



“Full service to increase capacity and awareness for disrupting gender-based violence in the VET sphere”



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## **Desk research transnational report and collection of national best practices**



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**Novel Group** - Luxembourg

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## 1. Executive summary

The project END GBV in VET – “Full service to increase capacity and awareness for disrupting gender-based violence in the VET sphere” aims to pilot support offices in Vocational Education and Training (VET) institutes in an effort to increase their capacity and awareness for addressing gender-based violence in the VET sphere. This will be achieved through (a) the development of a capacity building and training program for students, their teachers/VET staff, and interested parents that will focus on addressing issues relevant to gender-based violence, and by (b) strengthening existing structures of the institutions through the operation of a full service in the campus that will provide information, training, support, and consultations. Overall, the main activities and expected results of the END GBV in VET project will include: 250 students that will be trained and 150 educators and 50 parents that will be informed on relevant issues; as well as the implementation of 1 awareness-raising campaign, 8 national events with 30 attendees each, and 1 final event with 100 attendees.

In this framework, in order to gain insight into the level of state provisions on gender-based violence in VET, as well as on the data available on the subject matter on a country level, members of the consortium conducted desk research via literature review and gather any relevant information on the legal and institutional framework, the policies and statistics on gender-based violence on a national level in general, but also sought out for any available information on gender-based violence in the VET sector, while also providing relevant general context on a national level.

The **main research questions** that the national report sought to address are:

1. “What is the current situation and the existing needs in preventing and combatting gender-based violence in vocational education on a national level” and
2. “What is considered as a timeless, effective and transferable good practice in combatting GBV in vocational education and work-integrated learning contexts?”

At this point, it should be highlighted that research findings and results about gender-based violence in vocational education specifically are limited, on both EU and national level. Undoubtedly, this further stresses the need and value of the project, including the present desk research and the subsequent primary research that was conducted by the project partners.

The desk research **key findings** are:



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- There is no sufficient data on gender-based violence in the VET sector. Therefore there is a need for further quantitative and qualitative research on this topic.
- There is a need of awareness-raising initiatives on the topics of gender-based violence in education and work.
- Countries that possess an adequate institutional framework need to deploy better ways of implementing it.



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## 2. Introduction

### 2.1. European overview

#### 2.1.1. Gender-Based Violence

##### Legal framework

Gender inequality and gender-based violence has been addressed by the **European Union law**, directly and indirectly, through Conventions, Recommendations and Directives. The **European Commission** is bound to “promoting equal economic independence for women and men, closing the gender pay gap, advancing gender balance in decision making, ending gender based violence and promoting gender equality beyond the EU”. According to a **European Parliamentary Research Service** briefing, “the European Union (EU) is committed to eliminating inequalities and promoting gender equality 'in all its activities' and has made considerable advances over the years. Nevertheless, the situation remains uneven across the EU, and in recent times progress has slowed, stalled or even regressed in some areas” (Prpic et al., 2019). Therefore, the European Union has created legislation in its areas of competence:

**-Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention)**. According to the European Parliament, the Istanbul Convention, which is the first instrument in Europe to set legally binding standards specifically to prevent gender-based violence, “covers a broad range of measures, including obligations ranging from awareness-raising and data collection to legal measures on criminalising different forms of violence. Unlike other international treaties for tackling gender-based violence, the Istanbul Convention provides for the implementation of comprehensive and coordinated policies between national and governmental bodies involved in prevention, prosecution, and protection activities” (Jurviste & Shreeves, 2021).

**-European Parliament resolution of 16 September 2021 with recommendations to the Commission on identifying gender-based violence as a new area of crime listed in Article 83(1) TFEU (2021/2035(INL))**. In September 2021, the European Parliament adopted a “resolution with recommendations to the Commission on identifying gender-based violence as a new area of crime listed in Article 83(1) TFEU”. Due to its cross-border dimension and the severity of its impact, this new area would join others where the Union has already found the need to combat them on a common basis (so called “Eurocrimes”), such as human, drug, and arms



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trafficking, computer crime and terrorism. Notably, the Parliament highlights that gender-based violence encompasses violence against women and girls together with other forms of gender-based violence, that “LGBTIQ+ persons are also victims of gender-based violence because of their gender, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics”. The European Parliament emphasizes that gender-based violence includes “female and intersex genital mutilations” – along with physical or psychological violence, online or offline hate speech, bullying and harassment and other forms of violence. The resolution comprehensively addresses the need for improvement in areas such as education, data collection and reparations as to provide support for survivors of all forms of gender-based violence, in order to protect individuals from gender-based violence (European Parliament, 2021).

Further relevant European Union directives on gender equality and gender-based violence:

**-Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation.**

**-Directive 2010/41/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2010 on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity and repealing Council Directive 86/613/EEC.**

**-Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA.**

**-Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA.**

**-Council Directive 92/85/EEC of 19 October 1992 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding (tenth individual Directive within the meaning of Article 16 (1) of Directive 89/391/EEC).**





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**-Council Directive 2010/18/EU of 8 March 2010 implementing the revised Framework Agreement on parental leave concluded by BUSINESSEUROPE, UEAPME, CEEP and ETUC and repealing Directive 96/34/EC.**

### Key European Institutions formed to tackle gender inequality and gender-based violence

**Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO).** GREVIO is the independent expert body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) by the Parties.

**European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE).** EIGE is an autonomous body of the European Union, established to contribute to and strengthen the promotion of gender equality, including gender mainstreaming in all EU policies and the resulting national policies, and the fight against discrimination based on sex, as well as to raise EU citizens' awareness of gender equality.

**European Parliament Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality - FEMM Committee.** According to the **EU Monitor**, the FEMM Committee is responsible, among others, for the definition, promotion and protection of women's rights in the Union and related Community measures; equal opportunities policy, including equality between men and women with regard to labour market opportunities and treatment at work; the follow-up and implementation of international agreements and conventions; the implementation and further development of gender mainstreaming in all policy sectors (Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM), n.d.).

Furthermore, there are a number of policies and initiatives related to combating inequality and gender-based violence in the EU, including but not limited to:

**Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025.** According to the European Commission, the key objectives of the strategy are ending gender-based violence; challenging gender stereotypes; closing gender gaps in the labour market; achieving equal participation across different sectors of the economy; addressing the gender pay and pension gaps; closing the gender care gap and achieving gender balance in decision-making and in politics. The Strategy pursues a dual approach of gender mainstreaming combined with targeted actions, and intersectionality is a horizontal principle for its implementation. While the Strategy focuses on actions within the EU, it is coherent with the EU's external policy on gender equality and women's empowerment.



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**EU Strategy on victims' rights (2020-2025).** The EU strategy of victim's rights is aiming to empower victims of crime, by designing and implementing effective policies to fight crime and by setting out to ensure that victims are aware of their rights, and to work not only for the establishment, but also the correct implementation of victim's rights (EUR-Lex - 52020DC0258 - EN - EUR-Lex, n.d.).

### 2.1.2. VET system

Vocational education and training (VET) is an essential component of the European education system, providing students with practical skills and knowledge in a specific trade or occupation. VET is broadly defined at European level as “preparing learners for employment, traditionally non-academic, and related to a specific occupation or vocation” (Clarke et al., 2020). VET is designed to prepare students for the labour market and to meet the changing needs of the economy. The VET system in Europe is generally structured into three levels, ranging from upper secondary VET to higher education VET. The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) is used to describe and compare qualifications across the EU, making it easier for individuals and employers to understand the relative level of qualifications obtained in different member states. Some EU countries have also developed a dual system of VET, which combines theoretical education with practical training in a workplace. This system has been recognized as a successful model for preparing young people for the labour market in some EU member states.

The EU has been working to ensure that VET policies are inclusive and accessible to all learners, regardless of their background or circumstances. This includes efforts to improve access for disadvantaged learners, promote gender equality in VET, and ensure that VET is responsive to the needs of learners with disabilities. The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU recognizes access to education, training, and lifelong learning as a fundamental right, ensuring that everyone in Europe has equal opportunities to access these services. The European Pillar of Social Rights reinforces this right with its first principle of promoting inclusive and quality education, training, and lifelong learning, and its fourth principle of the importance of continued education and training to support employment opportunities. These rights guarantee that everyone can actively participate in society and successfully transition into the workforce while prospering in their personal and professional lives.



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The EU's vision is to achieve this goal by focusing on skills development, as highlighted by initiatives such as the European Skills Agenda, the European Education Area, and the Digital Education Action Plan. The EU aims to develop robust, forward-looking, and resilient education and training systems that cater to the digital age.

### Structure of VET in Europe

The VET system in Europe is generally structured into three levels:

**Upper secondary VET:** This level of VET typically follows compulsory education and is offered at vocational schools, technical schools, or through apprenticeships. It provides students with practical skills and knowledge in a specific trade or occupation. The qualifications awarded at this level include the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) levels 3 and 4, which correspond to a vocational diploma and a professional qualification, respectively.

**Post-secondary or non-tertiary VET:** This level of VET builds on the skills and knowledge gained in upper secondary VET and provides more specialized and advanced training. It is typically offered at vocational schools, technical schools, or through apprenticeships. The qualifications awarded at this level include the EQF level 5, which corresponds to a higher vocational diploma or a higher professional qualification.

**Higher education VET:** This level of VET provides advanced training and education in specific fields and prepares students for highly skilled professions. It is offered at higher education institutions such as universities, polytechnics, and vocational universities. The qualifications awarded at this level include the EQF levels 6, 7, and 8, which correspond to a bachelor's degree, a master's degree, and a doctorate degree, respectively.

### The EQF levels

The EQF is based on eight levels of learning outcomes, which are described in terms of knowledge, skills and competences. The levels are arranged in a hierarchical structure, with higher levels indicating greater complexity and difficulty. The EQF is intended to facilitate the comparison of qualifications across the EU, making it easier for employers, education providers, and individuals to understand the relative level of qualifications obtained in different member states.



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**Level 1:** This level is equivalent to the knowledge and skills acquired through compulsory education or basic vocational training. It is typically associated with the acquisition of basic knowledge and skills, such as reading, writing, and basic arithmetic.

**Level 2:** This level is equivalent to the knowledge and skills acquired through secondary education or vocational training at a basic level. It is typically associated with the acquisition of basic occupational skills and knowledge, such as simple technical skills and basic communication skills.

**Level 3:** This level is equivalent to the knowledge and skills acquired through vocational training or higher secondary education. It is typically associated with the acquisition of intermediate occupational skills and knowledge, such as complex technical skills, problem-solving, and teamwork.

**Level 4:** This level is equivalent to the knowledge and skills acquired through vocational training or post-secondary education at a non-university level. It is typically associated with the acquisition of advanced occupational skills and knowledge, such as the ability to use advanced equipment, manage complex processes, and supervise others.

**Level 5:** This level is equivalent to the knowledge and skills acquired through higher education at a university or non-university level. It is typically associated with the acquisition of theoretical knowledge and practical skills in a specific field, as well as the ability to analyze and solve complex problems.

**Level 6:** This level is equivalent to the knowledge and skills acquired through higher education at a university or non-university level. It is typically associated with the acquisition of advanced knowledge and skills in a specific field, as well as the ability to conduct research and analyze complex information.

**Level 7:** This level is equivalent to the knowledge and skills acquired through postgraduate education or research. It is typically associated with the acquisition of specialized knowledge and skills in a specific field, as well as the ability to undertake independent research and make original contributions to the field.



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**Level 8:** This level is equivalent to the highest level of knowledge and skills acquired through postgraduate education or research. It is typically associated with the acquisition of cutting-edge knowledge and skills in a specific field, as well as the ability to undertake original research at the highest level.

It is important to note that the EQF levels are not intended to provide a strict ranking of qualifications, but rather a general reference framework that can be used to compare and understand the relative level of qualifications obtained in different EU member states. The EQF is designed to promote the transparency and recognition of qualifications across the EU, making it easier for individuals to move between member states and for employers to understand the skills and competencies of job applicants.

### The Dual System

Some EU countries, such as Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Denmark, Netherlands, etc., have a dual system of VET, which combines theoretical education with practical training in a workplace. This system usually involves an apprenticeship, where learners work in a company while attending school part-time. It is designed to provide students with both theoretical knowledge and practical skills through apprenticeships, internships, or on-the-job training. Students who complete their VET programs receive a vocational qualification, which certifies their proficiency in a specific trade or profession.

The dual system of VET in the EU combines classroom-based learning with practical, work-based learning. This system is based on the principle of apprenticeship, which is an agreement between an employer and an apprentice, which sets out the terms and conditions of the apprentice's training and employment. Apprentices typically spend part of their time in the classroom and part of their time in the workplace, where they acquire practical skills and knowledge.

In the dual system, vocational schools provide students with theoretical knowledge and general skills, while companies provide them with practical skills and workplace experience. This allows students to acquire a wide range of competencies that are highly relevant to the labor market. Students are also paid a salary during their on-the-job training, which helps them to become financially independent and motivates them to take their training seriously.



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The dual system has many benefits for students, employers, and the economy as a whole. For students, it provides a direct pathway to the labour market, and can lead to higher wages and better job security. For employers, it allows them to train and develop their future workforce, and can help to address skills shortages in their industry. For the economy, it helps to ensure that there is a skilled and qualified workforce that can support economic growth and competitiveness.

In the EU, the dual system is supported by various policies and initiatives, such as the European Alliance for Apprenticeships, which aims to promote high-quality apprenticeships across Europe. The EU also provides funding for VET programs, including dual system programs, through the European Social Fund and other funding programs.

#### [EU Policy Initiatives and documents on VET](#)

The legislative structure of VET in the EU is established through a range of policy documents and initiatives, which are designed to ensure that vocational education and training systems across Europe are of high quality and meet the needs of learners, employers, and society as a whole.

At the European level, the European Commission is responsible for developing and coordinating policy initiatives related to VET. The Commission works closely with national governments, social partners, and other stakeholders to develop and implement policy initiatives, and also provides funding for VET through a range of programs, such as Erasmus+.

There are a number of policy initiatives and documents related to VET in the EU, including but not limited to:

**The European Qualifications Framework (EQF):** The EQF is a common reference framework for qualifications across Europe, which aims to make it easier to understand and compare qualifications across different countries and education systems. It was introduced in 2008 and has since been updated to reflect changes in the labor market and education systems.

**The European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET):** ECVET is a framework for the recognition and transfer of credit points for vocational skills and qualifications across Europe. It allows



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individuals to accumulate and transfer credits from one learning context to another, making it easier to move between education and training systems or between countries.

**The European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET):**

EQAVET provides a framework for the quality assurance of VET systems and helps to ensure that they meet the needs of learners, employers, and society as a whole. It promotes the use of common quality assurance standards and indicators, and provides guidance on how to develop and implement quality assurance systems.

**The European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EaFA):** The EaFA is a policy initiative aimed at promoting apprenticeships as a high-quality pathway to employment. It brings together stakeholders from across the EU, including national governments, employers, education and training providers, and trade unions, to promote the development and expansion of apprenticeships.

**Policy Initiatives on Inclusiveness and Gender Equity in VET**

Inclusiveness is a key priority for VET in the EU, and there are a range of legislative and policy initiatives aimed at promoting equal access to vocational education and training for all learners, regardless of their background or circumstances. Some of the policies include:

**The European Pillar of Social Rights:** The European Pillar of Social Rights was adopted in 2017 and includes a set of principles and rights aimed at promoting social inclusion and gender equality. Principle 3 of the Pillar states that "everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training and lifelong learning in order to maintain and acquire skills that enable them to participate fully in society and manage successful transitions in the labour market."

**The European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships:** The European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships, which was adopted in 2018, includes several measures to promote gender equality and inclusiveness in apprenticeships. The framework calls for the development of apprenticeships that are open to all, regardless of gender, age, or background, and that provide opportunities for individuals to acquire a range of skills and competences.



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**The European Strategy for Gender Equality:** The European Strategy for Gender Equality sets out a range of actions aimed at promoting gender equality and combating discrimination across the EU. It includes a number of measures related to education and training, including the promotion of gender equality in VET, and the development of measures to address gender-based violence and harassment.

**The European Disability Strategy 2010-2020:** The European Disability Strategy aims to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities in all areas of life, including education and training. It includes a number of measures related to VET, including the promotion of inclusive education and training, and the development of measures to support the transition from education and training to employment.

In summary, the EU has adopted several legislative and policy measures aimed at promoting inclusiveness and gender equity in VET. These measures include the European Pillar of Social Rights, the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships, the European Social Fund+, the Erasmus+ Program, and the European Institute of Gender Equality. Overall, inclusiveness is a key priority for VET in the EU, and there are a range of legislative and policy initiatives aimed at promoting equal access to vocational education and training for all learners. These initiatives are designed to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to develop the skills and competences they need to participate fully in society and the economy.

### Conclusions on the EU VET system overview

Vocational education and training (VET) is an essential component of the European education system, providing students with practical skills and knowledge in a specific trade or occupation. The VET system in Europe is generally structured into three levels, ranging from upper secondary VET to higher education VET, and is described using the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) to facilitate the comparison of qualifications across the EU. The EU aims to develop inclusive and accessible VET policies that cater to the digital age and promote skills development, which is crucial for preparing individuals for the changing needs of the economy. The EU recognizes access to education, training, and lifelong learning as a fundamental right, ensuring that everyone in Europe has equal opportunities to access these services and actively participate in society and transition into the workforce while prospering in their personal and professional lives.





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The EU has implemented a range of legislative and policy initiatives to promote inclusiveness and gender equity in VET. These initiatives include measures to promote equal access to education and training for all, including women and girls, and to reduce gender-based stereotypes and discrimination in education and training systems. By ensuring that all learners, regardless of their gender, have equal access to education and training, and are supported to reach their full potential, the EU is working to promote sustainable economic growth and social cohesion. Through targeted funding and policy initiatives, the EU is helping to create a more inclusive and equitable society for all.



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### 3. Comparative analysis of the national reports

On a European scale, there is no official data on gender-based violence in the VET sector. The **Gender Equality Index**, that measures the progress of the EU countries on gender-related issues, focuses on seven main domains that build the bigger picture of gender equality both on a European but also on a national level. These domains, that are interconnected and further provide useful context on gender-based violence, are: **work, money, knowledge, time, power, violence and health**. The **Gender Equality Index 2022** has included a sub-category of gender-related issues regarding the sharing of care responsibilities during the Covid-19 pandemic, such as childcare, long-term care, flexible work and housework.

**The European average of gender equality for 2022 is 68.6%**, which indicates a 0.6% change since 2019 and a 5.5% change since 2010 (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2022). **Greece** scored last across 27 EU member states at 53.4%, **Slovakia** follows at 56%, **Italy** at 65%, **Austria** scored 68.8%, **Luxembourg** 73.5%, and finally, **Spain** scored 74.6%.

In the **domain of violence**, the Gender Equality Index 2022 notes that **“data still falls short of reflecting the true extent of gender-based violence in the EU”**. One of the key factors for this shortcoming, according to the Index is the fact that, **on a national level, “the data recorded by authorities often underestimates the scope of gender-based violence”** (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2022).

While there is no available official data on school-related gender-based violence, in **higher education**, according to the **2023 UniSAFE project findings, the prevalence of gender-based violence is relatively uniform across European countries** (New Report: Multi-level Analysis of UniSAFE Findings - UniSAFE, 2023). The **UniSAFE 2022 survey dataset** reveals that across respondents, 62.1% has experienced any form of violence, while 57.2% of the reported violence is psychological.

**The VET sector remains a highly under-researched area in terms of gender-based violence**. No official data, and subsequently no policy and action recommendations have been produced and concentrated on a European level so far. Based on the EU indicators, both in general, and in higher education, at the moment, **we can only assume that gender-based violence is equally and uniformly prevalent in the VET sector and it needs to be studied and addressed according to the nuances of the field**.



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For the purposes of the END GBV in VET project, members of the consortium conducted **desk research** via **literature review** on the topic of gender-based violence in general, and especially in VET, on a national level. The findings of this research were documented for each country in six (6) national reports: **Austria**, written by BFI OÖ, **Greece**, written by AKMI, **Italy**, written by ENAIP NET, **Luxembourg**, written by Novel Group, **Slovakia**, written by Newport Group, and **Spain**, written by CSV International Affairs. An overview of the VET system on a European level, already presented in chapter 2.1.2., was written by EVBB. A brief overview on the topic and a comparative analysis of the findings was conducted by Symplexis, on the core axes of a) **legal framework**, b) **institutional and policy framework**, and c) **statistics** on gender-based violence on a national level, since they represent the most fundamental indicators of each state member’s initiatives on gender-based violence in general and on VET in particular. The data mentioned in the comparative analysis is available more extensively on each annexed national report.

### 3.1.1. Legal framework

Across all six EU countries, Austria, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Slovakia, and Spain, each national legal framework naturally differentiates from the rest and stands out depending on variances in each country’s political and judicial system. Even if constitutionally, most European countries enact equality among their citizens in general, some of the aforementioned EU countries fail to meet the EU standards on legally ensuring gender equality and battling gender-based violence, whereas others are successfully pulling through.

**Slovakia** is one of the very few remaining European countries, the rest being Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Czechia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, and Russia, that **has not ratified the Istanbul Convention**. The ratification process has been contested mainly by the Catholic Church, its affiliate organizations, but also other conservative organizations within the society. During the last decade it became part of several pre-election campaigns. The conservative opponents of the Istanbul convention described it as a legislation promoting the so-called gender ideology. This political and societal discussion and opposition towards it is one of the inhibiting factors for dealing with the issues such as GBV in other fields such as academic environment or VET.

Furthermore, the Slovak legal system lacks in legal definitions and provisions on gender-based violence, since **Slovak legislation does not clearly define the term gender based violence**, and the regulatory legal



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framework in the Slovak republic focuses on substitute terms of **domestic violence** instead, which is current legal praxis understood mostly as violence committed against women. In contrast, the currently most comprehensive **definition of gender-based violence** in the **Austrian legal framework** is defined and dealt with in the protection concept of the Istanbul Convention ratified by the Austrian Parliament.

However, **Austria**, similarly to **Slovakia**, still legally tackles gender-based violence within the narrow concept of **domestic violence**. On the other hand, **Spain**, under the Organic Law 1/2004 on Comprehensive Protection Measures against Gender Violence, defines gender-based violence as any act of violence, whether physical or psychological, committed against a woman by a man. Likewise, **in Luxembourg, the main regulatory focus relating to the issue of gender-based violence is the fight against domestic violence**, regulated by the amended Act of 8 September 2003 and Act of 20 July 2018 approving the European Council Convention on domestic violence. While there is some understanding that gender-based violence can happen in universities, research organizations and in the VET sector, **there is yet a big gap in legislation regarding this particular field**. Additionally, Luxembourg's national legal framework has, for the most part, definitions of **harassment** and **sexual harassment** in the workplace.

**Greece** has, over the years, updated the country's legal arsenal and possesses a progressive legal framework in regard to gender-based violence. By **ratifying the Istanbul Convention** with Law No. 4531/2018, among other things, the Greek State **enhances the rights of victims of domestic violence, criminalizes stalking and domestic violence**, strengthens the criminal provisions **punishing female genital mutilation**, makes it easier to implement the Convention and designates the General Secretariat for Demography, Family Policy, and Gender Equality within the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs as an overall "coordinating body". The State's primary responsibility is to effectively address such violence within the larger context of **promoting equality for children, the elderly, and men and women as well**.

Greece has also voted **Law no. 4604/2019** for the promotion of effective gender equality and prevention and combat of gender-based violence, which provides an independent institutional framework for gender equality and the elimination of discrimination against women. Moreover, it defines the basic concepts, mechanisms, and institutions for the realization of the principle of equal treatment of the sexes. Additionally, it entails a provision to increase the percentage by gender to at least equal to 40% of the total number of candidates per constituency, for parliamentary elections (already established for local government elections by the Kleisthenis programme). **In the field of education, gender mainstreaming is included in the actions**



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**and curricula of higher educational institutions, as well as in primary and secondary education and the educational process in general.**

Besides ratifying the Istanbul Convention, **Italy** has taken a range of additional measures to transpose its core principles into its national legislation. For example, **Law No. 119/2013**, against women’s violence, has been a major turn for Italian legislation and its alignment with international positions, while **Law No. 107/2015** (“La Buona Scuola”) introduces a **“Three-Year Educational Offer Plan”** which ensures the further implementation of the principles of equal opportunities that should inform and raise awareness among students, teachers and parents on all aspects involving GBV. Finally, **Law No. 69/2019** (“Codice rosso”) aims to **enhance the effectiveness of judicial responses to violence against women and improve victims’ protection**. This new “red code” status has indeed introduced GBV cases in a “priority lane” which expedites these cases while, at the same time, reinforcing a pre-emptive safeguard and redefining types of offenses with their related aggravating circumstances.

