

KIEV SPEECH / 16 DECEMBER

PRESENTATION AND THANKS

Good morning all. Firstly I wish to thank to Council of Europe for the invitation to participate in this conference on good practices at local level on gender violence, on behalf of the City of Pozuelo de Alarcón, its Mayor Ms. Susana Pérez Quisla and its Family, Social Affairs and Women Councilwoman, Ms. Beatriz Perez Abraham.

Gender violence is universal and meetings such as this are crucial, in which professionals from different parts of the European continent can gather, meet and exchange experiences.

This seminar is an important and innovative way of coordination among professionals who will be able to allow us to improve our performances, both locally and nationally and internationally.

The City of Pozuelo de Alarcón is aware of the importance of this new line of collaboration that has been opened with the Council of Europe and again we reiterate our gratitude for the invitation.

INTRODUCTION

Violence against women and domestic violence in all its forms: physical, psychological, sexual, economic and environmental, is the clearest exponent of inequality that still exists between women and men in our society.

It is a violation of fundamental Human Rights and an attack on human dignity. Being aware of it, the fight against gender violence has been a priority on the political agenda in Spain for many years.

Our country was a pioneer in the fight against violence against women. The Fundamental Law of Integrated Protection Measures against Gender Violence was approved in December 2004. That law is the result of an important work of sensitization carried out from different areas of civil society, women's organizations and defence of human rights for over thirty years.

Currently the Spanish Comprehensive Law keeps on being a model not only in Europe but internationally.

Spanish Constitution

It is important to explain what the structure of the Spanish state is:

Spain is a parliamentary monarchy with 17 regions, with their own governments and decentralised competences in many scopes of action.

The Community of Madrid (CM) is one of those 17 regions, with a single subarea or province called Madrid, too.

The Community of Madrid under the powers conferred by the Spanish Constitution (Article 149.3) and according to its Statute of Autonomy has transferred responsibility for gender based violence: legislative, executive and judicial.

Thus, in December 2005 the Comprehensive Law against Gender Violence was enacted at the regional level, in order to respond to all possible situations in which the GBV occurs: in intimate partner relationships, sexual assault and abuse, female genital mutilation, harassment at the workplace, induction into prostitution or sexual slavery.

Article 37 of that Law establishes that the Community of Madrid in collaboration with the municipalities would launch a Network of focal points from the Regional Observatory of Gender Violence (Puntos contra la Violencia de Género).

The Municipal Points (or Coordination Councils) competences, in accordance with the law are basically:

1. Information, counselling, referral and support to victims of gender based violence who request so, that is to say an integrated response for their comprehensive care.
2. The development of preventive and awareness raising actions.

Pozuelo de Alarcon was one of the 15 pioneers municipalities of the Community of Madrid to implement a Municipal Point against Gender Based Violence and it was the first of all the Northwest.

Currently there are 52 municipal Points throughout the regional territory.

Pozuelo de Alarcon

Pozuelo de Alarcon is a municipality of the Community of Madrid is in the Northwest part. It has 84,894 inhabitants, 52% are women of which 8.8% are immigrants.

The Municipal Point of the Regional Observatory of Gender Based Violence in the Community of Madrid (PMORVG) was opened in August 2004. That City Point is part of the Family, Social Affairs and Women Department, and integrated into Violence Program, Family and Gender of this council.

The Municipal Intervention Program on Gender Based Violence is structured and divided into three main areas:

1. Comprehensive care of victims
2. Prevention and awareness raising
3. Institutional participation, cooperation and coordination

1. COMPREHENSIVE CARE OF VICTIMS

The psychosocial and legal assistance program involves the comprehensive care to women victims, their children and any other person dependent on them.

The problem of gender based violence in all its dimensions is covered by a psychosocial intervention which works on the negative consequences of traumatic experiences, as well as promoting personal and social resources of the victims in order to achieve personal autonomy and abandonment of the abusive situation.

The "Point" has a multidisciplinary, specialized and trained team in domestic and gender based violence, consisting of a social worker, an adult and child psychologist, and a lawyer-coordinator.

1. Social Care - Social Worker: carries out support, information and guidance to victims, social intervention, resource management and social benefits: financial aids, child care helps, home help services, etc ... coordination and referral to other services, internal and external, national and regional are also carried out: urgent accommodation shelters, youth centres, other programs such as MIRA, ATIENDE, etc in the Community of Madrid.

That is a service provided 25 hours a week, in the morning and afternoon.

2. Psychological Care - Psychologist: psychological support services provide individual and group counselling services to women victims gender based violence. It also includes a counselling service for the sons and daughters of women and / or dependents. That includes all the necessary techniques and methodology for the physical and psychological recovery of victims, in order to mitigate as much as possible the serious consequences caused by the experiences suffered.

