

# Awareness raising

## AWARENESS-RAISING IN ADDRESSING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Awareness-raising is a fundamental component of primary prevention strategies aiming at:

- changing attitudes, behaviours and beliefs that normalise and tolerate domestic violence among general public;
- preventing men and women from becoming victims or perpetrators of abusive relationships; and
- informing wider public and especially victims and perpetrators about the resources available to tackle the problem.

Awareness-raising campaigns are recognised as the most efficient and effective means of communicating information especially to the general public. They can meet all the above mentioned objectives, emphasizing the fact that domestic violence is not a private matter, but an unacceptable violation of human rights. Awareness raising is a two-way street, fostering communication and information exchange in order to improve mutual understanding as well as mobilising communities and the whole society to bring about the necessary change in attitudes and behaviour.

## AWARENESS-RAISING IMPLEMENTATION ACROSS EUROPE

The results of the study show that public awareness campaigns are widespread in the EU-27 and Croatia. They are widely represented as a key tool in national action plans of most Member States (87.5%); and to a smaller extent also in regional action plans (37%). The importance of awareness-raising campaigns on domestic violence is also considered within legal provisions at both national and regional level in a quarter (25%) and a fifth (20%) of EU-27 and Croatia respectively.

In addition, one fifth (20%) of the EU-27 and Croatia have identified good practice assessment criteria for domestic violence awareness-raising campaigns.

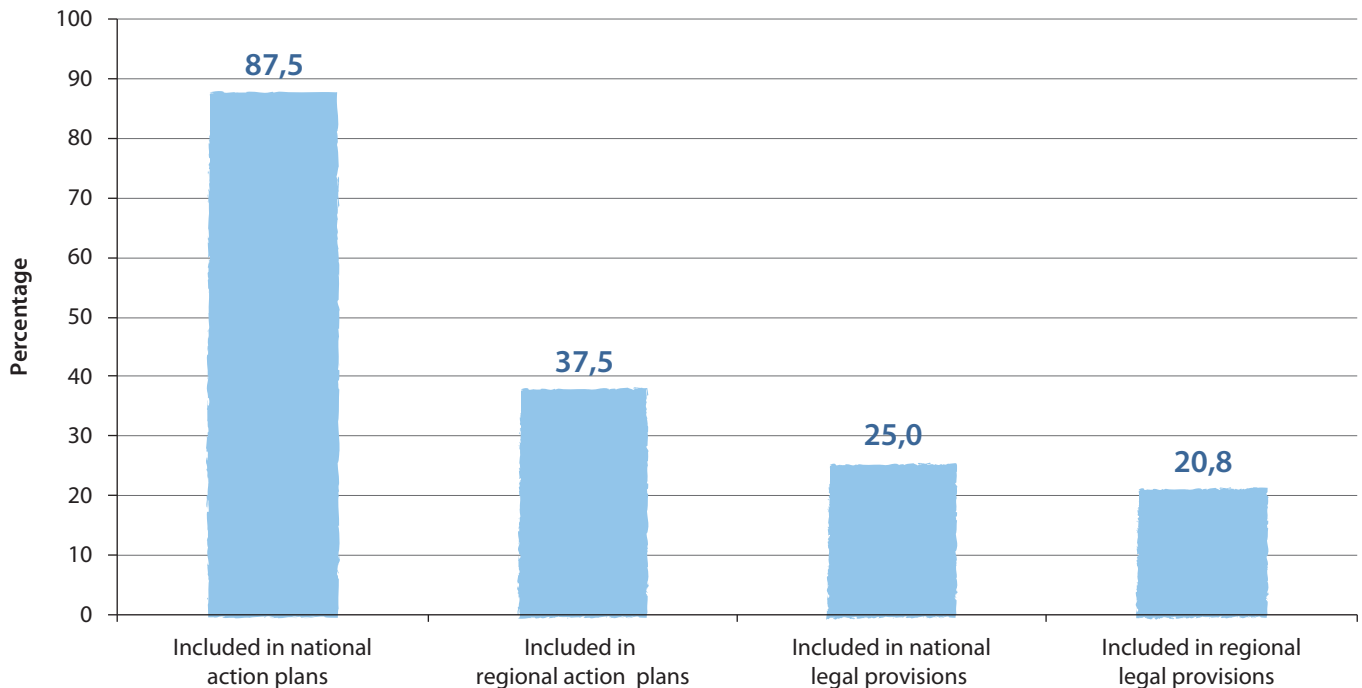
During the study, 144 examples of implemented domestic violence awareness-raising campaigns were collected all over the EU-27 and Croatia. Among those:

- 76% have a national coverage and 22% a regional one, while the remaining ones are transnational campaigns;
- 52% are promoted by NGOs; 42% by governmental bodies or statutory agencies; and 6% by other actors like research institutes. Often, they are jointly conducted.

