



# Exchange of Good practices on gender equality

Measures to fight  
violence against women  
Spain, 16-17 April 2013

Comments Paper –  
The former Yugoslav  
Republic of Macedonia

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*This publication is supported by the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity - PROGRESS (2007-2013).*

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# Measures to fight violence against women in FYROM

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“For Happy Childhood”

## 1. Comments on the discussion paper from Spain

### Web resource for support and prevention in cases of gender based violence

#### Introduction

In the Republic of Macedonia the ICT is being used in the fight against women and the domestic violence. The following services are used for women victims of domestic violence:

- Web resource for support and prevention in cases of gender-based violence;
- 24-hour Helpline 016 in case of gender-based violence;
- Telephone service for care and protection of victims of gender-based violence.

The Macedonian experience in the usage of the web resource is significantly different from the experience in Spain. Unlike Spain where the Web resource is framed in the context of the Organic Law to fight GV, in Macedonia the Web resource is not framed in the context of the Law. The Web sites that are used in Macedonia are not developed nor are financially supported by certain ministry or other state institution. They are developed by the organisations with their own resources or by donations from projects supported by international organisations.

#### Policy debate and measures

In Macedonia there are 3 active Websites<sup>1</sup>, hosted by the NGOs working on prevention, protection and/or sheltering in shelter centre for women victims of domestic violence. They are active since 2004/2006 year. It is worth mentioning that the Websites are not exclusively specialised for information from the area of the violence against women. These information are only one part from the Web site`s content of each organisation. These are mostly information for the services provided by the NGO for the women victims of domestic violence. Despite this, the Websites contain information on SOS lines numbers, phones and addresses of the Social work Centers, Police offices, NGOs at local and national level where the victims can receive psychological, social and legal aid or protection.

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<sup>1</sup> According the Publication of the National network against violence against women and the domestic violence, 2012, supported by the UN WOMAN

The information on the Websites is created by the employees in the organisation. The target groups in this resource are the general public, domestic violence victims. The positive aspect of the Websites in Macedonia is the existence of the Forums for debates on violence, as well as a possibility for the victims to set questions and to report violence.

A weak aspect is that the information on the Websites is available only in Macedonian language, by which the usage of the information is limited for the persons who don't speak Macedonian. Similarly to Spain in Macedonia the statistics on the number of visits to the site is missing, thus it is hard to assess the influence of this resource.

### **Transferability issues**

The positive experiences related to the site resource in Spain, which can be included in the Macedonian policy on fight against violence against women are the following: framing the Websites in the Family law (in the part of domestic violence), specialising the sites for giving wider information on the issues from the area of the gender based violence; logistical and financial support to the websites by the state.

## **24-hour helpline in case of gender-based violence**

### **Introduction**

In the Republic of Macedonia there are 8 SOS lines existing for women victims of domestic violence, placed in 3 cities in the state<sup>2</sup>. Two of them, the lines 15700 and 15315 are National and are offering services 24-hours seven days in the week. The first one (15700) was introduced in August 1994. The second one was introduced in January 2010.

The target group are women victims of family violence, or any other person, either relatives, friends, or any other individual who need information in relation to DV, in Macedonian language.

The operators on these lines are trained women, volunteers who are providing information on the social services, psychological support, legal advices, information for the institutions, centres for social work, health institutions, courts, police, NGOs, shelter centers in accordance to the need of the person who is calling.

The number of calls received concerning from 04 August to 31 December 2012 stands at 418.034. In 2012 are received 2174 calls. The number of the calls is increasing. It is due to the increased awareness of the violence victims, other persons and the general public on the existing possibilities for helping the domestic violence victims.

### **Policy debate and measures**

Helplines (it's opening and the way of functioning) are not regulated by law. These are only temporarily financially supported by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. For example, for the year of 2012 the line 15315 was financially supported with 7500 EUR.

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

The information is provided only in Macedonian language. The services are not available for persons with speech and hearing disabilities. The services are not interconnected with other emergency services and/or help lines that can activate resources. A serious weakness of this service in Macedonia is the absence of continuous monitoring and evaluation on the work of the helpline operators and their continuous professional upgrading. The service is free of charge, but the phone calls are not (users have to pay for the phone call).

In case a phone call is made by minors, they are transferred to a specialised helpline for minors run by an NGO, which has been operative since 1994, 8 hour 5 days in a week.

### **Transferability issues**

The following positive experiences with a Helpline in Spain can be included in the policy on the fight against violence against women in the Republic of Macedonia: framing the Helpline in the law; inclusion of the information in the languages of the national minorities; regular logistical and financial support by the state; providing free calls; enabling automatic call diverting and establishing a system of monitoring and professional support of the operators.

