

European Crime Prevention Award (ECPA)

Annex I – new version 2013

Please complete the template in English in compliance with the ECPA criteria contained in the RoP (Par.2 §3).

General information

1. Please specify your country.

Bulgaria

2. Is this your country's ECPA entry or an additional project? (**Only one ECPA entry per country plus a maximum of two additional projects may be submitted**)

Bulgarian 2013 entry

3. What is the title of the project?

Stop Domestic Violence!

4. Who is leading the project? Contact details.

Regional Police Directorate – Targovishte, Bulgaria;
Chief of Unit comm.Dimitar Dimitrov; mail: targovishte@mvr.bg

5. What was the start date of the project? Is the project still running?

Project started on 1st of May 2013 and is still ongoing.

6. Please give a short general description of the project. (**Abstract max. 150 words**)

The objective of the project "Stop domestic violence!" is to implement effective prevention of domestic violence through increasing the citizens' awareness of the problem and the opportunities for assistance and protection of victims.

The aims are three – improving the access of practitioners (psychologists, social workers, teachers, medical doctors, etc.) to specialized literature; increasing the citizens' engagement to domestic violence prevention; and to encourage the victims

to share their problems. The project is connected with development of a thematic web site. It is common initiative of Bulgarian Regional Police Directorate – Targovishte and a NGO “Association NAIA”. NAIA is situated in the town of Targovishte, Bulgaria and its specialists support and protect domestic violence victims. The cooperation between local police and this NGO on domestic violence started in 2006. In the project as partners also are involved volunteers - a group of students from a Targovishte school.

I. **The project shall focus on prevention and/or reduction of everyday crime and fear of crime within the theme.**

7. How does the project contribute to the prevention and/or the reduction of crime or the fear of crime? (**Max. 150 words**)

▪ Access to information. Project provides important specialized information for citizens. Through the site victims of domestic violence and potential victims can find information on legislation, important links and contacts.

▪ Specialized professional assistance. Assistance from consultants (psychologists, social workers, lawyers) working in NAIA to victims is offered. The assistance has been offered by this NGO in Targovishte region already for 8 years.

▪ Active communication. The web site is designed to offer a virtual room for communication and information exchange where its visitors can share their problems and experience. Specialists from NAIA are responsible to conduct consultations in the virtual room.

▪ Problem awareness. Through the introduction to web page people can realize than they face same problem without being aware of it.

All above-mentioned has preventive effect and contributes to decrease the domestic violence cases and fear of it.

8. How is the project related to the ECPA-theme selected by the organising Member State? (**Max. 150 words**)

By a jury appointed with an order of the Minister of Interior.

The project is directly related to the ECPA theme because it is addressing domestic violence prevention. The project activities are connected with different social mechanisms used to support domestic violence victims and to mediate for conflict resolution in such cases.

9. How is the project contributing to raising citizens' awareness of crime prevention? (**Max. 150 words**)

The project includes activities for announcement and broad presentation of the site which allows more people not only concerned to be informed for the domestic violence problems. This puts the problem in the focus of the public attention, informs about the consequences for victims and teaches how to counter domestic violence. In this way objective preconditions are developed to sensitize people's perception on the topic.

In the web site administration are taken all possible measures to protect the dignity and anonymity of victims. Access for offering consultations in the virtual room is given only to specialists from NAIA.

Also a very significant step to increase people's awareness of the problem is the involvement of volunteers – the group of pupils from a school in Targovishte. This is sign for the intolerance against violence also among young people.

II. The project shall have been evaluated and have achieved most or all of its objectives.

10. What was the reason for setting up the project? What problem(s) did it aim to tackle? How, when and by whom were these problems defined? **(Max. 150 words)**

A research conducted in 2000 revealed that every 4th woman is a victim of domestic violence. Only in 2012 the NGO "Alliance against domestic violence", where NAIA participates, assisted more than 10 000 victims in the country. Despite of the Law on Protection Against Domestic Violence the scale of this phenomenon does not decrease. Quite the opposite, given the economic and financial crisis it grows.

