



WWP // EUROPEAN NETWORK

National Report 2017

Lithuania



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Report Details

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Country

What types of activities related to preventing domestic violence has/have your organisation/s carried out in the last three years?

Human Rights Monitoring Institute is a public advocacy non-governmental organisation. In the last three years, we:

- Carried out a research on how the rights of domestic violence (DV) victims are guaranteed in the criminal proceedings (2014);
- Submitted proposals on the legislation transposing 2012 EU Victims Directive (2014);
- Developed and launched an e-course on domestic violence for professionals (police, judges, prosecutors, social workers) (2015);
- Conducted a cycle of regional trainings on DV for prosecutors (2015);
- Carried out a mapping on the accessibility of online support to victims of crime (2016);
- Contributed to the development of DV response municipal programme in Vilnius city municipality (2016);
- Carried out a qualitative research on experiences of DV victims with a focus on key factors encouraging women to speak out and seek help (to be released in 2018);
- Developed a handbook for law enforcement officers on effective and sensitive communication with victims of crime, including victims of DV (to be published in January 2018);
- Developed an online informational tool for victims of crime including victims of DV (to be published in January 2018)).



What would you define as the biggest obstacles/challenges regarding violence prevention to your organisation? Please focus on the last three years.

The biggest obstacle/challenges are:

1. **Lack of comprehensive educational programmes in schools on violence in intimate relationship.** Although the Programme on Health, Gender Education and Preparation for the Family Life has been adopted by the Ministry of Education in 2017, which includes education on gender equality, and how to recognise signs of violence and abuse in intimate relationship, it's not being implemented in a coherent way due to lack of approved methodologies and lack of training for teachers on how to deliver the programme to pupils.
2. **Enforcement of court orders.** Another weak link in violence prevention is enforcement of protection orders/correction measures and lack of accountability for not complying. Statistical data on the application of and compliance with protection orders/correction measures is not available; however, anecdotal evidence suggest, that: a) perpetrators are not always sanctioned for violating protection orders, e.g. obligation not to contact the victim; b) perpetrators are not reprimanded for failing to attend behaviour change programmes when participation in the programme is ordered by the court, even in cases, when the issue is brought before the ordering court by probation officer.

Please give an overview of general situation in your country regarding work with perpetrators.

Participation in the programme of changing violent behaviour is foreseen in the criminal law as a measure that can be imposed with criminal sanctions such as actual or suspended prison sentence. Such measure can also be ordered as a condition for release from criminal liability in cases of reconciliation between the victim and perpetrator.

The work with perpetrators in Lithuania is being carried out by three type of entities: a) probation services; b) municipal services such as health centres or crisis centres; c) specialised non-governmental organisations working with perpetrators (or victims and perpetrators). The services are funded through the National Programme on Prevention of Domestic Violence and



Support to Victims 2014-2020, municipal budgets, EU structural funds, and international funding.

There is no general approved model of working with perpetrators - services providers are free to choose their working methods by adopting different models from other countries.

Please give an overview of your country's criminal and civil responses to domestic violence, especially any changes within the last 3 years? (i.e. what are the most important legal and policy measures and how have they been implemented?)

In the last 3 years, there were two significant amendments to the Law on Protection from Violence in Close Environment (2011). The first amendment improved referral system to specialized victim support, obliging the police to share contact details of victims with specialized support services. The second amendment clarified the conditions and grounds for applying protection orders outside criminal investigation (if there is a risk of repetitive violence and (or) the victim requests such measures). Previously, the application of protection orders was tied to formal launching of criminal inquiry.

The most important policy measures adopted in the last three years are:

1. The National Programme on Prevention of Domestic Violence and Support to Victims 2014-2020, adopted by the Government; no official reports on the implementation of the Programme have been published to date.
2. Action Plan on the Implementation of the National Programme on Prevention of Domestic Violence and Support to Victims 2017-2020, approved by the Minister of Social Protection and Labour.
3. Action Plan on the Implementation of the National Programme on Prevention of Domestic Violence and Support to Victims 2014-2016, approved by the Minister of Social Protection and Labour.

There are no official reports on the implementation of the action plans published to date. Some information on the work with perpetrators is provided in the Ministry of Social Protection and



Labour's annual activity reports: in 2015, 252 people received services funded through the state budget; in 2016, there were 460 such people. However, the statistics do not include the number of people who received the services through municipal authorities.

Please tell us the progress your country has made in relation to Istanbul Convention (particularly Article 16 on work with perpetrators of domestic and sexual violence/abuse).

The Istanbul Convention is yet to be ratified by Lithuania.

Do you know any other organisations/programmes in your country that carry out domestic violence perpetrator work? If yes, please detail them.

- Kaunas District Crisis Centre for Men
- Kaunas Crisis Centre for Women
- Vilnius Crisis Centre for Men
- Vilnius Crisis Centre
- Ukmergė Public Health Centre
- Telšiai Crisis Centre
- Human Resources Monitoring and Development Bureau, Šiauliai
- Utena District Crisis Centre for Men
- Marijampolė District Crisis Centre for Men
- Šiauliai District Crisis Centre for Men
- Probation services in municipalities

Best practice:

Tell us about best practice in work with perpetrators in your country.

Kaunas District Crisis Centre for Men has adopted a Danish model of working with perpetrators "Dialogue against Domestic Violence". The programme consists of 28 group meetings, followed by at least of 5 months of individual meetings after completing the programme (with at least 1 meeting every two weeks in the first 3 months) to assess how the client succeeds in adopting new models of behaviour.

[http://www.vyrukrc.lt/userfiles/file/PROGRAMOS/KAVKC_PROGRAMA\(1\).pdf](http://www.vyrukrc.lt/userfiles/file/PROGRAMOS/KAVKC_PROGRAMA(1).pdf)



Needs and recommendations:

What needs to be done in order to prevent domestic violence in your country (regarding work with perpetrators)?

- Gaps in services should be identified where the programmes are not available and/or accessible. There are around 20 thousand cases of domestic violence reported each year, but services for perpetrators are still fragmented and their availability varies across municipalities. Only 4 municipalities out of 60 have municipal action programmes on DV.
- There should be a clearer state policy and better collection of statistics on the work with perpetrators. More specific guidelines and criteria could be developed in terms of the contents and purposes of the programmes funded from state and municipal budgets. Services providers should be required to use best practices, for example, involve victim support organisations in the process, and also clearly separate violent behaviour changing programmes from other services such as mediation. The latter is also applied by probation services, and mediation in domestic violence cases accounts for one third of the total of mediated cases. There could be clearer guidelines developed on the state level in terms of when mediation could be applied, prioritizing the safety of victim in the decision process.
- More investment into professional training and increasing the number of specialist able to deliver behaviour change programmes (in probation services, municipal institutions and other entities which, with appropriate training and recourses, could deliver such services).

What are the most important tasks and steps that you feel should be focused on in your country in order to tackle domestic violence on a general level?

1. Ratification of the Istanbul Convention
2. Early education in schools to promote a culture of non-violent behaviour and enable children to recognise signs of all forms of abuse from an early age
3. Sensitizing law enforcement agencies to enable women to report more often



4. Improvement of the application of legal protection measures to prevent repetitive violence
5. Consistent enforcement of courts orders, both protective and punitive
6. Improved multi-agency cooperation and coordination of response to domestic violence on the national as well as municipal levels

