https://www.eeagender.org/the-synergy-network/synergy-outcomes/

SYNERGY events and outcomes

The SYNERGY Network has organised several conferences, network meetings and study visits in the EEA-period 2018–2024. This page lists these activities, which mainly comprise conferences and SYNERGY Network meetings, including outcomes such as publications, articles, brochures and reports.



(Photo: EEA and Norway Grants)

Brussels 2025: International SYNERGY Network Conference

The international SYNERGY Network conference International SYNERGY Network Conference: “Working together for a Europe free from violence" was held from 20–21 January.

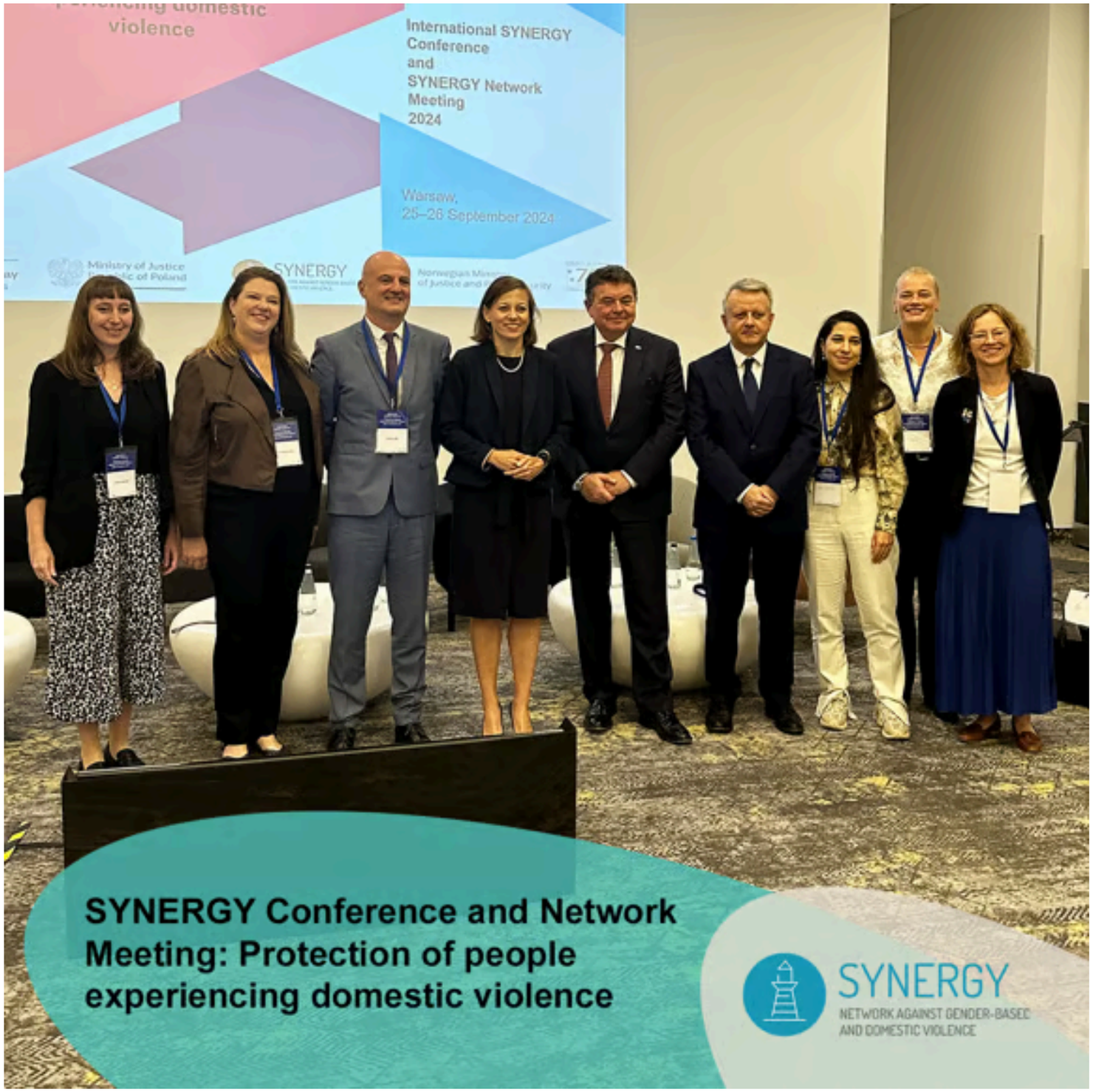
Goal: The conference marked the closing of the EEA and Norway Grants 2014–2021 programs addressing domestic and gender-based violence. The event brought together high-level political representatives from Norway, Poland, and Lithuania, who reaffirmed their commitment to tackling gender-based violence across Europe.