Since the present desk research focuses on battling gender-based violence in the VET sector, focus should be given in legal provisions regarding gender-based violence in education and in the workplace, in general, and VET in particular. **Out of all six countries, meaning Austria, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Slovakia and Spain, none has passed relevant legislation that tackles gender-based violence specifically in VET.** This comes as no surprise, **since the aforementioned EU member states’ legal framework on gender violence in education and the workplace is not always aligned with the EU standards.**

The following table will showcase the strengths and shortcomings of each country:

	Education	Workplace
<b>Austria</b>	Chapter 3 of Austria’s <b>Universities Act</b> ensures the equality of the sexes.	The Austrian <b>Equal Treatment Act</b> protects employees from sexual harassment in the office.
<b>Greece</b>	<b>Law No.4604/2019</b> promotes gender mainstreaming in the actions and curricula of higher educational institutions, as well as in primary and secondary education.	<b>Law No. 4808/2021</b> aims at the protection of employment for everyone who works in a place of business, including independent contractors, interns, and volunteers, regardless of their contractual relationship with the employer.



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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Italy</b></p>	<p><b>Law No. 107/2015</b> ("La Buona Scuola") introduces a "Three-Year Educational Offer Plan" which ensures the further implementation of the principles of equal opportunities that should inform and raise awareness among students, teachers and parents on all aspects involving GBV.</p>	<p>The Italian "<b>Code of equal opportunities between men and women</b>" provides a legal definition of sexual harassment in the workplace, however does not treat sexual harassment as a gender-based violence issue, but as a "less favorable treatment in the workplace" issue.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Luxembourg</b></p>	<p>In Luxembourg, <b>sexuality education</b> is taught in a few classes like biology, religion and citizenship studies, which cover various topics and strands of sexuality education. Since in Luxembourg, regarding gender-based violence, the main focus is on domestic violence, gender-based violence in higher education and VET is not discussed and there is a big gap in legislation regarding these particular sectors</p>	<p>The <b>Labour Code</b> of Luxembourg explicitly defines the terms "harassment" and "sexual harassment" in the workplace while it also contains provisions promoting a gender-balanced composition, laying down that they should contain at least 40% of the underrepresented sex.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Slovakia</b></p>	<p>Slovak policies towards GBV focus mainly focus on intimate partner violence, or domestic violence or in limited cases sexual violence outside of partnership. <b>Therefore, gender-based violence in VET and universities is non-existent as an issue.</b></p>	<p>The Slovak <b>Equal Treatment in Certain Areas and Protection against Discrimination (the "Anti-Discrimination Act")</b> provides a definition of "harassment" and "sexual harassment", although there is no mention of the term "sexual harassment in the Slovak <b>Labour Code</b>, but the act of sexual harassment falls under the legal definition of discrimination.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Spain</b></p>	<p>The <b>Equality Act 3/2007</b>, as an overall legal framework, alongside the <b>University Act 4/2007</b>, the <b>Science Act 14/2011</b>, and several <b>regional laws</b>, provide regulations and measures against gender-based violence in Spanish universities and science.</p>	<p>The Spanish <b>Constitutional Act 3/2007</b>, also known as Effective Equality between Men and Women (the "<b>Equality Law</b>") provides a legal definition of the term "sexual harassment" and "harassment on the grounds of sex", which constitute a form of discrimination at all times. Furthermore, under Spanish <b>Labour Law</b>, if an employer fails to prevent behaviour that could be classified as sexual harassment, then they get fined on the grounds of infringement.</p>

### 3.1.2. National Institutional and Policy Frameworks

Most of the consortium countries have established institutional frameworks to promote gender equality, and/or to tackle gender-based violence in general, or domestic violence in particular.



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In **Greece**, the relevant stakeholders and public bodies that have emerged **institutionally** are the General Secretariat for Demography, Family Policy and Gender Equality (GSDFPGE), the Equality Research Centre (KETHI), Equality Committees on Regional and Local Level, and Gender Equality Committees (EIFs) at a higher education level. On a **policy** level, the GSDFPGE has designed and is currently implementing the National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2021-2025, which focuses on preventing and combating gender-based and domestic violence, enhancing the equal participation of women in decision-making /leadership roles and in the labour market, and promoting gender mainstreaming in sectoral policies.

Similarly, in **Spain**, relevant **institutions** include the Ministry of Equality, the Government Delegation for Gender Violence, as well as the Prosecutor's Office, Specialized Courts and Social Services specialized in providing aid, care and assistance to victims of gender-based violence. On a **policy** level, Spain is implementing since 2021 the National Plan for Awareness and Prevention of Gender Violence. Spain further utilizes Action Protocols, specifically designed for victims of gender-based violence, such as the Health action protocol, the Police action protocol, the Protocol of judicial action, and the Social Services action protocol. Last but not least, in Spain, there are several Training and Raising Awareness-Raising Strategies targeting the general public and professionals, as well as training in the educational field on the topic of gender-based violence.

**Luxembourg** has established a number of **institutions** in regard to gender equality and gender-based violence, including the Ministry of Equality between Women and Men, the Committee gathering all professionals involved in the fight against domestic violence, the Gender Equality Committee of the University of Luxembourg, and the Gender Equality Officer position within the aforementioned committee. On a **policy** level, Luxembourg has implemented a number of policies and strategies, such as the National Action Plan on Gender Equality, the National Action Plan “Women and peace and security” (2018-2023), and the National Action Plan for Equality Between Women and Men (2020).

**Italy's** core **institution** on gender equality issues is the Ministry of Equal Opportunity. On a **policy** level, Italy is currently implementing the Strategy Plan to fight male violence against women 2021-2023. A key aspect that educational institutions need to adhere to is the 2017 Ministry of Education's national guidelines: "Educating to respect: for equality between the sexes, the prevention of gender-based violence and all forms of discrimination." Thus, based on this policy, each school must adopt educational actions to encourage an



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education based on the respect of other individuals and on the continuous fight against discrimination and GBV, to carry out training activities concerning the topic in question to the school staff.

**Austria's** institutional and policy framework on issues of gender equality seems scattered. **Institutions** that have been established in Austria are the Federal Ministry for Women, Family, Integration and Media-Women's Service, Women's and Girls' Counselling, Violence Protection Facilities, the Intervention Centre for Trafficked Women (IBF), the Children's and Youth Ombudsman's Office (KJIA) Upper Austria, and the Autonomous Women's Centre. A **policy** decree from 2018 titled "Reflexive Gender Education and Gender Equality", is valid indefinitely and it aims to address everyday forms of violence and aggressive behaviour, in general but also in schools, and the perception of the general public on connections between violence, gender-specific socialisation and role pressure as well as structural gender inequalities. Other policies/strategies implemented in Austria are the Violence Protection Summit 2021 "Together against Violence", the UN "Orange the World" campaign, and media campaigns promoting the women's helpline.

**Slovakia** seems to possess an **arguably weak institutional framework** on issues of gender equality, which aligns with the country's overall weak legal framework and the fact that it has not ratified the Istanbul Convention, and that the main focus on the Slovak legal system is interpartner and domestic violence. Therefore, most of the country's initiatives on gender equality and gender-based violence seem to emerge and be implemented by the Ministry of Social Affairs, and the Institute for research of Labour and Family. However, on a **policy** level, Slovakia is currently implementing the National Strategy for Equality between Women and Men and Equal Opportunities in the Slovak Republic for 2021-2027, National Action Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women for 2022-2027, and the Guideline for High Schools – “What to do with sexual harassment” issued by the Institute for research of Labour and Family.

**None** of the consortium countries possesses institutions or policies dedicated to promoting gender equality or addressing gender-based violence in the VET system.

### 3.1.3. Statistics

According to the **Gender Equality Index 2022**, the EU average score on gender equality stands at 68.6 out of 100 points, which is “only 5.5 points higher than in 2010”. According to the Index, “Greece, Hungary and Romania are struggling the most to advance gender equality”, since **Greece scored last across 27 EU member**





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**states at 53.4%, Slovakia** follows at 56%, **Italy** at 65%, **Austria** scored 68.8%, **Luxembourg** 73.5%, and finally, **Spain** scored 74.6%.

On a national level, in **Greece**, due to the **lack of available data focalized on the particularities of the VET sector in Greece**, data can be used from recent research conducted in the framework of higher education in Greece. Specifically, the Action Plan on Gender Equality that has been drawn by the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH) Gender Equality Committee, offers some insight into the situation of Gender Based-Violence incidents that take place in the specific educational context. This survey involved 2,134 students, of which 81% were enrolled in an undergraduate programme and 74.5% were female. According to the preliminary results, the rates of sexual harassment ranged from 3% to 23%, depending on the type of harassment. According to the research, for the majority of students, harassment incidents did not seem to have a significant impact on their performance and participation in academic processes and activities. However, the majority of students claimed that they found such events to be quite unsettling and worrying phenomena. Another survey result that can be very indicative of GBV in an educational context, is that the students appeared to be unsure of how to report any incident to the university or where to go for assistance. Of the 220 cases of sexual harassment that emerged from the survey, 85.5% of the victims were female and 91% of the perpetrators were male. Female students reported that the majority of perpetrators were undergraduate students (47%), followed by faculty members at 27%. It is worrying that 96.4% of students did not contact any of the relevant structures of the institution about these incidents, mainly because they did not consider them serious enough to report them (58.4%) and because they believed that any report would not be effective (32.5%). As stated by the students themselves, 67.4% of them, incidents such as these seem common.

**Slovak national statistics do not include the educational or VET sector, focusing mainly on cases of domestic violence.** If we take a look at the judicial data, 2.012 people were convicted of violence against partners. Out of these, 1.052 were cases of domestic violence, 920 cases were intimate partner violence against women and 40 cases were intimate partner violence against men. The data almost coincides with the police reports. The ratio between intimate partner and domestic violence is almost balanced, with violence against women significantly prevalent in intimate partner violence cases. 1.870 persons were convicted directly by the court or as part of the approval of a plea agreement. This represented 93% of men and 7% of women. Another situation occurred with ration amongst victims, with women and girls predominating 77%



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versus 23% of men and boys victims. Cases of domestic violence slightly predominate in judicial data on convicts, accounting for 55%, compared to intimate partner violence against women 44%. Where in the case of police data the ratio was the opposite, where 56% were intimate partner violence against women and 40% domestic violence.

In **Italy**, statistical data of the last five years indicate that GBV related attacks and charges have reached unprecedented levels, both globally and in our country. For example, reports from the calls to the National Helpline “1522” made in 2021 record a steady increase up 24,4 points since 2019 and 2% points compared to 2020. The Lazio regions has been confirmed the region with the highest volume of calls (69 every 100.000 women, an increase of 8.5%) with other regions such as Molise and Calabria with a diminishing trend of calls. Regarding GBV, the calls were over 32 thousand with an increase of 3,8% compared to 2020 and an extreme 72% compared to data before COVID-19 with psychological and physical violence reported more often. **No data on gender-based violence in the VET system is available in Italy.**

**Austria lacks available data on gender-based violence in the VET system, as well.** One of the most striking figures regarding gender-based violence in Austria is that 27% of perpetrators of sexual violence come from the family, while the European average is 20%. Sexual violence was registered in 46.52 cases per 100,000 inhabitants in Austria in 2020. This places Austria in the middle of the European nations. However, the crime statistics show Austria in the top third, if the cases of rape are taken into account. The same applies to sexual assault. Unfortunately, the crime statistics do not show where and in which environment these crimes were committed.

As of today, **there are unfortunately not enough reliable data to indicate what the situation in Luxembourg is regarding gender-based violence in the VET sector.** Some studies about women in VET note that women are more likely to drop out of their apprenticeship programs than their male counterparts, but have not investigated how gender-based violence might have a role in this attrition. In Luxembourg, two-thirds of women report having been victims of physical, psychological, sexual, or economic violence at least once in their lives. In 2017, according to EIGE, 38% of women in Luxembourg have experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15 and 71% of women who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15 have experienced health consequences as a result. Moreover, 19% of women who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by any perpetrator in the past 12 months have not told anyone. This rate is higher than the EU28 average of 13%. As for domestic violence, according to the Ministry of



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Equality between Women and Men, in 2021, 60.69% of the victims of domestic violence were female (60.28% in 2020) and 39.31% male (39.72% in 2020). 389 victims were minors, compared to 356 in 2020, which represents an increase compared to 2020. The age groups of 35-40, 40-45 and >50 were the most affected and alone represent 39.72%. 16.76% of the victims were over 50 years old.

Last but not least, in **Spain** the number of female victims of gender-based violence rose by 17,8% in the first three months of 2022, which can for once be blamed on the vigilance surrounding gender-based violence, which has provoked a raise in the reporting of such cases, but also on the pandemic that forced in a lot of cases for the victims to continue living with their aggressors, as in Spain there is a high percentage of gender-based violence that could be categorized under the umbrella of domestic violence. In Spain, it is quite difficult to assess the effects of GBV in school, as on the one hand there are no specific figures related to school-related gender-based violence. On the other hand, most school-related violence statistics are centered around bullying. Most studies suggest that the main victims of the bullying phenomena are closely related to those that are more vulnerable to suffering GBV, with the very same minorities being the most affected by this type of violence, stating the following when analyzing the phenomena of bullying in the country: “(2) that for once girls show more victimization and boys more aggression and (3) that there is a higher percentage of non-heterosexual victims, especially gays, and bisexuals. In conclusion, LGTB people show a greater vulnerability to suffering bullying”. **There is no available data on gender-based violence in the Spanish VET sector.**

Overall, aligned with their national legal and institutional frameworks, each consortium country has generated statistics and data on gender-based and domestic violence. However, **none has investigated the issue of gender-based violence in the VET sector on a national level, indicating a lack of provisions on the issue overall.**

## 4. Conclusions

Overall, each country-member of the consortium has established an arsenal of legal, institutional, and policy frameworks in order to tackle gender-based violence in general, although many more steps are necessary in order to accomplish gender equality on a national and European level.



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On average, the countries-members of the consortium possess enough available institutional tools, provided by both the EU legislation and policies and each national framework, in order to tackle gender-based violence and further enforce strategies into the field of VET. **What they all mainly lack is a better implementation of these frameworks.**

Countries with a satisfying legal and institutional framework, such as **Greece, Italy, Spain, Austria** and **Luxembourg**, need to improve the ways they’re implementing their plans and provisions, while others, such as **Slovakia** need to first establish the correct framework in order to further enact national policies and strategies that address gender-based violence on a more systemic level.

Furthermore, **the aforementioned lack of sufficient data on gender-based violence creates occasional inconsistencies in the research findings.** For example, even if Greece possesses an adequate legal and institutional framework in order to tackle gender-based violence and violence against women, the country still scored last in the Gender Equality Index 2022.

In addition, the findings of this research indicate that **possessing an adequate institutional framework is not enough in order to tackle wide societal and systemic issues, such as gender-based violence.** Most of the consortium country-members, such as **Austria, Italy** and **Luxembourg**, need to yet further improve their understanding on gender-related issues and, consequently, upgrade their legal language on gender-based violence accordingly. Moreover, it becomes evident that, **occasionally, it is societal opposition that hinders the progress of gender equality** in countries such as **Slovakia**, where the ratification attempt of the Istanbul Convention was met with intense hostility by a number of conservative forces within the country. Therefore, institutional tools cannot be established and implemented if the general public does not possess an adequate understanding of gender-related issues, such as gender-based violence, the gender pay gap, gender stereotypes that affect women and girl’s access to specific types of education, and so on. Consequently, **consortium country-members need to deploy better awareness-raising mechanisms and strategies on the issues of gender-based violence and battle the stigma of victimisation, before moving on to more specialized territories, such as education, work or the VET sector.**

Especially in the VET sector, all six countries need to incorporate VET into their legislation and policy provisions about addressing gender inequality and gender-based violence. Most importantly, **since no country has available data on gender-based violence in VET, relevant quantitative and qualitative research**



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**needs to be carried out, both on a national and European level.** This fact stresses the importance of the END GBV project since it is one of the first initiatives to fully and clearly address gender-based violence in the VET sector.

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## Annex 1 - National report and best practices of Austria

### NATIONAL REPORT: Austria

Desk research and collection of best practices to end GBV in educational structures.

<b>Project</b>	<b>END GBV in VET - "Full service to increase capacity and awareness for disrupting gender-based violence in the VET sphere".</b> Project 101049592 - CERV-2021-DAPHNE
<b>Available under</b>	Task 2.2 Desk research and collection of best practices for ending GBV in educational institutions
<b>Relevant work package:</b>	WP2 (T2.2)
<b>Date</b>	18-Oct-22
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<b>Version</b>	V3.0





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## 1. Abstract

In Austria, gender-based violence is hardly spoken about or reported. Consequently, there are practically no reports or statistics on sexual assaults in VET. On the other hand, there is an abundance of support services for structural and gender-based violence, so the need seems to be there. Although these assistance offers do not specifically refer to the VET sector and would thus indicate an increased problem situation.

The Austrian report starts with a short description of the school system and then goes into more detail about the VET school and company-based opportunities, which are very well developed. The VET school sector is key to Austria's economic success, low unemployment and yet is not always supportive enough for individuals in our society. It also does not seem to be able to prevent structural violence enough.

The legal framework can show what possibilities there are to prevent structural violence in Austria, but if society prevents a broad discourse by tabooing the topic, the legal framework will not be effective either.

The fact that the data on structural violence in Austria is so thin cannot be attributed solely to the tabooing of the topic. The problem must be more complex, the problem is obvious, but still not being addressed. Since 2021, the Methodological Manual for the EU Survey on Gender-based Violence against Women and Other Forms of Interpersonal Violence has been available<sup>1</sup> (Eurostat, 2021), in Austria it is just not made public, let alone worked with.

This Austrian report ends with helpful contacts and best practice examples.

## 2. Introduction

In the Official Journal of the European Union of 26.2.2021, the Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training with a view to the European education area and beyond (2021-2030) was published<sup>2</sup> (EUR-Lex, 2022).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/web/products-manuals-and-guidelines/-/ks-gq-21-009>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/DE/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32021G0226%2801%29&qid=1617706323424>



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It sets as its first strategic priority higher quality, more equal opportunities, better inclusion, and more success for all in education and training.

Inclusive education and training are also understood by the Council as developing gender sensitivity in learning processes and in education and training institutions, as well as challenging and breaking down gender stereotypes, especially those that limit boys' and girls' choice of field of study. Traditional male/female occupations should be further promoted to persons of the respective underrepresented gender. Further work is also needed to achieve gender balance in leadership positions in education and training institutions.<sup>3</sup> (EUR-Lex, 2021)

The proportion of people experiencing violence in a system is an important aspect of the level of well-being and safety. The EU Gender Equality Strategy for 2020-2025 emphasises that gender-based violence remains one of the greatest challenges facing our society and that it is deeply rooted in gender inequality - meaning that women and girls of all ages and backgrounds are most affected.<sup>4</sup> (European Commission, 2022)

Austria has ratified the Istanbul Convention and has already been monitored once. In addition, there were 10 recommendations that are already being processed in Austria. Austria is working deeply on the topic at a ministerial level. Obviously, Austria is good at agenda setting. Austria also has all the instruments at its fingertips and is well covered in criminal law.

There is a commitment in Austria to take up the issue of sexualised violence. As Austria, we have also committed ourselves to the European Union to implement these measures. We are currently in this process, which is also accompanied and monitored by the European Union. The Austrian school system is highly differentiated and partly very job-oriented and well established.

If you focus on gender-based violence, you have to look at how many women and men act in the system, where they act in the system. The awareness of the problem of sexualised violence has been researched.

The report shows which fields are available in vocational education and training, what the legal basis is, how gender-specific violence is viewed in general, and how to improve the number of cases in Austria in order to deal with the offences in this area in a legal and victim-centred way.

Two problem areas therefore open up:

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<sup>3</sup> [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021G0226\(01\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021G0226(01))

<sup>4</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy\\_de](https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_de)



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1. the establishment of a central reporting office with mandatory anonymous reporting of processed cases and the compilation of qualitative data on sexualised violence in vocational training in Austria.
2. dealing with individual cases. We have a problem in Austria in this area. It is obviously still the case that the existing offers are not taken up, out of shame, institutional mistrust or for some other reason.

### 3. The Austrian VET system

#### 1. Overview

The Republic of Austria basically has a public school system with free access, whereby a nine-year education is compulsory. The schools offer several vocational-technical and university-preparatory training programmes that cover one to four additional years beyond the minimum compulsory education.

The legal basis for primary and secondary education in Austria is the School Act of 1962. The Federal Ministry of Education is responsible for funding and managing primary, secondary and, since 2000, tertiary education. Primary and secondary education is regulated at the Land level by the authorities of the individual Länder.

Austria has a diverse education system with a large number of different types of schools. Children start their educational career at the age of three by attending kindergarten and continue at the age of six by attending primary school. After four years of primary school, a decision has to be made whether to attend a secondary school or a post-secondary school (a grammar school or a vocational, higher-level school). Compulsory education ends after 9 years of schooling, usually at the age of 15. In the upper secondary school, there is a wide choice of different secondary academic, technical and vocational schools. The Matura is required to attend a college or university.

A total of four educational pathways are open to pupils, three of which offer vocational training. This underlines the importance of this type of education in Austria: Thus, about 100,000 apprentices are trained in Austria every year.<sup>5</sup> (Wirtschaftskammer Österreich, 2022)

#### 2. Structure of the VET system

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<sup>5</sup> <https://wko.at/statistik/jahrbuch/lehrlinge21.pdf>



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VET has a special status in the Austrian education system. This is reflected in a differentiated offer and a high attractiveness: about 70% of an age cohort start a VET pathway from the last year of compulsory schooling. This year corresponds to the first year of upper secondary education (9th school year).

The total public expenditure The Austrian VET system on education at 4.8% of GDP puts Austria slightly above the European average. And the employment figures after completion of training are also considerably above the EU average.<sup>7</sup> (European Union, 2019)

The responsibility for school-based VET lies mostly with the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research; for apprenticeship, the Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy (in-company training) and the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (school-based part), as well as the social partners and Länder are jointly responsible. There is also a wide range of VET programmes at the tertiary level and for adults.<sup>8</sup> (CEDEFOP, 2019)

#### Upper secondary level

In addition to the general education track, learners can choose from a variety of pre-vocational and vocational options:

- ISCED 341 and ISCED 351 - EQF 3 are schools that provide basic vocational skills in addition to general education, as a kind of preparation for a secondary VET school or teacher.
- ISCED 354- EQF 4 are three- and four-year school-based VET programmes in various fields. In addition to an in-depth general education, students acquire vocational competences and qualifications for performing activities at an intermediate level. With a supplementary examination, these can also lead to access to higher education;
- ISCED 354-554 - EQF 5 are five-year school-based VET programmes that provide in-depth general education and high-quality technical education in various economic fields, combining theory and practice. With the Reife- und Diplomprüfung, graduates receive a double qualification: they are able to perform activities at a higher level of requirements and have general access to higher education;

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.wko.at/service/bildung-lehre/ausbildungspflicht-bis-18.html>

<sup>7</sup> [https://education.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document-library-docs/et-monitor-report-2019-austria\\_en.pdf](https://education.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document-library-docs/et-monitor-report-2019-austria_en.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/print/pdf/node/34156>



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- ISCED 354, EQF 4 the teacher or dual training provides training in about 200 apprenticeship occupations in various sectors, which can be started from the end of compulsory schooling, i.e. at the age of 15. It leads to a concrete vocational qualification at intermediate level or skilled worker level. Graduates have access to further qualifications, e.g. the master craftsman's examination or, after acquiring additional examinations, subject-related tertiary education. Completion of the Berufsreifeprüfung or advanced training courses also enables general access to higher education;
- ISCED 351 and 353 - Education and training for health professions: The prerequisite for training courses leading to nursing and medical assistant professions as well as other health professions is the completion of compulsory schooling, the attainment of a minimum age or the acquisition of corresponding prior qualifications. The training to become a certified nurse (ISCED 454) will be converted into tertiary education with a Bachelor's degree by the end of 2023.

