

## **GREECE**

# **Recommendations to improve data collection on intimate partner violence by the police and justice sectors**



The recommendations were developed after an in-depth analysis of data collection from the police and justice sectors. The relevance and feasibility of the recommendations were discussed with national professionals whose work is closely related to the topic at a meeting on 6 April 2017 in Athens, Greece. The suggestions were revised upon participants' feedback. The recommendations aim to improve administrative data collection on intimate partner violence to better inform policies and to help the Member States meet the monitoring requirements outlined in both Directive 2012/29/EU (the Victims' Rights Directive) and the Istanbul Convention.

## 1. Legislative and policy recommendations

### Strengthen political commitment

Political commitment is crucial to improving administrative data collection on intimate partner violence. It provides a catalyst for change and ensures the sustainability of systematic and harmonised data collection practices on intimate partner violence in the police and justice sectors. Any proposal for change is likely to be met with resistance unless senior decision-makers strongly support it and persons involved in its implementation clearly understand the added value and are given the right tools to introduce the change. In Greece, both the police and justice sectors provide data related to intimate partner violence. However, this data is only partial and data collection processes need improvement. The General Secretariat for Gender Equality has already expressed its commitment to provide support and offer expertise in monitoring gender-based violence.

**It is recommended** that the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights and the Ministry of Citizen Protection support efforts to improve administrative data collection on intimate partner violence by including specific measures in their action plans, identifying focal points in each relevant institution and monitoring progress in the implementation of those measures.

### Amend existing legislation and legal definitions relating to intimate partner violence

A specific Domestic Violence Act (Law 3500/2006) covers some aspects of intimate partner violence. However, the act does not encompass the whole spectrum of intimate partner violence as it pertains only to partners who share a household. Additionally, the existing legal provisions cover physical and sexual violence against an intimate partner but exclude other forms of violence, such as psychological (only the offence of threat is covered by the law) or economic violence. This definition does not correspond to the definition of intimate partner violence as it is outlined in the Istanbul Convention.

**It is recommended** to enlarge the scope of relationships included in the Domestic Violence Act, whereby relationships where current and former partners do not share a household are taken into account, and to incorporate psychological or economic violence in the context of intimate partner violence.

### Develop a legal or policy framework on data collection

In Greece there is currently no legal or policy framework in place to regulate data collection on intimate partner violence or violence against women. Developing such frameworks would be useful to support the move towards a comprehensive harmonisation of data collection across the police and justice sectors. It would also provide a catalyst for the implementation of policies which aim at improving the quality of the data collected on intimate partner violence and would strengthen the collaboration between institutions responsible for collecting data on intimate partner violence at the national level.

**It is recommended** to develop a legal or policy framework that identifies the need for data collection of intimate partner violence, highlighting the responsibilities of different stakeholders and data collection procedures and processes.

### Develop guidelines on how to improve the recording of intimate partner violence incidents

Guidelines that provide information on both data collection methods and well-defined responsibilities (with regard to the data collection of intimate partner violence) can help improve the quality of data collected by the police and justice sectors.

**It is recommended** to develop guidelines that establish the scope of data collection, the specific variables that need to be recorded and who should be responsible, as well as a data collection methodology. This should be done under the direction of the Observatory of the General Secretariat for Gender Equality with the objective of ensuring that more detailed data be publicly available and that Greece can fulfil its reporting obligations as outlined in the Victims' Rights Directive.

## Take steps to estimate the costs of intimate partner violence to the police and justice sectors

Violence against women in general and intimate partner violence in particular have far-reaching impacts on societies. A considerable amount of human and financial resources is devoted to dealing with cases of violence within the police and justice institutions. No studies have been undertaken that endeavour to estimate the economic burden of intimate partner violence on the police and justice sectors. By developing an action plan to do so, the phenomenon could be understood in the context of the economic burden it creates.

**It is recommended** that a purpose-built economic model be adopted so that the costs of intimate partner violence to the police and justice sectors can be estimated. The purpose-built model developed by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) can be used to estimate the cost of violence.

## 2. Data collection infrastructure and cooperation between different authorities

### Establish a standardised data recording system in the justice sector

While data from the police sector provides vital insight into how the criminal justice system deals with intimate partner violence against women, additional data from the justice sector is essential to complete the picture. This data provides insight into how victims of intimate partner violence are either protected or not by the system. Additionally, data availability from the justice sector greatly increases the chances of fulfilling reporting requirements under legal instruments such as the Victims' Rights Directive. In Greece, data collection infrastructure in the justice sector is not unified, as several data sources collect different types of justice data. The primary actors are the Justice and Public Order Statistics Section of the Social Statistics Division, a statistical body, and the Public Prosecutor's Office, an administrative body. This variety of sources presents some challenges when trying to present an overview of the data available from the justice sector on intimate partner violence.

**It is recommended** that Greece take the necessary steps to unify the data recording system used in the justice sector by adopting a standardised electronic data recording system.

