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**Draft Strategic Framework on Violence Against Women
2019-2022**

DRAFT



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1. Introduction

Gender-based violence is violence that is directed against a person because of that person's gender or that affects persons of a particular gender disproportionately. Violence against women is a form of gender-based violence that affects women disproportionately as it is directly connected with the unequal distribution of power between women and men in society. This power imbalance perpetuates the devaluation and subordination of women, and violates women's fundamental rights and freedoms. This framework document refers to violence against women, which is rooted in women's unequal position in society in relation to men, and represents one of the most persistent human rights violations of modern times.

This framework defines **violence against women** as 'a violation of human rights and a form of discrimination against women and shall mean all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life'.¹

2. Purpose of this Framework: to define the contribution of EIGE in addressing Violence against Women in the European Union

This document lays out the approach that EIGE proposes to take over the period 2019-2022 to support the work of the European Institutions and Member States in identifying forms of gender-based violence and in formulating proposals to monitor the measures to eradicate it. The following framework was envisaged within the internal strategic discussion on EIGE's future work in the area of violence against women. The structure of the document builds upon the Strategic Framework on Violence Against Women 2015-2018.

Elimination of violence against women is one of the key priorities for the EU, established in the Treaty of the European Union². The EU framework for combating violence against women is composed of a number of Directives, conclusions, recommendations, guiding principles and action plans. The EU's signing of the Istanbul Convention on 13 June 2017 was a significant milestone during a year of actions focused on combating violence against women.

Since 2010, EIGE has been contributing to increased knowledge on various types of violence against women in the EU. *Inter-alia*, EIGE has highlighted the connection between gender inequality and violence against women, developed a comprehensive proposal of how to measure it using the domain of Violence in EIGE's Gender Equality Index; explored differences in definitions, concepts and understandings of violence against women and its forms, and supported the collection of harmonised administrative data on intimate partner violence across Member States, as well as completed research on a range of thematic areas: female genital mutilation, protection of victims through a gender-analysis of the Victim's Rights Directive from the perspective of a victim of gender-

¹ Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, <http://www.conventions.coe.int/Treaty/EN/Treaties/Html/210.html>.

² Declaration on Article 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.



based violence and separately a comparative analysis of the Victims' Rights Directive and the Anti-trafficking Directive, and a study on Costs of Violence.

EIGE's Strategic framework on violence against women 2019 – 2022 is based on the consideration that violence against women is rooted in gender norms and stereotypes. Therefore changing societal attitudes towards gender to achieve gender equality is essential to the elimination of violence against women and girls. As such, data, understanding and information, measurement and analysis are needed to support the Member States in implementing their commitments on combating violence against women. The long-term goal of this strategy is to **strengthen capacity for institutional response to violence against women**, while incorporating the principles of due diligence,³ namely the Protection of women, the Prosecution and investigation of incidents, the Punishment of perpetrators and the Provision of redress.

This strategy envisages two specific objectives:

1. **improvement of administrative data collection** on violence against women, and more effective implementation of due diligence
2. **Secondary prevention** of violence against women.

These objectives link to Articles 11–15 of the Istanbul Convention which require parties to collect disaggregated data and undertake preventative measures including awareness-raising, education and training of actors (namely professionals in the police and justice sectors).

EIGE will continue to assist Member States in meeting the reporting requirements under the Victims' Rights Directive, mandatory as of November 2017, and where relevant the Istanbul Convention⁴. EIGE will also continue to promote and disseminate its previous work in the area of violence against women, through targeted communication and high-quality products for stakeholders.

3. Focus of this Strategic Framework

This section proposes (provisional) outputs and the broad actions required for each year from 2019–2022. However, for the later years, these should be considered as indicative, as the outputs from the early years combined with external factors may require revisions to the framework.

The two overarching objectives of this Framework for the period 2019–2022 are outlined below:

3.1 Improvement of administrative data collection

Given that the improvement of availability, quality and comparability of data at EU level remains a key priority in the area of gender-based violence, EIGE will continue the promotion of its 13

³ As laid out within the Framework on State Accountability to Eliminate Violence Against Women and reiterated by the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention).

