

“ Violence against women, including domestic violence, is one of the most serious forms of gender-based violations of human rights in Europe that is still shrouded in silence. ”

Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (2011)

€20 MILLION IN SUPPORT FOR 2009-2014

The Norway Grants has considerably increased the amounts of funding available to combat gender-based violence, with €20 million set aside from 2009 to 2014.

Working through dedicated programmes, the support is now more targeted and strategic. Funded initiatives aim to tackle both the causes and consequences of violence. Public and private bodies, as well as non-governmental organisations, are eligible for funding.

Dedicated programmes to tackle gender-based and domestic violence have been established in Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland and Slovak Republic, with Romania to be agreed. There will also be targeted efforts in Malta, Slovenia and Spain.

Supported activities can include:


- › specialist victim protection services, including refuge shelters, phone lines and crisis centres
- › police training and law-enforcement cooperation
- › advocacy, awareness-raising and campaigns
- › research, mapping and data collection
- › counselling and treatment programmes for offenders
- › specific health-related programmes to reduce the effects of violence.

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COMBATING
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



SAFE FROM FEAR, SAFE FROM VIOLENCE

Violence against women is a violation of fundamental human rights. The effects of violence on a victim's health, both physical and psychological, are severe. Inextricably linked to gender-based inequalities, violence represents a major obstacle to the achievement of full equality between men and women.

An estimated one-fifth to one-quarter of all women in Europe have experienced physical violence at least once during their adult lives, often alongside years of emotional abuse. More than one-tenth have suffered sexual violence involving the use of force.

Eradicating such violence is a challenge for all European countries. It cuts across all backgrounds and socio-economic groups in society, at huge social and financial cost. Although pervasive, it is still largely invisible. Sustained by a culture of silence and shame, it is rarely reported.

Many forms of gender-based violence are crimes – for example, harassment, rape, assault. However some forms of emotional and psychological abuse are not defined as crimes. These types of violence can nevertheless have a devastating and lasting impact on a woman's or child's sense of well-being and autonomy.

Through the EEA and Norway Grants, Norway provides funding worth €1.7 billion for social and economic development in the 12 newest EU member states, as well as Greece, Portugal and Spain.

Iceland and Liechtenstein also contribute to the EEA Grants. The three countries cooperate closely with the European Union through the European Economic Area (EEA) Agreement.

Addressing gender-based violence is vital for improving gender equality and empowering women. Tackling this scourge and supporting its many victims is a dedicated area of support under the Norway Grants.

REFLECTING WIDER AIMS

The significant support channelled through the Norway Grants reflects the importance attached to the issue of gender-based violence for both the donor and beneficiary states.

In recent years, the Norwegian government has introduced measures to ensure that the police, educational institutions and support services are better trained, better coordinated and more capable of detecting, preventing

and dealing with the complex issues raised by domestic violence.

In addition, the Equality 2014 action plan sets out measures to fight and prevent all forms of violence, coercion and abuse, and to ensure that victims receive the help and protection they need, regardless of gender, age, sexual orientation, ethnic background or disability.

STEPPING UP EFFORTS

Combating domestic and gender-based violence is included as a specific area of support under the Norway Grants in almost all beneficiary states for the funding period 2009-2014.

Initiatives to tackle violence against women can also be supported under NGO Funds. Worth around €140 million for 2009-2014, these are being established in all beneficiary states to provide funding to civil society organisations. NGOs play a vital role both as service providers and as watchdogs in this area. Funding can also be channelled through other programme areas under the EEA and Norway Grants, such as gender equality, capacity-building, public health and research.



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WORKING TOGETHER

Shared challenges require shared solutions. To enhance knowledge exchange and mutual learning, bilateral cooperation between organisations in the donor and beneficiary states is widely encouraged in this sector. As well as the partnerships established with

the Norwegian Police Directorate, Norwegian Directorate of Health and the Secretariat for the Shelter Movement, the Norway Grants will also draw on the valuable experience and expertise of the Council of Europe (see box) in this field.

COOPERATION WITH THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

The Council of Europe participates in the EEA and Norway Grants programmes related to human rights, democracy and the rule of law. It is directly involved as a partner in programmes dealing with domestic violence and violence against women.

The Council of Europe has long been engaged in setting standards for preventing and combating gender-based violence and helping countries improve their own situation. In 2011, it adopted a Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence¹. The Convention requires governments to take action to prevent violence, protect its victims and punish the perpetrators.

This fills a significant gap in human rights protection for women. It also allows for the protection of victims of inter-generational domestic violence, as well as men and boys. It provides an important guideline and may serve as a checklist for activities in the beneficiary states. Measures to support countries in their ratification and implementation of the Convention may also be funded under the Norway Grants.

¹ Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (CETS No.210) www.coe.int/conventionviolence