### Improve the harmonisation of police and justice data

Both the police and the justice system use the classifications outlined in the Penal Code to collect data related to intimate partner violence. However, as both sectors use different database systems, the current potential for data harmonisation is compromised.

**It is recommended** that the police and justice recording systems be unified through the development of a standard data collection system.

### Establish a coordinating body or extend the mandate of the Observatory of the General Secretariat for Gender Equality

Research suggests that the implementation of a coordinating body would result in an improvement of the quality and availability of statistics. Such a body would also promote good practices and procedures on data collection on intimate partner violence. The limited organisational structure for data collection on intimate partner violence remains a significant challenge. Indeed, in the absence of a coordinating body, there is limited potential to improve data harmonisation at the national level.

**It is recommended** that the Observatory of the General Secretariat for Gender Equality extend its mandate and coordinate the constituent authorities (police sector, justice sector and the Hellenic Statistical Authority) in order to establish a framework and compile and publish statistics on intimate partner violence. A protocol of cooperation between all institutions and stakeholders involved should be developed in which all of the actions and responsibilities of the data collection process are clearly defined.

### Make information on all the variables publicly accessible and more detailed

Publicly available information on crime statistics is limited. While police data on perpetrators is statistically processed, the data on victims is available only on request. More detailed and transparent publications of data would be very useful for the wider community to understand intimate partner violence prevalence and the availability of data. This would also diminish the burden on stakeholders who are dealing with data requests, as the data could then be easily obtained online. Moreover, the data that is currently available only provides partial information in the context of intimate partner violence. Although the police collects partial data that could be used to populate the indicators developed by EIGE, its corresponding publications do not provide enough information on specific incidents. Indeed, the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator is not specified, nor is the age of the victim.

**It is recommended** that information that pertains to intimate partner violence and is published in official police publications (online and in print) provide fully disaggregated data with breakdowns on the age and sex of the victim and of the perpetrator as well as on the relationship between them. This is in order to differentiate cases of intimate partner violence between partners from other relationships in the domestic sphere. Additional information on the metadata should also be made available in this format.

### 3. Technical recommendations

#### Improve information recorded on the victim in the police and justice sectors

While data collected at police level records information on the victim, it is not possible to disaggregate this data by age. Consequently, it is not possible to determine if the numbers relating to women victims of domestic violence concern all female victims (all age groups) or only those who are 18 and over. Data collected at justice level records information on the perpetrator, but no information on the victim. Consequently, it is currently not possible to cross-check the relationship between victims and perpetrators in cases of intimate partner violence recorded in the justice sector.

**It is recommended** that the police take steps to enable the systematic recording of the age of victims. It is additionally recommended that the justice sector make information on the sex of the victim a mandatory variable in order to comply with data requirements of the Victims' Rights Directive.

#### Record the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator in both sectors

Recording the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator is absolutely fundamental to any form of data collection on cases of intimate partner violence: this disaggregation enables the identification of offences in the context of an intimate relationship. Currently, the victim–perpetrator relationship is not systematically recorded by the police, and no information on this relationship is available from the justice sector (as no information on the sex of the victim is recorded). Information from a relationship variable is necessary to gather accurate data on intimate partner violence; thus, there is an urgent need to ensure that information on the victim–perpetrator relationship is systematically recorded.

**It is recommended** that the necessary changes be made to the recording systems at both the police and the justice level to facilitate the documentation of the victim–perpetrator relationship, ensuring that the relationship variable is disaggregated into different forms of variables. This will enable intimate partner violence to be differentiated from other relationships in the domestic sphere.

#### Indicator 1 — Annual number of women (aged 18 and over), victims of intimate partner violence <sup>(1)</sup> committed by men (aged 18 and over), as recorded by police

#### Indicator 9 — Women victims of intimate femicide <sup>(2)</sup> (aged 18 and over) committed by a male intimate partner (aged 18 and over), as a share of the women victims of homicide (aged 18 and over)

##### For indicators 1 and 9

As Greece has a specific act on domestic violence and records the number of domestic violence-related incidents, data is available to populate indicators 1 and 9. However, some important fields are missing, including information on the age of the victim. The scope of the legislation on domestic violence is also limited to formal relationships and to physical and sexual violence, so certain pieces of important data are not recorded.

**It is recommended** that the scope of existing legislation on domestic violence be amended to enable the recording of less formal forms of relationships (to include those not sharing a household) and to include other forms of violence such as psychological and economic intimate partner violence. It is additionally recommended that data on the sex and the age of the victim be systematically recorded.

<sup>(1)</sup> Any act of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence that occurs between former or current spouse or partner, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim (EIGE, *Terminology and indicators for data collection: Rape, femicide and intimate partner violence*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2017).

<sup>(2)</sup> The killing of a woman by an intimate partner and death of a woman as a result of a practice that is harmful to women. Intimate partner is understood as former or current spouse or partner, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim (EIGE, 2017).