⁴ Ratified by 17 EU Member States, as of 27.02.2018.

indicators on intimate partner violence for police and the judiciary, reaching agreements with Member States to collect data in line with EIGE’s definitions for statistical purposes. As this is a complex and challenging task, EIGE will start collecting data on each form of violence progressively, i.e., each year the focus will be on a different form of violence. Firstly, EIGE’s proposal to unify definitions will be introduced, when needed. Secondly, EIGE will assess Member States’ capacity to populate respective indicators with relevant data, including the satellite domain of EIGE’s Gender Equality Index. Finally, EIGE will provide technical support to Member States in their efforts to improve their data collection processes. EIGE expects to increase Member States’ capacity to populate indicators gradually; the process for each form of violence will last up to 3 years.

Table 1. Timeline of EIGE’s work plan on improvement of administrative data collection 2019-2022

| 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|---|------------------------|----------------------|------|
| Femicide | | | |
| <i>Terminology</i> | <i>Assessment</i> | <i>Supporting MS</i> | |
| Risk Estimation of Female Genital Mutilation | | | |
| | <i>Risk estimation</i> | <i>Dissemination</i> | |
| Gender Equality Index | | | |
| <i>Expanding the measurement framework of VAW</i> | | | |
| Physical violence | | | |
| | <i>Assessment</i> | <i>Supporting MS</i> | |
| Rape and Sexual violence | | | |
| <i>Terminology</i> | | | |

Proposed areas of work:

Since 2010, and in response to requests from the European Commission and the Member States, EIGE has been actively contributing to the EU’s important work towards increasing knowledge about the dimensions and forms of violence against women. EIGE’s work in this area focused *inter alia* on mapping the data, information and existing initiatives to combat this phenomenon and identifying challenges and providing recommendations to overcome it. Emerging forms of violence (cyber violence and the risks of digitalisation for children and young people) have also been a focus of preliminary desk research. As other institutional actors are working in this area EIGE will monitor the developments in research and collect information as it becomes available. It will be included among the list of Proposals for additional tasks in Annex X of the SPD 2019-2021 and 2020-2022.

- **Femicide** - otherwise known as gender-based killing of women. Lack of an official international definition of femicide leads to a limited understanding, and thereby capacity to respond to the

problem. EIGE developed a basic definition of femicide in intimate relationships for statistical purposes and assessed Member States' capacity to populate the indicator on femicide in 2017 (17 MS's are only able to populate homicide data in the context of intimate partner violence as a proxy). In 2019, EIGE will further broaden the development of a classification of femicide not limited to intimate partner relationships and assess to what extent Member States can populate it with exact data. In 2021 EIGE will support Member States' efforts in improving their data collection processes, which will, in turn, support the monitoring efforts of the proposed European Observatory on Femicide, *inter alia*. By 2021, EIGE expects seven (7) Member States to be fully able to populate indicators on femicide and by end of 2022 we expect 14 more to be able to do so. To be successful in this endeavour will entail intensive and tailored exchanges with each Member State.

- **Female Genital Mutilation** - In 2020, EIGE will apply its methodology to estimate the number of girls at risk to another group of Member States. Secondary data on the migrant population will be collected, combined with qualitative research. These risk estimations will be added to the 10 country data sets already collected through EIGE's studies on female genital mutilation in 2015 and 2018. In this way, comparability of data on the risk of female genital mutilation in the EU will be increased and Member States further supported to prevent the practice. Through recommendations, EIGE will support policies to combat female genital mutilation and feed EU migration policy on integration, return and relocation.
- **Physical violence** - EIGE developed a basic definition of intimate physical violence for statistical purposes and assessed Member States' capacity to populate the indicator on physical violence in intimate relationships in 2017 (10 Member States are able to populate with exact data). In 2021 EIGE will support Member States' efforts in improving their data collection processes on indicator on physical violence. EIGE expects that by 2022 18 Member States will be able to populate this indicator. To be successful in this endeavour will entail intensive and tailored exchanges with each Member State.
- **Rape and sexual violence** – EIGE developed basic definitions of intimate rape and sexual violence for statistical purposes and assessed MS's capacity to populate these indicators in 2017 (24 and 11 MS's, respectively, are able to populate the indicators with exact data). In 2022 EIGE will support MS's efforts in improving their data collection processes on rape and sexual violence. To be successful in this endeavour will entail intensive and tailored exchanges with each Member State.
- **Gender Statistics Database:** In 2019-2022, EIGE will continue to explore potential data sources for measuring incidents and prevalence of violence against women to be included in EIGE's Gender Statistics Database.
- **Eurostat Task Force:** Throughout 2019-2022 and as a member of the Eurostat Task Force, EIGE will continue to support the implementation of the Eurostat survey on gender-based violence, through the contribution of gender expertise to the process of piloting the questionnaire and start of the Survey. EIGE will then prepare for processing the resulting data and micro data for inclusion in the Gender Equality Index and other relevant areas.



