

Together for gender equality



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TOGETHER FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Through the EEA and Norway Grants 2009-2014, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein have provided more than €50 million to promote gender equality and to combat domestic and gender-based violence in 11 beneficiary countries across Europe.

The previous decades have seen progress towards gender equality as well as a growing body of evidence pointing to the long-term positive effects of women's equal participation in the labour market and in decision-making. Nevertheless, gender inequalities persist and are on the increase in some countries, including in the areas of employment, pay, work-life balance and decision-making.¹

One of the most serious manifestations of gender inequality is gender-based violence, including domestic violence. Gender-based violence imposes significant and long-lasting burdens not only on victims and witnesses, but on society as a whole. Despite efforts to counter such violence, recent data show that it remains extensive and under-reported.²

Both the donor countries and the EU recognise gender equality as a fundamental human right and a key enabler of social and economic development. To this aim, the funding from the EEA and Norway Grants to mainstreaming gender equality and promoting work-life balance has strengthened gender equality not only in public institutions, but in the private sector as well. It has also increased knowledge and raised awareness of the importance of gender equality, and promoted policy change. The funding to combat gender-based violence has improved victim support services, trained professionals and supported treatment for perpetrators, in addition to increasing knowledge and raising awareness of this major obstacle to gender equality.

¹ European Commission: Report on Equality between Women and Men (2014).

² EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA): Violence against women: an EU-wide survey (2014).



ABOUT THIS LEAFLET

Gender equality and gender-based violence touch upon a number of policy fields. Through the EEA and Norway Grants, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway fund a wide range of activities aimed at promoting gender equality and at tackling the causes and the consequences of gender-based violence. This leaflet shows examples of these activities.

WHERE WE WORK



Country	Programme area	Donor partners		Grant amount (€ million)
Bulgaria	Domestic and gender-based violence	Council of Europe	●	2.0
Cyprus	Domestic and gender-based violence	Norwegian Secretariat of the Shelter Movement	●	0.7
Czech Republic	Gender equality	Norwegian Directorate of Health	●	3.4
	Domestic and gender-based violence		●	4.2
Estonia	Gender equality	Norwegian Directorate of Health	●	2.0
	Domestic and gender-based violence	Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs	●	2.0
Lithuania	Domestic and gender-based violence	Norwegian National Police Directorate	●	1.0
Poland	Domestic and gender-based violence	Council of Europe	●	3.6
Portugal	Gender equality	Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities	●	2.5
Romania	Gender equality	Norwegian National Police Directorate	●	4.5
	Domestic and gender-based violence	Council of Europe	●	4.0
Slovakia	Domestic and gender-based violence	Council of Europe Norwegian Directorate of Health	●	8.4
Slovenia	Gender equality		●	1.5
Spain	Gender equality	Norwegian Equality and Anti-discrimination Ombud	●	10.2
			Total	50

● EEA Grants ● Norway Grants

In addition to the dedicated programmes, promoting gender equality and combating gender-based violence are supported in EEA and Norway Grants programmes focusing on NGOs and on research.

Gender equality is also a cross-cutting priority spanning across the Grants.

SUPPORTING GENDER EQUALITY

Equality between women and men is an EU fundamental value, enshrined in its treaties and in the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Strengthening women's economic independence through increasing their labour market participation is key not only to gender equality, but also to increased productivity and higher GDP³

Work-life reconciliation policies are recognised as key responses to the economic and demographic challenges facing Europe. Parenthood remains a main factor in the gender employment gap, and low fertility rates combined with increased life expectancy represents a major challenge for productivity. Gender equality and work-life reconciliation policies are vital to sustainable and quality employment for all, and therefore to increasing cohesion in Europe.



34

Policies implemented at regional or national level



3773

Women from vulnerable groups having improved their labour market accessibility



190

Female entrepreneurs participating in business training

³ International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO)



“The mentors make you believe that you can be whoever you want, and you start saying “I am here. I can do this.””

Marta Lamas Sanchez (pictured right), Head of Sustainability and Corporate Responsibility at BT Global Services.

BOOSTING FEMALE LEADERSHIP

Marta is one of the 186 women participating in the ‘Promociona’ project funded through the EEA Grants in Spain. The project identifies and develops the talent of women in business. The participants, carefully selected based on professional experience and academic background, receive training and mentoring to strengthen their leadership skills. No more than half a year after completing the programme, 25% of the participants – including Marta – have already been promoted.

This success looks likely to be sustainable. Originally a pilot, the project has since continued with the funding now coming from the companies themselves. The contacts and network established among the participants have led them to establish the Spanish Association of Female Executive and Board Members, dedicated to continuing the promotion of ‘Promociona’ and its objectives.

One of the aims of the EEA and Norway Grants has been to mainstream gender issues in the private sector. ‘Promociona’ illustrates how mentoring, business training and awareness raising can help more women mobilise, overcome barriers and be ambitious for themselves and for society.

