

Mission's activities on prevention of domestic violence



#endVAW



Organization for Security and
Co-operation in Europe
Mission in Kosovo

Support for health care providers on how to identify, refer and treat victims of domestic violence

Five workshops on how to identify, refer and treat victims of domestic violence were held between April and May 2017. Over 100 health care providers from hospitals, emergency and main family health care centres, as well as Kosovo Police Domestic Violence Units representatives, attended the workshops and learned more about the relevant legal and policy framework, and the roles and responsibilities of health care institutions outlined within the *Standard Operating Procedures for Protection from Domestic Violence*. Participants also discussed the implementation of agreements between the Ministry of Health and the Kosovo Shelter Coalition to protect the rights of victims; ways to improve referral mechanisms taking into consideration the confidentiality of potential victims and health care providers legal obligation to report domestic violence cases; challenges faced by service providers; and the provision of psycho-social treatment to perpetrators of domestic violence.

Workshops were organized by the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, Ministry of Health and Kosovo Police and were held in Pejë/Peć, Gjakovë/Đakovica, Prishtinë/Priština, Prizren and Gjiilan/Gnjilane.

Prevention of gender-based violence in schools

To discuss obligations of educational institutions in preventing gender-based violence in schools, in line with the *Standard Operating Procedures for Protection from Domestic Violence*, the OSCE organized five information sessions with elementary and secondary school directors and directors of municipal departments of education. The role of education institutions in identifying potential victims and reporting cases to Kosovo Police-Domestic Violence Units was highlighted during the sessions, as well as ways to develop internal policies to prevent sexual harassment in schools and to strengthen co-operation among teachers, parents and school psychologists.

Information sessions were organized by OSCE Mission in Kosovo and Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. They gathered 135 directors of elementary and secondary schools and directors of municipal education departments from different municipalities.



Advocating for sustainable support for victims of domestic violence

In 2017, the OSCE organized a roundtable with centres for social work, Kosovo Police Domestic Violence Unit, international organizations, civil society organizations, and representatives of relevant embassies and liaison offices in Kosovo to discuss ways to improve protection and ensure sustainable support for victims of domestic violence in Prishtinë/Priština region. The 26 representatives attending the event also discussed how to strengthen institutional support for domestic violence shelters and ensure unimpeded access to shelter services for victims of domestic violence.

Training for judges and prosecutors

The OSCE supported a series of five trainings on domestic violence cases for judges, prosecutors, police investigators, victim advocacy officers and social workers of Gjilan/Gnjilane, Prishtinë/Priština, Gjakovë/Đakovica, Prizren and Mitrovicë/Mitrovica regions. Delivered by Kosovo Judicial Academy trainers in April and May 2017, the trainings offered insight into the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence, as well as investigation and prosecution techniques under that law.

Roundtables on Domestic Violence cases in the justice system

Aiming to improve the handling of domestic violence cases, a capacity-building roundtable with 24 judges, prosecutors, police officers, representatives of centres for social work, and victim advocacy officers from Gjilan/Gnjilane and Ferizaj/Uroševac regions was held in July 2017. The roundtable started with a presentation on domestic violence, and continued with a discussion between participants on the nature of domestic violence cases, particularly the cultural sensitivities and complexities in prosecution. Participants concluded that these cases should be dealt with priority, and in order for the system to operate successfully in handling them, all institutions involved need to be prepared professionally and respect provisions of the law.



Monitoring hearings: assessment of justice system's response to the gender-based violence

Monitoring and reporting on domestic violence cases and their handling by the justice system institutions is one of the core programmatic priorities of the OSCE. Through monitoring of court hearings involving domestic violence cases, the OSCE evaluates how institutions respond to such cases and provides recommendations for remedial actions to be undertaken by the institutions for improvement of the situation. It is difficult to establish the number of domestic violence cases in the justice system, since domestic violence is not foreseen as a distinct criminal offence in the Criminal Code, but is scattered in a number of corresponding criminal offences such as light bodily injury, grave bodily injury, threat, attempted murder, and coercion. One of areas of concern observed through court monitoring is the timely issuance and handling of the emergency protection orders, as measures of restraining the offender to re-commit the offence. The OSCE has monitored more than 50 court sessions in which the protection orders were issued. Further, the OSCE follows up and gets regular updates on the cases by meeting respective judges handling domestic violence cases, victims' advocates and visiting shelters and other respondent entities.

