



Project title:

**Improvement of the national legal framework to bring in line with Council of Europe standards and strengthening the capacity of competent institutions involved in cases of GBV including DV**

Main theme:

Domestic and Gender-based violence

Project proposer: Ministry of Justice, Bulgaria

Project leader(s): Ministry of Justice

Project supporter(s): Council of Europe, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Ministry of Interior

Project scope:

The main goal of the Project is the creation of a robust legal framework that will ensure the protection of the rights of victims of GBV and domestic violence. The Project also envisage supporting the institutions providing social help and police protection in strengthening their administrative capacity and tools in handling cases of GBV and DV. GBV and DV are problems requiring complex and well-coordinated actions by competent authorities. Despite the accumulated national practice in applying the relevant legislation for the prevention, detection, investigation, protection and assistance to victims of GBV and DV, there are existing difficulties in coordination and admission of significant lapses. This in turn leads to inefficient protection and assistance to victims and violates basic human rights guaranteed in both Bulgarian and international law. Victims of GBV and DV are often subject to re-victimization and diverse interventions by various institutions. There are some cases where the lack of timely intervention and a coordinated approach leads to severe recurrence of violence, which in turn puts victims at greater risk for health and life.

In order to address this issue the first area of the project envisages the elaboration of an assessment of the current Bulgarian legal framework, an assessment of best European practices and how they can be implemented. As result of this activities will be developed a national strategy for reduction of GBV and domestic violence. To ensure the viability of these results will be put in place proposals for the necessary amendments to the national legal framework. The second area of the project will be focus on the strengthening of the institutional capacity through improved skills of the experts that deal with victims of GBV and domestic violence. The training programs conducted during the implementation of the project will improve the professional skills of legal experts of the judiciary system, as well as that of the social workers and police officers. As an essential emphasis in the work of social workers and police officers will be the work with Roma population.

Through the trainings, all participants will gain awareness of and knowledge on gender-based violence matters in order to handle cases of such violence with professional skills and competence.



Project outcomes:

1. Improvement of the legal framework in the field of GBV and domestic violence in line with European practice and the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence
2. Strengthening of the institutional capacity through improved skills of the experts that deal with victims of domestic violence

Timescales and key milestone dates:

Implementation period - October 2014 – February 2016

October – December 2014

- Assessment of the EU legislation and CoE Conventions in the field of domestic violence
- Assessment and gap analysis in Bulgarian legal framework, currently in place, dealing with DV
- Comparative analysis between the Bulgarian legal framework and best European practices (including the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence)

January-February 2015

- Development of a National Strategy for reduction of GBV and DV
- Workshops with Bulgarian magistrates and other stakeholders to discuss and fine-tune the legislative proposals

October 2014 – March 2015

- Elaboration and publishing of a Handbook for Social Workers on detection of and dealing with cases of GBV and DV

April – December 2015

- Conducted 6 training workshops for Social Workers

October 2014 – May 2015

- Elaboration and publishing of curriculum for training of police staff
- Elaboration and publishing of Trainer's Manual for trainers
- Elaboration and publishing of Guidebook for work on cases related to crimes based on GBV

Funding issues:

85% of the project is co-financed by the Norwegian Financial Mechanism and 15% in national co-financing.

Requested project grant rate: 267 305,00