The experience from joint actions of police officers and Association NAIA experts reveals that along with already used prevention forms new approaches are needed.

The web page would allow more potential and actual victims to receive assistance because many victims are not ready to lose their anonymity and to ask for direct consultation the NGO's experts or to complain to police.

11. What were the objective(s) of the project? Please, if applicable, distinguish between main and secondary objectives. **(Max. 150 words)**

The project's objective is to accomplish effective domestic violence prevention in Targovishte region through increasing people's awareness on the domestic violence and victims support.

The project aims are 3:

– Improve the access of practitioners (psychologists, social workers, teachers, medical doctors, etc.) to specialized literature and to provide them with an information bank on all the topics of domestic violence.

- increase the citizens' engagement to domestic violence prevention through their comments, participation in thematic groups, casus discussions, etc.
- encourage victims to talk for the problem which allows them to share it and to receive assistance with respect to their anonymity if wished.

12. How was the project implemented? How were these objectives translated into actions? What was the action plan of the project? (**Max. 300 words**)

Initially a project team was designed from representatives of Regional Police Directorate - Targovishte and NGO - "Association NAIA. This NGO is maintaining a Center for Consultations for Victims of Domestic Violence.

To create the site we used our previous experience when we worked on a thematic website "Disasters - surmountable forces if we know them" by volunteers from the secondary school "Prof. Nikola Marinov " in Targovishte. In 30 months the website recorded 94 000 visits. This gave us confidence that internet communication is a successful and rapidly gaining popularity form to provide information to citizens. The new site used and further developed the achievements of the previous one. Creating a virtual room and a section for comments, the project enables users to go beyond the passive use of information. The technical development of the site was assisted by young volunteers.

A conceptual site plan was created, after that took place processing of textual and graphics creation and the banner project realization. Design and proper navigation was prepared. After testing links and debugging site was posted on the Internet.

Specialists from the Association NAIA collected and summarized information on the problem of domestic violence. This information was included in the sections of the site. Regulations for implementation of the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence were published.

Information prepared by police and connected to its actions in cases of domestic violence was made available for the site users.

During the preparation of the site counterparts hold regular meetings to discuss and detail the various steps of the project.

13. Was the context analysed **before** the project was implemented? How, and by whom? Which data were used? (**Max. 150 words**)

Analysis of police statistics on domestic violence and of victims support cases by consultants from the Association revealed increase yearly. For comparison in 2011 the Association NAIA worked on 119 such cases, in 2012 – on 153 , and for the first nine months of 2013 - on 88. In 2011, employees of the Regional Police Directorate

- Targovishte controlled observance of the 22 orders issued under the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence. In 2012, they worked on 23 such orders, from the beginning of 2013 they are 20. The analysis carried out by experts from police and Association NAIA recommended searching for new ways for prevention. Given the aforementioned significant interest to the previous site we decided that this new form of work with public would be effective.

14. Has the project been evaluated? Internally and/or externally? Process and/or impact evaluation? How, when and by whom? Which data and techniques were used? (**Max. 300 words**)

Project evaluation is performed by two types of monitoring - internal and external (monitoring of the impact).

Initially, the participants in the project team from police and Association NAIA developed criteria and periods of time to evaluate the goals. Results obtained are compared with planned.

The internal monitoring is used for regular overview on the work, for assessment whether the activities are performed in accordance with plans, to identify and address problems as they arise. This is accomplished through periodic meetings of the working team of the two organizations where achievements are evaluated, corrections and adjustments are made if necessary. Results from activities are compared with expected ones.

We are planning to perform external monitoring of the project. Thematic website will be submitted to the leadership of Regional Police Directorate – Targovishte and to the regional and local governments in the area.

Also feedback is expected from the site users in the Recommendations and Suggestions area. They are given the opportunity to comment the extent to which the site performs its functions to raise public awareness on domestic violence and to create atmosphere of no tolerance to such manifestations. Any constructive suggestion will be included in our further work.

