης επειδή ήταν θυμωμένη με τον Αμίλ. Ο Αμίλ και τα παιδιά αρνήθηκαν επίσης οποιοδήποτε πρόβλημα στην οικογένεια όταν ρωτήθηκαν. Το σχολείο των παιδιών και ο προσωπικός ιατρός της οικογένειας δεν εξέφρασαν κάποια ανησυχία σχετικά με τα παιδιά. Δεν ελήφθησαν περαιτέρω μέτρα.



## Appendix 2: Key Worker Focus Group Questions

**Βασικές ερωτήσεις ομάδας εστίασης επαγγελματιών πρώτης γραμμής**

**Διάρκεια ομάδας εστίασης:** 45 λεπτά – 1 ώρα (μέγιστη διάρκεια)

**Εισαγωγή ομάδας εστίασης:**

- Υπενθυμίστε στους συμμετέχοντες ότι η συνεδρία καταγράφεται και μπορούν να συμμετέχουν μόνο μέσω ήχου εάν το επιθυμούν (απενεργοποίηση τις κάμερας τους).
- Ξεκινήστε την ηχογράφηση.
- Επιβεβαιωθείτε ότι όλοι οι συμμετέχοντες έχουν διαβάσει το φύλλο πληροφοριών και έχουν υπογράψει τη φόρμα συναίνεσης.
- Ρωτήστε εάν έχουν οποιεσδήποτε ερωτήσεις σε αυτό το στάδιο.

**Ζητήστε από κάθε συμμετέχοντα να κάνει σύντομη παρουσίαση του εαυτού του/της** αναφέροντας το όνομα τους, τη διάρκεια εργασίας σε αυτόν τον τομέα, με ποια άτομα εκ των θυμάτων/δραστών εργάζονται, και τη θέση εργασίας τους.

**Πρώτο μισό της ομάδας εστίασης:** Επιλέξτε 2 από τις βινιέτες που περιγράφουν ένα περιστατικό βίας. Θα πρέπει να δώσετε 15-20 λεπτά ανά περίπτωση για συζήτηση. Οι βινιέτες πρέπει να σταλούν εκ των προτέρων, μαζί με τις πιο κάτω ερωτήσεις:

**Θέματα παρακίνησης συζήτησης βινιέτας:** Ερωτήσεις:

- Πώς συγκρίνεται αυτό το συγκεκριμένο περιστατικό με τα είδη των περιστατικών που αντιμετωπίζετε ως επαγγελματίας;
- Σε ποια σημεία θα μπορούσε να προσφερθεί παρέμβαση; (Σύστημα ποινικής δικαιοσύνης και εθελοντικές επιλογές δράστών)
- Πώς θα μπορούσατε να φανταστείτε την ιδανική παρέμβασή σας σε αυτό το πλαίσιο, για να τερματιστεί η ενδοοικογενειακή βία και να προσφερθεί υποστήριξη τόσο στο θύμα όσο και στον δράστη, τι θα περιλάμβανε;

**Συμπληρωματικές ερωτήσεις** (για τα τελευταία 20 λεπτά)



### **Διερευνητικές Ερωτήσεις – απόψεις σχετικά με την υπάρχουσα παροχή υποστήριξης σε θέματα ενδοοικογενειακής βίας**

Θέλω να ρωτήσω τις απόψεις σας σχετικά με τα τρέχουσα προγράμματα δραστών:

- Κατά τη γνώμη σας, υπάρχουν κενά στην τρέχουσα παροχή προγραμμάτων/θεραπείας δραστών στην κοινότητά σας; Εάν ναι, ποια είναι;
- Κατά τη γνώμη σας, υπάρχουν εμπόδια για την έγκαιρη και αποτελεσματική υποστήριξη των δραστών; Εάν ναι, ποια είναι;

Εάν μπορούσατε να αλλάξετε ένα πράγμα σχετικά με την κατάσταση παρέμβασης των δραστών στην κοινότητά σας, τι θα ήταν;

### **Τέλος της ομάδας εστίασης**

- Ευχαριστείστε τους συμμετέχοντες που συμμετείχαν.
- Ενημερώστε τους ότι θα στείλετε ένα email και θα ρωτήσετε εάν μετά από περεταίρω σκέψη, έχουν οποιεσδήποτε περαιτέρω πληροφορίες που επιθυμούν να μοιραστούν.
- Υπενθυμίστε τους τις τοπικές υπηρεσίες υποστήριξης σε περίπτωση που αυτή η ομάδα εστίασης εγείρει ευαίσθητα ζητήματα γι' αυτούς.
- Σταματήστε την ηχογράφηση και αποθηκεύστε την σύμφωνα με τις οδηγίες στο φύλλο οδηγιών της ομάδας εστίασης.



## Appendix 3: Victim Surveys

### Εμπειρίες Ενδοοικογενειακής Βίας και Κακοποίησης: Ερωτηματολόγιο

Με τη συμπλήρωση αυτού του ερωτηματολογίου θεωρείται ότι έχετε δώσει την ενήμερη συγκατάθεσή σας.