## ABOUT THE STUDY

The European Institute for Gender Equality – EIGE commissioned the study on 'Collection of methods, tools and good practices in the field of domestic violence (as described by area D of Beijing Platform for Action)' in order to identify, collect and systematise the resources and information on training in dealing with domestic violence, awareness-raising and victims support services; identify gaps and needs; and provide recommendations for further development. The study was carried out by IRS – Istituto per la Ricerca Sociale in partnership with the Gender Studies, Equality and Equal opportunities Interuniversity Observatory (G.I.O.) through a network of country experts in the 27 Member States and Croatia. More information and references about the study are available at: <http://eige.europa.eu/content/activities/gender-based-violence>.

## Awareness-raising campaigns implementation across Europe



Collaboration among different stakeholders is one of the key factors of successful campaigning: the involvement of governmental institutions adds strength to the campaigns and allows system-wide impact, while the expertise of NGOs can provide specialised knowledge and a link between the campaign's messages and support services in a specific locality/country.

Most of the collected examples of domestic violence awareness-raising campaigns are addressed to the general public with a significant proportion targeting boys and girls.

Leaflets, brochures, handbooks and manuals were also collected (total number of 157), directed at professionals (61%) and at victims (39%), mainly with a national coverage.

Handbooks and manuals are usually perceived as relevant tools offering professionals organised and handy knowledge which they can manage individually or in groups. Leaflets and brochures are fundamental tools to spread knowledge on victim support services

and programs aimed at perpetrators and to promote the key message that a way out of violence is possible.

The most recent trends in awareness-raising methods and tools collected as part of this study include the following:

- websites and information materials specifically designed and conceived to meet the needs of ethnic minority and migrant women victims of domestic violence;
- websites and information materials specifically designed and conceived to meet the needs of disabled women victims of domestic violence, including deaf and blind women;
- lesbian and gay communication strategies directed to overcome the taboo of same sex violence;
- minimum standards for domestic violence awareness-raising campaigns.

## EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICES IN AWARENESS-RAISING CAMPAIGNS ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- **Croatian National Campaign ‘Silence is not gold’** (*Šutnja nije zlato*), promoted by the CESI – Centre for Education, Counselling and Research and the O.M.G. – open media group, to raise awareness on gender stereotypes and other causes of domestic violence among youth. It included research, media campaign based on research results, educational activities, and advocacy to change public policies (2007-8).
- **Austrian Travelling Exhibition ‘Behind the façade’** jointly promoted by a range of stakeholders: Gewaltschutzzentrum OÖ; the Network of the Wien Women Houses; the Ministry for Equal Opportunity; and the Ministry for Home Affairs. The exhibition – designed as a flat that consists of a kitchen, a bedroom, a children’s room and a living room – provides information through communication tools on the causes, forms and effects of violence in the family, and gives detailed information on the new Austria Violence Protection Act and on the programmes available for perpetrators (on-going since 2005).
- **Dutch campaign ‘Enough is enough. It is up to you to ask for help’** (*Nu is het genoeg. Hulpin-schakelenheb je zelf in de hand*) is a joint initiative

of the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport together with the Dutch Domestic Violence Support Centre. In 2010, the online shop ‘My Secrets Cosmetics’ joined the campaign, innovating the main communication campaign strategy. The shop offers a unique range of products that helps mask bruises, seals and shines cut lips, and removes blood stains. Each click on the website leads to the campaign message: ‘There is a better solution to the problem of domestic violence. Call 0900 126 26 26 for advice and help. Or visit [www.steunpunthuiselijkgeweld.nl](http://www.steunpunthuiselijkgeweld.nl)’.

## CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES IN AWARENESS-RAISING CAMPAIGNS RELATED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- strong basis in human rights and gender analysis
- clear, appropriate, comprehensive definitions of domestic violence
- women/victim-centred approach
- men/perpetrators accountable for the violence they inflict
- emphasis on equality issues and anti-discriminatory practice
- recognition of women/victims’ and men/perpetrators’ diversity

## SPECIFIC CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES IN AWARENESS-RAISING CAMPAIGNS ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- campaign planning grounded on evidence
- campaign strategy
- campaign implementation
- strong communications strategy
- contact numbers for survivors/perpetrators addressing men and boys as perpetrators
- promoting leadership and guidance by the women’s movement
- mobilising communities
- multi-sector approaches
- multi-level approaches

## ABOUT THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTE FOR GENDER EQUALITY (EIGE)

The European Institute for Gender Equality is the EU knowledge centre on gender equality. EIGE supports policymakers and all relevant institutions in their efforts to make equality between women and men a reality for all Europeans and beyond, by providing them with specific expertise and comparable and reliable information on gender equality in Europe.

More information: <http://eige.europa.eu>



<http://eige.europa.eu>

ISBN 978-92-9218-186-4

doi:10.2839/53350

ISBN 978-92-9218-186-4



Publications Office



MH-30-12-146-EN-C