

Policy

According to the Statistics from the Presidium of Police Force of Slovak Republic, in the following tables there are presented numbers of victims of selected crimes committed as “domestic violence” for the years 2003 to 2010 and number of offenders prosecuted for the crime of maltreatment of a close person or person in care for the years 2003 to 2010.

Number of victims of crime-related to domestic violence in the years 2003-2010

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
			M/W %	M/W %	M/W %	M/W %	M/W %	M/W %	M/W %
Maltreatment of a close person or pers. in care Art.208 Criminal Code	1194	1145	W76,5 195/63 5 830	W80,1 141/56 6 707	W79, 108/4 23 531	W88,3 67/505 572	W76,7 42/277 361	W88,8 26/207 233	W86,9 % 37/246 283
Rape Art.199 Criminal Code	232	224	200	173	182	153	141	116	149
Sexual violence Art. 200 Criminal Code	89	92	90	112	112	108	82	74	82
Sexual abuse Art.201,202 Criminal Code	424	468	398	418	374	365	388	357	528
Human Trafficking Art.179 Criminal code	43	33	18	31	15	13	7	5	13

The number of offenders prosecuted for the crime of maltreatment of a close person or person in care in the years 2003-2010.

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Number of offenders From that Men/Women Art 208 Criminal Code	705 660/45	683 641/42	461 431/30	410 483/27	296 276/20	284 264/20	269 246/23	186 169/17	216 198/18

Source: Presidium of Police Force of Slovak Republic

The Government of the SR got to work on resolving the issues of violence against women and in the families in 2004 when it approved the **National Strategy for Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and in Families**. The goal of the National Strategy was to coordinate and integrate the cooperation of all relevant stakeholders in preventing the occurrence of violence, ensuring fast and effective assistance, effective use of existing legislation in practice and creating a sufficient knowledge basis on violence against women. The Strategy forms the basic framework for launching effective procedures in the prevention and elimination of violence against women and in families. The document analyzes violence against women and violence in the families in the wider social context as well; in the context of international documents, it outlines the solutions of the given issues and defines the basic principles, aims and implementation principles of the Strategy. The Strategy specifies violence in relation to women, children, the elderly and the disabled as subjects who most frequently face the threat of violence in families. Furthermore it defines individual areas of intervention (criminal and civil areas, the area of assistance provision, prevention and research) within the framework of which the concrete operation goals, priorities and principle measures are formulated.

In 2005, the Government of the SR approved the **National Action Plan for Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women for the Period 2005 – 2008** for the effective fulfillment of the National Strategy for Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and in Families. Its basic aim was to implement adequate and effective procedures for the prevention and elimination of violence against women, so that victims would not have to face violation of their fundamental human rights and could live in safety, freedom, dignity and in absence of any threats. National Action Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women for 2005 – 2008 uses the definition of violence against women adopted from the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993), Article 1: “violence against women shall mean 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 the threat of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.” The National Action Plan for Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women for the Period 2005 – 2008 included, in particular, the implementation of basic steps in the area of prevention, education, research and the building of an institutional framework of coordinated assistance to women who faced violence, not excluding the important area of improving the legislative background of these issues. The National Action Plan for Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women for the Period 2005 – 2008 incorporated 27 tasks oriented on four areas: (I) Criminal and civil law relevancies, (II) Provision of assistance to women – victims of past or present violence (III) Prevention and (IV) Research.

As far as monitoring mechanism of the effectiveness of National Action Plan for Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women for the Period 2005 – 2008 is mentioned, it was evaluated in 2007 and at the expiration of its validity in 2008. **The final evaluation report on the fulfillment of the tasks of the National Action Plan for Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women for the Period 2005 – 2008** (2008) noted the fulfillment of several tasks in 2008. However the insufficient number and quality of services provided to women who became victims of violence remained a problem in particular. This especially relates to the accessibility and quality of services on European standards, the coordination of the work of assisting professions especially on the regional level and financing of

the above mentioned services. The need for consistent coordination of all components of assistance to the victims of violence in the form of establishing coordination intervention teams in all regions of Slovakia was emphasized. Attention was drawn to the need for the improvement of the quality of education of all professions that are in contact with the victims of violence. The continuation of the collection of statistical data and the acquisition of research data was shown as important and will constitute a necessary condition for the improvement of activities in the prevention and elimination of violence against women in the period of 2009 - 2012.