Project promoter: *Spanish Confederation of Business Organizations*

Grant amount: € 680 000

Project link: bit.ly/2eyfPqg

BUILDING SKILLS FOR A BETTER FUTURE

When it comes to strengthening women's economic independence, the funding through the EEA and Norway Grants has devoted specific attention to the relatively low labour market participation of women from ethnic minorities. Through the Norway Grants supported project 'Competence in a Nutshell', 40 unemployed Roma women in the Czech Republic have increased their chances of securing a job and integrating into society.

The women have received counselling and participated in activities focused on raising their competence, knowledge and practical skills. In parallel, 62 children have received a place in preschool and in a programme aimed at increasing their cognitive skills before they enter primary school. So far, 13 of the women participating in the project have succeeded in finding a job.

Project promoter: Kostka Krásná Lipa

Grant amount: € 57 000

Project link: bit.ly/2eMp2PR



COMBATING DOMESTIC AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

According to the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), as many as one in three women in Europe have experienced physical or sexual violence since the age of 15.⁴ The scale and gravity of this issue call for renewed and increased attention. Through the Norway Grants, Norway has provided €27 million in support to combating domestic and gender-based violence.

Domestic and gender-based violence is a violation of fundamental rights with respect to dignity, equality and justice. It goes beyond the remits of criminal law and touches upon a wide range of policy fields. The funding from Norway aims to support a comprehensive and coordinated approach to tackling both the causes and consequences of domestic and gender-based violence.



Around

10 500

Victims supported



73

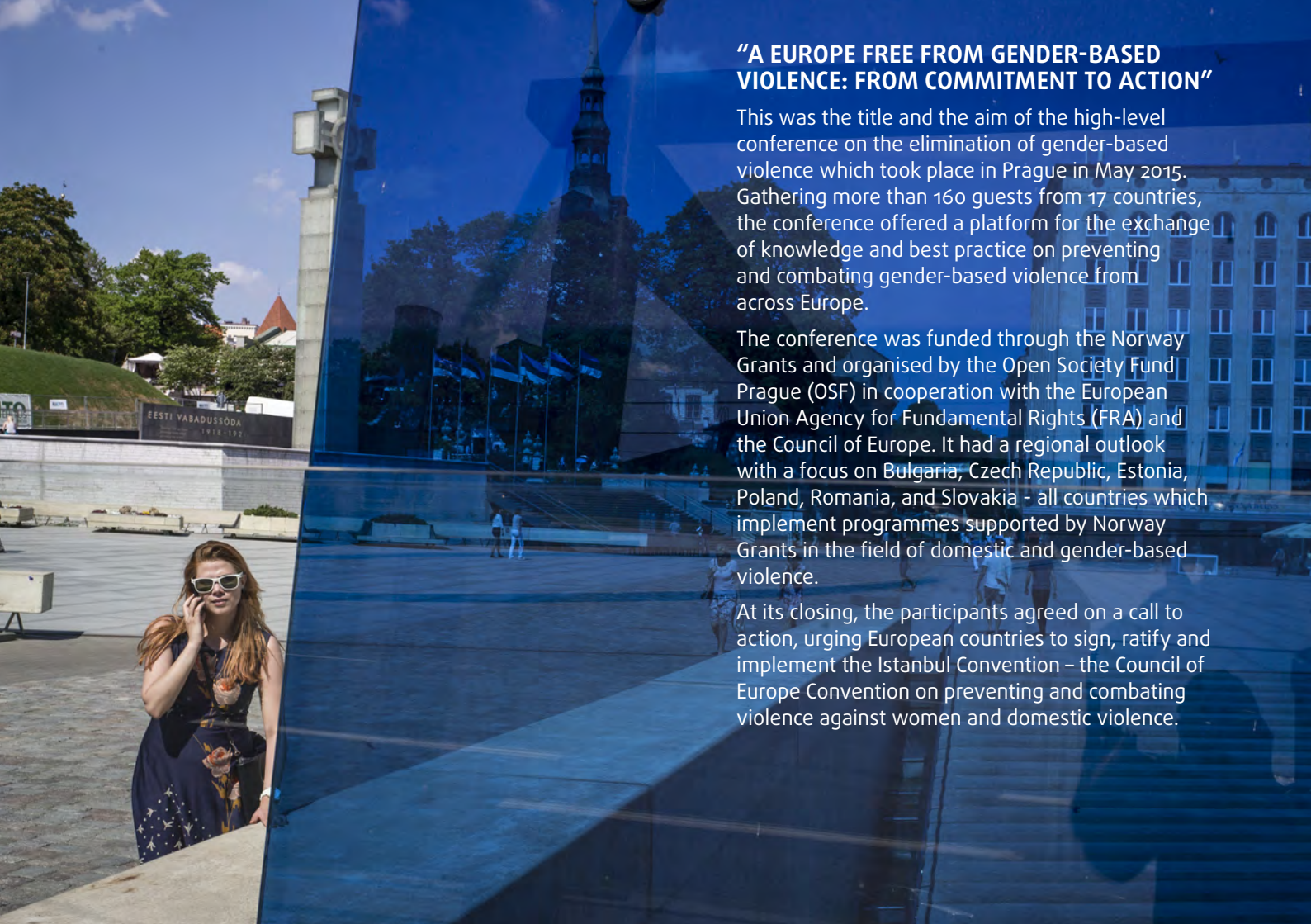
Centres for victims supported



5 600

Professionals trained to combat domestic and gender-based violence

⁴ EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA): Violence against women: an EU-wide survey (2014).