## **Mobile telephone service for care and protection of victims of gender-based violence**

### **Introduction**

In Macedonia, the mobile telephone service with number 070/75/77 141 700 has been introduced in 2005, as a mobile telephone service for women victims of all forms of violence. The services provided by this service are identical with the services provided by the SOS lines (information, psychological counseling, legal advices and referring to the institutions for help or protection shelters). This service is introduced with a purpose of facilitating the victim's access to the information and help by an operator in cases when in the close environment there is no access to the land line and to access the service in any part of the state. The mobile telephone service is available 24 hours seven days in a week. It offers services only in Macedonian language. The target groups are women – domestic violence victims, victims of gender based violence and women exposed to different type of a risk. The telephone line doesn't make automatic connection of emergency cases to the lines of the regional centres, the police or shelter centre.

The phone calls and the services of the mobile services are free of charge for the users from all the mobile operators. The service is financially supported by the 3 mobile operators in the territory of the Republic of Macedonia.

### **Policy debate and measures**

The mobile service which is being used in Spain significantly differs from the one in Macedonia. The differences are as following:

The technology used in Spain and the possibility for automatic connection with the specialised care centres, the police, health centers and the social services; types of the calls and the level of interventions; the goals of the services in Spain (providing

the victims and their relatives with police protection and direct support in case of emergency); the target groups (gender based violence victims included in the rehabilitation programme) the possibility of transfer of the service user in the specialised centre or in user`s home, according the circumstances.

### **Transferability issues**

The positive experiences related to the mobile services in Spain which could be included in the policies fighting violence against women in Macedonia are as following: inclusion of the tele-location technology (GPS): securing the automatic connecting with the special services and the police; enlarging the target groups and the types of help for the victims.

## **Telematics tracking system to monitor restraining orders in the field of gender-based violence (“electronic bracelet”)**

### **Introduction**

Macedonia still hasn`t established the Telematics tracking system to monitor restraining orders in the field of gender-based violence (“electronic bracelet”), as a preventive measure to impinge the approach of the aggressor to the victim either after imprisonment or during the judicial process.

### **Transferability issues**

The need to establish such a monitoring system has been actualised especially with the establishment of the system of intervention programmes for the perpetrators of domestic violence. According to that, the positive experiences of Spain will be used to establish this kind of protection of victims of violence in Macedonia.

## **2. Comments on the discussion paper from Ireland**

### **Introduction**

The implementation of intervention programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence in Macedonia is only starting. Many years of experience in the support and protection of victims of domestic violence demonstrate that it is not enough. If there is no change of offender behavior, violence in the family will continue to repeat. For adequate response and action in dealing with violence the legislation (the Family Law, the Law on Social Protection and the Criminal Law of the Republic of Macedonia) prescribes a set of protection measures, which Centers for social work and other's service providers are obliged to take up and apply. Among them is the measure that the perpetrator of domestic violence is required to visit counseling, measure by a court of competent jurisdiction, protected supervision for probation, attendance at programmes for working with convicts for crimes when performing domestic violence.

### **Policy debate and measures**

In response to the legal provisions, in December 2011 the Psychiatric Clinic in Skopje has launched a pilot programme for working with perpetrators of domestic violence, supported by the World Health Organisation in collaboration with the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy of the Republic of Macedonia. In June 2012 a Counselling Centre for psychosocial treatment of perpetrators of domestic violence was opened. The goal of the programme is to change the behavior of the perpetrator and to overcome the risk of recurrence of violence, by which counseling will achieve the core mission and vision of its existence. The target group are perpetrators of domestic violence recruited by police or Centre for social work and perpetrators recruited on counseling on the basis of a court decision. The programme is conducted individually and by group work through 20 meetings.

During one year of application of the programme 25 perpetrators of domestic violence were recruited, from which the programme was accepted by 16. Pilot programme for psychosocial treatment of the perpetrators is implemented only in Skopje.

The results of the programme have not been seen enough yet. However, evaluation showed that there was a need for opening a new Counseling Centers that would have regional coverage, but they are not started yet.

It is worth to mention that before the programme for the treatment of abusers was launched, Macedonian legislation (Family Law, Law on Social Protection, and the Criminal Code of the Republic of Macedonia) was recognising the need and was foreseeing measures for the treatment of abusers. Regulation has been prepared by the Centre for Social Work for the implementation of measures for protection of victims and for the treatment of the bullies of violence. The treatment of the perpetrators is included in the Strategic goal (3) of the National Strategy for combating domestic violence in Republic of Macedonia (2012-2015).

### **Transferability issues**

Extensive thirty years' experience and operation of the 12 intervention programmes for the treatment of the perpetrators of domestic violence from Ireland will be very helpful and valuable for extension, improvement and enrichment of the programme for treatment of bullies, which is still an initial project in Macedonia.

Of particular importance are the following experiences: the ways in which NGO cooperate with other institutions in the implementation of these programmes; therapeutic techniques and methods used in individual and group treatment; ways of conducting training for therapists; risk assessments for re-offending by the programme participants; ways of monitoring of the bullies and limitations imposed by the court; measuring the results and effectiveness of the programme with bullies; ways of funding programmes; standardisation of the programme; methods of monitoring and evaluating of the programmes and others.