Supporting Kosovo Forum of Women Judges and Prosecutors

The OSCE supported the Kosovo Forum of Women Judges and Prosecutors to organize a series of roundtables on the legal framework related to the prevention of domestic violence and difficulties with its implementation in practice. Roundtables gathered justice system actors, police officers, judges and prosecutors, victim's advocates, defence counsels and respective municipal gender officials. The roundtables served the purpose of raising issues of common concern among participating respondent institutions and addressing them through available legal and institutional mechanisms for protection, redress and rehabilitation of victims, in most efficient way. The OSCE also supported the Forum through distributing their Catalogue of Victims' Rights, a referral tool with references to respondent governmental and non-governmental agencies, active in the field of prevention and rehabilitation of victims of domestic violence in each of the five regions in Kosovo, and their contact details, to make it easier for the victims to seek assistance.

Supporting Inter-ministerial Working Group against Domestic Violence

The OSCE provides advice to the Inter-ministerial Working Group against Domestic Violence, comprised of deputy ministers, domestic violence focal points from the ministries, and representatives of international organizations and civil society. The advice focuses on the importance of implementation of the policy framework on domestic violence addressing protection and prevention, identification, referral, co-ordination, legislation, investigation and proceedings, as well as rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of domestic violence.

Sub-group meetings on gender-based violence

The OSCE is member of the sub-group on Gender-based Violence, which is part of the Security and Gender Group (SGG) and includes representatives of the international organizations, civil society and Kosovo institutions. The sub-group is established to promote, enhance and co-ordinate efforts for gender equality and women empowerment in Kosovo, contribute to women's and men's safety and security, and emphasize that women are equal contributors to and participants in shaping security policies and institutions.

Support for Sixteen Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence

Sixteen Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence is an international campaign held every year from 25th November to 10th December to challenge violence against women and girls. As part of the 2017 campaign, the OSCE and Kosovo Police Domestic Violence Section organized four information sessions on domestic violence and sexual harassment for upper elementary school students and staff of educational institutions on how to identify, prevent, refer, report and discuss cases of domestic violence and sexual harassment. Additional sessions on the same topics took place with approximately 150 teachers in five municipalities in Kosovo. Furthermore, the OSCE developed leaflets and supported broadcasting of television spots to raise awareness on gender based violence. The OSCE also supported a Ballet Performance “One Day,” inspired by real stories of women in Kosovo, performed to shed light on several gender issues through narrative-based dance.

Raising awareness among young men about gender-based violence

Gender equality work is very often limited to women empowerment activities, leaving men aside. In order to change this, the OSCE has implemented a project during 2016 and 2017 and engaged men and boys in gender equality promotion. In this regard, the OSCE conducted awareness raising campaigns and supported civil society organizations that work with boys and young men in schools on ending gender based violence. It has also partnered with United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in conducting the first comprehensive household study on men's attitudes and practices on a wide variety of topics related to gender equality. A strong focus has been put on domestic violence. The results of this study – the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) - will serve as a basis for evidence based advocacy to be conducted during 2018.

Planned activities on domestic violence in 2018

Sixteen Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign through broadcasting of two TV debates and a conference with high-level representatives from Kosovo institutions to discuss challenges, new patterns and ways forward in promoting and protecting the rights of victims of domestic violence.

Awareness raising campaigns and outreach activities with Kosovo Police on gender-based violence, the roles of the general public and the police in contributing to changes in perspectives and attitudes on this issue.

Supporting the Co-ordinator on Domestic Violence/Deputy Minister of Justice and the Inter-ministerial Working Group on Domestic Violence to organize five one-day workshops aiming to enhance co-ordination among relevant domestic violence stakeholders and service providers and improve protection of victims of domestic violence.

Advance trainings for Kosovo Police trainers on first police response and assistance to victims of domestic and sexual abuse, who will then be expected to reach out and transfer the knowledge gained to as many fellow officers as possible.

Supporting 25 one-day workshops with the Ombudsperson Institution, Centres for Social Work, Shelter Coalition, the Agency for Gender Equality, Coordinator on Domestic Violence and relevant civil society organizations aiming to build sustainable local capacities to monitor and advocate on behalf of victims of human rights abuse, including victims of gender-based violence.

The OSCE will conduct a Well-Being and Safety of Women Survey in 2018 to generate data and create an evidence base on different forms of violence against women. The study will involve a Kosovo-wide sample, and by using the methodology of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, it will explore violence against women in conflict and post-conflict situations, thus contributing for improved policymaking by key central- and local-level institutions.

The OSCE Mission supports Kosovo institutions, service providers, and civil society representatives in their work to **prevent domestic violence** and to more effectively protect the rights of victims of domestic violence. It also organizes activities to raise awareness of the need to eliminate gender-based violence.

0800 11112
#endVAW

Learn more about OSCE's work on domestic violence at
osce.org/mission-in-kosovo/human-rights
osce.org/mission-in-kosovo/gender-equality

Follow us on
facebook.com/oscekosovo
twitter.com/oscekosovo
instagram.com/oscekosovo
youtube.com/oscekosovo