Σας ευχαριστώ θερμά για τη συμμετοχή σας. Ελπίζουμε να μάθουμε από εσάς για να μπορέσουμε να βοηθήσουμε και άλλους ανθρώπους στο μέλλον.

Υπενθυμίζουμε ότι δεν υπάρχουν σωστές ή λάθος απαντήσεις, η γνώμη σας είναι που μετράει.

**ΕΝΟΤΗΤΑ 1: Σε ποιο βαθμό συμφωνείτε ή διαφωνείτε με τις ακόλουθες προτάσεις; Παρακαλώ τσεκάρετε ένα κουτί.**

	Συμφωνώ απόλυτα	Συμφωνώ	Δεν συμφωνώ/Δεν Διαφωνώ	Διαφωνώ	Διαφωνώ απόλυτα
Υπάρχει μια καλή γενική ενημερότητα για την Ενδοοικογενειακή Βία και Κακοποίηση ως κοινωνικό πρόβλημα στην κοινότητά μου					
Ήξερα που να απευθυνθώ για να λάβω βοήθεια					
Μπορούσα να έχω πρόσβαση σε υπηρεσίες υποστήριξης Ενδοοικογενειακή Βία και					



Κακοποίηση όταν το χρειάστηκε					
Η βοήθεια που μου παρασχέθηκε ήταν άμεση					
Όταν βίωσα Ενδοοικογενειακή Βία και Κακοποίηση ενεπλάκησαν οι υπηρεσίες ποινικής δικαιοσύνης (Αστυνομία, Δικαστήρια, νομική υποστήριξη)					
Οι αποκρίσεις της ποινικής δικαιοσύνης ήταν αποτελεσματικές					
Οι αποκρίσεις της ποινικής δικαιοσύνης ήταν βοηθητικές					
Οι αποκρίσεις της ποινικής δικαιοσύνης ήταν ζωτικής σημασίας για την ασφάλειά μου					
Ο δράστης κατέστη υπόλογος/ υπεύθυνος για τις πράξεις του εξαιτίας των αποκρίσεων της ποινικής δικαιοσύνης					
Εάν ο δράστης δεν ήταν βίαιος, τότε τον περισσότερο καιρό η σχέση θα ήταν ικανοποιητική					



Εάν η κακοποίηση σταματούσε θα είχα παραμείνει στη σχέση					
Παρασχέθηκε υποστήριξη από υπηρεσίες στο δράστη για να αλλάξει τη συμπεριφορά του					
Για να αποδεχτεί ο δράστης τη βοήθεια, πρέπει να συνειδητοποιήσει ότι υπάρχει πρόβλημα με τη συμπεριφορά του					
Εάν υπήρχε βοήθεια για τον κακοποιητικό σύντροφό μου, τα πράγματα θα ήταν διαφορετικά					
Θα προτιμούσα να υπήρχε πρόσβαση σε υποστήριξη για τον εαυτό μου, τον κακοποιητικό σύντροφό μου και (εάν υπάρχουν) τα παιδιά μου					
Ο δράστης θα μπορούσε να είχε βοηθηθεί εάν υπήρχε διαθέσιμη η κατάλληλη βοήθεια					

## ΕΝΟΤΗΤΑ 2:

### Βάσει της εμπειρίας σας:-

Άρχισα να σκέφτομαι τη λήψη βοήθειας, στα \_\_\_\_\_ χρόνια της κακοποίησης

Καλέσατε την αστυνομία; Ναι/ Όχι

Εάν ναι,

Πόσες φορές καλέσατε την αστυνομία; \_\_\_\_\_



Παρακαλώ, εξηγείστε με δικά σας λόγια:

- i) Ποια ήταν, εάν υπήρξαν, τα **καλύτερα** τρία πράγματα σχετικά με τη **βοήθεια που λάβατε** για την Ενδοοικογενειακή Βία και Κακοποίηση;
- ii) Ποια ήταν, εάν υπήρξαν, τα **χειρότερα** τρία πράγματα σχετικά με τη **βοήθεια που λάβατε** για την Ενδοοικογενειακή Βία και Κακοποίηση;
- iii) Εάν θα μπορούσατε να αλλάξετε ένα πράγμα σχετικά με το πώς οι δράστες ανταποκρίνονται, τι θα αλλάζατε και γιατί;

Παρακαλώ πείτε μας λίγα πράγματα για τον εαυτό σας:-

Πόσο χρονών είστε (σε έτη);	
Ποια είναι η εθνικότητά σας;	
Είστε άντρας, γυναίκα ή προτιμάτε να μην αυτοπροσδιορίζεστε;	
Εάν εργάζεστε, ποιο είναι το επάγγελμά σας;	
Ο κακοποιητικός σύντροφός μου ήταν/είναι άντρας/γυναίκα. Εάν είχατε πάνω από έναν κακοποιητικούς συντρόφους, παρακαλώ πείτε μας πόσοι ήταν στο παρακάτω κουτί, και ποιο ήταν/είναι το φύλο/τα φύλα τους;	
Έχετε παιδιά;	