Organisers: The Central Project Management Agency (CPVA) in Lithuania, the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public security, the Gender Equality Division of the Council of Europe and the Financial Mechanism Office in Brussels.

Read more:

Article about the conference: *2025 SYNERGY conference charts the future of gender-based violence prevention in Europe*

About the conference: The international SYNERGY Network conference



A group photo of the panelists and organisers at the SYNERGY conference in Poland together with the Polish minister Zuzanna Rudzińska-Bluszcz and Ambassador Øystein Bø in the middle. (Photo: Kristine Sundvor Solvin)

Poland 2024: Conference on protection of people experiencing domestic violence

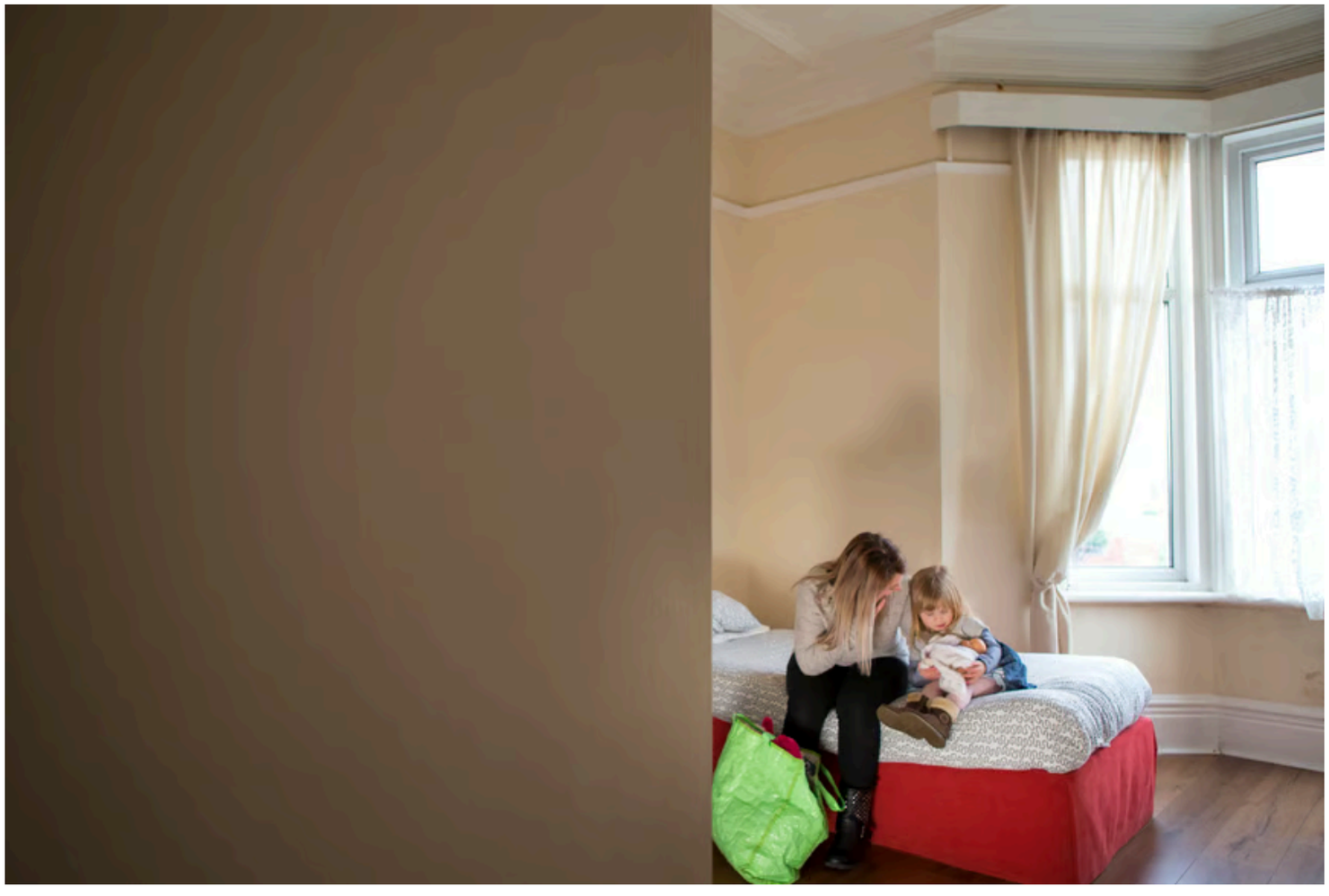
The international SYNERGY conference and network meeting “Protection of people experiencing domestic violence” was held from 25–26 September 2024.

