



The EU Mutual Learning Programme in Gender Equality

Tackling sexual harassment

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For more information see: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/grants1/programmes-2014-2020/rec/index_en.htm

Tackling Sexual Harassment in Slovenia

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Introduction

Slovenia keeps the issues of violence against women and girls high on the political agenda. Significant progress in preventing and combating violence against women and family violence has been acknowledged, as concrete measures have been taken at the legislative and implementation levels. Further efforts in preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence have been made recently.

1. Legislation

Slovenian legislation defines sexual harassment as *“any form of undesired verbal, non-verbal or physical action or behaviour of a sexual nature with the effect or intent of adversely affecting the dignity of a person, especially where this involves the creation of an intimidating, hateful, degrading, shaming or insulting environment.”*

Slovenia ratified The Council of Europe’s Istanbul Convention. In order to comply with the Convention two new criminal offences against human rights and liberties were introduced to the Criminal Code in 2015, stalking and forced marriage.

One of the latest legislative changes has been made in July 2017 with the inclusion of “revenge porn” in the Criminal code (Article 143, Paragraph 6): *“Anyone who publicly publishes videos or messages from another person with sexual content without the consent of this person and thereby seriously affects his or her privacy shall be punished by imprisonment of three months to three years.”*

2. Situation in Slovenia

Existing national surveys show that reasons for sexual bullying can be found in the tolerance of society, bad conditions at home (inactivity of parents, alcohol, drug abuse, etc.) or controlling through bullying. What is interesting is that perpetrators of sexual bullying are often victims by someone else, and are seeking the source/reason for this someone to bully others in the fact that this someone has problems elsewhere (usually at home).

There is also significant difference between genders. Unlike girls, boys of the age group have different perception of what sexual bullying is, especially among friends. They do/practice a lot of things among close friends that would fall into the categories of sexual bullying (calling names, touching, exposing body parts) but they do not percept this acts as such, but solely as a game or a joke. Also there are many cases when boys perform elements of sexual bullying to girls they fancy/sympathise with, to show their affection to them (talking about body parts, showing/exposing body parts, touching, etc.) but they don’t consider it as sexual

bullying. Perception of sexual bullying is, therefore, often left to individual decision – some forms are tolerated and seen as normal in the Slovenian society.

Experts see the role of technology is essential. Technology creates unknown forms of sexual bullying by producing alternative realities where youth feel beyond control and are always a step ahead from professionals. Not only the technology, media is also seen as a key factor, especially by setting bad examples, offering false gender roles and tolerating sexual bullying.

Despite significant effort to raise awareness and fight cyber violence in Slovenia, it is evident that cyber violence and harassment are not recognised as a form of violence against women and girls specifically.

3. Statistics

Eurobarometer's survey on Cybercrime¹ from 2014 showed that:

- 50 % of Slovenians stated they are not well informed about the risks of cybercrime.
- Only 15 % of the respondents talk to their children about risks on Internet and the same percentage of the respondents limit time spent by child online. Only 8 % of Slovenians adjust security settings on browser (for use by child).
- 50 % of Slovenians, when asked what they do to prevent online harassment of their child (under 16 years of age), responded as not applicable. Yet 94 % of Slovenian's are using computers, 54 % are using smartphones and 27 % responded to use the tablets.

National survey *Power of Words (2015)* among young people aged 15-25 revealed that 31 % of respondents have repeatedly received mean or offensive messages via mobile phone, 22 % received mean or offensive messages or comments on social networks and 18 % received them via e-mail.

The 2014 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights survey data results showed that since the age of 15:

- 22 % of women in Slovenia have experienced physical and/or sexual violence;
- 14 % of women in Slovenia have been stalked;
- 44 % of women in Slovenia have experienced sexual harassment.

According to Eurostat from 2010 to 2012, an estimated 2 out of 100 000 people in Slovenia were registered as victims of human trafficking.

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/archives/ebs/ebs_423_fact_si_en.pdf

4. Good practices in Slovenia

4.1 Project CYBERVAW

Since July 2017 the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and its project partners (Faculty of Social Sciences – University of Ljubljana, Ministry of the Interior – Police and Ministry of Justice – Judicial Training Centre) have been implementing a project CYBERVAW – Cyber Violence and Harassment against Women and Girls that is co-financed by the European Commission in the framework of Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme. The overall aim of the project is to address cyber violence and harassment as a form of violence against women and girls and manifestation of historically unequal power relations and to develop a systematic gender sensitive approach to prevent gender-based cyber violence and harassment.

Objectives of the project are following:

- to raise awareness, combat gender stereotypes, prevent, reduce and change attitudes towards cyber violence and harassment against girls and women (hereafter: cybervaw) in Slovenia;
- to increase sensitivity and knowledge of young people, (potential) victims, groups at risk, parents, (potential) perpetrators and witnesses about the issue;
- to build capacity of relevant professionals to ensure adequate prevention, prosecution and protection against cybervaw;
- exchange of experiences and good practices and promoting cooperation at the national and European level;
- to ensure achievement of expected results and sustainability of the action through continuous monitoring and evaluation of the project activities.

Project involves the following activities:

- awareness raising activities against cyber violence;
- capacity-building programmes and tools for a gender-sensitive approach on the prevention of cyber violence, including Train the Trainers programme;
- development of learning tools for young people, (potential) victims, groups at risk, parents, (potential) perpetrators and witnesses;
- mutual learning and exchange of good practices at the national and European level;
- monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of project activities.

Activities are targeted at the following groups:

- professionals in schools (teachers, principals, school counselling workers, e.g. psychologists and social workers), Police and Justice (prosecutors, judges and other court personnel) and NGOs (working with youth and in the area of VAW) (approx. 12.000);
- young people, girls and boys aged 12-19 ((potential) victims, groups at risk), (potential) perpetrators, (potential) witnesses, and parents (approx. 100.000));
- national policy makers, journalists and media professionals (approx. 30 per target group);
- general public with the emphasis on young women (age 12-30) (reach: 60 % of target group).

4.2 Safer Internet Centre Slovenia (SAFE.SI)

Safer Internet Centre Slovenia is the national project promoting and ensuring a better internet for kids. The project is co-financed by the European Union's Connecting Europe Facility, in Slovenia financial support also comes from the Ministry of Public Administration. The project is run by a consortium of partners coordinated by Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Ljubljana, Academic and Research Network of Slovenia (Arnes), Slovenian Association of Friends of Youth (ZPMS) and Youth Information and Counselling Centre of Slovenia (MISSS). Safer Internet Centre Slovenia has three components:

- Awareness Centre Safe.si,
- Helpline Tom telefon: Helpline for Children and Youth is a general helpline intended for all children and youth with any kind of question or problem that they wish to discuss.
- Hotline Spletno oko: Slovenian hotline which provides the possibility for anonymous reporting of illegal internet content. Our mission is to decrease the amount of child abuse images and hate speech on the internet through cooperation with various partners.

The project CYBERVAW intends to build on and upgrade the awareness-raising and education activities of the SAFE.SI. The project will improve already developed and implemented practical and targeted information, awareness-raising and education activities for preventing cyber violence and harassment, by including gender perspective.

4.3 LOGOUT – Centre for digital addiction, help and treatment

NGO Logout consists of selected individuals, who use and support use of digital technologies and their contents and at the same time care for those, who are losing control over them. Their experts help children and adults with all kinds of digital addictions and excessive use of digital media (for example, general addiction to digital technologies, addiction to social networking sites, addiction to pornography etc.). They believe that every person, who lost control, is capable of re-establishing a new, healthier attitude towards use of technology and therefore live a full life.