Εάν έχετε επιπλέον σχόλια σχετικά με αυτή τη θεματική, παρακαλώ προσθέστε τα εδώ:

Θα θέλατε να σας στείλουμε πληροφορίες σχετικά με τα αποτελέσματα αυτού του έργου;
Εάν ναι, παρακαλώ γράψτε το email* σας εδώ:



\*Αυτό το email θα χρησιμοποιηθεί μόνο για να σας σταλεί αντίγραφο της Περίληψης της έρευνας και δεν θα αποθηκευθεί ως μέρος των προσωπικών δεδομένων της έρευνας. Όλα τα προσωπικά δεδομένα που σχετίζονται με αυτή την έρευνα θα διατηρηθούν για 30 μήνες από την ημερομηνία δημοσίευσης της έρευνας. Το Πανεπιστήμιο του Bournemouth θα φυλάξει τις πληροφορίες που θα συλλέξουμε σχετικά με εσάς σε ασφαλή τοποθεσία ενώ θα φυλαχθούν ηλεκτρονικά σε προστατευμένο, ασφαλές δίκτυο, με τη χρήση κωδικού ασφαλείας. Η πρόσβαση στα προσωπικά σας δεδομένα θα περιορίζεται αυστηρά στα μέλη της ερευνητικής ομάδας και μόνο για τον σκοπό του ερευνητικού έργου, ακολουθώντας τις οδηγίες προστασίας δεδομένων. Η [Σημείωση Απορρήτου Συμμετεχόντων σε Έρευνα](#) του Πανεπιστημίου του Bournemouth (BU's [Research Participant Privacy Notice](#)) παρέχει περισσότερες πληροφορίες για το πώς εκπληρώνουμε τις ευθύνες μας ως διαχειριστές δεδομένων και σχετικά με τα δικαιώματά σας ως άτομο βάσει της νομοθεσίας προστασίας προσωπικών δεδομένων.

**Τέλος, μπορείτε να μας πείτε από πού ακούσατε γι' αυτό το ερωτηματολόγιο;**

Facebook	Twitter	Ιστοσελίδα OSSPC	Ιστοσελίδα των ΥΚΕ/Αστυνομίας ή άλλης αρχής	Από κάποιο φίλο/η	Από πόστερ σε ΥΚΕ/Αστυνομία ή άλλη αρχή	Από επαγγελματία ΥΚΕ/Αστυνομίας ή άλλης αρχής	Άλλη πηγή

**Αν άλλη πηγή, σας παρακαλώ όπως μας ενημερώσετε από πού;**

**Σας ευχαριστούμε που συμπληρώσατε αυτό το ερωτηματολόγιο. Εάν υπάρχουν τυχόν απορίες, παρακαλώ μη διστάσετε να επικοινωνήσετε μαζί μου (Σοφία Θανασούλα) στο: [sofia@kakopoiisi.gr](mailto:sofia@kakopoiisi.gr)**



Εάν επιθυμείτε να βρείτε περισσότερες πληροφορίες σχετικά με την Ενδοοικογενειακή Βία και Κακοποίηση, οι ακόλουθοι ιστότοποι παρέχουν χρήσιμες πληροφορίες, συμβουλές και υποστήριξη

*Στην Ελλάδα:*

- *Σύνδεσμος Μελών Γυναικείων Σωματείων Ηρακλείου & Νομού Ηρακλείου: [www.kakopoiisi.gr](http://www.kakopoiisi.gr), Γραμμή*

*Ελπίδας 801 11 16000 (24/07), [info@kakopoiisi.gr](mailto:info@kakopoiisi.gr)*

- *Γενική Γραμματεία Οικογενειακής Πολιτικής και Ισότητας των Φύλων: [www.womensos.gr](http://www.womensos.gr) , Γραμμή*

*βοήθειας 15900, [sos15900@isotita.gr](mailto:sos15900@isotita.gr)*

**Επιβεβαίωση Εμπιστευτικότητας:** Τα δεδομένα που θα συλλεχθούν θα είναι προσβάσιμα μόνο από την ερευνήτρια και την ομάδα εποπτείας της. Τα ανωνυμοποιημένα δεδομένα που θα συλλεχθούν σε αυτή την έρευνα μπορεί να χρησιμοποιηθούν σε μελλοντικές εκθέσεις όπως ακαδημαϊκά άρθρα και παρουσιάσεις σε συνέδρια. Κανένα άτομο δεν θα είναι αναγνωρίσιμο σε αυτές τις δημοσιεύσεις δεδομένων.

*Για περισσότερες πληροφορίες σχετικά με το γενικότερο έργο παρακαλώ επικοινωνήστε με:*

*Σπετσίδης Νικόλαος*

*Project Manager*

*Σύνδεσμος Μελών Γυναικείων Σωματείων Ηρακλείου & Νομού Ηρακλείου*

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