This service is provided 30 hours a week, in the morning and afternoon.

In addition to this service, women can access Yoga and personal growth workshops once a week for one and a half hours, in order to work and strengthen the knowledge and skills acquired during therapy, both individual and group dynamics.

3. Legal assistance - Lawyer: The Municipal Point is responsible for receiving the protection orders and other judicial decisions arising from the Protection Orders Coordination Point of the Community of Madrid In order to facilitate coordination, the General Directorate for Women has made available a computer based service to facilitate referral, communication and monitoring of Protection Orders (POs) and Court Resolutions.

The lawyer provides an individualized legal assistance service for victims of domestic violence, advising them about all the necessary legal procedures. This attention is configured to accommodate the actual legal problems arising in the field of gender, family and domestic violence.

She also carries out an important work of coordination with members of the judiciary at the municipal level in order to trace the protection orders and other legal measures.

This service is provided 15 hours a week, in the morning and afternoon.

4. Counselling Labour Service. Labour Counsellor: for victims of violence who are searching and / or trying to improve their employment. That service is carried out in coordination with the Department of Employment and it is offered by technicians of this department.

Since the opening of the point until October 30, 770 women, 97 minors have been treated, and 296 protection orders have been tracked.

A total of 105 women have been attended in this year 2015. 79 of them are new cases, and 26 of them OPs.

2. PREVENTION AND AWARENESS

The Pozuelo de Alarcón Town Hall has always been aware of the importance of prevention of GBV (Gender Based Violence) and awareness raising in our society. The ultimate goal of all our actions is the eradication of GBV, a society without violence against women and a zero tolerance policy to it.

For that and over more than 12 years different preventive actions have been carried out to achieve a gradual change of mentality in our town, to avoid sexist and discriminatory attitudes towards women and girls, and to promote values based on fairness, respect and equality.

All those activities of prevention and awareness raising are carried out by the entire team of gender based violence. Our goal is that residents of the municipality, social partners, associations and many other individuals and / or entities get involved and wish to join this cause, which is a common cause of all our society.

The prevention and awareness raising actions implemented from the Municipal Point, can basically be divided as follows:

2.1. Awareness raising and information campaigns aimed at women and men in Pozuelo de Alarcon.

- ✓ Organization of Conferences and Forums about prevention and awareness.
- ✓ Awareness Campaign "Pozuelo says NO to Gender Violence", since 2011.

2.2. Prevention of Gender Based Violence Program in Schools "for the good treatment" and workshops "Living together in equality" for the families of the municipality.

- ✓ Educational workshops for the prevention of violence and the promotion of equality for children, teenagers, parents and teachers of schools and high schools of the municipality. These workshops are taught by our Social Educator, which is also part

of the multidisciplinary team and who works an average of 10 hours a week, flexible hours, as needed.

- ✓ More than 900 students from seven schools in the municipality have involved during 2014-15 school year.

2.3. Editing informative, didactic and / or educational material.

- ✓ Editing a Municipal guide of Resources and Services on Gender based Violence.
- ✓ Development of training materials for teachers, pupils and parents on gender violence.

2.4. Commemoration of November 25, International Day Gender based Violence.

- ✓ Organization of activities and events of various kinds with the ultimate aim of raising awareness and draw attention to the phenomenon of gender violence in our town.
- ✓ In this year 2015, we organised a great concert against GBV in which both professionals and students of the Municipal School of Music and in our schools got involved selflessly.

2.5. Professional Training Program:

- ✓ Workshops, courses, seminars and conferences for professionals from different fields: psychosocial, educational, health, police, judiciary, associations, foundations and NGOs from the municipality.
- ✓ In November 2015 we offered a new training course to more than 42 professionals.

3. PARTICIPATION, COOPERATION AND INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION

Local Governments, within the framework of its powers and in accordance with existing legislation and international guidelines, have an obligation to promote and implement all measures at its disposal to promote the eradication of GBV.

From Pozuelo de Alarcón we have always been aware of the need to work together to achieve this ambitious goal, and the importance of collaboration, cooperation and coordination between all institutions and professional sectors involved in the field of Gender Violence.

Experience has shown us over the last few years that an appropriate coordination needs the involvement of professionals from different areas, and contributes to create a homogeneous and unified care for victims, avoiding duplication or gaps.

The coordination of professional activities also facilitates a better optimization of resources. It generates support networks between social partners, it helps to visualize their work, it establishes common communication channels and about existing resources to all citizens.

A system of permanent coordination with National and Municipal Police for monitoring and control of protection orders and / or other legal action has been established since the Point was created in August 2004,

Every month we conduct a coordination meeting with both types of police, while the rest of the month we remain permanently in touch to any circumstance or event that may occur. 43 Protection Orders are currently in force in Pozuelo.