### 3. Tertiary level

Practical training at university level is offered by Fachhochschule (FH) degree programmes. There are Bachelor's (EQF 6) and Master's (EQF 7) programmes in various fields. Some provide for compulsory work placements. Many studies can be completed part-time, some are dual, i.e. theory phases alternate with practical phases in companies. Universities generally offer pre-vocational training; however, some fields of study, e.g. medicine, law or technical studies, have a vocational focus.

Training for teachers at primary and secondary schools takes place in close cooperation between teacher training colleges and universities.

Further education degrees of the formal education system can also be acquired by adults. In addition, a variety of institutions develop needs-based programmes for the further and higher qualification of persons with VET qualifications. Among other things, these programmes lead to higher, i.e. tertiary/post-secondary VET qualifications or prepare for these qualifications, e.g. master craftsman training, preparatory courses for the master craftsman qualification and for the accountant's examination, training for the executive service, etc. They also offer programmes within the framework of the formal education system. However, they also offer programmes within the framework of active labour market policy.<sup>9</sup> (CEDEFOP, 2018)

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<sup>9</sup> [https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/8127\\_en.pdf](https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/8127_en.pdf)



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#### 4. Environmental conditions of vocational training in Austria

The VET system in Austria generally enjoys broad acceptance. However, it is currently confronted with a number of challenges that are shaping the current education policy discourse: - In 2020, 40.1 percent of men of working age (25 to 64 years) in Austria had an apprenticeship diploma as their highest level of completed education; for women, on the other hand, the figure was only 25.8 percent. On the other hand, women had a higher proportion of university graduates (17.9 to 16.2 percent).<sup>10</sup> (Statista, 2022)

- Basic competencies: According to the PISA results of the last few years, the share of pupils who have low mathematical competences or who cannot read comprehensively enough is comparatively high in Austria. Companies in particular complain about the often insufficient basic skills of their apprentices. The aim of the current government is to ensure that no pupil leaves the school system without basic skills in reading, writing and arithmetic. To this end, compulsory schooling is to be expanded into compulsory education;

- Dropping out of school or leaving the education system early: Even though the percentage in Austria is comparatively low, compulsory education until the age of 18 was introduced in 2017. Thus, the long-standing education guarantee became mandatory. All young people must complete a secondary school, an apprenticeship or another recognised training programme after completing compulsory education;

- Importance of non-formal education: Austria has a relatively highly segmented education system with low permeability, especially between formal and non-formal education in the higher qualification segment. Moreover, non-formal educational qualifications do not enjoy the same public perception as formal ones.

- The National Qualifications Framework (NQF), which relies on learning outcomes to describe and classify qualifications, regardless of where they were acquired, aims to create a new perspective on educational qualifications.<sup>11</sup> (CEDEFOP, 2018)

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<sup>10</sup> <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/1236592/umfrage/bildungsstand-der-bevoelkerung-in-oesterreich-nach-geschlecht/>

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/8127\\_en.pdf](https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/8127_en.pdf)





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## 4. Women in the Austrian educational landscape

### 1. Overview

Women make up the majority of teaching staff in Austria (BMBWF, 2019). As in other Member States, teaching staff in Austria are predominantly female; this is especially true for the lower levels of education (FBBE: 99%; primary: 92%; secondary: 66%). Female teachers tend to be younger than their male colleagues. They are less likely to become head teachers, although the gap is gradually closing. While 55% of teachers in upper secondary education are female, the proportion of female headmasters is only 34%, far below the European average.

Austria will have to replace a severely over-aged teaching force in the next 10 years.<sup>12</sup> (CEDEFOP, 2016)

In the school year 2019 / 20, there were a total of 128,886 teachers (including those on leave) at Austria's schools. Almost three quarters (73.1%) of the teaching staff were women (2009 / 10: 70%). At 92.6%, the share of women was highest in primary schools. Near gender parity prevailed in the area of VET schools and colleges (share of women: 54.6%).<sup>13</sup> (Bundeskanzleramt, 2021)

In the school year 2019 / 20, a total of 1,135,519 pupils were enrolled, of which 550,854 were girls and 584,665 were boys. Already when looking at the types of schools, gender-specific differences become apparent. The share of women continued to predominate in AHS (54.9%) and BHS (53.3%). Girls attended 83.6% of schools in the health sector. The traditionally female pedagogical (91%) as well as economic-professional (84.6%) and social-professional (76.1%) schools continued to be attended mainly by girls. Whereby the number of pupils especially in the business-professional sector increased in recent years (from 5.6 % in 1999 / 00 to 15.4 % in 2019 / 20).

In the commercial schools, the proportion of girls has also been constant for years and amounted to 57.1 %. At 73.8 %, boys were clearly overrepresented at technical and commercial schools. Overall, around two thirds of the students at vocational schools were boys (67.2%), which is the result of the fact that more boys complete an apprenticeship.

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<sup>12</sup> [https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2016/2016\\_CR\\_AT.pdf](https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2016/2016_CR_AT.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Bundeskanzleramt (2021). Frauen und Männer in Österreich. Zahlen, Daten, Fakten 2020. Wien.



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<sup>12</sup> [https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2016/2016\\_CR\\_AT.pdf](https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2016/2016_CR_AT.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> *Bundeskanzleramt (2021). Frauen und Männer in Österreich. Zahlen, Daten, Fakten 2020. Wien.*

In 2020, a total of 108,416 apprentices were trained in Austria, 35,091 of them women and more than twice as many men (73,325). The share of women predominated in particular in the trade sector (60.3 %), while the share of men was higher in the sectors of industry (82.2 %), trade / crafts (80.8 %) and transport / traffic (74.8 %), among others.

#### Studies and non-university tertiary education

In the winter semester 2019 / 20, the number of students in Austria was 376,050. Of these, 205,972 were women, which corresponds to a share of 54.8%. Compared to the previous year, the proportion of female students increased in all areas of higher education, with an overall increase in the proportion of women by 1.8%.<sup>14</sup> (Bundeskanzleramt, 2021)

## 5. National legal framework

The currently most comprehensive definition of gender-based violence in the Austrian legal framework is defined and dealt with in the protection concept of the Istanbul Convention ratified by the Austrian Parliament.

The protection concept of the Istanbul Convention - commonly referred to as the "Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence", was ratified by Austria on 14 November 2013 and entered into force on 1 August 2014.<sup>15</sup> (Bundeskanzleramt, 2022)

The short title Istanbul Convention refers to the place of signature. The Convention was adopted by the Council of Europe on 7 April 2011 and opened for signature on 11 May 2011 at the meeting of the Committee of Ministers in Istanbul. Austria was one of the first signatories, along with Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and Turkey. The special feature of the Convention stems from the fact that it is not merely a recommendation, but also contains binding standards. The main aim of the Convention is to strengthen the protection of victims on the one hand and to ensure the

<sup>14</sup> Bundeskanzleramt (2021). Frauen und Männer in Österreich. Zahlen, Daten, Fakten 2020. Wien.

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/agenda/frauen-und-gleichstellung/gewalt-gegen-frauen/istanbul-konvention-gewalt-gegen-frauen.html>



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prosecution of perpetrators on the other. The state's duty to protect has become even more important. <sup>16</sup>  
(Bundeskanzleramt, 2022)

In Art. 2 para. 2 of the Istanbul Convention, the States Parties are encouraged to apply the Convention to all victims of domestic violence, i.e. also to men and children. This is to make it clear that men do not only assume the role of perpetrators, but can also be victims of violence. However, the scope of application also includes, above all, all forms of violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, which disproportionately affects women. <sup>17</sup> (Council of Europe, 2011)

The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence was amending or supplementing legislation and therefore required the approval of the Austrian National Council pursuant to Art. 50 para. 1 subpara. 1 B-VG and subsequently the enactment of laws pursuant to Art. 50 para. 2 subpara. 4 B-VG. In order that the Convention could also regulate matters within the independent sphere of action of the Länder, it required the consent of the Bundesrat pursuant to Art. 50 para. 2 no. 2 B-VG. The Convention commits to comprehensive measures to combat all forms of violence against women and domestic violence. It contains provisions on preventive measures, measures for the protection and support of victims as well as measures under criminal law. The Convention also contains an anti-discrimination clause and addresses the situation of particularly vulnerable groups of victims. This Convention establishes common standards at the regional level in this area for the first time.

With regard to the implementation of the Convention, the Parties - and thus also Austria - are nevertheless obliged to pay special attention to female victims of violence in order to ensure that their particular vulnerabilities and protection needs are taken into account. Furthermore, the Convention pursues a comprehensive gender-specific protection concept.

Further legal foundations are provided by the Violence Protection Act in Austria, which in principle applies to all persons living in Austria. However, it is primarily intended to offer protection to women and children who are either threatened by spouses or cohabitants or experience actual violence. The Protection against Violence Act is composed of the General Civil Code (ABGB), the Security Police Act (SPG) as well as the Enforcement Order (EO). Irrespective of whether or not a woman wants to file a complaint, the Protection

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/agenda/frauen-und-gleichstellung/gewalt-gegen-frauen/istanbul-konvention-gewalt-gegen-frauen.html>

<sup>17</sup> Council of Europe (2011). Übereinkommen des Europarats zur Verhütung und Bekämpfung von Gewalt gegen Frauen und häuslicher Gewalt und erläuternder Bericht. Istanbul.



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against Violence Act gives her the possibility to make use of police measures as well as protection options under civil law.<sup>18</sup> (Finditoo GmbH, 2022)

Since 1997, Austria has also had the Violence Protection Act to protect victims of domestic violence. This enables victims of domestic violence to stay at home while the violent person has to leave the shared flat.<sup>19</sup> (Finditoo GmbH, 2022)

In addition, the tenth section of Austrian criminal law describes the offences of criminal acts against sexual integrity and self-determination and their respective penalties.<sup>20</sup> (Bundesministerium für Finanzen, 2022)

## 6. Gender-based violence in Austria

The Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research currently states that violence among children and adolescents often has a gender dimension, for example when it comes to sexualised violence or harassment, when it comes to aggressive physical confrontations among adolescents or when it comes to bullying or mobbing, in which pupils are exposed to derogatory actions or (gender-related) comments over a longer period of time.

The genders are often affected differently by violence or involved differently in violent situations. A gender-sensitive and reflective approach to everyday forms of violence and aggressive behaviour, also in schools, and the perception of connections between violence, gender-specific socialisation and role pressure as well as structural gender inequalities in the sense of the Istanbul Convention, which has also been ratified by Austria, can help to carry out more targeted and successful prevention work in the sense of strengthening the personality, expanding the scope for action and reducing sexism and violence. A policy decree from 2018 in this regard, "Reflexive Gender Pedagogy and Gender Equality", is valid indefinitely.<sup>21</sup> (BMBWF, 2022)

The topics of preventing and combating violence as well as gender equality are an integral part of the curricula of Austrian schools, although the intensity of the presentation in the curricula varies. The curriculum of the primary school already contains, e.g. in the chapter "General Educational Objectives", the statement

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.strafrecht24.at/ratgeber/allgemeines/gewalt-gegen-frauen/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.strafrecht24.at/ratgeber/allgemeines/opferschutz-in-oesterreich/>

<sup>20</sup> [https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/Dokumente/Erv/ERV\\_1930\\_1/ERV\\_1930\\_1.html](https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/Dokumente/Erv/ERV_1930_1/ERV_1930_1.html)

<sup>21</sup> BMBWF. Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung (2018). Grundsatzlerlass „Reflexive Geschlechterpädagogik und Gleichstellung“. Wien.



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that "conflicts arising from living together or from differences in interests must be made the subject of joint reflection at an early stage: the pupils will learn ways and means of conflict resolution.

The same curriculum lists among the educational and teaching tasks within the experiential and learning area of "community" for basic level I, for example, the topics of the family as a community (living together and partnership in the family), and for basic level II, for example, the requirement to explicitly link the topics of violence and women/family can be found in a number of teaching materials, which, however, are not usually listed in the curricula.<sup>22</sup> (Parlament, 2022)

A study prepared by the European Union shows that in Austria severe experiences of violence in the last 5 years are 7% at school or college and 8% at work.<sup>23</sup> (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2007-2022) This is a very high figure even in an EU comparison, when women with this probability in Austria have to fear having a serious experience of violence at school or at work. Even though the study emphasises that with these figures Austria is one of the safer countries in the EU in this area.

What the study also shows very well, however, is that women do not turn to institutions or aid organisations when they experience violence, nor do they turn to medical personnel, to victims' associations, to a lawyer or to the church. Austrians do not seek help in 76% of the cases and 6% do not know why they do not seek help or prefer not to say anything.

In all of these figures, Austria is at the absolute bottom of the list behind all other countries in the EU.<sup>24</sup> (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2007-2022) This realisation that sexualised violence is not discussed much in Austria unfortunately leads to the fact that some statements in and about Austria do not represent the reality correctly. When considering the above statements about relative safety in the workplace and at school, it can be assumed that the statements of the interviewees

The same applies to the comparative figures on whether and why the incidents were not reported. Here, too, a form of concealment is used in which it is claimed that the incident was not so serious that it should or should not have been reported in any way.<sup>25</sup>(European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2007-2022) Since trust in the police is good, this factor also falls away as an obstacle. One of the most striking figures is that 27% of perpetrators of sexual violence come from the family, while the European average is 20%.

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<sup>22</sup> [https://www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXIV/I/I\\_02449/fnameorig\\_309174.html](https://www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXIV/I/I_02449/fnameorig_309174.html)

<sup>23</sup> <https://fra.europa.eu/en/data-and-maps/2021/frs>

<sup>24</sup> <https://fra.europa.eu/en/data-and-maps/2021/frs>

<sup>25</sup> *ibid.*



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Sexualised violence was registered in 46.52 cases per 100,000 inhabitants in Austria in 2020. This places Austria in the middle of the European nations. However, the crime statistics show Austria in the top third, if the cases of rape are taken into account. The same applies to sexual assault. Unfortunately, the crime statistics do not show where and in which environment these crimes were committed.<sup>26</sup> (Eurostat, 2022)

The rate of material and social deprivation according to age, gender and educational attainment of young people aged between 14 and 29 is fortunately very low in Austria and, at 3.9%, is the third lowest in the European Union.<sup>27</sup> (Eurostat, 2022)

Although Austria is one of the wealthiest countries in the world, the rate of people at risk of poverty according to the at-risk-of-poverty threshold, age and gender is 14.4%. The comparable rate for men is 13.3% and for women marginally higher at 15.5%.<sup>28</sup> (Eurostat, 2022)

The employment rate by gender in 2021 was 75.6 overall, 79.9 for men and 71.3% for women.<sup>29</sup> (Eurostat, 2022)

The gender pay gap without adjustments refers to the difference between the average gross hourly earnings of male and female employees as a percentage of the average gross hourly earnings of male employees. Austria is unfortunately among the frontrunners in this comparison with a percentage of 18.9%.<sup>30</sup> (Eurostat, 2022)

A striking figure shows the at-risk-of-work-poverty rate based on age and gender, which is in the European average at 7.8%. While the rate for men is 8.2%, it is 7.3% for women.<sup>31</sup> (Eurostat, 2022) This is discussed and perceived quite differently in the Austrian public, i.e. the other way round. A closer look reveals a clue from the vocational education sector. If the figures on poverty in old age are broken down by material and social deprivation according to age, gender and educational attainment, and if one also breaks down the figures according to educational attainment at ISCED 2011 level, the average rate for all is 3.5%. For men it is higher at 4.5%, while for women it is only 2.2%.

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<sup>26</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/crim\\_off\\_cat/default/table?lang=de](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/crim_off_cat/default/table?lang=de)

<sup>27</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ILC\\_MDSD03/default/table?lang=de&category=livcon.ilc.ilc\\_md.ilc\\_mdspd](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ILC_MDSD03/default/table?lang=de&category=livcon.ilc.ilc_md.ilc_mdspd)

<sup>28</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ilc\\_li09/default/table?lang=de](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ilc_li09/default/table?lang=de)

<sup>29</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/TESEM010\\_\\_custom\\_3807991/default/table?lang=de](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/TESEM010__custom_3807991/default/table?lang=de)

<sup>30</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tesem180/default/table?lang=de>

<sup>31</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ILC\\_LI02\\_\\_custom\\_4348522/default/table?lang=de](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ILC_LI02__custom_4348522/default/table?lang=de)



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Comparing this with the figures from the Netherlands, which has a similar standard of living, the picture is exactly the opposite along gender lines. The vocational training system in the area of dual training is thus marginally, but nevertheless, protects women from the danger of poverty in old age in Austria.<sup>32</sup> (Eurostat, 2022)

## 7. Gender-based violence in vocational schools in Austria

The Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research currently states that violence among children and adolescents often has a gender dimension, for example when it comes to sexualised violence or harassment, when it comes to aggressive physical confrontations among adolescents or when it comes to bullying, where pupils are exposed to derogatory actions or comments (related to gender) over a longer period of time.<sup>33</sup> (BMBWF, 2022)

The European Fundamental Rights Agency did a survey on harassment and collected the following information:

- 1) You have been personally insulted or threatened, e.g. by insults or name-calling,
- 2) You have been personally threatened with violence,
- 3) You were threatened with insulting or threatening gestures or stared at inappropriately,
- 4) You received insulting or threatening emails or text messages (SMS),
- 5) You were insulted or threatened on the internet, e.g. on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Twitter or WhatsApp.

The evaluation showed that 57% of the Austrian respondents had had experiences of harassment in the last five years, which is 16% more than the European average.<sup>34</sup> (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2007-2022). These harassments were experienced by 15% at work and 3% at school.

Since the German school system as well as the vocational training system has strong similarities to the Austrian system, a current study on violence in schools is used here.

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<sup>32</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ilc\\_iw04/default/table?lang=de](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ilc_iw04/default/table?lang=de)

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.bmbwf.gv.at/Themen/schule/schulpraxis/ba/gs/gewaltpraevention.html>

<sup>34</sup> <https://fra.europa.eu/en/data-and-maps/2021/frs>



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A study published by FORSA in October 2022<sup>35</sup> (forsa, 2022), in which school headmasters were asked about violence against teachers, does not give a good report on the situation in German schools.

Similar to two years ago, 59 per cent of school headmasters in Baden-Württemberg currently report cases of direct violence against teachers in the last five years, i.e. that a teacher has been directly insulted, threatened, insulted, bullied or harassed. 33 percent have experienced cases of violence via the Internet, i.e. that teachers were defamed, harassed, harassed, threatened or coerced via the Internet. That a teacher has been physically assaulted in the last 5 years is reported by 25 per cent of school headmasters. The study suggests that students who show violence towards teachers also show violence towards their classmates.

Very few schools have a multi-professional team to support the teachers, for example consisting of school psychologists, social workers, educators and other professions. The vast majority of school headmasters in Baden-Württemberg (93%) whose school does not have a multi-professional team would like to see such a team in place at their school. They see in the multi-professional teams a possibility to work with the pupils in a de-escalating way.

## 8. National policies, strategies and resources against violence in vocational training

On 7 July 2015, the Convention on the Rights of the Child was finally adopted in the National Council and became valid in Austria. As part of the UN Convention on Human Rights, the UN Children's Rights are common sense in Austria and the basis for social and political action.<sup>36</sup> (Netzwerk Kinderrechte Österreich, 2019)

Thus, all children in Austria up to the age of 18 have the right to free access to education, non-violent upbringing and protection against economic and sexual violence.

Article 14 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union states that everyone has the right to education and access to vocational education and training.<sup>37</sup> (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2007-2022)

Unfortunately, the article falls short throughout Europe, as it only states that compulsory education is to be provided free of charge, but does not refer to initial and continuing education. For Austria, the free choice of

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<sup>35</sup> [https://www.vbe-bw.de/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/forsa\\_Ergebnisbericht\\_BaWü\\_2022.pdf](https://www.vbe-bw.de/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/forsa_Ergebnisbericht_BaWü_2022.pdf)

<sup>36</sup> Netzwerk Kinderrechte Österreich – National Coalition zur Umsetzung der UN-Kinderrechtskonvention in Österreich (2019). Ergänzender Bericht zum 5. Und 6. Bericht der Republik Österreich an die Vereinten Nationen gemäß Artikel 44 Absatz 1b des Übereinkommens über die Rechte des Kindes. Wien.

<sup>37</sup> <https://fra.europa.eu/de/eu-charter/article/14-recht-auf-bildung>





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education is laid down in the Basic Law on the General Rights of Citizens. Article 18 states that everyone is free to choose their profession and to train for the same as and where they wish.<sup>38</sup> (Bundesministerium für Finanzen, 2022) The state pays the costs of training, whether in a vocational school or in an apprenticeship. In an apprenticeship, however, the state only pays the share of the costs for the vocational schools; the entrepreneur as the master of the apprenticeship pays the apprentice's remuneration.

Since 2017, Austria has also had a legally regulated training obligation for all persons up to the age of 18.<sup>39</sup> (BMBWF, 2022) This goes hand in hand with the fact that the state has committed itself to providing every Austrian citizen with an apprenticeship place, which is a training guarantee that every single apprentice receives. In order to guarantee this, there are a multitude of support options to make it easier for young people to decide which occupation or which training they would like to enter. Anti-discrimination is laid down in law.

In Austria, sexual harassment is a form of discrimination based on gender and is prohibited under the Equal Treatment Act (GIBG). Employers are obliged to take appropriate remedial action in the event of sexual harassment in the company, i.e. to take action to prevent further harassment.

This duty to remedy arises from the employer's general duty of care and the Equal Treatment Act. If the employer does not respond or does not respond appropriately, a claim for damages may arise against him or her.<sup>40</sup> (Bundesministerium für Finanzen, 2022)

Genders are often affected differently by violence or involved differently in violent situations. A gender-sensitive and reflective approach to everyday forms of violence and aggressive behaviour, also in schools, and the perception of connections between violence, gender-specific socialisation and role pressure as well as structural gender inequalities in the sense of the Istanbul Convention, which has also been ratified by Austria, can help to carry out more targeted and successful prevention work in the sense of strengthening the personality, expanding the scope for action and reducing sexism and violence. A policy decree from 2018 in this regard, "Reflexive Gender Education and Gender Equality", is valid indefinitely.<sup>41</sup> (BMBWF, 2020)

The topics of preventing and combating violence as well as gender equality are an integral part of the curricula of Austrian schools, although the intensity of the presentation in the curricula varies. The curriculum

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<sup>38</sup> [https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/Dokumente/Erv/ERV\\_1930\\_1/ERV\\_1930\\_1.html](https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/Dokumente/Erv/ERV_1930_1/ERV_1930_1.html)

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.bmbwf.gv.at/Themen/schule/beratung/schulinfo/abp18.html>

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=10002296&FassungVom=2013-07-31>

<sup>41</sup> BMBWF. Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung (2018). Grundsatzlerlass „Reflexive Geschlechterpädagogik und Gleichstellung“. Wien.



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of the primary school already contains, e.g. in the chapter "General Educational Objectives", the statement that "conflicts arising from living together or from differences in interests must be made the subject of joint reflection at an early stage: the pupils will learn ways and means of conflict resolution. The same curriculum lists among the educational and teaching tasks within the experiential and learning area of "community" for basic level I, for example, the topics of the family as a community (living together and partnership in the family), and for basic level II, for example, the requirement to explicitly link the topics of violence and women/family can be found in a number of teaching materials, which, however, are not usually listed in the curricula.<sup>42</sup> (Parlament, 2022)

Article 15 of the Istanbul Convention sets out the education and training required for members of certain professions: Paragraph 1 of this provision provides for the establishment or strengthening of education and training for relevant professionals dealing with victims or perpetrators of all acts of violence falling within the scope of this Convention. Education and training on the prevention and detection of such violence, on gender equality, on the needs and rights of victims and on the prevention of secondary victimisation are intended to raise awareness among professionals about violence against women and domestic violence, to contribute to appropriate behaviour towards victims and to improve the type and quality of support provided to victims.<sup>43</sup> (Bundesministerium für Finanzen, 2022)

This definition takes into account the essential need for professional training in the field of education to raise awareness - also in the field of vocational training.