“A EUROPE FREE FROM GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: FROM COMMITMENT TO ACTION”

This was the title and the aim of the high-level conference on the elimination of gender-based violence which took place in Prague in May 2015. Gathering more than 160 guests from 17 countries, the conference offered a platform for the exchange of knowledge and best practice on preventing and combating gender-based violence from across Europe.

The conference was funded through the Norway Grants and organised by the Open Society Fund Prague (OSF) in cooperation with the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) and the Council of Europe. It had a regional outlook with a focus on Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia - all countries which implement programmes supported by Norway Grants in the field of domestic and gender-based violence.

At its closing, the participants agreed on a call to action, urging European countries to sign, ratify and implement the Istanbul Convention – the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.



WORKING WITH THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

The Council of Europe, which has long set European standards in the field, is involved as partner in several of gender-based violence programmes under the EEA and Norway Grants. The Council's 2014 Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention)⁵, serves as a reference and guideline for the Grants' efforts in this area.

Its wide range of experience and expertise from multiple contexts makes the Council of Europe uniquely placed to share strategic advice and support the beneficiary countries in ratifying the Convention and combating gender-based violence.

⁵ Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (CETS No.210)



FIRST CENTRE IN SUPPORT OF VICTIMS

In Cyprus, Norway has supported the construction of SPAVO House – Cyprus' first ever centre built to support victims of domestic violence. The support has enabled the SPAVO House to more than double its capacity to accommodate victims of violence and their children. The centre now provides 24 hours support on-site and via a telephone helpline. It has also improved its standards of accommodation, security and support services. A total of 190 staff, volunteers and professionals have been trained to offer support services to victims, including psychological counselling and assistance to re-enter the labour market.

The project is described as a success in more ways than one. In addition to the support offered, the construction of SPAVO House has led the Cypriot government, the public and the media to increase their focus on domestic violence. This, together with the seminars and workshops which have been organised as part of the project, has raised knowledge and awareness of domestic violence in Cyprus.

The project has been implemented in partnership with the Norwegian Secretariat of the Shelter Movement, which has shared its knowledge and expertise stemming from long having worked with support to victims of domestic violence in Norway.

Project promoter: *The Association for the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the Family*

Grant amount: € 742 197

Project link: bit.ly/2fioDrG



A COORDINATED POLICY

Although domestic and gender-based violence has been a topic of public policy for nearly a decade, many countries lack common standards for service provision and training for professionals in the field. Through the project 'Coordinating Methodical Centre for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence', financed through the Norway Grants, Slovakia is leading the way towards change. The project sets up the Coordinating Methodical Centre as the national co-coordinating body for Slovakia's work to combat the violence, following requirements laid out in the Istanbul Convention. The Centre will allow Slovakia to provide the comprehensive and coordinated policy which is needed to combat the multidimensional challenge of domestic and gender-based violence.


The Centre draws upon the experience and expertise of both the Council of Europe and the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies, who are Donor Partners in the project.

Project promoter: Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic
Grant amount: € 1 700 000
Project link: bit.ly/1YWbIxM



"The Coordinating Methodical Centre and the project itself are excellent examples of how to make an international instrument a concrete reality."

Marta Becerra, Council of Europe



“This would not have happened without the close cooperation between Norway and Estonia.”

Rainer Rohla, Coordinator for the ‘Domestic and Gender-Based Violence’ programme in Estonia

BILATERAL COOPERATION

Partnerships help pool expertise, share experience and enhance knowledge exchange to tackle shared challenges. One project in Estonia illustrates how sharing best practices can result in structural and sustainable change.

The project - ‘Creating and Enhancing a Multisectoral Network to Help the Victims of Sexual Violence’ - has seen the Estonian Sexual Health Association and their Norwegian partner, the Oslo Municipality Health Agency, build on Norwegian experiences to set up the ‘sexual assault unit’ model used in Norway as a pilot in Estonia. The model includes a centralised and coordinated support to victims of sexual assault, allowing them to receive medical, psychological and legal assistance all in one place.

The model, piloted by the project in two hospitals and two health clinics, has since been streamlined in the Estonian system and made available in four additional hospitals across the country. Recognising its success, the Estonian government has ensured funding for its continued operation in the years to come. The introduction of this model is a direct result of collaboration with a Norwegian partner.

Project promoter: Estonian Sexual Health Association

Grant amount: € 195 639

Project link: bit.ly/2fdYpnR

Photo credits:

All photos taken by Christophe Vander Eecken except the following:

Pg. 2: Promociona

Pg. 6: Financial Mechanism Office

Pg. 7: Dagmar Hadravova

Pg. 10: Open Society Fund Prague

Pg. 12-13: Flash De Vie Photographic Studio

Pg. 14: Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic

The EEA and Norway Grants represent Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway's contribution to reducing social and economic disparities and strengthening bilateral relations with 16 countries in Central and Southern Europe and the Baltics.

www.eeagrants.org
www.norwaygrants.org