However, after some years of this coordination experience, the Town Hall decided to take another step forward in our efforts to join forces and add synergies.

Experience had shown that well coordinated work between various professional, improves the results and particularly the quality of care for victims.

Gender violence is a structural problem in our society, to which all the institutions, organizations and professionals have to respond from their respective fields

Thus, in January 2011 the Municipal Board against Gender Violence was created. It is a participatory body of technical and consultative character, composed of representatives of different professional fields: legal, police, education, health, labor, social, and municipal associations.

Its main objective is the joint treatment of gender violence in our town, and the design of future actions and strategies to eradicate it and to support its victims.

The Municipal Board is a space for dialogue, training and information for professionals, where the exchange of experiences and coordination of existing resources is provided. Its main task is the reflection and design of joint actions and strategies for the eradication of gender violence and the adequate care and protection of victims.

The objectives of the Municipal Board are:

1. To create and consolidate smooth channels of information and communication, establishing unified collaboration and coordination criteria.
2. To provide victims fast, effective and coordinated institutional responses.
3. To optimize human and material resources in the municipality, to ensure the effective implementation of legal measures for the protection of victims, and to avoid duplication of interventions.
4. To improve the training of professionals involved in the management and treatment of gender violence and care for victims.

The Municipal Board was also born with a very clear mandate from the beginning: to

formalize and structure all the actions carried out by professionals of the municipality on Gender Violence.

For that reason, one of the first decisions was precisely draft a protocol coordination of action in providing care and protection to victims.

There are many cases in which professionals from different areas can be confronted with women victims of gender violence in their daily work. These women usually do not verbalize the situation they are suffering, which can greatly hinder detection cases: for example women who regularly attend primary care with diffuse and diverse conditions such as headaches, depression or back pain, or women attending social services with different requirements related to family, immigration or disability.

It is essential that professionals from the fields of action involved are specially trained for that to be able to identify indications or signs that may make them assume that they are facing a possible situation of Gender Violence and know what to do, how, when and who should coordinate with.

To this end, from April to November 2011, we started working on the drafting of the Protocol for the Coordination of Professional Attention to Gender based Violence Situations.

Meetings with each and every one of the social actors involved were made: Department of Women of the Community of Madrid, Municipal and National Police, gender violence Court, psychosocial team of court, healthcare centers, hospitals in the area, schools, associations and various councils of the City: education, employment, health, safety, business development and communication technologies.

The Protocol was structured by areas of intervention, it named the coordinators and those responsible for each area were appointed to write it.

All work was always coordinated and supervised from the Department of Family and the municipal point professionals participated in each and every sector meeting necessary throughout the process.

In all meetings and contact maintained we worked to clarify and describe the powers and functions on Gender based Violence for each and every single agency/stakeholder/institution involved and their respective professionals.

The most appropriate method of coordination and / or referral of victims to The Municipal Point of the Regional Observatory of Gender Violence in the Community of Madrid upon detection, from each of the areas of intervention was also discussed and agreed.

Conversely, the different mechanisms of derivation from other resources of the The Municipal Point of the Regional Observatory of Gender Violence in the Community of Madrid, were settled.

In short, it was to formalize all ways for action when confronted with a female victim of

gender violence, as well as all processes that must be implemented by the various professionals.

Today we can say that this document is the result of consensus and cooperation of all professionals and areas of intervention.

We think that one of the main keys to success has been that this Protocol was always the project of all and for all, and all authors and participants were the same.

The document was officially launched in November 2011 to mark the International Gender Violence Day in an official ceremony in which all institutions were represented.

This document is a reference at the level of the Community of Madrid, and has been presented as an example of good practice on numerous occasions over the years.

Its immediate aim was always to be a common, practical and useful working tool that generates as a result, optimum use of the various existing resources and improved quality of care to the victims.

Four years after its writing, it remains a useful document for professionals, and serves as a reference in our daily actions.

The protocol is a flexible living document, which adapts to new situations that are arising. It is not a closed document.

From the Municipal Point we continue to work closely with the different areas of intervention, we keep trying to strengthen bonds, communicating, sharing experiences and mutual support in developing cases.

We continue to insist on the need for the training of our professionals, and therefore do and attend training sessions, organize events and attend various meetings to avoid losing touch.

Professionals continue sending comments, revisions and updates. Daily experience, obstacles and difficulties we all face in our daily work, also help us to move forward and enriching our work together.

In short, the Protocol meant putting in writing the work we were already doing and to keep doing day by day.

It is an honor for us to present it to you all today, to know that it has been translated into Ukrainian and could perhaps serve as a reference for your work.

At this moment I am at your disposal for every doubt and question that you can have.

Thank for your attention