- **Gender Equality Index:** In 2021 and upon availability of data collected by EUROSTAT, EIGE will further expand the measurement framework of violence against women in the next edition of the Gender Equality Index.

3.2 More effective implementation of due diligence and secondary prevention of violence against women

EIGE identifies the police and justice sector as pivotal to the secondary prevention of gender-based violence and the support of the due diligence process. The law enforcement sector plays a key role not only in the punishment and prosecution of perpetrators and the provision of redress to victims, but also in the protection of (potential) victims and prevention of violence against women as a whole. The police and judiciary are crucial in carrying out risk assessment and management; for example issuing protection orders for women victims can prevent repeat offences. Ensuring effective punishment and reducing impunity rates for perpetrators of violence against women can act as a deterrent for either repeat or first offenders. Intervention herein, such as awareness raising, can therefore be seen as secondary prevention.

In supporting victims and ensuring prevention of repeat offences, the training of personnel is critical in order to combat violence against women. EIGE’s proposed work within the criminal justice sector from 2019-2022 can serve as a model to be replicated within the health and social services sectors, as future steps.

Table 2: Timeline of EIGE’s work plan on secondary prevention and support of due diligence 2019-2022

| 2019 | | 2020 | | 2021 | | 2022 | |
|---|--|---------------------------------|--|--|--|------|--|
| Risk assessment by police of intimate partner violence against women | | | | | | | |
| <i>Developing tools</i> | | <i>Dissemination of results</i> | | | | | |
| | | | | Good practices on prosecution of femicide cases | | | |
| | | | | <i>Conducting the study</i> | | | |
| Trafficking in Human Beings | | | | | | | |
| <i>Dissemination</i> | | | | | | | |
| White Ribbon Campaign | | | | | | | |
| <i>Dissemination</i> | | | | | | | |
| Costs of Violence | | | | | | | |
| <i>Dissemination</i> | | | | | | | |

Proposed areas of work:

- **Risk assessment by police** of intimate partner violence against women - In 2019, EIGE will disseminate the findings and tools of the 2018 -2019 Risk Assessment study and will organise a consultation meeting with relevant stakeholders to agree on recommendations for risk assessment that will help to ensure appropriate institutional responses. This is part of EIGE's support to Member States in fulfilling their obligations under relevant international instruments, namely the Victims' Rights Directive and Istanbul Convention by providing guidelines and recommendations for the individual risk assessment to support victims of gender-based violence.
- **Good practices on prosecution of femicide cases** – It is important to map current practices by the police and judiciary in response to violence against women, in order to assess whether there are areas for improvement. Identifying good practices can provide models for other Member States to follow. In 2020 EIGE will conduct a study on good practices on prosecution of femicide cases.
- **Training of Police:** there is potential to collaborate with CEPOL to support them in meeting in-service training needs within Member States on gender-based violence, for example on risk assessment by police of victims of gender-based violence,. These training programs shall also include victims' perspectives.
- **Communications:** continue to raise awareness about violence against women as part of EIGE's communications mandate and to engage men and boys through the White Ribbon Campaign.
- **Trafficking in Human Beings:** EIGE will support the work undertaken by the EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator and add available datasets and indicators on trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation in the Gender Statistics Database. EIGE will cooperate with the Unit in 2018 on development of their glossary of terms on trafficking in human beings with the aim to include the terms and definitions in EIGE's Glossary and thesaurus.
- **Costs of violence** - continue to disseminate EIGE's study on costs of violence, highlighting the need for, and cost-effectiveness of, investment in prevention by Member States. This would be done with view to raise awareness of the phenomenon as a problem concerning society as a whole as opposed to one affecting only the immediate victim. The planned study by the Anti-Trafficking Coordinator on the Costs of Trafficking will be used to support communications in this area.

4. Conclusions

This Strategic Framework 2019-2022 lays the ground for a strengthened capacity for Member States to respond to violence against women. Firstly, by improving administrative data collection on violence against women a fuller picture of the problem will appear, further aiding the comparability of data in the EU. Secondly, the focus on the development of tools for the police and justice sector, together with the sharing of good practices and cooperation with relevant actors in this field, will support secondary prevention. In this way, Member States will be further equipped to move closer to eliminate the phenomenon of violence against women.