**Indicator 2 — Annual number of reported offences related to intimate partner violence against women committed by men (aged 18 and over)**

**Indicator 3 — Annual number of men (aged 18 and over) perpetrators of intimate partner violence against women (and percentage of male population that are perpetrators)**

**For indicators 2 and 3**

Data is not available to populate indicators 2 and 3.

**It is recommended** that data on offences and perpetrators be collected and made publicly available in annual reports.

**Indicator 4 — Annual number of women (aged 18 and over) victims of physical intimate partner violence <sup>(3)</sup> committed by men (aged 18 and over), as recorded by police**

**Indicator 5 — Annual number of women (aged 18 and over) victims of psychological intimate partner violence <sup>(4)</sup> committed by men (aged 18 and over), as recorded by police**

**Indicator 7 — Annual number of women (aged 18 and over) victims of economic intimate partner violence <sup>(5)</sup> committed by men (aged 18 and over), as recorded by police**

**For indicators 4, 5 and 7**

Incidents of domestic violence are not recorded based on the specific forms of violence which constitute it. Therefore data on physical, psychological and economic intimate partner violence is currently not available. Nevertheless, it can be assumed that this data can indeed be obtained, as the police uses offences listed in the Criminal Code to record incidents of violence.

**It is recommended** that the offences aggregated to obtain this statistical category be identified so that these indicators can be populated.

**Indicator 6 — Annual number of women (aged 18 and over) victims of sexual intimate partner violence <sup>(6)</sup> committed by men (aged 18 and over), as recorded by police**

In the absence of information on the specific relationship between the victim and the perpetrator, it is not possible to differentiate incidents of sexual intimate partner violence from those happening in the domestic sphere. Therefore the data that could be used to populate this indicator is only approximate. Furthermore, information on the age and the sex of the victim is lacking.

**It is recommended** that data on the victim–perpetrator relationship be collected in order to differentiate incidents of sexual intimate partner violence from other offences occurring in the domestic sphere, in addition to data on the sex and the age of the victim.

**Indicator 8 — Annual number of women (aged 18 and over) victims reporting rape <sup>(7)</sup> committed by men (aged 18 and over), as recorded by police**

No major issue has been identified with regards to the number of women reporting rape (except the lack of information on the age of the victim).

**It is recommended** that data on the age of the victim be recorded to fully populate this indicator.

<sup>(3)</sup> Any act which causes physical harm to the partner or former partner as a result of unlawful physical force. Physical violence can take the form of, among others, serious and minor assault, deprivation of liberty and manslaughter (EIGE, 2017).

<sup>(4)</sup> Any act or behaviour which causes psychological harm to the partner or former partner. Psychological violence can take the form of, among others, coercion, defamation, verbal insult or harassment (EIGE, 2017).

<sup>(5)</sup> Any act or behaviour which causes economic harm to the partner. Economic violence can take the form of, among others, property damage, restricting access to financial resources, education or the labour market, or not complying with economic responsibilities, such as alimony (EIGE, 2017).

<sup>(6)</sup> Any sexual act performed on the victim without consent. Sexual violence can take the form of rape or sexual assault (EIGE, 2017).

<sup>(7)</sup> Sexual penetration, whether vaginal, anal or oral, through the use of object or body parts, without consent, using force, coercion or by taking advantage of the vulnerability of the victim (EIGE, 2017).

**Indicator 9 — Women victims of intimate femicide <sup>(8)</sup> (aged 18 and over) committed by a male intimate partner (aged 18 and over), as a share of the women victims of homicide (aged 18 and over)**

The absence of specific information on the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator means that incidents of intimate partner femicide cannot be identified, nor can the age of the victim. Due to these limitations, only approximate data can be used to populate this indicator.

**It is recommended** that data on the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator be collected.

**Indicator 10 — Annual number of protection orders applied for and granted in cases of intimate partner violence against women by types of court**

No data on protection orders in cases of intimate partner violence against women is collected by the justice sector.

**It is recommended** that data on this information be collected and made publicly available in annual reports.

**Indicator 11 — Annual number of men (aged 18 and over) prosecuted for intimate partner violence against women****Indicator 12 — Annual number of men (aged 18 and over) sentenced for intimate partner violence against women****Indicator 13 — Annual number of men (aged 18 and over) sentenced for intimate partner violence against women and held in prison or with a sanction involving a form of deprivation of liberty****For indicators 11, 12 and 13**

The justice sector collects data on crimes committed and criminal sentences given. However, the justice sector does not provide information on the victim's sex. This gap should not impede the collection of the requested data. The only potential issue is if no information is provided on the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator and if data is recorded under the generic offence of 'domestic violence'.

**It is recommended** that the justice sector provide disaggregated information on the different offences included under the more general offence of 'domestic violence' in order to be able to differentiate incidents of sexual intimate partner violence from other offences occurring in the domestic sphere.

<sup>(8)</sup> The killing of a woman by an intimate partner and death of a woman as a result of a practice that is harmful to women. Intimate partner is understood as former or current spouse or partner, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim (EIGE, 2017).



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