Goal: The aim of the conference was to discuss a wide range of issues concerning protecting children from domestic violence, measures to protect victims of violence, GREVIO findings and Istanbul Convention standards and good practices and perpetrator-oriented programmes in various European countries.

Organisers: The conference was organised by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Poland, with support of the Norway Grants.

Read more:
Article about the conference: *Poland steps up efforts to protect women and children from domestic violence*

About the international SYNERGY conference and meeting: SYNERGY conference in Poland



More than 130 participants attended the conference to discuss the needs of support services for victims of violence in Bratislava in December 2023. (Illustration photo: iStockphoto)

Bratislava 2023: Conference on support for services to victims of domestic and gender-based violence

The conference and network meeting “Support for services to victims of domestic and gender-based violence – way to the results and sexual violence” was held from 6–8 December 2023, during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence campaign.

Goal: The aim of the conference was to discuss a wide range of issues concerning support, counselling, specialised and health services provided for the victims of domestic, sexual and intimate partner violence in various European countries.

Organisers: The conference was organised by the Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic in cooperation with the Coordinating Methodical Centre for Gender-based and Domestic Violence and the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic.

Read more:
Article about the conference: *Violence survivors need accessible support services*
Article about the bilateral research project between Norway and Slovakia: *New research on shelters in Norway and Slovakia*



(Illustration photo: iStockphoto)

Reykjavik 2023: Launching the handbook on Roma inclusion at the ECDV Conference

The SYNERGY Network visited Reykjavik from 10–14 September 2023 to attend the fifth European Conference on Domestic violence (ECDV) and to launch the handbook on Roma inclusion. In addition, the SYNERGY Network had various meetings and on-site visits to relevant stakeholders in Iceland, such as the Family Justice Centre, the Icelandic Human Rights Centre and the National Police Commissioner.

Goal: A handbook on Roma inclusion was launched at the conference in Reykjavik. In addition, the SYNERGY Network attended the ECDV Conference and held various meetings with relevant stakeholders.

Organisers: This project was implemented by The European Institute Foundation (EI) and the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security, in collaboration with the Council of Europe, the Bulgarian National Police General Directorate and Kilden genderresearch.no. The SYNERGY mission to Reykjavik was part of the EEA and Norway Grants bilateral initiative “Stepping up efforts to prevent and combat violence against Roma women and women from minority groups facing discrimination, marginalisation and exclusion”.

Read more:
Article about the study visits: *Icelandic family justice centre: coordinated support under one roof*

The handbook: *How to take into account the rights and needs of Roma women when working to prevent and combat gender-based violence*

Article about the handbook: *A new handbook to include Roma women: “Nothing about us, without us”*

See the brochure about the workshop: *SYNERGY Workshop: How to best consider and take into account the rights and needs of Roma women when addressing gender-based and domestic violence*



(Illustration photo: iStockphoto)

Sofia 2023: International conference on how to ensure Roma women's rights to be free from violence

The International SYNERGY Conference: "Working together for a Europe free from violence - ensuring Roma women's access to justice to assert their right to be free from violence" was held in Sofia, Bulgaria on 15 June 2023.

Goal: The aim of the conference was to learn more about integrating Roma and minority women's perspectives into efforts to address gender-based and domestic violence.

Organisers: The conference was organised by the European Foundation Institute in cooperation with the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security and the Council of Europe's Roma and Travellers Team and Gender Equality Division. The conference was funded by the Norway Grants Home Affairs Programme in Bulgaria and was part of the bilateral project "Working together for a Europe free from violence - Ensuring Roma and Traveller women's active participation in asserting their rights to be free from violence".

