

Coordinating Institution:

Legal-Informational Centre for NGOs - PIC is a non-governmental and non-profit organisation active in the fields of protection of human rights, strengthening the role of non-governmental organisations and alternative dispute resolution, established in 1997. The mission of PIC is to provide professional legal support to individuals, vulnerable groups and NGOs in exerting and protecting their rights and reinforcing their position within society. PIC's activities aim at the improvement of the situation of non-governmental organisations, to connect Slovenian NGOs and to contribute to a stronger role for NGOs and other interested bodies in decision-making processes.

Coordinating Institution:



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Partner Organization:

The Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS) is a non-profit organization, affiliated to the University of Nicosia. The Institute aims to act as main contributor to the intellectual, political, and sociopolitical life of the region as this relates to issues of gender and to do so using a multidisciplinary approach and in collaboration with other institutions. The Institute recognizes the multilayered levels of discrimination against women and accepts that this discrimination takes different forms. It is committed to the elimination of this discrimination using a combination of research, advocacy and lobbying, as well as training, conferences, and other activities.

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REACT

**TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:
Building a Support System for
Victims of Domestic Violence**



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CRISIS CENTRE

CALL 1440



THE PROJECT

Domestic violence is a violation of the fundamental human rights of women. Violence directed against women by their intimate partners is an epidemic of global proportions that has devastating physical, emotional, financial and social effects on women, children, families and communities around the world. Despite this, victims are often reluctant to report incidences of violence due to ingrained sociocultural attitudes that render violent behaviour acceptable, persistent economic inequalities between women and men, a lack of confidence in the ability of the relevant authorities, a lack of resources for women victims of violence, and fear of social stigmatization. Women that do report violence often withdraw charges due to a lack of appropriate psychosocial and legal support mechanisms. On the other hand, there is a lack of knowledge and awareness among actors in the criminal justice system on the dynamics of domestic violence, resulting in a failure to keep women safe and hold offenders accountable.

To address these issues the Legal Informational Centre for NGOs - PIC, Slovenia, in partnership with the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS) is coordinating a project entitled REACT to Domestic Violence: Building a Support System for Victims of Domestic Violence, and funded by the European Commission Daphne III Programme.

The project's main aim is to raise awareness, knowledge and sensitivity among legal practitioners, judges and prosecutors involved in domestic violence as well as to increase the capacity of the NGO support system to effectively respond to victim's needs.

Project Objectives

- Map and assess the implementation of the relevant legislation and policies on domestic violence and the victim support system
- Raise awareness and sensitivity among actors in the criminal justice system on domestic violence
- Train NGO staff and other professionals in the victim support system to effectively respond to the needs of victims
- Contribute to the development of a multidisciplinary approach to addressing victims' needs
- Raise awareness among the general public on domestic violence in order to encourage reporting of domestic violence cases

Activities

- A mapping study to assess all aspects of implementation of the relevant legislation and policies on domestic violence as well as the existing victim support system in Cyprus and Slovenia
- The exchange of information among project partners on existing support systems including best practices in victim support and protection
- Building a field support system through networking with local contact points and organisations involved in domestic violence through awareness raising courses
- The organisation of training workshops with the judiciary/prosecutors and other actors in the criminal justice system
- The creation of a website with relevant information on the project, information on domestic violence in Slovenia and Cyprus, including legal documents, laws, and National Action Plans
- The publication of a final project report with the results of the mapping study as well as recommendations for addressing the needs of domestic violence victims
- A final conference involving all relevant stakeholders to address the gaps in the support system for victims of domestic violence

WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Domestic violence is a form of violence against women and a violation of women's human rights. The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, defines the term 'violence against women' as: "Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life."

Under section 3 of the Violence in the Family (Prevention and Protection of Victims) Laws 119(I)/2000 and 212(I)/2004 domestic violence means: "any act, omission or behaviour which causes physical, sexual or mental injury to any member of the family and includes violence used for the purpose of having sexual intercourse without the consent of the victim as well as of restricting its freedom."

Forms of domestic violence can include physical violence, sexual violence, economic control, and psychological assault (including threats of violence and physical harm, attacks against property and other acts of intimidation, emotional abuse, isolation, and use of the children as a means of control). Forced sex by a spouse/intimate partner is considered rape and is punishable according to the provisions of the Criminal Code to life imprisonment.

Section 3 of the Violence in the Family (Prevention and Protection of Victims) Laws 119(I)/2000 and 212(I)/2004 recognizes that violence that takes place in the presence of a minor is violence exercised against said minor if it may cause him/her psychological trauma and is punishable to up to five years imprisonment.

SERVICES THAT CAN HELP YOU

The Association for the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the Family	Direct Helpline	1440
The Cyprus Family Planning Association	Direct Helpline	1455
Domestic Violence and Child Abuse Office, Cyprus Police	Telephone	22808442
Police-Emergencies	Direct Helpline	199
Cyprus Police- Citizens' Line	Direct Helpline	1460
Hospitals – Emergencies	Direct Helpline	112
Social Welfare Services/District Welfare Offices	Nicosia	22406709
	Limassol	25804535
	Larnaca	24800101
	Paphos	26306240
	Paralimni	23821551
Morphou	22870582	
Evrihou	22870582	