15. What were the results? Was the project implemented as originally intended? To what extent were the intended objectives of the project achieved? Please refer back to the objectives mentioned in question 11. What works/has worked for whom in what circumstances? Were there any unexpected side-effects? (**Max. 300 words**)

A thematic website "Stop Domestic Violence" was created with sections Forum, Chat room and Virtual Sharing. The information is published with friendly language on topics such as types of abuse /domestic violence, child abuse, etc./ and related myths and realities, regulations to the problem, victims protection forms. In this way conditions are created to increase the sensitivity of citizens on domestic violence and to develop not acceptance of it. The information bank on the problems enables experts on Domestic Violence (psychologists, social workers, teachers, medical

doctors, etc.) to increase their knowledge and provide more effective support to victims. Users of the site are given the possibility to communicate their opinion which enables to create a heart in civil society that shares and disseminates in community the ideas of no tolerance to signs and symptoms of domestic violence. To put the subject of domestic violence out of closed community where it was almost taboo at to place it for public debate and discussion in Internet space where unlimited number of people have access is already by itself a major step towards understanding the problem and confession of its social significance.

16. Are there any reports or documents available on the project and/or the evaluation of the project? Please, provide references to the most relevant ones. **(Max. 5 references)**

The project's site address is: www.noviolence.netii.net.

III. The project shall, as far as possible, be innovative, involving new methods or new approaches.

17. Why is the project innovative, original or creative in its methods and/or approaches? **(Max. 150 words)**

The project is innovative because the created multidisciplinary team combines the efforts of police, NGO experts and a group of young volunteers.

A comprehensive approach to domestic violence combines preventive actions of police with professional support provided by the experts of the Association to victims. For several years we follow this approach to reduce the causes and conditions of the phenomenon and we have regular proof of its effectiveness.

Considerable interest was recorded by the population of two communities in Targovishte municipality where open days on protection from domestic violence were organized. There employees of Regional Police Directorate - Targovishte and consultants from NAIA interviewed victims and potentially threatened people Evidence for the efficiency of the selected approach is increasing number of people participating in such campaigns as a consequence of the increase of their awareness on the problem.

The participation of students from school as volunteers in the project is a prerequisite for formation of intolerance to violence from an early age through students' information on the subject and sharing experiences with their peers.

Another major point is that through the options of online communication from one side victims have the opportunity to share experience and receive professional

advice, and from the other side the other users can share the culture of prevention and join efforts to prevent domestic violence.

IV. The project shall be based on cooperation between partners, where possible.

18. How and to what degree were relevant stakeholders involved (directly or indirectly) in the project? **(Max. 150 words)**

All partners participated directly in the project's implementation.

Police- police officers and police psychologist identified the problem on the base of received calls or complains on domestic violence by the emergency phone line 122; Prepared questionnaire, conducted interviews and processed data; analyzed the results of the meetings of police inspectors with residents in their area of responsibility; during the interviews police inspectors were able to gain insights and feedback from respondents; analysis of domestic violence cases in Targovishte Regional Prosecutor's Office; conducted public opinion survey in Targovishte municipality; police officers process information on the relevant legislation and prepared it for publication on the web site.

Association NAIA – summarized relevant information on domestic violence based on their specialists' experience.

School students - developed the web site.

19. Which other (local, national, international) partners were involved in the planning, development and/or implementation of the project? Who were they and what were their roles? **(Max. 150 words)**

Part of the project is connected with communication campaign designed to promote the site through regional and national media. We hope to involved them and make them our partners in order to familiarize with the site people and to discuss the topics.

As a proof of media interest we can confirm that local media have responded many times and with readiness when police organized different crime prevention campaigns. We hope that the discussion in public space through media on various aspects of domestic violence gradually will form in people intolerance to such cases.

V. The project shall be capable of replication in other Member States.

20. How and by whom is the project funded? **(Max. 150 words)**

The project is implemented with volunteer efforts of Targovishte Regional Police

District, specialists of Association NAIA and students from 2nd School “Prof. Nikola Marinov” Targovishte, Bulgaria.

Recently NAIA is running several projects, financed by different national and international donors and programs.