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Current activities and events in Austria on the topic of violence that have taken place recently:

- A Violence Protection Summit 2021 "Together against Violence": To kick off the International Days against Violence against Women and Girls, the Minister of Women's Affairs and the Minister of the Interior invited representatives from violence protection institutions, academia, the police and the judiciary to a violence protection summit.
- Participation in the "Orange the World" campaign  
The United Nations (UN) has been addressing and combating violence against women for many

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<sup>42</sup> [https://www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXIV/I/I\\_02449/fnameorig\\_309174.html](https://www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXIV/I/I_02449/fnameorig_309174.html)

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=10002296&FassungVom=2013-07-31>



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years. In 2008, in particular, the campaign " was launched. In 2021, the Federal Chancellery also participated in the campaign "Orange the World - 16 days of activism against gender-based violence", which is implemented annually by UN Women - the United Nations Organisation for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women ("Unite to End Violence against Women by 2030") - during the "16 Days against Violence against Women".

- On 15 November 2021, a media campaign was launched in print media and on info screens of public transport to draw attention to the help offered by the violence protection centres, the women's helpline and the police; the campaign ran until 9 December 2021.

## 9. Support services and useful contacts

Support services:

In Austria, there are comprehensive counselling and support services in the field of gender-based violence, including preventive services:

A free "women's helpline" is available around the clock, anonymously and throughout Austria: Persons affected by violence can contact the helpline and receive initial information and, if necessary, contact details for support services in the respective province. The women's helpline offers initial and crisis counselling as well as rapid help in acute situations. If necessary, it refers to regional women-specific violence protection facilities and counselling centres.

In every province there are "violence protection centres" whose services are free of charge (cf. homepage of the Federal Chancellery): Topics include "domestic violence", "stalking", "violence in the social environment",...

Offers include:

- Assistance to increase protection and safety for women and their children
- Information and support especially after a police intervention
- Support in formulating and submitting applications to the court
- Assistance with contacts with authorities
- Accompaniment to police questioning and court hearings



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- Psychosocial and legal process support
- If necessary, referral to other facilities (women's shelters, women's and family counselling centres, child protection facilities, psychotherapists etc.)
- If necessary, mother-tongue counselling or the involvement of interpreters

Support is also offered to relatives (in the family and circle of friends) of people affected by violence. In addition, there are also specific information services for women with disabilities.

In every federal state there are "women's shelters", which are social institutions that offer help, counselling and temporary shelter to women and their children in acute emergency situations in case of domestic violence. Contact to these facilities is only possible by telephone, the exact location of these houses is not known and cannot be found on the internet or elsewhere. The strictest protective measures are in place for the clients, but admission is limited in time.

There are specialised women's counselling centres for sexual violence. These counselling centres offer anonymous and free counselling, including online counselling. These are specialised counselling centres for all forms of sexualised violence, sexual assault or harassment. Here they support girls and women in coming to terms with what they have experienced and accompany them in the criminal proceedings (process support).

The counselling services include: Psychosocial counselling, counselling on charges, psychosocial and legal process support, counselling, social services, accompanying referral, information on psychotherapy options, counselling and process support in German and other languages (also with interpreting).

There is an Austria-wide emergency call for women's counselling in cases of sexual violence (Tel.: 523 22 22). On the topic of forced marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM= Female Genital Mutilation), there are counselling services for those affected by tradition-related violence. Safe and supervised accommodation is also offered for those affected by forced marriage from all over Austria. The address is kept secret for security reasons.

There is an Intervention Centre for Trafficked Women (IBF) that offers counselling for trafficked persons from all over Austria.

Information and contact details are provided on the Federal Chancellery- There is information on the topics of "Violence against Women", "Women and Equality", etc. ([www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at](http://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at))



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The WHITE RING helps victims of crime regardless of age, gender, nationality or type of crime.

There are free brochures on violence protection facilities.

There are also good offers in the preventive field. These should help to strengthen the young people's self-confidence, to make dealing with stress in e.g. bullying situations a topic, to make support services known and thus prevent later experiences of violence:

Children's and Youth Ombudsman's Office (KIJA) Upper Austria:

These services focus on the interests and needs of children and young people. The staff pay special attention to the implementation of children's rights and make them known to the public, based on the UN Convention for Children. This institution offers free psychological and legal counselling. In addition, there are prevention offers that can be taken up individually, age-appropriate and free of charge for all schools or kindergartens, e.g. in the whole of Upper Austria:

- Children's rights workshops: "My rights - Your rights" for 6-12 year olds and "Strong 4Life" for young people aged 13 and over
- the offers of the Bullying and violence prevention centre offer conflict management and bullying and violence prevention (also workshops against bullying and violence)
- with the KIJA Upper Austria violence prevention package `respect@school` has contributed to the development of a respectful school culture with a focus on bullying and violence prevention.
- Elementary education - KIJA staff inform children in kindergarten about children's rights in an age-appropriate form through plays, play impulses and creative methods. Parents are informed about the preventive effect of the contents, and the educators receive ideas for further consolidation.

Useful contact information:

- Women's protection centres: [www.gewaltschutzzentrum.at](http://www.gewaltschutzzentrum.at)
- Women's shelters in all provinces - e.g.: [www.frauenhaus-linz.at](http://www.frauenhaus-linz.at), Tel. : 0732/606700
- Women's Helpline (Tel.: 0800/222 555), also online: [www.haltdergewalt.at](http://www.haltdergewalt.at)
- Autonomous Women's Centre: [www.frauenzentrum.at](http://www.frauenzentrum.at)
- Women's emergency hotline: Tel.: 523 22 22



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- Intervention Centre for Trafficked Women (IBF) [ibf@lefoe.at](mailto:ibf@lefoe.at)
- Contact point for people affected by forced marriage and genital mutilation: <http://fgm-koordinationsstelle.at>)
- Weisser Ring: [www.opfer-notruf.at](http://www.opfer-notruf.at), 0800(112112
- Federal Chancellery: [www.bundestkanzleramt.gv.at](http://www.bundestkanzleramt.gv.at)
- Federal Ministry for Women, Family, Integration and Media- Women's Service, Women's and Girls' Counselling, Violence Protection Facilities ([bka.at](http://bka.at))
- Reporting and counselling centres at the Federal Ministry: [www.oesterreich.gv.at](http://www.oesterreich.gv.at)
- Child and youth ombudspersons' offices: [www.kija.at](http://www.kija.at)
- Children's rights page of the Federal Ministry of Youth: [www.kinderrechte.gv.at](http://www.kinderrechte.gv.at)
- United Nations Children's Fund in Austria: [www.unicef.at](http://www.unicef.at)
- Rat auf Draht: [rataufdraht.orf.at/](http://rataufdraht.orf.at/), telephone counselling in crisis situations for children, adolescents and their caregivers
- Internet Ombudsman: [www.ombudsmann.at/](http://www.ombudsmann.at/)
- Child Protection Centre: [www.kinderschutzzentrum.at](http://www.kinderschutzzentrum.at)



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## 10. Best Practice - Austria 1

<b>AVEO- Austrian Violence Evaluation Online Tool</b>	
<b>Land:</b>	<b>Austria</b>
<b>Short description (exact nature of the problem addressed):</b> (500-1000 words)	<p><b>Starting point:</b></p> <p>In Austria, the initiative "National Strategy for the Prevention of Violence at School" was introduced.<sup>44</sup> (BMBF, 2015) In addition, intensive research has been carried out in recent years about violence and bullying in schools (study). Studies conducted at the University of Vienna dealt with the research situation on violence and aggression in schools, as well as social relationships in multicultural school classes. The importance of the school class as a social unit and bullying in social media has also been researched (studies).</p> <p>An important measure to prevent violence is the participatory development of common rules for dealing with each other. A position paper on support is provided by the "Charter for the Establishment of Schools as a Health-Promoting and Non-Violent Habitat". The Charter was published in 2017.<sup>45</sup> (Wallner, 2018)</p> <p><b>Goals and objectives:</b></p> <p>In cooperation with the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, the University of Vienna has developed an evaluation instrument for the collection of violence in schools.<sup>46</sup> (Spiel/Strohmeier, 2011) This online tool is called <b>AVEO- Austrian Violence Evaluation Online Tool</b>: After carrying out the evaluation procedure and evaluation, it provides the basis for decision-making for prevention measures and serves to reduce violence in the school context,</p>

<sup>44</sup> [https://www.schulpsychologie.at/fileadmin/upload/persoenelichkeit\\_gemeinschaft/Bilanz\\_NAP\\_Schulische\\_Gewaltpraevention.pdf](https://www.schulpsychologie.at/fileadmin/upload/persoenelichkeit_gemeinschaft/Bilanz_NAP_Schulische_Gewaltpraevention.pdf)

<sup>45</sup> [https://wohlfuehlzone-schule.at/sites/wohlfuehlzone-schule.at/files/2019-10/Handreichung\\_Mobbing\\_ONLINE.pdf](https://wohlfuehlzone-schule.at/sites/wohlfuehlzone-schule.at/files/2019-10/Handreichung_Mobbing_ONLINE.pdf)

<sup>46</sup> Spiel, Christiane / Strohmeier, Dagmar (2011). Sustainability of Violence Prevention in Schools. Creation and Testing of a Self-Evaluation Instrument. Vienna



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### AVEO- Austrian Violence Evaluation Online Tool

to protect children and adolescents and enable self-reflection by teachers/teams.

<sup>47</sup>

It promotes a quality-oriented, health-promoting as well as gender- and diversity-oriented school culture in order to perceive conflicts and violence at the school and to intervene if necessary. This instrument is constantly being further developed. An important prerequisite for the selection of suitable strategies against violence in school is information on the extent of the occurrence of violence in one's own school.

#### **Focus of the intervention:**

The self-evaluation tool AVEO is an online student questionnaire on the occurrence of violence in individual classes with feedback function for teachers and school principals. Teachers can interview their classes independently with AVEO and receive an evaluation of the results immediately afterwards. As a result, teachers receive information about the occurrence of violence in the class quickly and easily. Thus, a survey with AVEO can help the schools to adequately assess the occurrence of violence in their classes and, if necessary, to take countermeasures. Surveys with AVEO follow strict data protection guidelines. Teachers and school principals are not reported data at the individual level and the data cannot be traced back to individual schools by third parties.

Target population: Pupils from the 5th grade, girls and boys

A total of 149 pupils took part in the piloting of the self-evaluation instrument, at which time they were attending the 6th to 9th grade. They were on average 12.1 years old (SD = 1.26; Range 11 - 16 years). (Spiel/Strohmeier, 2011)

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<sup>47</sup> Spiel, Christiane / Strohmeier, Dagmar (2011). Sustainability of Violence Prevention in Schools. Creation and Testing of a Self-Evaluation Instrument. Vienna





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### AVEO- Austrian Violence Evaluation Online Tool

The AVEO student questionnaire asks about the occurrence and frequency of **various forms of violence** between students:

- o verbal: e.g. through insults or teasing
- o physical: e.g. by hitting, kicking or pulling on the hair
- o relational: e.g. by spreading rumours or repeated exclusion
- o with new media: e.g. through SMS, e-mails or photos on the Internet

With the help of the reported results on the frequency of different forms of violence, teachers can assess whether bullying (bullying among students) occurs in their classes. A designation of acts of violence as bullying presupposes that one or more students are regularly harassed by other students over a longer period. Bullying actions are characterised by a power imbalance between perpetrators and victims, which is often difficult to recognize from the outside.

In addition, AVEO contains questions on various factors that can influence the occurrence of violence and bullying among students.

The manifestation of the following factors of violence is queried:

- o Empathy
- o Beliefs about violence
- o Assumption of responsibility
- o Class climate
- o Teachers' approach to violence at school

Deficits in these areas can be queried by means of AVEO and dealt with specifically with the help of measures against violence. To consider the individual circumstances in the school classes, teachers also have the opportunity to provide their students with up to five specially formulated questions with the self-evaluation tool AVEO.

**Period of implementation:**



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**AVEO- Austrian Violence Evaluation Online Tool**

	<p>The online questionnaire was developed in 2011, then introduced and adapted again and again after several evaluation rounds. 149 students took part in the piloting of the self-evaluation instrument. The tool is constantly updated and technically updated; the version <b>AVEO-T</b> is the current version for 2022.</p> <p><b>4. Main results from the implementation of the practice:</b></p> <p>Teachers can call up the results immediately after the survey via an online system. A summary of all responses to a class is reported. In the event of a new survey, teachers can compare the results with previous surveys and thus receive feedback on changes in the occurrence of violence. Principals have access to the results of all surveys conducted at their school. To ensure data protection, feedback can only be provided for the entire class. Feedback at the level of individual students or divided according to certain characteristics, such as gender, is not possible for data protection reasons.</p> <p>If students in the surveyed classes often become victims or perpetrators of violence, this appears in the AVEO feedback for teachers and school principals. In this case, the implementation of measures against violence in these classes is recommended.</p>
<p><b>Trends and potential benefits of these best practices</b> (max. 500 words)</p>	<p>The AVEO instrument offers are low-threshold, anonymous and free of charge for all schools in Austria.</p> <p>The surveys are carried out and evaluated by the schools independently and economically.</p> <p>It enables a rapid assessment of the situation regarding incidents of violence at a school. The evaluation of the evaluation takes place immediately. The headmasters and teachers have the data available very quickly.</p> <p>Countermeasures can be initiated in a targeted manner - e.g.: via the Department of School Psychology, organisation of workshops on certain key topics, organisation of free therapy offers for those affected, ...</p>



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AVEO- Austrian Violence Evaluation Online Tool	
	<p>The evaluation can be carried out several times in one class - i.e. changes in the incidents of violence can be shown.</p> <p>The survey data make it possible to take countermeasures if necessary.</p>
<p><b>How this good practice could be applied/transferred</b> (max. 500 words)</p>	<p>In vocational education institutions, the topic of gender-based violence could be addressed in the courses, training, etc. and the participants could be asked to carry out the adapted online tool (cf. AVEO) voluntarily and anonymously. Based on the evaluations, a status quo regarding gender-based violence in the educational institution could then be collected and support for those affected could be offered, or information on offers could be given. The transferability is possible to a large extent through the online tool and the given structure, even in an international context.</p>
<p><b>Essential criteria it addresses</b></p>	<p>The procedure is based on political recommendations - project "Feel-good zone school" (Spiel/Strohmeier, 2011), "National strategy for school violence prevention" (BMBF, 2015)</p> <p>Accuracy, clarity: Violence is queried in a standardised way (certain forms of violence), but also active and protective factors are asked.</p> <p>Transferability: After adaptation, this method can also be used in educational institutions with adults</p> <p><sup>48</sup></p> <p><sup>49</sup></p> <p>Several stakeholders are involved in this project</p> <p>It is time-effective: Implementation is not time-consuming; results can be queried by teachers and headmasters after answering the questions</p>

<sup>48</sup> Spiel, Christiane / Strohmeier, Dagmar (2011). Sustainability of Violence Prevention in Schools. Creation and Testing of a Self-Evaluation Instrument. Vienna

<sup>49</sup> [https://www.schulpsychologie.at/fileadmin/upload/persoennlichkeit\\_gemeinschaft/Bilanz\\_NAP\\_Schulische\\_Gewaltpraevention.pdf](https://www.schulpsychologie.at/fileadmin/upload/persoennlichkeit_gemeinschaft/Bilanz_NAP_Schulische_Gewaltpraevention.pdf)



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<b>AVEO- Austrian Violence Evaluation Online Tool</b>	
<b>Secondary criteria it addresses</b>	<p>The procedure is financially sustainable: it is free of charge for the users, for the operators also little financial effort is necessary - the instrument can be further developed if necessary.</p> <p>It also requires little effort to maintain.</p>
<b>Category of best practices</b>	<p>The described online tool falls into category <b>4: Awareness and prevention</b>.</p> <p>Through anonymous surveys, it tries to find out how the violence situation at the schools at the time of the survey is. The data obtained from this serve as a basis for decision-making for prevention measures and should thus lead to a reduction in violence in the school context and the protection of children and adolescents.</p> <p>By carrying out the tool, there is automatically a sensitization, which begins with the introduction of the topic before the survey. By then taking up the topic in class, after evaluating the data, further awareness is raised for the topic of violence and prevention of it.</p>
<b>Status of applicability (local, regional, national, international) and justification</b>	<p>Local, regional, national, international</p> <p>This online tool can be used anywhere in educational institutions, it only needs to be adapted to audience / focus of use - e.g.: in educational institutions for adults with a focus on gender-based violence</p>
<b>Website link:</b>	<p><a href="https://www.schulpsychologie.at/gewaltpraevention/praevention/praeventionsprojekte/selbstevaluation-aveo-s-aveo-t">https://www.schulpsychologie.at/gewaltpraevention/praevention/praeventionsprojekte/selbstevaluation-aveo-s-aveo-t</a></p> <p><a href="http://aveo.schulpsychologie.at">http://aveo.schulpsychologie.at</a></p>
<b>Further information (e.g. employees or stakeholders involved)</b>	<p>Teachers, school principals, psychologists, psychotherapists, bullying prevention officers</p>



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### AVEO- Austrian Violence Evaluation Online Tool

Stakeholders: Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, School Psychology, University of Vienna (Institute of Psychology of Development and Education)



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## 11. Best Practice- Austria 2

Title of good practice: <b>Website of the Federal Chancellery- Service for Women, Women's and Girls' Counselling, Violence Protection Facilities</b>	
Land:	Austria
Brief description	<p>1. <b>Aims and objectives of the website: (Bundeskanzleramt, 2022)</b></p> <p>The Women's Service of the Federal Ministry for Women and Integration serves as an information hub for women and girls seeking advice and help in all situations. The basis for this is the National Action Plan for the protection of women against violence.</p> <p>The aim is to make it easier for women and girls to find a counselling service that suits them. Because seeking counselling is always a hurdle that requires strength and overcoming. The search function makes it possible to filter all counselling centres according to federal states, counselling topics, counselling languages, type of counselling or target group. Each counselling centre has a detailed page with relevant information such as address, telephone number, email address, how to reach them by phone, information about the services offered, workshops offered and much more.</p> <p>2. <b>Focus of the intervention, including: target population (e.g. gender, age), type of GBV addressed, mechanisms / tools for reporting and addressing GBV; settings in which the practice took place, etc. :</b></p> <p>The offer was directed at all women and girls who need information on gender-specific topics. Among other things, support is offered for those affected by violence, violence in the network, sexual violence, domestic violence and stalking, genital mutilation or forced marriage.</p>



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The website offers extensive information on various key topics:

**- Women's Service:**

The women's service team offers general support in "women's issues" and can be reached at the free telephone number, but contact is also possible via e-mail. Requests are handled anonymously, non-bureaucratically and in a trustworthy manner.

**-Women and Girls' Counselling Centres:**

The women's and girls' counselling homepage clearly presents all counselling facilities funded by the Federal Chancellery with their respective counselling services.

**-Online counselling for women and girls: HelpCh@t, MonA-Net Helpdesk**

The online counselling from all over Austria around the clock, fast, anonymous and free of charge, can offer a first orientation in difficult situations and helps especially those women and girls who find it easier to write down their thoughts than to speak them out. It is important to mention that no traces are left behind on the net, as no e-mail address has to be given. And above all: it is a possibility for many women who cannot or do not want to go to a counselling centre to get help.

**-Information for migrant women:**

The reduction of discrimination against women is a central task of women's and gender equality policy, and the information provided in this portal is intended to support this. Migrant women, especially those who have fled from war and crisis areas to Austria in recent years, are more exposed to disadvantageous life



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situations: in addition to the disadvantageous position of women vis-à-vis men and the multiple burdens, there is also the migration-related structural disadvantage. For this reason, help and information are offered especially for this group of women.

**-Women's Helpline against Violence:**

The women's helpline against violence (0800 222 555) provides support:

- All women who are affected or threatened by male violence, as well as all persons from the environment of the affected persons
- Women and girls affected by stalking and forced marriage
- Women in relationship and life crises
- Representatives of various institutions and social facilities

**-Violence on the Net:**

Depending on the specific form of online violence, different **specialised counselling centres** are available. Affected persons can receive free psychosocial and legal counselling there.

For certain forms of violence and hate on the net, there are special **reporting centres** where incidents can be reported - also anonymously.

**-Domestic violence and stalking:**

In every province there is a "Violence Protection Centre", this supports women, men and children who are affected by domestic violence or stalking. Its central task is to protect the victims and increase their safety. The support is free of charge and confidential. Affected persons can contact these violence protection facilities directly. If the police impose a no-entry order, these facilities also actively contact those affected by violence.





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**-Women's Houses:**

The women's shelters offer threatened or abused women and their children non-bureaucratic immediate assistance consisting of protection, accommodation/protected living space, meals and counselling. The staff of the women's shelters advise, accompany and support women in dealing with official channels, maintenance and custody issues, divorce as well as finding work and housing. Nationality, religion and income are irrelevant. If necessary, counselling in the mother tongue is offered, and interpreters can also be called in.

**-Sexual violence:**

In every province there is at least one counselling centre that offers free, specialised support for women and girls affected by sexual violence. These centres offer crisis intervention, psychosocial counselling, referral to psychotherapy or trauma therapy if needed, psychosocial and legal process support and counselling for caregivers.

**-Forced marriage and female genital mutilation:**

Help is offered here for those affected by forced marriage:

In an acute emergency situation, women have the possibility to stay in a **shelter**. This is a specialised, protected crisis accommodation and offers intensive care, counselling and support. As a follow-up facility, there is also a **transitional flat**, also with care, counselling and support, to enable women to start an independent life. The address of the two flats is kept secret for security reasons.



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**-Women's Trafficking:**

In Austria, the **IBF - Intervention Centre for Trafficked Women** exists. This state-mandated intervention centre provides comprehensive counselling and support to women and girls who have been trafficked to or within Austria in order to be exploited in prostitution or in marriage, in the household, in care or in other activities and service relationships (such as cleaning, the tourism industry, agriculture). The counselling service is available in German as well as in numerous foreign languages.

The IBF works closely with state authorities and private institutions and also maintains contact with non-governmental organisations abroad in order to inform women about violence prevention in their home countries as well, and to coordinate the care of affected women and girls in the countries of origin, transit and destination.

**-Women's Health:**

In this area, health-specific offers for women are advertised.

**-Women's Service:**

This section provides an overview of Austria-wide services for women and girls. An important basis for a self-determined life and making informed decisions is to know where to get support and help in all life situations. For this purpose, there are - nationwide and regionally - special contact points for every woman and every girl in Austria.