Read more:
News item about the conference: Upcoming conference: *How to ensure Roma women's rights to be free from violence*

Interview with Aida Farkas from the Council of Europe about the importance of the handbook *"We need to listen to the voice of Roma women"*

Online meetings 2023: Steering Committee meetings

A Steering Committee was established as an advisory body to the bilateral project “Working together for a Europe free from violence – Ensuring Roma and Traveller women’s active participation in asserting their rights to be free from violence”.

Goal: The committee functioned as a training and focus group, addressing the challenges Roma women face in accessing justice in cases of violence and domestic violence.

Organisers: The Steering Committee consisted of Roma women and NGOs, project promoters from Bulgaria and Romania, and representatives from the Council of Europe, the Financial Mechanism Office of EEA Grants, the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security and the European Institute Foundation. The committee meetings were coordinated and chaired by the European Institute Foundation in Bulgaria.

Five online meetings were held between January and May 2023 on the themes:

- Participation
- Protection
- Prosecution
- Prevention
- The handbook



(Photo: Private)

Strasbourg 2022: Conference on Roma and traveller women's access to justice

The study visit: *Working together for a Europe free from violence – ensuring Roma and Traveller women's access to justice to assert their right to be free from violence* took place on 17–18 November 2022 at the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg, France.

Goal: The aim of the study visit was to provide valuable input to the SYNERGY Conference in Bulgaria 2023 in order to strengthen the efforts to include the rights and needs of Roma and Traveller women in EEA and Norway Grants programmes and projects addressing gender-based and domestic violence.

Organisers: The study visit was organised as part of the cooperation framework between the Council of Europe, the EEA and Norway Grants, in support of Bulgaria and contributing to the SYNERGY Network against Gender-based and Domestic Violence.

Read more:
An interview with Ingeborg Larssen from the Sami Parliament and former GREVIO member Rachel Eapen Paul: *Violence in Sámi communities: From too frightened to touch, to openness*



(Illustration photo: iStockphoto)

Online Conference 2022: Protecting Refugee, Migrant and Asylum-seeking Women and Girls against Violence

The conference was open for members and friends of the SYNERGY Network and was held on 30 March 2022.

Goal: The aim of the SYNERGY conference was to provide concrete and actionable guidance for receiving countries, potentially fostering cooperation under the EEA and Norway Grants.

Organisers: The conference was organised by the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security and the Council of Europe, with support from the Financial Mechanism Office (FMO).

Read more:
Article about the conference: *How can we protect displaced women and girls from abuse and violence?*



(Illustration photo: iStockphoto)

Online conference 2022: The digital dimension of violence against women

The international online conference was organised by Greece and Cyprus in April 2022.

Goal: The aim of the conference was to foster a regional collaboration and an exchange of knowledge, expertise and good practices for effectively combating online and technology-facilitated violence.

Organisers: The online conference was organised and hosted by Active Citizens Fund Greece (Bodossaki Foundation and Solidarity Now) and Active Citizens Fund Cyprus (NGO Support Centre and GrantXpert Consulting) in cooperation with the Council of Europe and the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security, as coordinator of the EEA and Norway Grants SYNERGY Network against Gender-based and Domestic Violence.

Read more:

About the online conference: *The digital dimension of violence against women*

Interview with Aleid van den Brink, member of GREVIO and the GREVIO Working Group on a General Recommendation on the Digital Dimension of Violence against Women: *Calls for a holistic approach to combating digital violence*

Good practices from the online conference: *How can we fight tech-facilitated violence?*



(Illustration photo: iStockphoto)

