



European
Network

NATIONAL REPORT GUIDELINE

Country: Bulgaria

Focal Point name, affiliation, contact data: Diyana Videva & Pavlina Petkova / Association Demetra demetra@unacs.bg, tel.+35956815618, 102a Sheinovo street, Burgas 8000, Bulgaria and BGRF office@bgrf.org, tel./ fax 003599635357, 5, Evlogi and Hristo Georgievi blvd., Sofia- 1142, Bulgaria, P.O. box 938, Sofia- 1000

Diyana Videva represents also the Alliance for Protection against DV- Vice- Chair of the APADV

1) **Organisation/programme** (max 3000 characters)

- **Do You conduct any programme(s) for the domestic violence perpetrators at the moment? If yes, please describe it/them briefly. If not, please explain why**

Associatioion Demetra and Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation are NGOs from Bulgaria with experience in a work with perpetrators. The beginning started in 2009 with the Dafhne project SPREAD, leaded by the Spanish NGO SURT- Barcelona. The program was conducted in 3 prisons in Bulgaria and the main topics were work with perpetrators of gender violence. After this project we adapted a methodology for perpetrators of domestic violence. In the period 2010- 2012, the BGRF introduced this programme in Sofia, Plovdiv and Dimitrovgrad, along with the integrated services for victims. The programme was elaborated by the colleagues from Demetra and Dr. Pavlina Petkova.

During 2013 both organizations provided specialized program for perpetrators of domestic violence. The program was organized in the form of group training with the following time:2 individual evaluation meetings with each participant; 24 group sessions, which are held once a week, within two hours. The core goal of the program is to help to perpetrator to stop the violence to create new attitude to be achieved and understanding of violence against the opposite sex as unacceptable pattern of behavior, to present them appropriate non-violent strategies for conflict resolution. The program tasks are: Creating a motivation for change; Inflowing the mind of the perpetrator: what is violence; Supporting to perpetrators to realize their own aggressive behavior in relation to their close people; Identifying and addressing

problem areas in behavior; Acquiring new skills for solving conflicts and disputes in the family, without aggression; Making and taking responsibility for socially acceptable solutions. Target group and criteria for inclusion connect with: Persons who are perpetrators of domestic violence are included in the program in execution of the sent administrative measure of protection according to Law for Protection against Domestic Violence - those persons are included "under force"; Persons who recognized themselves as perpetrators of domestic violence and voluntarily want to be included in order to change their own aggressive behavior; Persons who are not mentally disabled and also are not dependent on drugs, alcohol, hazardous. Core topic of the program are: Legislative and legal framework relating to violence - Charter of human rights, women's rights and children's rights; Forms of gender base violence; Facts about violent relations and their development and escalation; Violence and its social context.

The program represents as follows:

First individual session is: Obtaining information about protection order to measure under Article 5, paragraph 1, item 5 of the LPDA. Compiling a list of requested persons and provide initial information about the program. Invitation for the initial evaluative interview: Factual data / name, gender, age, children, marital status, health, employment, etc. Directing (how he found out about the program? Courts, Police, friends, media, etc..) Problem that is addressed (what is the problems according the clients' view?) How it came to what idea? Why it come right now, at this moment? What do you expect from us? What to do? Imagine how it can happen, what should happen according to clients view how to solve the problem? What is the request of the client? What is subquery of the consultant? Providing information on the program objectives, time, and method of implementation.

Second individual session is: Self - examination of the clients - self-image of themselves, the world and others; Examination of the attitudes and believes of the client toward relations with the opposite sex; providing information about the group - aims, objectives, methodology. Study the expectations of group work.

The group work start a group with presenting the goals, objectives, methods of the group in order to motivate them to participate. The facilitator of the group has the role to structure the group process to require more because in the beginning of the process the apprehension is higher and it is essential and need to initially release the tension through giving tasks to the group to know each other through self presentation;

The next step is presenting the participants through giving them the task aimed to present the positive sides of themselves. The aim is to strengthen a "limited" positive self-image. Establishing rules for the group - aims to increase the motivation for participation and input frame in the group process.