**3. Period of implementation:**



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<p>Title of good practice: <b>Website of the Federal Chancellery- Service for Women, Women's and Girls' Counselling, Violence Protection Facilities</b></p>	
	<p>The website operated by the Ministry has existed in this form since 2019; it is continuously updated with current offers (e.g.: offers in the area of women's health) and will continue to be usable in the future.</p>
<p>Trends and potential benefits of these best practices</p>	<p>The website's services are <u>low-threshold, anonymous</u> and <u>free of charge for all</u> interested parties and those in need of help.</p> <p>The website is <u>available at all times</u> - it is accessible all day, around the clock, 365 days a year</p> <p>The required information can be searched for in a <u>targeted and efficient manner</u> due to the different portals.</p> <p>The inserted links in the respective areas enable immediate detailed information, contact details and contents of the support services.</p> <p>In the online area of the Girls' and Women's Counselling Service (<a href="http://www.frauenberatenfrauen.at">www.frauenberatenfrauen.at</a>) it is possible to immediately get in touch with the professional counsellors online. An e-mail can be sent via a button. It is not necessary to give one's own email address, so no traces are left behind on the net and the anonymity of those seeking help is preserved.</p> <p>In the section on violence on the net, a link with reporting offices has been added - this links to the Federal Ministry of the Interior. This portal contains fax numbers and e-mail addresses for the individual reporting offices (e.g. for reports of human trafficking: <a href="mailto:www.menschenhandel@bmi.gv.at">www.menschenhandel@bmi.gv.at</a>).</p> <p>In the free <u>BanHate App</u> of the Styrian Anti-Discrimination Agency, hate postings or hate crimes can be reported anonymously.</p>
<p>How this good practice could be applied/transferred</p>	<p>Parallel to this website of the Federal Chancellery, information campaigns are continuously carried out to raise awareness about violence in general. In schools, there is the project "Well-being zone school", preventive workshops on these topics are also offered (e.g.: "Respect" by KIJA). In addition, actions</p>



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<p>Title of good practice: <b>Website of the Federal Chancellery- Service for Women, Women's and Girls' Counselling, Violence Protection Facilities</b></p>	
	<p>against violence against women are taken annually in Austria within the framework of "orange the world- 16 days against violence against women".</p>
<p>Criteria it addresses</p>	<p>Raising awareness of women's and gender equality issues is a central task of the section of the Federal Ministry for Women, Families and Integration. In addition to the collection and evaluation of scientific bases and statistical data, this also includes the implementation of projects promoting gender equality, representation in national and international committees, the provision of information material and statements on laws (Bundeskanzleramt, 2022)</p> <p>The website is based on policy recommendations.</p> <p><b>Clarity:</b> Forms of violence are addressed and concrete support services for women affected by violence are listed.</p> <p>Transferability: This website can be used for the field of "Gender-based violence in educational institutions" after adaptation.</p> <p>There are <b>several stakeholders</b> involved in this project</p> <p>It is <b>time-effective</b>: all users of the website can quickly get the information they want because of the subdivisions</p>
<p>Best practice category</p>	<p>Category:</p> <p>Tools, services, mechanisms: <b>Website</b></p>
<p>Applicability status (local, regional, national, international)</p>	<p>This offer can be used locally, regionally, nationally and also internationally. The website would only have to be adapted for the area of "gender-based violence" on the basis of detailed information and could then also be used throughout Europe.</p>



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Title of good practice: <b>Website of the Federal Chancellery- Service for Women, Women's and Girls' Counselling, Violence Protection Facilities</b>	
Website link (if applicable) or other relevant links:	<a href="https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/service/frauenservice-beratung-und-gewaltschutzeinrichtungen.html">https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/service/frauenservice-beratung-und-gewaltschutzeinrichtungen.html</a>
More information (e.g. staff involved, stakeholders, evaluation results, etc.)	This website is operated by the Federal Ministry, and various stakeholders are involved: Authorities, professionals from counselling centres, social workers, psychologists, hotline staff, etc.

## 12. Conclusions

The research shows that it is still a big taboo in Austria to talk about violence and structural violence in general and at school and at the workplace. Austria must have an interest in collecting valid data in the field of structural violence in schools, vocational schools and at the workplace. A methodological manual for the EU survey on gender-based violence against women and other forms of interpersonal violence was published by the European Union in 2021. Austria needs a national strategy on where, how, and when these data should be collected. No more years must pass before a valid database is finally available to develop and implement adequate measures against structural violence in general and specifically in vocational schools.

The most important instrument would be to establish a data record on gender-specific violence in Austria. This would finally make it clear how big the problem really is. At present, only the crime statistics in Austria are quantifiable. That is not sufficient. Above all, it is about the grey area of sexual harassment, which is not yet criminalised. These offenses are not yet documented and centrally summarised. This is not adequately recorded either in the educational institutions or outside. A mandatory collection of anonymised data would be worth considering.



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People working in the education system should be made more aware of the problem area of gender-based violence. The area of cybercrime must also be given greater attention. Involved persons should get more and better information about the various possibilities of external counselling to empower them to act. We also see the German instrument of multidisciplinary teams in education as a good approach to establish more prevention work against violence in everyday school life in Austria as well.

Awareness of the problem of gender-specific violence should be created among the entrepreneurs in addition to the legal obligations of guardianship. This also applies to those companies that train apprentices.

The agenda for protection against gender-based violence must be operationalised from the life situation of the respective persons affected. The problem must be solved from their perspective, otherwise the assistance will not be accepted.

Sensitisation to the problem of gender-based violence must be intensified, not least among the police and the judiciary. In any case, the awareness of the penal framework must be intensified for all persons involved. Above all, the most important problem to be solved is the poor data situation in the field of structural violence in general and in the vocational education sector in particular. If we want to work on and solve the comprehensive problems in this area, this is indispensable. In 2021, the European Union has already given us the right means to collect data in this area. All institutions are obviously willing and ready to help solve the problem.



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## Annex 2 - National report and best practices of Greece

<b>Project</b>	<b>END GBV in VET – “Full service to increase capacity and awareness for disrupting gender-based violence in the VET sphere”</b> Project 101049592 — CERV-2021-DAPHNE
<b>Deliverable</b>	D2.4 Desk Research and collection of best practices to END GBV in educational settings
<b>Relevant Work package:</b>	WP2 (T2.2)
<b>Dissemination level</b>	SEN - Sensitive
<b>Date</b>	Jan.2023
<b>Authors</b>	<b>AKMI</b>
<b>Status</b>	Final draft
<b>Version</b>	V3.0



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Table 1: Structure of the Greek Education System



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## Abbreviations

<b>DYPA</b>	Public Employment Service
<b>EIFs</b>	Gender Equality Committees
<b>ESK</b>	Vocational Training Schools
<b>EPAS</b>	Vocational Apprenticeship Schools
<b>EPAL</b>	Vocational High Schools
<b>EOPPEP</b>	National Organisation for Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance
<b>ESEEK</b>	National System of Vocational Education and Training
<b>GREVIO</b>	Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
<b>GSDFPGE</b>	General Secretariat for Demography, Family Policy and Gender Equality
<b>HEI</b>	Higher Education Institution
<b>IEK</b>	Vocational Training Institutes
<b>KETHI</b>	Equality Research Centre
<b>SDE</b>	Second Chance Schools



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## Executive Summary

The project *END GBV in VET – “Full service to increase capacity and awareness for disrupting gender-based violence in the VET sphere”* aims on piloting support offices in Vocational Education and Training (VET) institutes in an effort to increase their capacity and awareness for addressing gender-based violence in the VET sphere. In this framework, the present National Report aims to offer insights on aspects related to Gender Based Violence in the VET sector in Greece, in terms of the national context regarding the phenomenon of GBV, the national system of VET and the legal, institutional and policy frameworks relating to GBV.

In Greece, the issue of **Gender Based Violence** has been in **the epicentre of the public dialogue in the recent years more than ever before**; especially after the beginning of the Greek #metoo movement in 2018. However, Greece continues to rank last in the EU on the Gender Equality Index with its score being more than 15 points below the EU average, according to the latest data from European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE, 2022).

The **legal and institutional framework** for advancing gender equality in Greece has made significant advancements in the recent years with notable point being the inclusion in national legislation of the ratification of Convention 190 of the International Labour Organization and the Istanbul Convention on the prevention and combating of violence against women and domestic violence.

Also, a noteworthy improvement has been the establishment of Gender Equality Committees (EIFs) in Higher Education Institutions and the adoption of Action Plans to promote and ensure effective equality in education.

Regarding the issue of **GBV in the VET sector**, the Report presents the research results from a recent survey conducted by the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH) Gender Equality Committee. The survey touched upon issues of GBV and gender equality metrics in the framework of higher education in Greece. Also, a gap is identified regarding the availability of data and specialized research regarding the issue of GBV in Education and in the VET sector in particular.

Finally, the Report includes a broad record of the **national structure of support mechanisms** for victims of GBV as well as an **inventory of useful resources** address GVB in the Educational Sector in Greece. Two **best practises** implemented on national level have been identified and analysed in depth.



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## 1. Introduction

The project *END GBV in VET – “Full service to increase capacity and awareness for disrupting gender-based violence in the VET sphere”* focuses on piloting support offices in VET institutes in order to increase the capacity of VET providers and awareness for combating gender-based violence in the VET sphere. This will be achieved through the development of a capacity-building and training program for students, their teachers/VET staff, and interested parents that will focus on addressing issues relevant to gender-based violence. The training programme will be accompanied by the operation of a full service on the campus that will provide information, training, support, and consultations on issues of GBV.

The present **National Report** is developed in the framework of Work Package 2 of the project, entitled “**Comparative approach on disparities among and within participating countries**” and its goal is to offer insights on aspects related to Gender Based Violence in the VET sector in Greece. The Report’s specific **research objectives** include a deeper understanding of the roots of the problem of GBV in VET and the identification of needs and gaps on a national level regarding the reporting and combating incidents of GBV in the VET sector. The National Report is the result of extensive desk research and the collection of good practices to END GBV in educational structures.

The Report starts by discussing the **national context** regarding the phenomenon of Gender Based Violence in Greece and how issues and incidents of GBV have become the **epicentre of public dialogue in recent years**. In this chapter, the #metoo movement and notable cases of GBV are discussed, along with the continuously poor performance of Greece in the EU Gender Equality Index. Notably, the

The Report offers a brief yet comprehensive analysis the **Greek Vocational and Educational Training (VET) system**, which has been the subject of modernization and enhancement efforts in recent years. The Greek VET system offers training at levels three, four, and five of the National Qualifications Framework, which is comparable to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs holds overall responsibility for the implementation of the VET system in Greece, with the National Organisation for Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP) serving as the primary operative entity.

The Report presents an overview of the **legal, institutional and policy frameworks** relating to GBV on a national level. In Greece, efforts to advance gender equality have been ongoing and have shown notable progress in recent years, which includes the integration of the Istanbul Convention into Greek legislation and the recent amendment to the Penal Code (Article 336), which redefines the concept of rape based on the principle of non-consent. However, it is highlighted that despite the existence of legal and policy frameworks, Greece still lags behind other European Union countries due to the inadequate implementation of these measures. Also, the report showcases that along with the legislative advancements, various stakeholders and



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public institutions have emerged or been strengthened aiming at contributing to gender equality efforts in Greece.

To continue, the Report presents facts and figures from research focusing on GBV in the education sector; as research on the topic of GBV in the VET sector is lacking. The report, also, maps the **national policies, strategies and resources on GBV** as well as the **support services** available for victims/survivors of GBV in Greece. The Report concludes with the presentation of two identified **best practices** aiming to combat the phenomenon of GBV in Greece. The first identified best practice refers to a holistic intervention to support and raise awareness on GBV issues which was implemented on a national level with very promising results. The second identified best practice refers to educational material on human rights, including GBV issues, which was developed by the Greek department of Amnesty International and was implemented in various educational contexts on a national level.

The project's next step involves gathering data from all partners to create a comprehensive overview of the current state of gender-based violence (GBV) in vocational education and training (VET) in Europe. This data will help identify the needs and gaps in addressing GBV in VET, which will inform the development of a capacity-building program aimed at promoting gender equality and providing a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students. The ultimate goal is to address GBV in VET and ensure all students have equal access to quality education.

## 2. The National Context

In Greece, the issue of **Gender Based Violence** has been at the **epicentre of public dialogue in recent years** more than ever before. The COVID crisis has exacerbated incidents of GBV on a global and national level and it has been characterised as a “shadow” pandemic on a global level (UNWomen, 2021)<sup>50</sup>. Also, in Greece, the recently “born” #metoo movement has pushed the phenomenon of GBV into the media and public opinion spotlight.

The **#metoo movement in Greece** started to develop almost 4 years after its beginning in the USA in 2017. In January 2021 a well-known Olympic athlete, Sofia Bekatorou, came forth with revelations about her sexual abuse by an influential and established figure of the Greek sports institutional system. The revelations created a snowball effect and a momentum that many women used to come forward with similar stories of sexual harassment and gender-based violence. It is still evident that the #metoo movement and all the recent media attention that GBV has gained, have marked a turning point for the public discussion on GBV and the

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<sup>50</sup> UNWomen. (2021, November 24). Measuring the shadow pandemic: Violence against women during COVID-19. UN Women Data Hub. <https://data.unwomen.org/publications/vaw-rga>





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visibility of the issue. There is a noticeable indication that the issue of GBV is slowly starting to shed the taboo status that it traditionally held in Greek society.

In addition, among the many cases of GBV that have captured the public’s attention over recent years, it is **noteworthy to mention the two cases that have left a special mark on a national level**. The femicide of 21-year-old university student Eleni Topaloudi in 2018, created such commotion in public opinion and it forcedly unearthed the issue of GBV. This case created such a ripple on a national level that the first national “Annual Report on Violence against Women” was dedicated to her memory. Also, the murder of Zak Kostopoulos in 2018, was the first case in recent years that was highly covered by the media and it managed to pull out of obscurity the issue of LGBTQ+ victims of GBV.

Another situation explicit to the Greek context that helped bring on a substantial change to Greek society and politics was the **refugee “crisis” of 2015 and its ripple effects**. The influx of refugees and migrants helped to bring forward the gender perspective of the situation. The Greek state was pushed by international NGOs to address the issue of GBV and introduce interventions specialised for women suffering from multiple discriminations, like refugees and immigrant women (Lampros, 2017)<sup>51</sup>. Nowadays, the General Secretariat for Demography, Family Policy and Gender Equality (GSDFPGE) has the Directorate for Social Protection and Counselling Services which is mandated to introduce policies specialised to women suffering multiple discriminations.

Although a **small shift can be observed at the societal and institutional level, there is still a lot of work to be done to adequately address an issue such as GBV on a national level**. According to the most recent study conducted by European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE, 2022)<sup>52</sup>, **Greece ranks last in the EU on the Gender Equality Index** with its score being more than 15 points below the EU average. Greece's score has increased by 4.8 points since 2010, but its ranking has remained unchanged as other countries have advanced faster. Since 2019, Greece's score has risen by less than 1 point. This small improvement is due to advancement being observed in the domains of power and health. In Greece, more women have occupied decision-making positions mainly across the economic sphere and not so much change has been realised in the political and social spheres which are counted as part of the power domain of the EIGE Gender Equality Index. The power domain remains the one with the most notable inequalities between genders. Also, it is important to mention that no score has been appointed to Greece in the domain of violence, due to a lack of comparable EU-wide data. In 2020, in Greece, 10 women were killed by a family member and/or an intimate partner and according to an official report, 788 women were murdered by the same category of perpetrators in 17 EU Member States. So far Greece does not provide official data disaggregated by the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator, making it impossible to compare the data at the

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<sup>51</sup> Lampros, A. (2017, January 26). Responding to Gender-Based Violence in Greece’s Refugee Camps. Berkeley Law. <https://www.law.berkeley.edu/article/responding-gender-based-violence-greeces-refugee-camps/>

<sup>52</sup> European Institute for Gender Equality - EIGE. (2022, October). Gender Equality Index | 2022 | Greece. <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2022/country/EL>



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European level (EIGE, 2022)<sup>53</sup>. This is a very bitter aspect of an overall poor situation for Gender Equality in Greece.

## 2.1. The National VET System

Since 2010, Greece has been implementing an **eight-level comprehensive framework for lifelong learning, the Hellenic qualifications framework (HQF) (Law No. 3879/2010)**<sup>54</sup>, aiming at a coherent and comprehensive system of qualifications from all parts and levels of education and training (Cedefop, 2021). The **Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs** is responsible for HQF implementation and the **National Organisation for Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP)** is the main actor at the operational level. The recently adopted **Law No. 4763/2020**<sup>55</sup> has reshaped the institutional framework of VET and lifelong learning policies in Greece and formalizes all operational aspects of the HQF.

Education in Greece is **compulsory** for all children between the **ages of 4 and 15**. Students enter upper secondary school at the age of 15 and graduate at 18. Those who graduate from a general upper secondary school receive a certificate equivalent to EQF/NQF level 4 and can sit the national examinations for admission to a higher education programme. Specifically, the education system in Greece is divided into:

- Early Education and Care for children up to the age of 6;
- Primary Education for schoolchildren between the ages of 6 and 12;
- Compulsory Secondary Education up to the age of 15;
- Upper Secondary Education from the age of 15 to 18;
  - Students can choose to follow General Education
  - or Vocation Education Schools (EPAL).
- Post-Secondary VET from the age of 18;
- Higher Education for those wishing to attend university courses;
- Lifelong Learning, which caters for adult students of all ages.

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<sup>53</sup> ibid

<sup>54</sup> Law No. 3879/2010 on the development of lifelong learning and other provisions set the ground for developing the HQF and introduced levels and the learning outcomes concept as essential elements of qualifications and awards. Official Government Gazette, 163A/2010. [http://www.edulll.gr/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/nomos\\_-3879\\_2010.pdf](http://www.edulll.gr/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/nomos_-3879_2010.pdf)

<sup>55</sup> Law No. 4763/2020 on the national vocational education system, training and lifelong learning. Official Government Gazette, 254/A/21-12-2020. <http://www.opengov.gr/ypepth/?p=5632>



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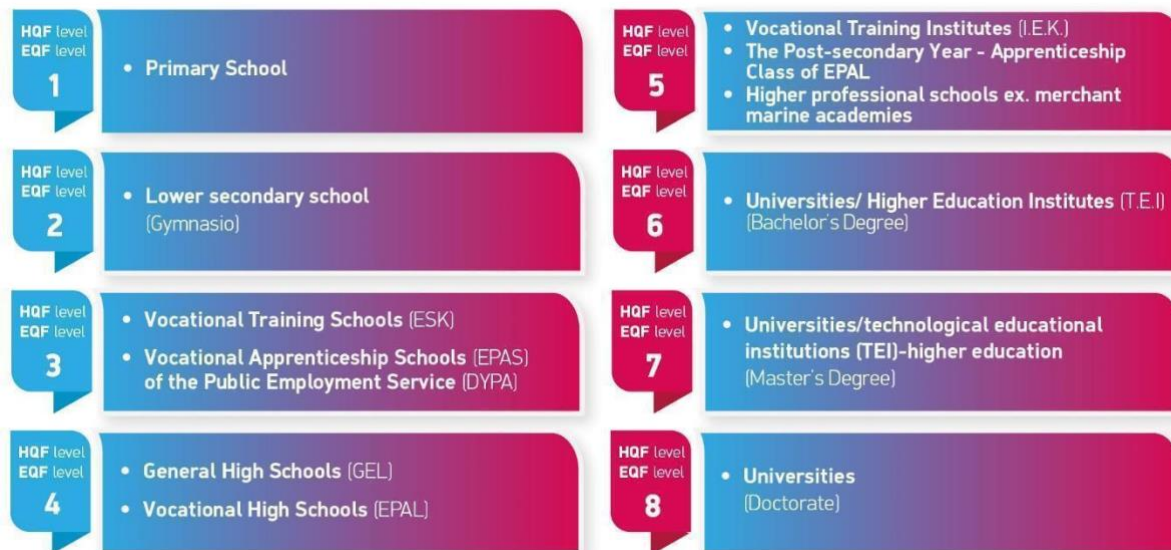


Table 1: Structure of the Greek Education System

In Greece, vocational education and training (VET) is heavily regulated by the state and, until recently, was mostly delivered through a school-based model (Cedefop, 2018). The Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs holds the overall responsibility for the VET implementation in Greece.

The National System of Vocational Education and Training (E.S.E.E.K.) was established in 1992 (Law No. 2009/1992) and the recently adopted **Law No. 4763/2020**<sup>56</sup>, is the most recent modernization and upgrade effort for the E.S.E.E.K.

The objective of the Greek VET system is also clearly stated in Law No. **4763/2020**, article 1, par. 2<sup>57</sup>:

*“Objective of the Greek VET System is to improve the knowledge, skills and abilities of the human resources of the country, its effective adaptation and its response to the constant changing needs of society and the market taking into account the internationalized labour environment in order to be a pillar of conscious alternative choice education-training of the population of the country.”*

Under this objective, the **goals** of the Greek VET System are also stated in **Law No. 4763/2020**, article 1, paragraph 3:

- a) *the provision of basic knowledge and the development of skills through formal vocational training of EQF level 4, in wider branches of the economic activity or professions, for their optimal acquisition with substantial contribution of the social partners;*

<sup>56</sup> Law No. 4763/2020 on the national vocational education system, training and lifelong learning. Official Government Gazette, 254/A/21-12-2020. <http://www.opengov.gr/vpepth/?p=5632>

<sup>57</sup> *ibid*



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- b) *ensuring flexibility and efficiency for formal post-secondary vocational education and training at **EQF level 3** and formal vocational training at **EQF level 5**, with substantial contribution of the social partners;*
- c) *creating conditions for enhancing sound economic **competitiveness** and improving conditions for **employment** and the fight against unemployment, as well as the **elimination of discrimination** and social exclusion;*
- d) ***avoiding duplication** between learning pathways*
- e) *upgrading and strengthening of the general **adult education**.*

The national VET system is developed at levels three (3), four (4) and five (5) of the National Qualifications Framework, which corresponds to those of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). In particular, **level three (3)** includes the Vocational Training Schools (ESK), and Vocational Apprenticeship Schools (EPAS) of the Public Employment Service (DYPA) [formerly known as OAED (Manpower Employment Organization)], **level four (4)** includes the Vocational High Schools (EPAL), and at **level five (5)** the Vocational Training Institutes (I.E.K.) and the Post-secondary Year - Apprenticeship Class of EPAL.

Specifically, after the completion of compulsory secondary education (Gymnasio), **upper secondary VET** is provided in the following formats:

- **Vocational Training Schools (ESK)**, day or evening, two years of study. The ESK can be either public or private entities and their curriculum is organised into specialisations. Each specialisation includes either a "learning programme in the educational structure" in combination with a traineeship or a "work-based learning programme". Graduates of the ESK programmes receive a **NQF/EQF Level 3** Diploma in Vocational Education and Training and are allowed to enrol in the second class of EPAL, in a field corresponding to their specialisation.
- **Vocational Apprenticeship Schools (EPAS)** of the Public Employment Service (DYPA). These apprenticeship programmes are available for students aged 15 to 29 who have completed the secondary compulsory education (DYPA, 2022)<sup>58</sup>. **Apprenticeship programmes** have a two-year duration and combine classroom education with **paid practical work** in a business, and they are mostly run by the **Public Employment Service (DYPA)**. In 2022, DYPA operates a total of 50 EPAS apprenticeship schools and for the school year 2022-2023 the total student enrolment reached 6.460 students (DYPA, 2022)<sup>59</sup>. Graduates of the Apprenticeship Training Programmes have the opportunity to immediately access the labour market by obtaining a **Level 3** Vocational Education

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<sup>58</sup> DYPA - Public Employment Service. (2022). Approval of the operation of specialties in the Apprenticeship Schools of the D.Y.P.A., for the School Year 2022 - 2023. In [www.dypa.gov.gr](https://www.dypa.gov.gr/storage/ekpaideysi/prokhrhryksh-2022-2023/egkrish-liturgias-idikothton-2022-2023.pdf). <https://www.dypa.gov.gr/storage/ekpaideysi/prokhrhryksh-2022-2023/egkrish-liturgias-idikothton-2022-2023.pdf>

<sup>59</sup> *ibid*



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and Training Diploma (following certification examinations at the EOPPEP) or enrol in the second year of the Vocational High School in a field corresponding to their specialisation.

- **Vocational High Schools (EPAL)**, three years of study in general and vocational specialities courses. EPAL curricula offer over 25% of total teaching hours in work-based learning (WBL). Currently, 408 EPAL schools are in operation with more than 108.244 attending students (Nektarios et al., 2022)<sup>60</sup>. EPAL graduates can gain qualifications of **NQF/EQF level 4**.

Overall, in the **school year 2020-2021**, 116.704 students attended the secondary education VET facilities. This means that **only 1 in 3 students choose to go to an EPAL in secondary education** - and **only 37% of students in EPALs are girls**. And of those who choose technical and vocational education and training, the vast majority (93%) choose EPALs and other in-school training structures, and **only 7% go to Apprenticeship EPALs**. In the EU, the opposite is true - 70% choose apprenticeships (Nektarios et al., 2022)<sup>61</sup>.

