https://www.eeagender.org/good-practices/How-prevent-gender-based-violence/a-new-integrated-system-to-prevent-domestic-violence/

A new integrated system to prevent domestic violence

The project addresses the needs of families with children exposed to domestic violence, specialists in the support system working for children and families exposed to domestic violence and local community members.



(Illustration: iStockphoto)

About the project

In Poland, domestic violence has become a serious social problem. In 2018, more than 224 000 people experienced domestic violence and more than 100 000 families received support under the “Blue Cards” procedure, according to the Report on the Implementation of the National Programme for Counteracting Domestic Violence for 2014-2020. (see fact box).

The main goal of the project is to find a solution to help identify the risk of domestic and gender-based violence before it happens.

The project aims to find answers to the problem of domestic violence. In recent years, this problem has increased in most European countries. The project is based on the assumption that the best way to reduce domestic violence is to prevent it from happening in the first place rather than just being reactive once it has occurred. In this respect, it is important to increase attention to the phase in which families are in direct danger of developing violent behaviours, before they become a pattern.

Prevention is successfully achieved when it is implemented as a system solution. This is to be understood as the organization of activities at the local level, aiming to provide comprehensive help and support to families living with domestic violence. The system solution requires the involvement of various institutional partners, local social resources (e.g. NGOs, the Church), and the families themselves. The way in which the various stakeholders are linked will be defined by the model of integration/cooperation of services (e.g. integration, networking, or semi-integrated model).

The process of making a system for prevention

The project's central task is to develop a model for a system of integrated services for the prevention of domestic violence that can be implemented after a trial phase in selected municipalities. The project is planned to last for a period of 44 months, and will consist of the following main activities: evaluation of existing solutions and possibilities of creating a model for the prevention of domestic violence, and development of a model for an integrated system for the prevention of domestic violence.

The evaluation involves reviewing existing solutions in various other countries. It will be based on the analysis of existing data (scientific literature, knowledge bases, databases of ministries) and on data obtained during the project period (interviews, observations, surveys - if necessary). Following the evaluation, a model for the prevention of violence will be developed, which will include a supporting tool for assessing the probability (likelihood) of domestic violence.

The model will be tested in five different local communities within projects that will be funded under the Small Grant Scheme.

Once the testing is completed, the actions undertaken in the test phase will be assessed with regard to their effectiveness from the perspective of both the system and its users (families). Based on this assessment, conclusions and recommendations will be drawn and the final model for the integrated system for the prevention of domestic violence (including tools) will be designed and disseminated.

The project will result in the domestic violence prevention system in Poland including the comprehensive domestic violence prevention programme and the cross-agency cooperation.

The affected victims and families

The actual number of victims and families affected by domestic violence is difficult to estimate. The prevalence study, commissioned by the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy (2014), revealed that nearly 1/4 of the respondents experienced at least one form of violence from a close relative in their lifetime.

As regards domestic and gender-based violence in general, Poland has successfully developed an effective system to deal with complaints of domestic violence based on the Act on Counteracting Domestic Violence (2005; amended in 2010 and in 2020) and the Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 12 September 2011 on the “Blue Cards” procedure.

Read: New laws to protect victims of domestic violence in Poland

Preventing violence at an early stage

There is a need to coordinate the available services to prevent domestic and gender-based violence and to support families with a system that can identify the risk of domestic violence. The idea of preventing domestic violence at a very early stage is a new concept in the field of combating domestic violence in Poland.

One challenge that needs to be dealt with is a lack of coordination and common approach to prevention. Local initiatives are not sustainable, and good practices are not disseminated across the country. Coordination and information flow between the involved institutions (police, social services, healthcare system) is also a problem.

The existing programmes on the prevention of domestic violence are launched locally and they differ from one another. There is no common approach to this issue, and no services are provided at the stage in which families are in direct risk of experiencing violent behaviours. “The Integrated System of Domestic Violence Prevention” project contributes to improving the prevention system at a national level by developing a comprehensive model for the prevention of domestic and gender-based violence that can be applicable in all municipalities.

Collaborators across sectors and countries

The project is implemented in collaboration with the University of Stavanger (UIS). The activities within the project will be implemented by the Faculty of Social Sciences in the Department of Social Studies and by NORCE Norwegian Research Centre AS - one of Norway's largest independent research institutes.

The researchers involved in the project have experience from research projects in the field of gender equality, work-life balance, migration, family life, relationships, parenting and domestic violence.

Professors from the University of Stavanger will be a part of the research team. They will collaborate with the Project Promoter who will gather information from Norway, carry out data collection in Norway, and analysee the systems for preventing domestic violence as well as barriers and enablers of prevention in Poland and Norway. They will be also involved in creating a new model for preventing domestic violence to be tested through the projects implemented under the Small Grant Scheme.

> “
>
> The Synergy network is a unique network of cooperation in the field of combating domestic and gender-based violence since it connects people from different countries and professions.

SYNERGY – a unique network of cooperation

The Synergy network is a unique network of cooperation in the field of combating domestic and gender-based violence since it connects people from different countries and professions. It is not uncommon that the conferences or meetings organized within the Synergy Network are attended by professionals representing various institutions, such as ministries, police and social welfare services. These meetings are highly important and helpful when analysing the current situation in the field of domestic violence in the Donor States and Beneficiary States and designing new solutions. They create a common space for sharing good practices and experiences related to programme or project implementation. The Synergy Network also enables the coordination of activities implemented under Norway Grants across the involved countries. Another highly important aspect is that the joint discussions encourage professionals from different countries to introduce the changes needed in the field of combating domestic and gender-based violence.

Reported by Polish Ministry of Justice (Program operator, The Institute of Justice of Warsaw (Project Promoter) and the University of Stavanger (Donor project partner).

Published 4 May 2021 | Last updated 8 May 2023 Download | Share

Messages at time of print 15 November 2026, 02:57 CET

No global messages displayed at time of print.