When adopting the National Action Plan for the Period of 2005 – 2008, it was emphasized that the evaluation of the achieved results in 2008 would be followed by the updating and supplementing of the material by newly formulated areas and measures in order to continuously move forward the solution of the issues. Based on the above, starting from summer 2008 the follow-up document was being elaborated and discussed within various forums, groups of experts and committees. Finally there was elaborated the **National Action Plan for Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women for the Period of 2009 – 2012**, which was adopted by the Government of the Slovak Republic on 17th June 2009. The NAP continues in the operation goals of the National Strategy for Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and in Families and develops them in compliance with new facts and requirements of the international documents and practice. The NAP for the period 2009 – 2012 also uses the definition of violence adopted from the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993) and emphasizes also the Article 2 of the Declaration, where is pointed: “Violence against women shall be understood to encompass, but not be limited to, the following:

(a) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation;

(b) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution;

(c) Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs“.

As far as the definition of violence against women is considered, the NAP for the period 2009 – 2012 refers also to General Recommendation of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women No. 19 (1992)

The NAP tasks are predominantly formulated in the context of the previous plan with concrete measures in the originally established four areas (Criminal and civil law relevancies, Provision of assistance to women – victims of past or present violence, Prevention, Research), while the area of research is extended by the issues of statistical findings and monitoring.

Furthermore the material is supplemented by three extending areas i.e., (a) Education and sensitising of assisting professions, (b) Violence against women at work and (c) Work with the perpetrators of violence. In the NAP for the period 2009 – 2012 there is for example mentioned, that handling with the topic „violence against women“ requires more complex and close cooperation between coadjutant professions like social workers, health workers, prosecution authorities, police, advocates, judges etc. Also there was highlighted that it is necessary to support and improve activities in the field of direct help for the victims of violence according to

European standards. The evaluation of the NAP is expected at the halfway point and at the expiration of its validity.

In 2009 the Government of the Slovak Republic adopted the **National Strategy for Gender Equality for the Period 2009 – 2013**, where violence against women is also included in one of its objectives (Operational objective No. 6.: *Increasing the effectiveness and quality of the prevention system and eliminating discrimination and violence in their forms.*) (full text available in English on:

<http://www.gender.gov.sk/index.php?id=560&sID=825c01779d4be145013e4c1b125baf1f>)

Starting from adoption of the National Strategy for Gender Equality for the Period 2009 – 2013 (April 2009), we have begun to work on elaboration of **National Action Plan for Gender Equality for the Period 2010 – 2013**, which would result from the need of effective pursuance of the Strategy. The National Action Plan for Gender Equality is expected to be finished by the end of 2009.

To contribute to the increased level of information the general public had about violence against women, there was carried out the first **National Campaign “Stop Domestic Violence against Women”** funded by the Government of the Slovak Republic in 2007 – 2008. The goal of the campaign was to raise public awareness about the gender-based violence. The national campaign was implemented within the lines and calls of the pan- European campaign of the European Council. The national campaign took place from November 2007 to March 2008 and a large number of media and information activities targeted on the individual target groups were carried out. Within the campaign there was established a website pointing the topic of violence against women (www.zastavmenasilie.sk), there were prepared information fliers and booklets for various target groups and cooperating professions, the posters of the Council of Europe with the call “*It starts with screams and must never end in silence*” were presented in the form of outdoor advertisement media, radio and TV spots aimed at the violence against women were broadcast, various public discussions were started, etc. The campaign was initiated and managed by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and family of the SR and owing to its European dimension, it cooperated with the European Council Information Office, the representatives of several churches in Slovakia, non-governmental organizations associated under the initiative entitled *Piata žena* (The Fifth Woman), which became known by the organizing of the first media campaign designated for removing the taboo of the theme of domestic violence in Slovakia. The Ministry of Education, The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Interior, which cooperated in selected activities implemented within the framework of this campaign, also joined the fulfillment of the campaign activities.

More information on the web site of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic (in Slovak)

<http://www.gender.gov.sk/index.php?id=22&sID=7cad437c1ea203ea6dff94c77c7095bc> and www.zastavmenasilie.sk