The first topic for group work is Legislative framework of gender based violence, the second is Gender stereotypes, following by Gender violence, Developing of alternative models of non-violent relationships, New models for tackle aggressive behavior, Assertiveness skills and conflict resolution, Skills of emotional intelligence, empathy and the ability to forgiveness.

There are tests in the beginning and in the end of the group for measuring the results.

▪ **What type of (other) activities regarding preventing domestic violence have You conducted within last four years?**

Since its establishment the Association has been working on women and children's issues with main focus on the domestic violence and discrimination. We have three offices- Administrative office, Shelter for women and children victims of violence and trafficking and together with Burgas Municipality and Police we provide services and consultations to victims of domestic violence in The Center for Protection of Domestic Violence and Crime. Demetra Association is part of the Bulgarian Alliance for Protection Against Domestic Violence, Bulgarian Network for Children, Astra Network, Bulgarian Platform of Wide Network and Demetra is the founder of Bulgarian Platform of European Women's Lobby.

Very strong and durable over time, we have developed social - psychological and legal counseling that we offer to victims of violence and discrimination and people at risk. We are working towards prevention of violence, crime and discrimination. Demetra Association has been providing legal and psycho-social support to victims of violence and discrimination since 2001. We also provide consultations - individually and group. The organization participates in many lobbying initiatives, projects activities and campaigns. All these activities are related to social work and community work with people and children in risk and with fewer opportunities. To achieve its goals Demetra Association has worked out a long-term program: Prevention and protection against women and children - victims of violence. Multidisciplinary Trainings and Seminars are organized on domestic violence and trafficking in women and children with the representatives of Law Enforcement agencies, Mass Media, health care bodies, NGOs. Trainings of Trainers adolescence addressed to the subject of women's human rights, domestic violence and trafficking in women and reproductive rights and health and the right of decision making. Through various programs and projects we try to develop and provide services to victims of violence as in The "Protected home" and also in the Centre for Prevention of Violence and Crime, which was established through charity together with Bourgas municipality and Police. Demetra Association has good cooperation with two Universities in Bourgas and we are working with students of the Social Work Department and Pedagogue Faculty. The organization acquired experience and created a good image in the local area as well as in the country at all. Its name is known well abroad. We have good cooperation with the local authorities. We provide trainings, supervisions and

supporting (after graduate) education and seminars for different professionals that are working with people at risk.

We have developed complete package of programs for people with fewer opportunities and people at risk:

- Program prevention and protection against Domestic Violence,
- Program “Protection of women and children in risk”,
- Youth Program,
- Program “Psycho-social support and risk prevention”,
- Volunteer Program,
- Since 2000 we are working on a program which main goal is consultations of male violators.

Some of the project from last four years are:

1. 01/03/2007 - 30/12/2008 Management activities for establishment of crisis center for victims of violence and providing accommodation, consultation and trainings financed by PHARE/2004 program
2. From 03/01/2007 - 30/12/2008 organization of seminars in 12 cities, providing trainings for different professionals working on the problem of domestic violence. Presenting the community respond model-together with BGRF/Bulgaria Gender Research Foundation financed by UNIFEM
3. 01/01/2007 - 31/12/2009 educational activities and trainings for children at risk project financed by OAK
4. Project "Skills for successful social integration after institutional care .Funded by: OAK Foundation Switzerland .
5. Project “Let’s help young Romani girls to be successful in life” The main aim of the project is empowerment and life skills education to young girls from the Roma society. Funded by the Open Society Budapest
6. Project “Yes! In Action!” and “Yes! In Action-2”. 2010-2012, funded by the European Youth Foundation. The main aim of the projects is providing a trainings in Human Rights in Burgas schools, creation of Human Rights Clubs for youngsters in Bourgas and awareness of the society on the problems and the abilities of the youngsters.
7. 2011 - Project under the Ministry of Justice Bulgaria- “Increasing the effectiveness of NGOs to deal with socially significant issue by providing comprehensive care for victims of domestic violence and conducting training programs to prevent violence among young people”