After the completion of the upper secondary level education, VET students can continue their studies at **post-secondary level** in two formats:

- **The ‘Apprenticeship Class’**. The Vocational High Schools (EPAL) also offers a one-year post-secondary course where EPAL graduates follow apprenticeships in businesses relevant to their specialisation. The graduates of the “Apprenticeship” programme can receive qualifications equivalent to **NQF/ EQF level 5**, after successfully completing the EOPPEP certification examinations.
- **Vocational Training Institutes (IEK)**. Two and half-year post-secondary VET programmes offered by public and private training providers (IEK) to upper secondary graduates. IEK graduates are awarded occupational specialisation diplomas at **NQF/EQF level 5**.

Additionally, Vocational programmes are also offered by **Higher Professional Programmes**. The main providers of such programmes are public and private schools supervised by respective ministries (e.g. education, culture, defence, tourism, mercantile marine). Adult learners that have completed upper secondary vocational education programmes (EPAL) or upper secondary general education programmes (GEL) can be admitted to these programmes. The diplomas awarded by these schools can be higher technological education diplomas (**EQF level 6**) in the case of merchant navy academies, or non-university tertiary level diplomas (**EQF level 5**) in the case of dance and theatre schools (CEDEFOP, 2018a).<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Nektarios, M., Karkalakos, S., Plessa-Papadaki, A., Theodoridou, A., & Chinopoulos, E. (2022). Efficiency of the Professional Education and Training in Greece. Dianeosis. [https://www.dianeosis.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/vocational\\_training\\_v.2.10.22.pdf](https://www.dianeosis.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/vocational_training_v.2.10.22.pdf)

<sup>61</sup> *ibid*

<sup>62</sup> Cedefop. (2018). *Spotlight on VET in Greece*. Luxembourg: Publications Office. <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2801/97571>



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**Lifelong Learning centres (LLCs)** are the main providers of Lifelong Learning in Greece, and they can be either public or private entities. According to **Law No. 4763/2020**<sup>63</sup>, these centres offer a variety of courses, **focusing on non- formal adult education**. The services offered by LLCs include:

- (a) Continuing vocational training; (b) reskilling; (c) upskilling; (d) general adult education; and (e) counselling and vocational guidance. LLCs can be public or private organizations. LLCs can also offer internship opportunities as part of their Continuous Vocational Training programmes.

Finally, **Second Chance Schools (SDE)** are also considered a form of Adult education and they address the needs of adults that have not completed compulsory education (Sytziouki M., 2022).<sup>64</sup>

It is also important to mention that **in general terms Greek society strongly favours general education and appreciates university studies**. Both these factors reflect sociological stereotypes rooted in long-lasting perceptions and have affected overall VET attractiveness. VET has been characterised by: higher dropout rates; multiplicity and complexity of the legal framework; challenges regarding the design and implementation of VET-related policies; and impediments to linking with the labour market. It remains a **second choice** and **often attracts low performers**, who may also come from lower economic backgrounds (Cedefop, 2018a).<sup>65</sup>

According to research conducted by Cedefop (2018b)<sup>66</sup>, there is a contradiction that can be observed in Greece where around **70% of people have a positive opinion about VET at the upper secondary level** but at the same time, **only around 20% of people have participated in VET**.

Despite the significant efforts of the last years in the field of VET policies and the high implementation of the European guidelines and strategic thematic priorities, time is still needed in order to yield concrete results and reach their maximum potential.

## 2.2. Legal Framework

The **legal and institutional framework for advancing gender equality in Greece** has made significant advancements in recent years. However, despite the legal and policy frameworks being in place, Greece is

<sup>63</sup> Law No. 4763/2020 on the national vocational education system, training and lifelong learning. Official Government Gazette, 254/A/21-12-2020. <http://www.opengov.gr/yppepth/?p=5632>

<sup>64</sup> Sytziouki, M. (2022). Teachers and trainers in a changing world – Greece: Building up competences for inclusive, green and digitalised vocational education and training (VET). Cedefop ReferNet thematic perspectives series. [http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2022/teachers\\_and\\_trainers\\_in\\_a\\_changing\\_world\\_Greece\\_Cedefop\\_ReferNet.pdf](http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2022/teachers_and_trainers_in_a_changing_world_Greece_Cedefop_ReferNet.pdf)

<sup>65</sup> Cedefop. (2018). *Spotlight on VET in Greece*. Luxembourg: Publications Office. <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2801/97571>

<sup>66</sup> Cedefop. (2018b), Cedefop opinion survey on vocational education and training in Europe. [Opinion survey on vocational education and training in Europe | CEDEFOP \(europa.eu\)](https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/press/news/1144)



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still lagging behind other EU countries due to inadequate implementation, the enduring effects of the recession and austerity policies, and the persistence of discrimination (OHCHR, 2019).<sup>67</sup>

In recent years, the national legal framework on discrimination based on gender identity or sexual orientation has been steadily improving, following relevant legislative initiatives instituted at the European and/or international level. Gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence are now deeply embedded in Greek legislation with its roots in the Greek Constitution. Specifically, **the Greek Constitution** since 2001 (Greek Government Gazette 85/A/18-4-2001) under article 2 par.2 mentions:

*«The Greek males and female citizens have equal rights and obligations»*

and under article 116 par.2:

*«Taking **positive measures to promote equality** between men and women is not discrimination on grounds of sex. The State takes care to remove the inequalities that exist in practice, especially to the detriment of women».*

This constitutional amendment marked an important moment for gender equality on the national level as it removed the constitutional restrictions in Greece, which still exist in other EU countries, and opened the door for progressive policies in a variety of areas, including the adoption of gender quotas for local, national, and European Parliament elections as well as gender quota provision for advisory bodies and scientific councils (Anagnostou & Avlona, 2019).<sup>68</sup>

Following the constitution, the national legislation incorporates numerous **European directives** such as [Directive 2011/99/EU](#)<sup>69</sup> — European protection order, [Council Directive 96/34/EC](#)<sup>70</sup> of 3 June 1996 on the framework agreement on parental leave, [Council Directive 76/207/EEC](#)<sup>71</sup> of 9 February 1976 on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions and [Council Directive 75/117/EEC](#)<sup>72</sup> of 10 February 1975 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the application of the principle of equal pay for men and women and international legislations and directives.

Consequently, Greece has formed a legislative base with the most significant laws being:

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<sup>67</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights - OHCHR (2019, April 19). Greece must put gender equality at the heart of economic and social recovery, say UN independent experts [Press release].

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2019/04/greece-must-put-gender-equality-heart-economic-and-social-recovery-say-un>

<sup>68</sup> Anagnostou, D., & Avlona, N. (2019). The European Union and gender equality in research and higher education: A view from Greece. In [www.eliamep.gr](http://www.eliamep.gr). ELIAMEP. <https://www.eliamep.gr/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/The-European-Union-and-gender-equality-in-research-and-higher-education-4.pdf>

<sup>69</sup> Available online : <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/AUTO/?uri=CELEX:31996L0034&qid=1666969560612&rid=3>

<sup>70</sup> Available online: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/AUTO/?uri=CELEX:31996L0034&qid=1666969560612&rid=3>

<sup>71</sup> Available online : <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A31976L0207&qid=1666969632316>

<sup>72</sup> Available online : <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/AUTO/?uri=CELEX:31975L0117&qid=1666969804517&rid=1>



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- **Law No. 4808/2021 - For the protection of Employment**<sup>73</sup>

This legislation established the ratification of **Convention 190 of the International Labour Organization** to eliminate violence and harassment in the world of work. In this framework, a number of new practices are put in place, and new rights and responsibilities are established, including the right of an employee who experiences such behaviour to leave the workplace for a reasonable period of time without facing any pay loss or other repercussions. It should be highlighted that this protection is given to everyone who works in a place of business, including independent contractors, interns, and volunteers, regardless of their contractual relationship with the employer.

- **Law No.4604/2019 - Law for the promotion of effective gender equality and prevention and combat of gender-based violence;**<sup>74</sup>

The main features of this Law can be summarized as follows (GSDFPGE, 2019)<sup>75</sup>:

- 1) **For the first time, an independent institutional framework for gender equality and the elimination of discrimination against women is being legislated**, which is governed by a comprehensive view of gender relations and without treating the female sex as "a special category", as is the case with the provisions and regulations of family and labour law, social security law, Community directives and international treaties that our country has ratified or defined by the Constitution.
- 2) It **defines the basic concepts, mechanisms and institutions for the realization of the principle of equal treatment of the sexes**, the incorporation of this principle in public policies and private life, as well as the formation and organization of a network of permanent structures throughout the country for the prevention and treatment of violence against women. To this end, the operation of an integrated network of structures and services aiming to offer psychosocial support, legal counselling and safe accommodation to women victims of gender violence is envisaged.
- 3) Furthermore, for the first time, there is a provision for the preparation of "**Equality Plans**", by public and private sector enterprises, developed after an analysis of the existing social reality and set specific objectives, strategies and practices for the achievement of gender equality, as well as the awarding of an "**Equality Badge**" (Sima Isotitas) by the General Secretariat for Demography, Family Policy and Gender Equality, as a reward for the implementation of equal treatment and equal opportunities policies.

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<sup>73</sup> Law No. 4808/2021 for the protection of Employment. Official Government Gazette, 101/19.6.2021. <https://www.kodiko.gr/nomothesia/document/727771/nomos-4808-2021>

<sup>74</sup> Law No.4604/2019 on substantive gender equality, prevention and combating gender-based violence. Official Government Gazette, 50/26.03.2019. <https://www.kodiko.gr/nomothesia/document/506446/nomos-4604-2019>

<sup>75</sup> GENERAL SECRETARIAT FOR FAMILY POLICY AND GENDER EQUALITY - GSDFPGE. (2019, March 19). Publication in the Greek Government Gazette of Law No. 4604 on the promotion of substantive gender equality and the prevention and combating of gender-based violence. <https://isotita.gr/%CE%B4%CE%B7%CE%BC%CE%BF%CF%83%CE%AF%CE%B5%CF%85%CF%83%CE%B7-%CF%83%CE%B5-%CF%86%CE%B5%CE%BA-%CF%84%CE%BF%CF%85-%CE%BD%CF%8C%CE%BC%CE%BF%CF%85-4604-%CE%B3%CE%B9%CE%B1-%CF%84%CE%B7%CE%BD-%CF%80%CF%81/>





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- 4) It also **incorporates the gender dimension in the drafting of administrative documents** by prohibiting the use of formalities that imply or contain gender discrimination, while it includes the violation of the principle of equality, equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of work and employment, the use of gender discriminatory language in disciplinary law.
- 5) In addition, to further encourage the active participation of women in the political life of the country and to strengthen their representation in the Parliament, the law includes a **provision to increase the percentage by gender to at least equal to 40% of the total number of candidates per constituency, for parliamentary elections** [already established for local government elections by the Kleisthenis programme (2018)], while as regards the composition of the collective bodies of the Administration, a sanction is introduced for their unlawful composition when the specified percentage is not respected.
- 6) In addition, the **Independent Offices for Equality in the Regions**, the KEDE and the ENPE, the **Equality Committees in the Municipalities and the Regional Equality Committees** are established and **upgraded**.
- 7) **In the field of education, gender mainstreaming** is included in the actions and curricula of higher educational institutions, as well as in primary and secondary education and the educational process in general.
- 8) **In the areas of health and social solidarity**, the gender dimension is included in the design, implementation and evaluation of public policies for physical and mental health, as well as social solidarity and support for vulnerable groups of women. At the same time, seven working days' leave with full pay is granted to women workers who use medically assisted reproduction methods.
- 9) Finally, **in the field of the media and advertising**, regulations are promoted to implement the principle of gender equality and eliminate gender stereotypes (codes of conduct, self-commitment contracts, self-regulation rules, Greek National Council for Radio and Television), while an explicit ban on the reproduction of advertising, television or radio messages using discriminatory language is provided for.
  - **Law No. 4531/2018**<sup>76</sup> - on the (i) ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on the prevention and combating of violence against women and domestic violence (**Istanbul Convention**) and adaptation of the Greek legislation

The ratification of the **Istanbul Convention** by the Greek State through **Law No. 4531/2018**<sup>77</sup>, represents the first legally binding document outlining a thorough prevention, protection, and legal response to violence against women. This law added to and strengthened **Law No. 3500/2006**<sup>78</sup>, which lacked a well-coordinated strategy for prosecuting violent offenders and protecting their victims. **Law No. 3500/2006** was harshly

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<sup>76</sup> Law No. 4531/2018 On The (I) Ratification Of The Council Of Europe Convention On The Prevention And Combating Of Violence Against Women And Domestic Violence And Adaptation Of The Greek Legislation. Official Government Gazette, 62/A/5-4-2018. <https://www.e-nomothesia.gr/oikogeneia/nomos-4531-2018-phek-62a-5-4-2018.html>

<sup>77</sup> ibid

<sup>78</sup> Law No. 3500/2006 for combating domestic violence. Official Government Gazette, 232/24.10.2006. <https://www.kodiko.gr/nomothesia/document/154457/nomos-3500-2006>



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criticized as an inadequate and ineffectual tool that did not include all forms of violence and defined rape based on violence rather than the absence of consent, leading to legal confusion and implementation challenges. (Charokopou & Tzavala, 2020).<sup>79</sup>

The new law, among other things, enhances the rights of victims of domestic violence, criminalizes stalking and domestic violence, strengthens the criminal provisions punishing female genital mutilation, makes it easier to implement the Convention and designates the General Secretariat for Demography, Family Policy and Gender Equality within the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs as an overall "**coordinating body**". The State's primary responsibility is to effectively address such violence within the larger context of promoting equality for children, the elderly, and men and women as well.

The progress and implementation of the Istanbul Convention are monitored by an independent body of 10-15 experts, **GREVIO- Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence**. GREVIO is mandated to create and publish reports analysing legislative and other actions taken by the countries that have ratified the Convention. The GSDFPGE in cooperation with other government agencies, the Hellenic Police and NGOs, has compiled the first report (baseline report) on the implementation of the provisions of the Istanbul Convention in Greece, which was published by GREVIO on April 2022 (GREVIO, 2022).<sup>80</sup> The expert group is expected to make an assessment visit to Greece to evaluate the situation on the ground in the fall of 2022 and in 2023 it is expected to publish the first evaluation report on Greece (COE, 2022).<sup>81</sup>

- **Law No. 3896/2010 - concerning the application of the principle of equal opportunity and treatment of men and women in terms of employment**<sup>82</sup>

Greek law has been brought into compliance with **Directive 2006/54/EC**<sup>83</sup> of the European Parliament and of the Council of July 5, 2006 thanks to Law No. 3896/2010. It defines harassment as unwelcome sexual behaviour that is carried out intentionally or having the effect of violating the person's dignity and fostering an intimidating, hostile, demeaning, humiliating, or insulting atmosphere. The law covers all workplaces, including higher education institutions and research institutes, and covers sexual harassment as well as gender-based harassment and any "other less favourable treatment."

<sup>79</sup> Charokopou, K., & Tzavala, E. (2020). Information relevant to the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women – CEDAW. GREEK NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS.

<sup>80</sup> Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO). (2022). Report submitted by Greece pursuant to Article 68, paragraph 1 of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Baseline Report). In *www.coe.int*. <https://rm.coe.int/inf-2022-4-state-report-greece/1680a60a4e>

<sup>81</sup> Council of Europe - COE. (2022). About GREVIO – Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. *coe.int*. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/istanbul-convention/grevio>

<sup>82</sup> Law No. 3896/2010 concerning the application of the principle of equal opportunity and treatment of men and women in terms of employment. Official Government Gazette, 207/8.12.2010. <https://www.kodiko.gr/nomothesia/document/58023/nomos-3896-2010>

<sup>83</sup> Available online: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32006L0054>



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- **Greek Penal Code art. 336<sup>84</sup>**

Finally, it is important to mention that a significant legislative step has been made recently with the amendment to the **Penal Code (art. 336) redefining the concept of rape on the basis of non-consent**. The new amendment affirms that rape is a crime that can occur without physical violence. The amendment was voted after significant backlash from women’s organizations and NGOs regarding the proposed draft law that would have required the prosecution to provide evidence of physical violence. The government revised the legislation to include “lack of consent” as enough grounds for a conviction (Amnesty International, 2019).<sup>85</sup>

It is important to also mention that **new legislation is under discussion by the Ministry of Justice** which comes to add to the recent wave of new and more advanced legislation regarding GBV in Greece. After a recent scandal that took over the Greek media regarding a case of “**revenge porn**”. The Ministry is considering making revenge porn a felony, which would result in the implementation of harsher punishments (Mandrou, 2021).<sup>86</sup> According to current legislation, the act qualifies as a misdemeanour, and currently, the burden falls on the victim who is responsible to sue the perpetrator for criminal charges to apply (Mandrou, 2021).<sup>87</sup>

### 2.3. Institutional and policy frameworks

Along with the legislative progress, several relevant stakeholders and public bodies have emerged or have been upgraded to support the afore-mentioned laws.

- **General Secretariat for Demography, Family Policy and Gender Equality (GSDFPGE)**  
<https://isotita.gr/>

The **GSDFPGE** is the **main coordinating body for gender equality issues on a national level**. The General Secretariat is the governmental body responsible for planning, implementing and monitoring the implementation of policies for equality between women and men in all areas. It is an autonomous public service and is responsible for the promotion and implementation of legal and substantive gender equality in all areas of social, political and economic life.

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<sup>84</sup> Penal Code art. 336 on definition of rape. Law No. 4619/2019 on the Ratification of the Criminal Code. Official Government Gazette, 95/11.06.2019. <https://www.kodiko.gr/nomothesia/document/529099/nomos-4619-2019>

<sup>85</sup> Amnesty International. (2019, June 9). Greece: Newly amended rape law is a historic victory for women [Press release]. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2019/06/greece-newly-amended-rape-law-is-a-historic-victory-for-women/>

<sup>86</sup> Mandrou, I. (2021, December 15). Justice ministry mulls harsher penalties for revenge porn. Kathimerini.Gr. <https://www.ekathimerini.com/news/1173858/justice-ministry-mulls-harsher-penalties-for-revenge-porn/>

<sup>87</sup> *ibid*



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The General Secretariat was first established in 1985 under the supervision of the Ministry of Interior and in 2019 it was transferred under the supervision of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and it was renamed as General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality. In 2021, it was renamed again as General Secretariat for Demography, Family Policy and Gender Equality and the name remains as it is until today.

- **Equality Research Center** <https://www.kethi.gr/>

In the framework the General Secretariat, operates the **Equality Research Centre (KETHI)** as the competent body for the collection and publication of statistics on all forms of gender-based violence, through the collection of data from the Greek Police. KETHI was established in 1994 it is governed by a five-member Administrative Board. The **primary objective** of the Centre is to conduct **sociological research** on issues of gender equality. In addition, KETHI's activities include conferences, seminars for professionals, publications of studies and research, and collaboration with NGOs and other organizations for gender mainstreaming. (Research Centre for Gender Equality, 2020).<sup>88</sup>

Also, it is important to mention that the GSDFPGE of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the UNHCR and the Equality Research Centre (KETHI) recently signed a **Memorandum of Cooperation**. This is a key step to strengthen cooperation, with the common goal of preventing and responding to gender-based violence (GBV), as well as promoting social inclusion and equal treatment of asylum seekers and refugees, with a focus on women and girls.

- **Equality Committees on Regional and Local Level**

Also, according to Law No. **4604/2019**,<sup>89</sup> each Region is required to establish a “**Regional Equality Committee**” (PEPIS), by the decision of the Regional Governor. At the same time, it is imperative that a “**Municipal Equality Committee**” (DEPIS) is established in each municipality.

Both DEPIS and PEPIS are required to:

- Take into account the policies of the General Secretariat for Demographic and Family Policy and Gender Equality and the National Action Plan for Gender Equality, in order to integrate gender equality into the policies of the Region,
- recommend and participate in the preparation of Regional and Municipal Equality Plans,
- formulate proposals and recommend to the competent bodies of the Regions and Municipalities the necessary measures to promote effective gender equality in all areas of economic, political and social life.

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<sup>88</sup> Research Centre for Gender Equality- KETHI. (2020). [www.kethi.gr](http://www.kethi.gr).

<sup>89</sup> Law No.4604/2019 on substantive gender equality, prevention and combating gender-based violence. Official Government Gazette, 50/26.03.2019. <https://www.kodiko.gr/nomothesia/document/506446/nomos-4604-2019>



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- seek to ensure and promote gender equality and the elimination of gender stereotypes through communication and awareness-raising activities for the citizens of the Region/ Municipality.

According to the latest data (Ministry of Labour, 2021),<sup>90</sup> 259 Municipal Equality Committees and 8 Regional Equality Committees have been established.

### **In the Education Sector**

According to **Law No. 4589/2019** (article 33),<sup>91</sup> **Gender Equality Committees (EIFs)** have been established and operate **in almost all universities in the country**, as advisory bodies to the Senates and the Administrations of the Faculties and Departments of the universities for the **promotion of equality at all levels of operation and in all processes of academic life**. One of the most important responsibilities of the Gender Equality Committees is the preparation of medium-term Gender Equality Action Plans for each Higher Education Institution (HEI).

The **EIF** of each HEI has the following responsibilities:

- to develop **Action Plans to promote and ensure effective equality** in the educational, research and administrative processes of the HEI and prepare an annual report, which is submitted to the competent body of the Institute,<sup>92</sup>
- to recommend to the competent bodies **measures to promote equality and combat sexism**,
- to provide **information and training** to members of the academic community on gender and equality issues,
- to provide **mediation services** in cases of complaints of discrimination or harassment,
- to promote the **development of MSc/MA courses** and the holding of seminars and lectures focusing on gender studies,
- to promote the **preparation of studies and research** on issues related to its field of competence,
- to **assist victims of discrimination** when they come forward with discrimination allegations.

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<sup>90</sup> Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. (2021). Establishment of Regional Equality Committees and Municipal Equality Committees. [www.ypergasias.gov.gr](http://www.ypergasias.gov.gr). <https://ypergasias.gov.gr/isotita-ton-fylon/sygkrotisi-perifereiakon-epitropon-isotitas-kai-dimotikon-epitropon-isotitas/>

<sup>91</sup> Law No. 4589/2019 on Synergies between the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, the Agricultural University of Athens, the University of Thessaly and the Technical Universities of Thessaly and Central Greece, the Pallimnic Fund and other provisions. Official Government Gazette, 13/29.01.2019. <https://www.kodiko.gr/nomothesia/document/488386/nomos-4589-2019>

<sup>92</sup> Gender Equality Action Plans must be adopted by universities and research institutions in order to qualify for funding from the European Commission through the HORIZON EUROPE programme.



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### 3. GBV in the VET Sector

#### 3.1. Fact and Figures

There is a scarcity of available data and specialized research regarding GBV in the VET sector in Greece. The **annual report on Violence against Women of the GSDFPGE**, the national coordinating body for gender equality in Greece, does not contain any information about GBV either in the VET or the wider education sector.

However, there is some research conducted about GBV, school violence and bullying in the wider education sector, mainly about secondary and higher education levels (Artinopoulou, et al., 2016).<sup>93</sup> Due to the **lack of available data focalized on the particularities of the VET sector in Greece**, data can be used from recent research conducted in the framework of higher education in Greece. Specifically, the **Action Plan on Gender Equality** that has been drawn by the **Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH) Gender Equality Committee**, offers some insight into the situation of Gender Based-Violence incidents that take place in the specific educational context. Although research is based on data gathered from university students and professors, the results can also be used to shed light in the context of the VET sector since the age group of the students coincides, as post-secondary VET education and higher education, both involve students that are over 18 years old. Also, similar power relations can be observed in both VET and higher education contexts between students and educators, which might be a ground for harassment or overall abusive behaviours.