Online course 2021: HELP course on access to justice for women

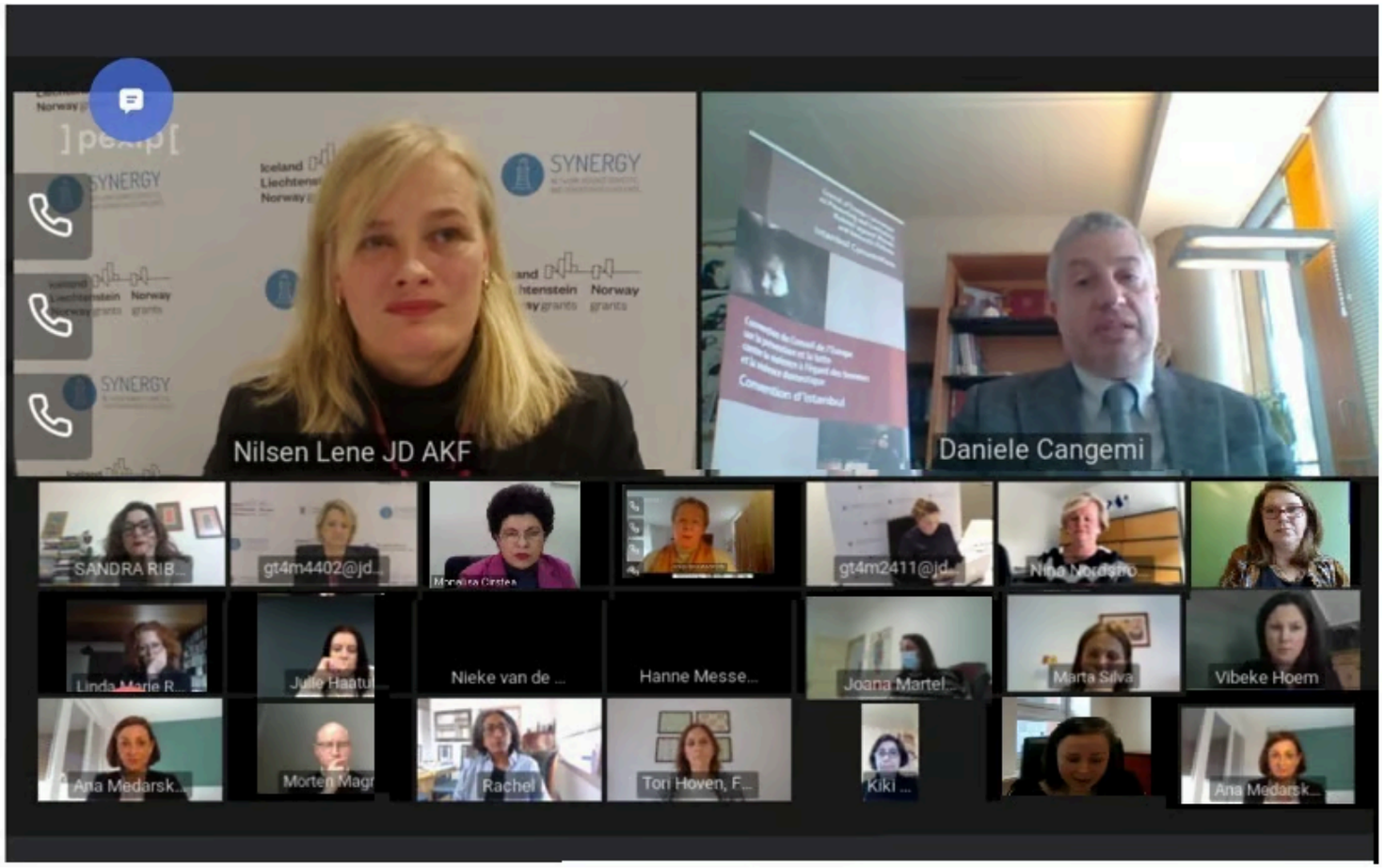
A 10-week professional development course for SYNERGY members on Access to Justice for Women, held online from June–August 2021.

Goal: The aim of the course was to help professionals understand the barriers women face when accessing justice and to apply a gender sensitive lens in their day-to-day work. The online course provides a comprehensive overview of International and European women's rights and gender equality standards, case law and good practices.

Organisers: The HELP course on Access to Justice for Women was developed by the Council of Europe.

Read more:

News item about the launch of the online course and the HELP course: *Kick-off for the online HELP course on Access to Justice for Women.*



(Photo: coe.int)

Online conference 2021: Mitigating the negative impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on domestic violence

The international online conference was held on 18 March 2021.

Goal: The aim of the conference was to focus on mitigation measures to prevent violence against women during COVID-19. The discussion featured numerous speakers from the Council of Europe, including the keynote speaker Nina Nordström, Ambassador of Finland to the Council of Europe. In addition, the SYNERGY webpage was launched by Kilden.