8. Since 2009 we have signed an agreement with Regional Inspectorate for Education and under it we provide constant training activities in Burgas schools. The main topics are : Prevention of violence and crime. Women's human rights. Gender based violence and human rights
9. Project , financed of Ministry of Justice Bulgaria: "Validation and dissemination of good practices for the protection and rehabilitation of victims of domestic violence, and specialized programs for perpetrators through effective consultation and inter-exchange

▪ **What would you define as your most significant success regarding violence prevention within the last four years?**

The most significant success connected with:

- Psycho-social support and risk prevention for victims women and children
- Program for perpetrators
- Prevention of violence between younger

▪ **What would you define as the biggest obstacles/challenges regarding violence prevention in your organisation within the last four years?**

Both organisations we represent are providing integrated services for victims of violence in our communities in Sofia and Burgas. They include legal, psychological support, social support, directing to other services and institutions. We work closely with the police and municipalities. We apply the coordinated community response and work in special centres provided by the municipalities and in cooperation with the police.

In 2013 the Alliance for protection against DV / BGRF and Demetra, we are members and initiators, and in the coordination of the Alliance/started a pilot training programme for social workers, police, NGO staff on GBV. The training included theoretical and practical training also on aggressive behaviour and on the services for perpetrators to cope with such behaviour,

The main challenge- lack of regular support for developing and financing the work with victims and perpetrators. The lack of consistent legislation and policies on VAW and GBV. The Istanbul Convention is not yet ratified.

2) **Country** (max 1800 characters)

▪ **The overview of general situation in Your country regarding work with perpetrators (e.g. What has change in your country legislation within the last 4 years? Most important legal and policy measures implementation; In which way they helped?**

Bulgaria has the Law for protection against domestic violence since 2005. It is the civil law. There are few measures for protection of victims of violence. The programs for work with

perpetrators are required to implement the measures taken by the Court under Article 5 paragraph 1, item 5 of the LPDV - obliging the perpetrator of violence to attend a special program in order to further and more effective protection of victims of violence.

The amendments made into the Penal Code in April 2009 in Article 296 - if the court order for protection against domestic violence has been executed it considered a criminal offense;

The social services related to this measure are not strictly defined, tested and established in Bulgaria, despite the fact that the measure can be enacted by the court in every case of domestic violence, where the court gives an order for protection according to Bulgarian Law for Protection against Domestic Violence;

The lack of appropriate social services makes the law unenforceable measure and victims of domestic violence are not adequately protected from further violence.

Perpetrators are not able to benefit from services and their re-integration into the family environment after the violence. They can be accused in default of the court order if the measure is enacted by the court

- **Do You know any other organisations/programmes in your country which deal with domestic violence prevention mostly by work with perpetrators? If yes please point them out**

Along with BGRF and Demetra, the NGO Open door- Pleven is among the specialized NGOs in Bulgaria. The programmes with perpetrators are being tested and introduced gradually also by the other members of the Alliance for protection against DV in Bulgaria, the members of which are our NGOs.

3) **Best practices** (max 1800 characters)

- **Point out the best practices in work with perpetrators existing in your organisation/country**

The best practices were marked above.

- **Can they be implemented in other organisations/countries? If yes – how?If no – why?**

It is possible to implement our practices in other organizations and country too. For example for the next year will start with education of professionals how to lead a group program for perpetrators. It will be the first training for professionals from the Alliance and other organizations.

4) **Needs and recommendations** (max 1800 characters)

- **What has to be done in regard to prevent domestic violence in your country (mostly regarding to work with perpetrators)?**

The first point is increasing are human professional resources with trainings for specialization skills for work with perpetrators.

The other important issue is to establish more centers for providing services for victims and for perpetrators.

What is needed now for us- to have exchange and support by European and other foreign networks and programs, to have exchange visits to other countries and see other models. To have financial support for projects with EU partners, to apply and improve our methods.