The AUTH Gender Equality Action Plan (2022),<sup>94</sup> which was conducted by the AUTH Gender Equality Committee in cooperation with the project European project "RESET- – Redesigning Equality and Scientific Excellence Together", refers to the ongoing research being carried out under the auspices of the Gender Equality Committee and with funding from the AUTH Special Research Account (ELKE). This survey involved **2,134 students**, of which 81% were enrolled in an undergraduate programme and 74.5% were female. According to the preliminary results, the rates of sexual harassment ranged from 3% to 23%, depending on the type of harassment. According to the research, for the majority of students, the **harassment incidents did not seem to have a significant impact** on their performance and participation in academic processes and activities. However, the majority of students claimed that they found **such events to be quite unsettling and worrying phenomena**. Another survey result that can be very indicative of GBV in an educational context, is that the students appeared to be unsure of how to report any incident to the university or where to go for assistance. Of the **220 cases of sexual harassment** that emerged from the survey, **85.5% of the victims were female** and **91% of the perpetrators were male**. Female students reported that the majority of perpetrators

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<sup>93</sup> Artinopoulou, V., Babalis, T., & Nikolopoulos, V. (2016). *Panhellenic research on intra-school violence and bullying in primary and secondary education*. Athens: Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs.

<sup>94</sup> AUTH Gender Equality Committee. (2022). Action Plan for Gender Equality. In ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI. [https://www.auth.gr/wp-content/uploads/%CE%A3%CE%94%CE%99%CE%A6\\_%CE%91%CE%A0%CE%98\\_2022\\_2024.pdf](https://www.auth.gr/wp-content/uploads/%CE%A3%CE%94%CE%99%CE%A6_%CE%91%CE%A0%CE%98_2022_2024.pdf)



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were undergraduate students (47%), followed by faculty members at 27%. It is worrying that 96.4% of students did not contact any of the relevant structures of the institution about these incidents, mainly because they did not consider them serious enough to report them (58.4%) and because they believed that any report would not be effective (32.5%). As stated by the students themselves, 67.4% of them, incidents such as these seem common.

### 3.2. Key research findings

Based on the ongoing research that is being conducted by the University of Thessaloniki (AUTH) Gender Equality Committee and as presented in the Gender Equality Plan of said University<sup>95</sup>, some of the most notable research results are the following:

- rates of sexual harassment ranged from **3% to 23%**
- **>50%** of students reported that GBV incidents are quite unsettling and worrying
- Most students appeared to be unsure of how to report any incident
- **85.5%** of the victims of reported GBV incidents were female
- **91%** of the perpetrators from the reported incidents were male
- **96.4%** of students did not contact any of the relevant structures of the institution

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<sup>95</sup> ibid



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## 4. National Policies, Strategies and Resources

### 4.1. Policies and Strategies

The **National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2021-2025**<sup>96</sup> was conducted by the General Secretariat for Demography, Family Policy and Gender Equality and the National Council for Gender Equality, which is the competent collective consultative advisory body, was consulted on the objectives and actions of the new National Plan for Gender Equality 2021-2025. The Action Plan was finalized and presented to the public on December 2021. The National Action Plan focuses on **four key areas**, which are:

- **Preventing and combating** gender-based and domestic violence
- **Equal participation** of women in **decision-making /leadership** roles
- **Equal participation** of women in the **labour market**
- **Gender mainstreaming** in sectoral policies

It is important to highlight that the National Action Plan contains **explicit proposals regarding the sector of Vocational Education and Training**:

*“Proposals for further actions to promote Gender Equality in Vocational Education and Training and Lifelong Learning:*

- **Training programs** in vocational education, training and lifelong learning (concerning executive and teaching staff)
- Action for **equal participation** in initial professional training programs
- Action for **equal participation** in mobility programs (Erasmus+) implemented by I.E.K.
- Action to **encourage women and girls to participate** in vocational education and training in technology, ICT-related specialities and occupations in which female participation is low
- Action to inform and raise awareness about the **gender dimension** in vocational education and training
- Special arrangements for the participation of **women who suffer multiple discriminations** and removal of their social exclusion in **Second Chance Schools**
- Planning programs to **raise awareness of women who suffer multiple discriminations** for their reintegration possibilities in the educational system (S.D.E., Vocational Training Schools, EPA.L., Post-Lyceum”

Additional provisions of the **National Action Plan on Gender Equality**, which are **relevant with the education sector** in general are the following:

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<sup>96</sup> GENERAL SECRETARIAT FOR FAMILY POLICY AND GENDER EQUALITY - GSDFPGE. (2021, December 10). National Action Plan for Gender Equality. <https://isotita.gr/esdif-2021-2025/>





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Under **Objective 1.2: Combating violence at work**, there is a provision for the implementation of a **pilot project called "Eleni Topaloudi"** for the sexual harassment of female students in universities and the following specific actions are foreseen:

- Development of partnerships with the Equality Committees within the Universities
- Operation of Sexual Violence Reporting Offices
- Provision of psychological support

Under **Objective 4.4: Promote gender equality in education – science**, there is the provision for Gender mainstreaming in all levels of education (gender-sensitive education) by:

- Training secondary school guidance counsellors on gender stereotypes.
- Training of primary and secondary school teachers on gender equality issues through the Training Institute of the National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government (INEP/ECDDA).
- Other educational interventions from a gender perspective (competitions, theme days, visits).
- Design and assistance in the implementation of sex education programmes in primary and secondary schools.

There is also the provision for the strengthening of institutional structures to promote equality in HEIs by:

- Monitoring the progress of the establishment of the Equality Committees.
- Monitoring the progress of the drafting of the Equality Action Plans. (Article
- Informing HEI
- Cooperation with the Network of Gender Equality Committees of Universities

## 4.2. Existing Resources and Tools

Educational Resources to increase Awareness and address GVB in the VET or Educational Sector in Greece		
Title	Type of Resource	Brief Description
<b>LOG IN: Laboratories on Gender Violence in New Media</b>  <b>Date:</b> 2013 - 2014 <b>Coordinator:</b> The City of Modena	<a href="#">Training Guide</a> <sup>97</sup>	LOGIN aims to prevent and combat gender-based violence by encouraging teenagers to behave more responsibly in using social networks and new media.  The guide's target group are adults (parents, educators) and provides instructions on how to discuss sensitive issues with young people, such as gender-based

<sup>97</sup> Available online : <https://medinstgenderstudies.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/booklet-gre-ok-27-2.pdf>



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<p>co-funded by the EC Daphne III Programme</p>		<p>violence, as well as issues related to the responsible use of social media.</p>
<p><b>Building Relationships through Innovative Development of Gender-Based Violence Awareness in Europe (BRIDGE) Project</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> 2018-2020</p> <p><b>Coordinator:</b> Terre des hommes</p> <p>co-funded by the REC Programme</p>	<p><a href="#">Training Manual</a><sup>98</sup></p>	<p>The Training Manual has been developed primarily for use in the training of trainers and focuses on building the knowledge and capacity of care professionals from Greece, Belgium, Malta and Romania to prevent, identify and respond to gender-based violence affecting children and youth on the move.</p>
<p><b>ON-OFF. Switch ON your mind, switch OFF gender-based violence online</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> 2020-2022</p> <p><b>Coordinator:</b> Lumen (IT)</p> <p>co-funded by REC Programme</p>	<p><a href="#">Handbook for teachers and educators</a><sup>99</sup></p>	<p>The project aims at preventing cyber GBV through the development of ON-OFF Model with activities concerning underlying determinants, offline effects, targeted behaviours and positive social values. The Handbook is a pedagogical model for preventing stereotypes and gender-based violence online.</p>
<p><b>Youth4Youth: Empowering Young People in Preventing Gender-based Violence through Peer Education</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> 2022-2013</p> <p><b>Coordinator:</b> Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS)</p> <p>co-funded by REC Programme</p>	<p><a href="#">Educational Manual for Empowering Young People in Preventing GBV through Peer Education</a><sup>100</sup></p>	<p>The Training Manual provides teachers, education practitioners, and youth workers, with the knowledge and the tools needed to plan and implement Youth4Youth training workshops for young people. It contains comprehensive information on the theoretical and practical framework of the programme alongside session plans, activity resources and evaluation tools.</p>

<sup>98</sup> Available online: [https://childhub.org/sites/default/files/library/attachments/training\\_manual\\_-\\_english\\_0.pdf](https://childhub.org/sites/default/files/library/attachments/training_manual_-_english_0.pdf)

<sup>99</sup> Available online : <https://on-offproject.eu/handbook/>

<sup>100</sup> Available online : [https://medinstgenderstudies.org/wp-content/uploads/Y4Y-Manual\\_digital\\_v12.pdf](https://medinstgenderstudies.org/wp-content/uploads/Y4Y-Manual_digital_v12.pdf)



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<p><b>CONVEY project – Counteracting sexual violence and harassment: Engaging Youth in schools in digital education on gender stereotyping</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> 2016-2019</p> <p><b>Coordinator:</b> CESIE (IT)</p> <p><b>co-funded</b> by REC Programme</p>	<p><a href="#">Manual for Workshops<sup>101</sup></a></p>	<p>The educational workshops to be delivered in schools will aim to educate and familiarize the young people on the issues of sexual violence, harassment, gender stereotyping, teach them how to protect themselves and promote behavioural change.</p>
<p><b>BASE project - Migrant and refugee child-friendly support services in cases of sexual and gender-based violence</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> 2019-2021</p> <p><b>Coordinator:</b> HOPE FOR CHILDREN (CY)</p> <p><b>co-funded</b> by REC Programme</p>	<p><a href="#">Cultural Advisor Curriculum<sup>102</sup></a></p>	<p>The Curriculum aims at enhancing the cultural advisors’ capacity to provide guidance to professionals working in support services handling sexual violence and GBV against migrant women/girls.</p>
<p><b>Women’s Protection and Empowerment Programme</b></p> <p>Developed by IRC Hellas</p>	<p><a href="#">Fact Sheet<sup>103</sup></a></p>	<p>Highlights IRC’s activities on building the capacity of government institutions, municipalities and local organisations to provide support to GBV survivors.</p>
<p><b>Training Manual for combating violence and harassment in the workplace.</b></p> <p>Developed by the Equality Research Centre (KETHI)</p>	<p><a href="#">Training Manual<sup>104</sup></a></p>	<p>The manual is part of a series of educational initiatives and seminars of KETHI that aim to contribute decisively to the promotion of effective gender equality in the field of employment.</p>

<sup>101</sup> Available online : [https://conveyproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/CONVEY\\_pilot\\_programme\\_EN.pdf](https://conveyproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/CONVEY_pilot_programme_EN.pdf)

<sup>102</sup> Available online : <https://cesie.org/en/resources/base-cultural->

<sup>103</sup> Available online : <https://eu.rescue.org/sites/default/files/2020-07/IRC%20Greece%20WPE%20factsheet%2022.07.2020.pdf>

<sup>104</sup> Available online : [https://www.kethi.gr/sites/default/files/attached\\_file/file/2022-04/KETHI\\_sexual\\_harassment.pdf](https://www.kethi.gr/sites/default/files/attached_file/file/2022-04/KETHI_sexual_harassment.pdf)



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<p><b>Speak out: Legal support for sexual harassment</b></p> <p>Developed by Action Aid in cooperation with Women on Top (NGO)</p>	<p><a href="#">Online Support Service and Awareness Raising Campaign<sup>105</sup></a></p>	<p>Speak Out is an online Service aiming to provide free legal support for women who have experienced sexual harassment at work.</p>
<p>ASTRAPI Project -</p> <p><b>Active Strategies for Prevention and Handling Sexual Harassment Incidents</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> 2019-2021</p> <p><b>Coordinator:</b> Cyprus Academy of Public Administration</p> <p><b>co-funded</b> by Erasmus+ Programme</p>	<p><a href="#">Training Handbook<sup>106</sup></a></p>	<p>The handbook is designed to guide trainers to deliver training workshops on sexual harassment at work taking a transformative approach. The ultimate beneficiaries will be a range of people occupying a variety of positions: trade union reps, health and safety officers, managers, HR managers, staff members, etc., who are not necessarily knowledgeable about Sexual Harassment and can express resistance about it.</p>
<p>USVReact: <b>Universities Supporting Victims of Sexual Violence</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> 2016-2017</p> <p><b>Coordinator:</b> BRUNEL UNIVERSITY OF LONDON</p> <p><b>co-funded</b> by REC Programme</p>	<p><a href="#">TRAINING EVALUATION REPORT<sup>107</sup></a></p>	<p>The USVreact Training Programme presented a significant opportunity to introduce the issue of sexual violence and harassment at Panteion University (Athens, Greece), and to identify institutional gaps in policy and care provision, as well as overall attitudes among university staff and students towards the problem of sexual and gender violence more broadly.</p>
<p>“<b>Democratic Education</b>” Programme</p> <p>Developed by the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens.</p>	<p><a href="#">Training Material<sup>108</sup></a></p>	<p>Democratic Education brings together educational material with an emphasis on activities and suggestions for actions that teachers can incorporate into their teaching practice. The available educational material is categorised by Topic, Grade and Type of material so that teachers can easily search for ideas and activities to</p>

<sup>105</sup> Available online : <https://speakout.actionaid.gr/>

<sup>106</sup> Available online : <https://astrapi-project.eu/training-handbook/>

<sup>107</sup> Available online : [https://usvreact.eu/wp-content/resources/panteion\\_pte\\_eng.pdf](https://usvreact.eu/wp-content/resources/panteion_pte_eng.pdf)

<sup>108</sup> Available online : [https://www.demopaideia.gr/educational\\_items/aliunos-andras-gineka/](https://www.demopaideia.gr/educational_items/aliunos-andras-gineka/)



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		<p>promote in their classrooms actions related to the elimination of prejudices and stereotypes and the development of collectivity and solidarity.</p> <p>The material include specialized courses about violence between romantic partners and gender stereotypes.</p>
<p><b>Educational Material for Sexism / Gender equality</b></p> <p>developed by the NGO, “Signal: researching and confronting the far right”</p>	<p><a href="#">Educational Material</a><sup>109</sup></p>	<p>The “Signal: researching and confronting the far right” presents original educational material for primary, secondary and high school. The material is a suggestion and encouragement for both teachers and parents. The material is scaled: from sexism to language and gender stereotypes to verbal and physical violence. From sexual harassment to violence and femicide.</p>
<p><b>“Gender Based Violence and educational institution: Teachers as social reformers. The example of the Dodecanese” (GR)</b></p> <p>Publishing Date: 2021</p> <p>Author: Raptis Nikolaos, Kouroutsidou Maria</p> <p>Publisher: GKONI</p>	<p><a href="#">Book</a><sup>110</sup></p>	<p>Discussing the attitude and understanding of male and female educators on issues of GBV. Specifically, the book addresses the issue of gender-based violence in schools, or SRGBV, which affects millions of children globally and aims to raise awareness and inspire action to combat this pervasive problem.</p>
<p><b>ARIADNE: Developing and supporting multisectoral police reporting procedures to prevent and respond to domestic violence against women</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> 2020-2022</p>	<p><a href="#">Police Guide</a><sup>111</sup></p>	<p>The project aims to support the officers working in the newly established Offices for Combating Domestic Violence of the Hellenic Police, in 3 regions of the country (Attica, Thessaly and Central Macedonia) and aims to strengthen the police reporting procedures of</p>

<sup>109</sup> Available online : <https://simeio.org.gr/en/simeio-school/sexismos-isotita-ton-filon>

<sup>110</sup> Available online : <https://www.politeianet.gr/books/9789609509145-raptis-nikolaos-gkoni-emfuli-bia-kai-ekpaideutikoi-thesmou-327157>

<sup>111</sup> Available online : [http://kemea.gr/images/Docs/ARIADNE/Police\\_Guide/Ariadne\\_PoliceGuide.pdf](http://kemea.gr/images/Docs/ARIADNE/Police_Guide/Ariadne_PoliceGuide.pdf)



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<p><b>Coordinator:</b> Center for Security Studies (GR)</p> <p><b>co-funded</b> by by REC Programme</p>		<p>domestic violence incidents involving migrant/refugee women.</p>
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## 5. Support services/systems and useful contacts

### 5.1. Support services/systems

According to the information available on the website of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs<sup>112</sup> the national network of structures for women who are victims of violence have been developed as follows:

The General Secretariat for Demographic and Family Policy and Gender Equality has a complete nationwide Network of Structures for preventing and combating violence and multiple discrimination against women, which consists of:

- **The Counselling Centres**

- 14 counselling Centres, which are operated by the Centre for Research on Equality Issues (KETHI-NPID, supervised body under GSDFPGE),
- 28 Counselling Centres, operated by respective Municipalities and
- 1 counselling Centre that is organically part of the General Secretariat.

The Counselling Centres are staffed with specialized scientific personnel of consultants specialized in approaching women from the perspective of gender. They provide women who turn to them; free information and counselling services, in the context of integrated psychosocial and legal support actions and work counselling.

- **The Shelters for Abused Women**

- 18 Shelters are operated by respective Municipalities and
- 1 Shelter operated by the National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA).

The Shelters host women victims of violence with their children, according to their Rules of Procedure.

- **The SOS Telephone Line 15900**

The SOS line 15900 is addressed to women victims of violence. It is nationwide, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, with urban charge. The line is staffed with psychologists and social scientists that provide immediate assistance in emergencies and violence. The SOS hotline offers information and telephone counselling

<sup>112</sup> Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. (2021). Network of structures for women – victims of violence. [www.ypergasias.gov.gr. https://ypergasias.gov.gr/en/gender-equality/network-of-structures-for-women-victims-of-violence/](https://ypergasias.gov.gr/en/gender-equality/network-of-structures-for-women-victims-of-violence/)



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services to victims of all forms of gender-based violence and is provided free of charge for calls from all major national telecommunication providers.

Any woman experiencing incidents of violence (gender or domestic) can call the SOS 15900 hotline or send an email to: [sos15900@isotita.gr](mailto:sos15900@isotita.gr)

- **The website metoogreece.gr**

[Metoogreece.gr](http://metoogreece.gr) is the website of the State that collects all the necessary information and emergency telephone numbers on issues of sexual harassment, abuse and authoritarian violence and actions to combat them. The website also announces initiatives aimed at helping everyone to act against to any form of harassment and abuse.

- **Greek Ombudsman**

In addition to the National Network of Structures for the support of GBV survivors, the **Greek Ombudsman** is an institution that has an advisory but important role in this respect as it receives complaints, investigates them, mediates between parties, and makes decisions that influence policymaking and court decisions.

- **Greek Police – Department of Combating Domestic Violence**

It is important to mention that the **Greek Police** established, by Presidential Decree (PD) 37/2019, the **Department of Combating Domestic Violence**. According to the 1st Annual Report from the GENERAL SECRETARIAT FOR FAMILY POLICY AND GENDER EQUALITY (2020),<sup>113</sup> the department has 73 stations across the nation, each with two employees and it is in charge of: keeping an eye on domestic violence cases, researching ways to prevent and deter domestic violence crimes, directing, supervising, and coordinating the work of regional agencies to carry out those measures, as well as keeping an eye on the outcomes of those efforts.

- **Further Support**

Finally, it is important to mention that additional measures and provisions have been established for women victims of violence (GREVIO, 2022).<sup>114</sup> Women victims are eligible beneficiaries for the **Guaranteed Minimum Income (GMI)** programme and they are encouraged to participate in activation services aimed at helping beneficiaries enter the workforce and to avoid further social or economic marginalisation. The programme beneficiaries can participate in **vocational training and work experience programmes** offered by the “Public Employment Service” (DYPA) and join or return to the education system. In particular, they are eligible to join a Second Chance School, which constitutes an innovative and more flexible public adult education school

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<sup>113</sup> GENERAL SECRETARIAT FOR FAMILY POLICY AND GENDER EQUALITY - GSDFPGE. (2020). 1st ANNUAL REPORT ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN. In isotita.gr. [https://isotita.gr/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/First-Report-on-Violence-Against-Women\\_GSFPE.pdf](https://isotita.gr/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/First-Report-on-Violence-Against-Women_GSFPE.pdf)

<sup>114</sup> Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO). (2022). Report submitted by Greece pursuant to Article 68, paragraph 1 of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Baseline Report). In [www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int). <https://rm.coe.int/inf-2022-4-state-report-greece/1680a60a4e>



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of two academic years’ duration and offers a certificate equivalent to secondary school (GREVIO, 2022).<sup>115</sup>

## 5.2. Useful contacts

The table below contains a **list of competent bodies, authorities and organisations dedicated to gender equality** and most well-known organizations where victims of GBV, witnesses or bystanders, VET learners, VET Teachers/Trainers and the general public could refer, in order to seek advice, support or protection. It should be noted that this is a non-exhaustive list; it is highly possible that there are other movements, groups or initiatives at the local level that are not included in the table. We collected the ones that have an established or institutional form, have had a strong local, regional and national impact and have made targeted interventions.

<p><b>Hellenic Police</b> Tel. <b>100</b></p> <p>Website: <a href="http://www.astynomia.gr">www.astynomia.gr</a></p>	<p>The Hellenic Police's Domestic Violence Services are available throughout the country. The Hellenic Police handles every incident of domestic violence and notifies the appropriate judicial authorities, while also assisting victims in locating shelter, medical care, psychosocial and legal support.</p>
<p><b>SOS Help line</b> Tel. <b>15900</b></p> <p>Website : <a href="http://www.womensos.gr">www.womensos.gr</a></p>	<p>The SOS 15900 line is for women victims of violence. It is nationwide, open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The line is staffed by psychologists and social scientists who provide immediate assistance in emergency and urgent cases of violence. The SOS hotline offers information and telephone counselling services to victims of all forms of gender-based violence.</p>
<p><b>Greek Ombudsman</b> Mr. Andreas Pottakis</p> <p>Website: <a href="http://www.synigoros.gr">www.synigoros.gr</a></p> <p>E-mail:</p>	<p>The Greek Ombudsman is the national equality body with a mandate to combat discrimination and promote the principle of equal treatment irrespective of gender, racial or ethnic origin, family or social status, religion or belief, disability or chronic disease, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender characteristics (Law No. 3896/2010<sup>116</sup> and Law No. 4443/2016<sup>117</sup>).</p>

<sup>115</sup> ibid

<sup>116</sup> Law No. 3896/2010 concerning the application of the principle of equal opportunity and treatment of men and women in terms of employment. Official Government Gazette, 207/8.12.2010. <https://www.kodiko.gr/nomothesia/document/58023/nomos-3896-2010>

<sup>117</sup> Law No. 4443/2016 against discrimination at work and employment. Official Government Gazette, 232, A/9-12-2016, <https://www.e-nomothesia.gr/kat-anthropina-dikaiomata/nomos-4443-2016-fek-232a-9-12-2016.html>





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[ombudsman@synigros.gr](mailto:ombudsman@synigros.gr)

It is important to mention that according to research conducted by the Research Centre for Gender Equality, a gap has been identified regarding the establishment of **specialized and inclusive support services for Gender Based Violence victims who are also part of the LGBTQI+ community** (Moschovakou & Ntani, 2018).<sup>118</sup> LGBTQI+ people and especially children can be victims of harassment and violent behaviours at home and school, so it is crucial to develop services for the protection and support of these children (e.g. the establishment of shelters). So far, support services are mainly offered by specialized NGOs with appropriately trained staff and volunteer personnel.