Organisers: The conference was organised by the Norwegian Ministry of justice and Public Security on behalf of the EEA/Norway Grants SYNERGY Network against Gender-based and Domestic Violence.

Read more:

About the online conference: *Digital Network meeting*

Read the news article: *First meeting of the SYNERGY Network against Gender-based and Domestic Violence in 2021*

Reykjavik 2019: Presentation of the SYNERGY Network at an EEA conference on gender equality

The SYNERGY Network attended the EEA conference “A key for economic and social development in Europe and beyond” in September 2019.

Goal: The aim was to present the network and hold a SYNERGY Network meeting about future activities, in addition to attending the conference.

Organisers: The conference was organised by the Icelandic Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality of Portugal and the Norwegian Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud

Prague 2019: Conference on promoting and discussing the ratification of the Istanbul Convention

An international conference on promoting and discussing the ratification of the Istanbul Convention was held 8 October 2019. In addition to the conference, there was also a SYNERGY Network meeting on Teen-dating violence and awareness raising campaigns.

Read more:

Summary of the contributions in the published report from the conference and meeting in Prague.



(Illustration: iStockphoto)

Bucharest 2019: Conference on integrating the Istanbul convention

The high-level conference was held in Bucharest 4–6 June 2019 and was part of the bilateral project "Towards a Europe free from violence against women and girls – The Istanbul Convention creating a new horizon and a paradigm change for all stakeholders!". The conference was a political event for European institutions and politicians.

Goal: The aim of the project was to improve the Romanian authorities' capacity to implement the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence.

Organisers: The Conference was organised in the context of the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union and was part of the EEA Grants cooperation between Romania, Norway and Portugal.

The project has been implemented by the National Agency for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (NAEO) in Romania and the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security, in collaboration with the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (CIG) in Portugal.

Read more: Publications from the conference
As part of the cooperation, Kilden published a brochure on integrated policies and three articles:

- The Istanbul Convention: the best tool to combat violence against women
- Fighting gender inequality and violence with the Istanbul Convention
- A comprehensive approach to combating violence against women

Brochure on the Istanbul Convention and integrated policies towards a Europe free from violence

Interview with the artistic director Anne Holck Ekenes about the cultural performance at the conference: *"Soft Power": A dance production in the fight against violence*

A good-practice guidance report was also published as part of the bilateral cooperation between Romania and Norway, in collaboration with Portugal, in the context of the Romanian EU presidency in 2019. The report was written by Virginia Gil Portolés from Aspacia Foundation: *Good practice Guidance on integrated policies against gender-based and domestic violence*

Bucharest 2018: Conference on coordinated responses to violence

In November 2018, an international two-day conference and SYNERGY Network meeting were held on how to identify good practices for addressing gender-based violence – the Delphi method.

Goal: The aim of the Conference and Synergy meeting was for participants to gain knowledge and discuss different approaches to responding to gender-based and domestic violence, and to exchange tried and tested strategies from different countries, agencies and sectors. Throughout the conference, several coordinated-response intervention models were presented from very different contexts, highlighting different focuses and goals.

Organisers: The Conference and Synergy meeting were held under the auspices of the Romanian National Agency for Equal Opportunities (ANES) and the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security.

Read more:
The insights shared at the conference from different models and mechanisms relating to comprehensive and coordinated responses to victims of gender-based and domestic violence were published in the compendium: "A common voice towards a world without GBV – intervention mechanisms and good practice models on gender-based violence".

Oslo 2018: Conference on coordinating bodies and the Istanbul Convention

In March 2018, EEA and Norway Grants stakeholders participated at an international conference on coordinating mechanisms organised in the context of the meeting of the Nordic Council:

“Preventing Violence Against Women in the Nordic Countries". In addition, a founding meeting was held to establish the SYNERGY Network.

Goal: The conference focused on exchanging know-how and sharing best practices to prevent and combat domestic and gender-based violence (DGBV) in Norway, and on presenting the Istanbul Convention and its monitoring and reporting system by GREVIO.

Results: The stakeholders attending the conference identified a common interest for a network model for creating synergies, the SYNERGY Network was established, and the network’s mandate was drafted and agreed after the meeting.

Organisers: The visit was hosted by the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security.

Read more:
Report: *The Istanbul Convention – the Nordic way*

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