

Promising practices and main challenges in the field of violence against women and domestic violence in Slovenia

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Starts

- The groundwork of dealing with VAW and domestic violence in Slovenia started primarily by **non-governmental organisations** at the end of the 80s.
- Their work filled the gaps caused by the still **limited** institutional response and the **lack of knowledge** about violence against women.

Starts

- ❑ In 1989 – **first NGO** Association SOS Help-line for Women and Children – Victims of Violence.
 - ❑ Followed in 1990ties by others (Women's Counselling Service, Association against Sexual Abuse).
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Starts

- ❑ In 1997 - Association for Non-violent Communication (the first Slovenian non-governmental organisation, establishing a program of **advisory assistance** to people perpetrating violence).
 - ❑ The **first safe house** opened in 1991 under the auspices of Krško Social Work Centre and the second one in 1996 under the auspices of Maribor Social Work Centre.
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Starts

- ❑ Other safe houses opened during the 2000s, under the auspices of women's NGOs, other NGOs and SWCs.
 - ❑ The first women's NGO safe house was opened in 1997 by the Association SOS Help line.
 - ❑ **Prevention** campaigns in 1990ies.
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Prevention campaigns

Everything except YES means NO



Prevention campaigns

Everything except YES means NO



Prevention campaigns

Everything except YES means NO

- ☐ Clear content: consent.
 - ☐ Clear target group.
 - ☐ Clear channels for communication:
 - Famous hip-hop artist.
 - Instagram.
 - FB.
 - Youtube.
 - Young women influencers.
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At present - Network

- The **network** of safe houses is at present combined with:
 - safe houses (16),
 - crisis centres (3), and
 - maternal homes (12)

 - with **capacity** all together 445 beds.
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At present - Network

- 1 of the safe houses is specialised for **drug addicted** women victims and
 - one of them provides space for **physically disabled** women and their children.

 - **Safe houses are:**
 - regionally dispersed.
 - Obligated to accept women regardless of their personal circumstances (residential status etc.).
 - Part of national social security network.
 - Regularly funded from the state and some townships whereas Township of Ljubljana is having long-term clear policy in this field.
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At present - Network

- Slovenia is developing a **network of counselling services** for victims of violence and
 - programmes for **comprehensive treatment**, comprehensive assistance and support to victims of **sexual abuse**.
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At present – Legal framework

- 2008 - the adoption of the **Domestic Violence Prevention Act**, amended in 2016:
 - a systemic:
 - sets a system of support;
 - role, tasks and cooperation of various state authorities and non-governmental organisations;
 - multi-institutional co-operation;
 - obligation for training and education;
 - court restraining order (up to 12 months with extension possibility); etc.
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At present – Legal framework

□ Police Tasks and Powers Act:

- enforces restraining order (for 48 hours and if the investigating judge upholds the restraining order she/he may impose the measure for up to 15 days).
 - The injured party may, before the expiry of the 15 days measure, appeal to the investigating judge to extend the measure to 60 days.
 - Enforces detaining offenders who do not respect the restraining order.
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At present – Legal framework

- Harassment and sexual harassment prohibited by the **Protection against Discrimination Act.**
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At present – Legal framework

- ❑ **Criminal Code** covers the offences of:
 - domestic violence (Art. 191),
 - forced abortion (Art. 121),
 - rape (art. 170)
 - ❑ also includes intimate partner rape, but in this case the “prosecution shall be initiated by a motion”,
 - sexual violence (art. 171),
 - stalking (134a), and
 - forced marriage (art 132a).
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Main challenges

- ❑ **Equal access** to various forms of assistance/support services:
 - in many places there is **no free** psychosocial help from NGOs;
 - practices of institutions are **not uniform** to
 - ❑ ensure that a woman receives high-quality and comparable assistance
 - ❑ regardless of the place of residence and the person dealing with her case.
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Main challenges

- ❑ Appropriate and practical **trainings and educational programs** for professionals are lacking.
 - ❑ **Prevention programs** are lacking.
 - ❑ Measures to implement Article 22e of DVPA on the **prohibition of alternative dispute settlement** have to be strengthened.
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Main challenges

- ❑ **Sexual violence** is underreported and not dealt with in a proper manner.
 - ❑ **Victims directive** needs to be implemented. (Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and the Council of October 25 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime)
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Main challenges

- Create specialized **programs to work with Roma women, older women and other vulnerable groups of women**, survivors of violence who need **different support services**.
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Main challenges

- ❑ **Programs for perpetrators of violence** need to be strengthened and obligatory.
 - ❑ **Extensions** of restraining orders are rare in practice.
 - ❑ **Compensations** for survivors are degradingly low.
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Main challenges

- ❑ Alarmingly widespread practice of **disregarding the history** of violence from the institutions.
 - ❑ Practices of **media** reporting are not improving.
 - ❑ **Administrative data** sources are not related to each other.
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Summarized from

- Mag. Špela Veselič (2018) *Council of Europe fact finding mission – Summary of the main gaps and challenges in the field of violence against women and domestic violence in Slovenia with recommendations. Report.*
 - Dr. Ermira Danaj, mag. Špela Veselič (2018) *Recommendations for the development of the slovenian national programme on preventing and combating domestic violence and violence against women. Challenges, gaps and best practices report. DRAFT.*
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