

Press release

European service providers call for enhanced collaboration with frontline workers and police authorities to address gender-based violence against women and girls.

07.05.2024

The recent femicide outside a police station in Athens has ignited outrage among public opinion and demands for urgent action. This painful happening marks the sixth femicide in Greece this year, with many other European countries facing the same severe phenomenon, highlighting the pressing need for significant improvements in frontline and police professionals' training and procedures, and the need to establish systemic cooperation together with service providers to tackle violence against women.

According to TACTICS coordinator Hector Pagan, University of Tartu, "While social and health care services have overlapping goals, tensions can arise due to differing focuses on aspects of well-being of individuals. On the other hand, law enforcement agencies may have different priorities, including considerations of justice and the rule of law, which can sometimes conflict with domestic violence support providers' objectives.

While multi-agency cooperation is essential, it's important to acknowledge that it's not a one-size-fits-all solution. It must be pursued while respecting the diverse working cultures, expertise, and goals of different agencies involved.

We aim to address these challenges by fostering and improving cooperation among all relevant actors, through the production of learning tools and materials, convening multi-stakeholder cooperation groups, and creating roadmaps for everyday practice".

"We are deeply saddened by the tragic loss of Kyriaki Griva, and our thoughts are with her loved ones during this incredibly difficult time. This devastating incident underscores the urgent need for comprehensive training and protocols within law enforcement agencies to effectively address and prevent violence against women." states Alessandra Pauncz, Executive Director of the European Network for the work with perpetrators of domestic violence.

"While the inaction of the police in this case is indeed distressing, it is crucial to recognize that officers must be adequately equipped with the knowledge and resources to respond swiftly and effectively to such situations. We cannot solely fault individual officers when systemic issues such as lack of training and procedural deficiencies hinder their ability to intervene.

At WWP EN we believe in the importance of supporting law enforcement agencies through specific initiatives.

Multinational, interdisciplinary projects like ISEDA and TACTICS can play an important role in equipping police with the necessary tools and expertise to fulfil their critical mission in combating gender-based violence. It is imperative that we continue to invest in these efforts to ensure that tragedies like this do not occur again in the future".

“The new femicide in Athens reveals the dramatic need for a substantial reform at the provision of support to women who are asking for help. The reform needs to be based upon an intensive capacity building of front-line professionals, and especially Police officers, on how to identify and respond to cases of violence against women, upon multidisciplinary work and collaboration with specialised services, and upon shared risk assessment and management. We need to build shared processes and establish real and effective coordinated response.” comments Nicholas Spetsidis, Project Manager of the Union of Women Associations of Heraklion.

“The Union of Women Associations of Heraklion, as a member of the WWP European Network, recognizes and advocates for a constructive collaboration among Women Support Services, Law Enforcement Agencies and Perpetrator Programmes aiming to assess and minimize risks. Learning from specialised European actions like the TACTICS project and through establishing actual multidisciplinary work in our territories, we support Police Authorities in positioning themselves as a substantial, positive “catalyst” to the process aiming to maximize the safety of women who are asking for help.

We, all, share common goals and responsibility to increase women’s safety and wellbeing. No one can be exempt from this challenge!”.

Once again, a heartbreaking occurrence triggers reflection on a crucial aspect of combating gender-based violence against women and girls: the necessity for communities and institutions to be equipped addressing perpetrators and holding men accountable, while ensuring women are listened to and kept safe, to halt the cycle of violence.

For inquiries on the abovementioned initiatives [TACTICS](#) and [ISEDA](#), please contact:

Dimitra Mintsidis, Project Manager at WWP European Network,
d.mintsidis@work-with-perpetrators.eu