21. What were the costs of the project in terms of finances, material, infrastructure and human resources? **(Max. 150 words)**

The project was developed and carried out by representatives of partnering organizations in addition to their core duties and daily activities.

Personnel: Totally 6 persons were engaged, 2 by each counterpart.

Logistics: 2 computer configurations, room and internet access.

Manpower: 120 hours volunteer work.

Materials: 150 pages A4 and other office equipment.

Total: – 1 500 лв. = 750 Euro.

Future expenditure:

- Each year 120 leva to use hosting;
- NGO consultant – 40 hours per month (1 hour = 15 leva) = 600 leva =300 Euro.

22. Has been carried out a cost-benefit analysis? If so, how, and by whom? What were the findings? Please provide supporting information. **(Max. 150 words)**

A cost-benefit analysis was not made at this stage due to the voluntary principle in its implementation and few resources invested.

23. Please describe the context of the project in as much detail as possible: basic theory or principles which form the basis of the project, geographical area, legal context, timescale. **(Max. 300 words)**

The principles on which the project is developed include:

- the right of victims to receive assistance and protection irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, religion ,age, education,
- the voluntary principle;
- the principle of inclusion of all stakeholders in addressing the publically significant problem;
- the right of victims for anonymity.

Regional Police Directorate - Targovishte works systematically during the years in the area of domestic violence prevention and always emphasizes on cooperation with other responsible organizations and institutions. Under other projects offices for victims of domestic violence in communities in Targovishte municipality were established - in 2009 and 2012. There periodically people meet police officers and experts from the Association. In police efforts to partner with all organizations and to limit domestic violence 3 action plans are prepared and implemented at the moment.

Reflecting the efforts of police to place the problem of domestic violence to public awareness a Centre for Crime Prevention in the town of Targovishte was established. It's based on the agreement among the Regional Police Directorate, the Municipality Targovishte, NGOs and business. This Centre operates from the year of 2011 and is one of the few in the country.

This recent project is a continuation of the cooperation of police officers with specialists from "Association NAIA ". The project is directly related to the National Programme for the prevention of domestic violence in 2013 - dissemination of good practices in combating the phenomenon of domestic violence through electronic sites.

24. Please, write a **one page** description of the project:

The project is a jointed initiative of Regional Police Directorate - Targovishte and NGO - Association NAIA" in Targovishte, whose specialists provide support to victims of domestic violence.

Our collaboration on domestic violence started in 2006 when we began to work together on individual cases, after that joint projects for prevention were implemented, and in 2012 a cooperation agreement to build a Center for Crime Prevention - Targovishte was signed. This Centre provides assistance and advice to public in connection with the implementation of the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence.

As a result of the mutual work in two communities of the Targovishte municipality were built offices for advice and support of victims of domestic violence. There multidisciplinary teams of police officers and experts of the Association work.

For illustration: in 2012 Regional Police Directorate - Targovishte and Association NAIA worked together on 37 cases of domestic violence in Targovishte .

On the base of the effective co-work was initiated current project Stop Domestic Violence.

The project is linked to creation of a thematic website and its objective is effective prevention of domestic violence in Targovishte region by increasing public awareness of this crime, of the opportunities for support and protection of victims. Goals that we would like to accomplish are:

- facilitating access of professionals working in the area (psychologists , social workers, teachers, medical doctors , etc.) to literature by creating a data bank on all aspects of domestic violence;
- increasing involvement of citizens in prevention of the phenomenon of domestic violence ;
- increasing victims sharing of the problem, giving them the opportunity to share their experiences and to seek help.

Expected results of the project are to create conditions for increasing the sensitivity of citizens to domestic violence and the formation of zero tolerance towards such cases and behaviors. To create a community than shares same anti domestic violence values and to increase knowledge and effective support to victims of domestic violence.

For the realization of the project a working group was set up from representatives of police and an association. As a partner on their own initiative the project was joined by a group of volunteers - students from a Targovishte school. During the implementation of the project activities, the working group regularly discussed achievements, made recommendations and adjustments, which were respected in the subsequent work.