Some of the most notable **organizations offering support to LGBTQI+ GBV victims** are the following:

<p><b>Colour Youth</b></p> <p>Website : <a href="http://www.colouryouth.gr/">http://www.colouryouth.gr/</a></p>	<p>Colour Youth is a non-profit organisation, a member of the Racist Violence Reporting Network and the international organisations ILGA-Europe, TGEU and IGLYO. The aim of the organisation, among others, is to support the LGBTQ+ youth community, defend their human rights and raise awareness of LGBTQ+ issues in Greek society. Colour Youth offers services and carries out activities such as psychological empowerment groups under the supervision of mental health specialists and anonymous reporting of incidents of violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and/or identity, expression, gender characteristics, psychological and legal support for victims of violence and discrimination.</p>
<p><b>Rainbow School</b></p> <p>Website: <a href="http://www.rainbowschool.gr">www.rainbowschool.gr</a></p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:info@rainbowschool.gr">info@rainbowschool.gr</a></p>	<p>Rainbow School was created in 2009 as a group of support and empowerment towards LGBTIQ teachers under the title “Homophobia and Transphobia in Education”. Gradually, it was transformed to an organized and established activist group, aiming at promoting institutional changes for more inclusive schools. To meet its aims, Rainbow School retrains teachers, students, parents, authorities and general public on LGBTIQ issues, creates training materials, does research on relevant fields, collaborates with LGBTIQ associations and collectives and lobbies for institutional registration.</p>

<sup>118</sup> Moschovakou, N., & Ntani, S. (2018). Discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation: Data, institutional framework and qualitative investigation. In kethi.gr. KETHI - Research Centre for Gender Equality. <https://www.kethi.gr/ereunes-meletes/diakriseis-logo-taytotitas-fyloy-kai-sexoyalikoy-prosanatolismoy-dedomena-thesmiko-plaisio-kai-poiotiki-diareynisi>



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More information regarding all available resources on National, Regional and Local level are available on the website of the European Anti-Violence Network (EAVN) [a non-profit, non-governmental organisation, founded in November 2006, in Athens, Greece]: [www.antiviolence-net.eu](http://www.antiviolence-net.eu)



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## 6. Examples of Good Practises

### 6.1. Best Practise: “SPEAK: Legal support and awareness-raising against gender-based violence”

“Don't Skip” digital campaign as part of the wider intervention: “SPEAK: Legal support and awareness-raising against gender-based violence”

<b>Country:</b>	Greece
<b>Short Description (exact nature of problem it addressed):</b> (600-1000 words)	<p><b>Goals and objectives</b></p> <p>The <b>core concept</b> behind the digital campaign is that the social environment often skips gender-based violence incidents. Very often, victims rather than perpetrators are considered to be responsible and accused for being violated. In many surveys, survivors of gender-based violence reported that have been discouraged, faced with cautiousness and received a lack of understanding, when they sought help from the family, work environment, or even government agencies (eg police, judicial authorities). Friends, neighbours, relatives, although they often see, hear, know, suspect that a woman can be a victim of domestic violence, refuse to get involved, considering it to be a "private affair".</p> <p>The campaign addresses the collective culture of tolerance which is established, causing the perpetrators to reproduce, unpunished, violent and abusive behaviours. Victims of GBV on the contrary, remain in abusive relationships, in fear of not only the retaliation of the perpetrator but also stigmatization, social isolation and lack of safety both for themselves and their children. Also, the majority of Greek society considers that gender-based violence is a phenomenon that belongs to the past, to other countries, to different cultures. Aiming to transform these perceptions and offer more visibility to the extent of the phenomenon in Europe, the campaign has chosen to present the statistics from the research carried out by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA, 2014).<sup>119</sup> This is the world's largest survey of violence against women, with 42,000 participants aged 18 to 74.</p>

<sup>119</sup> European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. (2014, February 3). Violence against women: an EU-wide survey: Main results report. In <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/violence-against-women-eu-wide-survey-main-results-report>



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**“Don't Skip” digital campaign as part of the wider intervention: “SPEAK: Legal support and awareness-raising against gender-based violence”**

Diotima Center, through the "Don't Skip" campaign, aimed towards offering visibility and contributing to the formation of a zero-tolerance collective culture. The contribution of all of us is necessary, in order to eradicate gender based violence.

The intervention included 3 type of activities:

- **Implementation of digital campaign in national level.**

The successful digital campaign "Don't Skip - Don't Skip Gender Violence" was implemented in the framework of the programme. The campaign started with a short film competition for young creators (18-30 years old).

This was followed, for two months (May - June 2018), by the publication of digital entries and three video spots on the organisation's website and social media. Specifically, the digital campaign included:

- Gallery of gender violence: abstract art paintings were presented depicting the consequences experienced by women victims of domestic violence and rape.
- The comments of those around: through common comments that a woman who suffers gender-based violence may hear, the campaign sought to make visible the "legitimization" of gender-based violence by the social environment, which should not be tolerated.
- Couples: photographic snapshots of the everyday life of even young couples documented the difficulty and fear of women to talk about the violence they experience.
- Video spot, in which the public was invited not to pass by the signs of gender violence.
- Video spot, with which the phenomenon of sexual harassment in public space was made visible.
- Video spot, with which the stereotypes of verbal abuse used by the perpetrator were presented in a daily incident of domestic violence.

The campaign aimed to make visible the phenomenon of gender violence in all its dimensions (domestic violence, economic deprivation, physical violence, psychological abuse, trafficking) and to raise awareness among the wider public,



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so that the everyday phenomena that we know, hear, suspect and learn about are not tolerated.

- **Creation of open informative groups on the issue of gender-based violence**

During the 1st part of the programme, 10 open information groups were held in cooperation with various academic institutions (Athens University of Economics and Business, University of West Attica, NTUA, ASPAITE, SIVITANIDIOS, Panteion) and with institutions of a completely different profile, such as TEDxAthens 2018.

The information and awareness groups were intended to contribute in:

- challenging stereotypical perceptions and attitudes that reproduce gender violence
- the recognition of everyday phenomena of gender-based violence
- the cultivation of a culture of zero tolerance
- reflection on what gender discrimination means or is

According to the published programme results, there was an abundance of young people who actively participated and offered to share a plethora of thought-provoking comments to facilitate group work.

- **Provision of free legal assistance to women - victims of gender-based violence**

It should be remarked that the vast majority of cases, were related to domestic violence (60%). The rest of the cases concerned women who had received violence, of various forms, outside the family or relationship. Specifically: physical violence (13%), psychological and emotional abuse (7%), sexual harassment (4%), trafficking (1%), rape (3%).

The women who turned to the Legal Service of the Centre were mainly Greek (61%), while the percentage of immigrant women was also significant (39%), with the main countries of origin being Albania, Ukraine, Russia, Egypt, etc.

Regarding the age groups, the largest proportion of the women benefited from the Legal Service (57%) belong to the age group of 33-49 years. In general, the



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following are the categories which benefited as well: 16-33 years old (22%), 49-65 years old (12%) and 0-16 years old (9%).

It should also be mentioned that women over 50 had all suffered domestic violence since the beginning of their marriage and had never found the courage to declare the fact and practice their legal rights (accusations against their husbands).

Regarding the marital status of the women benefited: 37% were in the process of divorce and did not live together with the perpetrator, 23% were married, 15% were divorced, 18% were in a partnership, 2% were single. The perpetrator was primarily the partner/spouse. In some cases, the perpetrator came from the friendly, neighbourly, relative (parent), school (teacher), work (supervisor) environment, or was a member of the community, while in others it was unknown.

The digital campaign is part of the "SPEAK: Legal Support and Raising Awareness of Gender Based Violence" program and was implemented in two parts (2017-2018, 2018-2019).

The 1<sup>st</sup> part of the programme run from September 2017 until July 2018. The digital campaign was symbolically launched on 8 March 2018, International Women's Day, chosen as a starting point to commemorate years of struggle for gender equality. The campaign officially came to an end on July 2018. After the great success achieved during the 1<sup>st</sup> phase, it was decided to renew the programme for a second year and continue its activities from September 2018 until April 2019.

This good practice goes beyond a single function of an awareness raising campaign as follows a more comprehensive approach, combining the awareness-raising with providing free legal support services.

The impact of the campaign is clearly depicted in a dedicated webpage and it provides specific **quantitative** and **qualitative** data about the programme: <https://diotima.org.gr/apologismos-protis-fasis-programmatos-speak/>



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**“Don't Skip” digital campaign as part of the wider intervention: “SPEAK: Legal support and awareness-raising against gender-based violence”**

	<p><u>Highlights:</u></p> <p><u>Concerning the Legal Support Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the Legal Service of the Centre assisted 100 women</li> <li>○ The perpetrator was primarily the partner/spouse. In some cases, the perpetrator came from a friend, neighbour, relative (parent), school (teacher), work (supervisor) or community member, while in others the perpetrator was unknown.</li> <li>○ The largest proportion of women beneficiaries (57%) belongs to the 33-49 age group. This is followed by the following categories: 16-33 years old (22%), 49-65 years old (12%) and 0-16 years old (9%).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Trends and Potential Benefits from this Good Practice</b></p> <p>(350 min -500 words max)</p>	<p>The intervention is extremely relevant to the “Active Bystander Approach” also known as the Positive Bystander Approach that has been the focal point of various UN awareness raising campaigns (UNDP, 2021;<sup>120</sup> UNWomen, 2015<sup>121</sup>).</p> <p>Potential benefits from the implementation of such a campaign:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identification of GBV incidents. Not only the incidents that refer to physical violence but also forms of violence that have only recently been established as violence, such as: verbal, psychological / emotional abuse, economic violence, sexual harassment, stalking. These forms of violence may occur in and outside of school.</li> <li>● Clear definition of the reporting process for a GBV incident. The campaign aims to involve third parties to GBV incidents so that the responsibility does not only fall upon the victim to face and report such incidents.</li> <li>● Pushing GBV out of obscurity and into the public eye, alleviating the taboo status that still holds in many parts of the society.</li> <li>● Awareness raising about the extent and the severity of GBV in a local, regional, national or international level. The campaign aims to inform the public about</li> </ul>

<sup>120</sup> UNDP. (2021). The Role of Bystander (Part One): Intervention During Different Stages of Violence | United Nations Development Programme. (2021, January 11). In [www.undp.org/](http://www.undp.org/). <https://www.undp.org/south-africa/blog/role-bystander-part-one-intervention-during-different-stages-violence>

<sup>121</sup> UNWomen. (2015, November 25). Active bystander Public Service Announcement promoting positive bystander launched on EVAW Day. <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/>. <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/news-and-events/stories/2015/11/active-bystander>



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	<p>the issue and ensure that everyone understands that the issue of GBV is an issue that should concern every member of the society.</p>
<p><b>How this Good Practice could be used/ transferred</b>  (350 min - 500 words max)</p>	<p>The “Don’t Skip” campaign could function as a starting point for awareness raising on GBV in VET institutes. More specifically, this kind of digital campaign could reinforce the involvement of everyone in claiming their rights and sensitize on the issue of gender-based violence and at the same time provide them with detailed and accurate information about legal support and guidelines.</p> <p>In addition, similar campaigns could be incorporated in the VET institutes with ultimate goal to make visible gender-based violence in all dimensions (domestic violence, economic deprivation, physical violence, psychological abuse, trafficking) and to raise awareness among the wider public, so that the everyday phenomena that we know, hear, suspect and learn, will not be tolerated.</p>
<p><b>Criteria it addresses</b></p>	<p><b><i>Relevance and impact</i></b></p> <p>The programme and the campaign were based on well substantiated data from the EU Fundamental Rights Agency and it addresses an issue with special importance for the national context which is that the blame for GBV is often shifted from the perpetrator to the victims. Also, the programme has a holistic approach on the issue of GBV as it approaches the issue through actions of legal support and a multitude of awareness raising activities aiming at a larger audience and to a paradigm shift in the Greek Society. To add to the multiple approaches, the programme was clearly addressing many different forms of GBV: verbal, physical, psychological / emotional abuse, economic violence, sexual harassment, rape, human trafficking, stalking, etc. This approach is in accordance with the Istanbul Convention which showcases the extent of GBV by addressing all its different forms.</p> <p>Regarding the campaign’s impact, it is important to mention that the programme the dissemination of the campaign and its core message was significant. A number of media outlets presented the campaign. The response of social media users, especially women in the 25-45 age group, was also significant. Indicatively, we</p>





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mention that the last spot, starring a Greek popular actor, went viral, with over 1 million views.

***Accuracy and clarity***

Best practice that clearly present the issue that has been tackled (GBV in different forms) including quantitative and qualitative data.

***Transferability***

The good practice can be easily transferable across education levels and/or in other contexts as it can be applied in a variety of educational and non-educational contexts. Specifically, the aspect of the programme that included the creation of open informative groups on the issue of gender-based violence, was already implemented in various higher education and VET institution (Athens University of Economics and Business, University of West Attica, NTUA, ASPAITE, SIVITANIDIOS, Panteion).

***Adaptable***

The good practice transcends disciplines as it addresses many different forms of GBV (verbal, physical, psychological / emotional abuse, economic violence, sexual harassment, rape, human trafficking, stalking) through the use of different tools (video campaigns, open discussions, legal services etc.)

***Reliable***

The best practice is extremely reliable as it has been implemented in various contexts and involved multiple stakeholders, from NGOs to Academic Institutions and private companies. All the results of the programme are still available online on the programme's website as well as in various news outlets.

***Involvement of multiple stakeholders***

The programme was mainly implemented by DIOTIMA, an NGO specialized in issues related to gender-based violence which cooperates with a wide range of actors (scientific community, institutions, civil society, feminist and LGBTI collectives, etc.). DIOTIMA is also a national expert in the database of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). Also, the programme involved



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multiple stakeholders as it organised open discussions on GBV in a variety of spaces and contexts. It also involved the wider public and it was “tested” by the public opinion as the digital campaign managed to become viral and produced a lot of clout.

***Time effective***

The programme run during a specific timeframe and produced measurable results.

***Sustainable/timeless***

This practice can be applied at any time and at any educational or social level and it is not limited to a specific form of GBV or to a specific context.

***Financially sustainable***

*This practice* meets the criterion of financial sustainability because it consists of digital material, namely videos, which can be shared and replicated at no or very low cost. Also, the aspect of the programme that consists of open discussions in educational contexts, is also easily replicated at low or no cost at all.

***Gender-sensitive, SOGI-inclusive, Intersectional***

The majority of the women who sought the Legal Service of the Centre were Greek (61%), while the percentage of immigrant women was also significant (39%), with the main countries of origin being Albania, Ukraine, Russia, Egypt, etc. Also, the programme was operated by DIOTIMA, an NGO dedicated to awareness raising for such issues and with personnel trained on issues of discrimination and behavior, so special attention has been paid to the language and content to meet these criteria.

**Category of good practice**

*awareness & prevention*

**Applicability status (local, regional, national, international) and**

The practice had a nationwide scope and included a series of multifaceted actions to raise public awareness of the phenomenon of gender violence, targeting the heart of the social stereotypes that maintain and reproduce it. The practice can also be applied at the local and regional levels and as long as the



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**“Don't Skip” digital campaign as part of the wider intervention: “SPEAK: Legal support and awareness-raising against gender-based violence”**

<p><b>justification</b> 400-600 words</p>	<p>material is translated or subtitled it can be transferred to an international level as it addresses issues that apply to the wider context.</p>
<p><b>Website link (if applicable) or other relevant links:</b></p>	<p>Official Campaign Page: <a href="https://diotima.org.gr/dontskip/en/index.html">https://diotima.org.gr/dontskip/en/index.html</a> Impact: <a href="https://diotima.org.gr/apologismos-protis-fasis-programmatos-speak/">https://diotima.org.gr/apologismos-protis-fasis-programmatos-speak/</a> Press Release for the Award received by the Hellenic Responsible Business Awards 2019: <a href="https://diotima.org.gr/vraveio-epikoinonias-gia-tin-kampania-dont-skip/">https://diotima.org.gr/vraveio-epikoinonias-gia-tin-kampania-dont-skip/</a></p>
<p><b>More Info (e.g., staff or stakeholders involved, evaluation results)</b> 200-500 words</p>	<p>The campaign received the gold award in the category "Communication Program - NGO Campaign" of the Hellenic Responsible Business Awards 2019.</p>

6.2. Best Practise: Educational Programme “Me and You Together”

<p><b>“Me and You Together”</b> «Εγώ κι Εσύ Μαζί»</p>	
<p><b>Country:</b></p>	<p><b>Greece</b></p>
<p><b>Short Description (exact nature of problem it addressed):</b> (600-1000 words)</p>	<p>"Me and You Together" is an <b>educational material</b>, and its <b>main objective</b> is to clarify human rights and the rights of the child, focusing on diversity, the refugee issue, the rights of the child, sexual orientation, gender equality, and accessibility. Moreover, through the proposed experiential and educational activities, the educational material aims the cultivation a culture of awareness and respect for human dignity, respect for diversity, and the need to shape a society of equal and free citizens. Through the material, teachers are creatively guided to the implementation and purpose of the program, through the implementation of activities and intervention plans within the classroom, but</p>



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also in terms of planning and design and implementation of social interventions in the context of the School and Society with the aim of experiential, participatory action and activation of the student audience, the parents and guardians and the educational community as a whole.

"Me and You Together" has as its **target groups** the whole range of secondary school students, teenagers, and young people. In addition, it could be applied to a wider age range and all sexes. The educational material includes a series of activities, which are interactive exercises for empathy building. They also provide, in an innovative way, information and data on different issues of discrimination and violence from around the world. Firstly, the students and students are introduced to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and then clarify aspects of diversity, the refugee/immigration issue, sexual and reproductive rights, and the rights of children, sexual orientation and accessibility. The educational material includes activities - texts analysing attitudes and intervention concerning Human and Children's Rights with simple definitions, cases of diversity in school, refugee sexual orientation, cases diversity, the refugee issue, sexual orientation, gender equality, and the dimension of accessibility at school, the neighbourhood, and the city. All the texts include data and primary sources from International Organizations, and government agencies and have been prepared by experts. Finally, **examples and guidelines** are introduced for the design and implementation of social, and experiential actions and interventions. The educational material was elaborated by **people who are fully trained on issues of discrimination and behaviour**, so special attention has been paid to the language and content to meet these criteria. The implementation period is 3 years and has been implemented in **17 schools**. But the practice has a **flexible implementation framework** (from a few hours to days). Each instructor can adapt it to the time limits that suit the participants.

The practice took place as follows: Presentation by Amnesty International of data on the violence against women. Experiential game: take a stand. The pupils, after having been briefed by Amnesty International's training officer on the international data on violence against women, actively participated in an



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experiential game to exchange views and strengthen arguments on the topic of violence against women. They participated in 3 classes of which 52 boys and 26 girls. The activity took place at the school auditorium. A laptop and projector from the school were used for the presentation. The students participated 100% in the debate and even extended the action even during a break. It greatly enhanced the sense of protection of women's self-determination and empowerment through the exchange of views. The student audience was familiarized with data on violence against women.

The educational material's **main outcomes** are to consolidate the core values linked with human rights, (such as dignity, freedom, and justice), foster empathy and empowerment, and promote the active participation of student's involvement in the protection of human rights with a view to harmonious coexistence with those around them. This practice also aims to achieve widespread use by multiple stakeholders and to raise awareness on issues of discrimination, violence, and violence against women and men.

#### Trends and Potential Benefits from this Good Practice

(350 min -500 words max)

A good practice must be effective and create a multi-level framework, including learning, information, awareness-raising, creating beneficial trends among participants, be understandable to a wider community and be usable by all relevant actors. This good practice was designed to have **multiple benefits** and potential trends for all participants. These include the following:

- Introduction to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and then clarify aspects of diversity, the refugee/immigration issue, sexual and reproductive rights, and the rights of children, sexual orientation and accessibility.
- Provision of, in an innovative way, information and data on different issues of discrimination and violence from around the world.
- The educational material includes a series of activities, which are interactive exercises for empathy building.
- Renewal and enhancement of the educational process and the material through interactive methods and gamification.



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- Promoting teachers’ creativity, through the implementation of activities and intervention plans within the classroom, but also their planning, design, and implementation of social interventions in the context of the School and Society with the aim of experiential, participatory action and activation of the student audience.
- Cultivation of a culture of awareness and respect for human dignity, respect for diversity, and the need to shape a society of equal and free citizens.
- Clarify human rights and the rights of the child, focusing on diversity, the refugee issue, the rights of the child, sexual orientation, gender equality, and accessibility.
- Present attitudes concerning Human and Children's Rights with simple definitions, cases of diversity in school, refugee sexual orientation, cases diversity, the refugee issue, sexual orientation, gender equality, and the dimension of accessibility at school, the neighbourhood, and the city.
- Widespread use by multiple stakeholders.
- Raise awareness on issues of discrimination, violence, and violence against women and men.
- Consolidate the core values linked with human rights, (such as dignity, freedom, and justice), foster empathy and empowerment, and promote the active participation of students’ involvement in the protection of human rights with a view to harmonious coexistence with those around them.
- Integration in the educational process of the parents and guardians and the educational community as a whole.

#### How this Good Practice could be used/ transferred

(350 min - 500 words max)

A key element of good practice is **transferability**, it must have the maximum possible implementation by the most possible stakeholders.

Through the educational material, teachers are creatively guided to the implementation and purpose of the programme. The material offers guidance about the implementation of activities and intervention plans within the classroom, but also in terms of planning, designing and implementing social



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interventions in the context of the School and Society. The aim of the interventions is the experiential and participatory action and the activation of the student audience, the parents and guardians and the educational community as a whole.

The specific good practice was designed to have a very **high degree of transferability** and can have a **wide range of uses**. The educational material has been created based on **simplified language** with clear questions and concerns. The examples and issues it addresses are ecumenical and can be **used in many different contexts** (national, social, cultural, etc.). It also touched upon general issues of violence and discrimination and can therefore be implemented in a differentiated timeframe. It is **interactive** and **puts the learner at the centre of the educational process**, resulting in a complete understanding of the educational material and the achievement of complete inclusion by all participants.

Moreover, this practice has a **flexible implementation framework** (from a few hours to days), so each instructor can adapt it to the time limits that suit the participants. The educational material has been created in such a way that it can be **used and be effective by all stakeholders of the educational sector** (students, teachers, administrative staff, coaches, counsellors, etc.).

Furthermore, it can have an even **wider application in other sectors** such as the private sector, employers-employees, local communities, etc. Another element of transferability is the very **low cost** of the implementation because this good practice consists of digital educational material, which does not require much capacity, is quite easy to use, and is concrete in its content and objectives. Therefore, it can be implemented by anyone in any time and space context.

All of the above demonstrates that this good practice can be transferred to all levels of education (from secondary school onwards), to all social groups, to the national level, and to genders.

**Criteria it addresses**

***Relevance and impact***



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This practice **reflects policy recommendations** on this issue, as well as addressing the issue in its entirety. Also, it has a great impact because has been implemented on multiple occasions with excellent recorded results, mainly in schoolchildren and adolescents.

#### ***Accuracy and clarity***

The educational material of the practice has been designed in such a way that it is **clear and understandable** by anyone. Moreover, it provides a wealth of sources, statistics, and information.

#### ***Transferability***

The intellectual outcomes of this practice can be transferred to multiple contexts (either at the national or educational levels). More specifically, they can be **transferred to all levels of education** from secondary education onwards, as well as at the international level (except in a few cases).

#### ***Adaptable***

There is a huge degree of **adaptability**, as it includes many issues such as diversity in school, the sexual orientation of refugees, the refugee issue, sexual orientation, gender equality, and the dimension of accessibility in schools, neighbourhoods, and cities, etc.

#### ***Reliable***

This material is reliable because it includes **primary data and sources** from International Organizations, and government agencies and has been prepared by experts.

#### ***Involvement of multiple stakeholders***

The application of this practice has focused mainly on teachers and students, but also includes stakeholders such as parents, coaches, administrative staff, and even employers-employees in a more general context.

#### ***Time effective***





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Time efficiency is essential, so this practice has a **flexible implementation framework** (from a few hours to days). Each instructor can adapt it to the time limits that suit the participants.

***Sustainable/timeless***

This practice can be implemented in all periods and at **multiple educational and social levels**, because it is not only limited to GBV but extends to different forms of violence and discrimination.

***Financially sustainable and replicable at low/no cost***

This practice fully meets the criterion of financial sustainability because it consists of **digital educational material**, which is clear in its content and easy to use by anyone.

***Gender-sensitive, SOGI-inclusive, intersectional***

The educational material was elaborated by people who are fully trained in issues of discrimination and behaviour, so **special attention has been paid to the language and content** to meet these criteria.

- Category of good practice**
- Tools, services, mechanisms
  - Awareness & Prevention

**Applicability status (local, regional, national, international) and justification**

This good practice has great applicability and can be applied at all levels (local, regional, national, and international). The examples and issues it addresses are ecumenical and can be used in many different contexts (national, social, cultural, etc.). **The educational material of this practice has been created based on examples and evidence from all over the world, dealing with different issues of violence and discrimination.** Therefore, this material is understandable to all social and ethnic groups.

400-600 words

Also, the more general issues of violence and discrimination it includes can be implemented in a wider time context. Furthermore, it can have an even wider application in other sectors such as the private sector, employers-employees, local communities, etc. The internationalist dimension of the material also



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	applies to the language, which is simple, comprehensible, and easy to translate into any language needed. In addition, it is gender-sensitive and intersectional. Moreover, this practice has a flexible implementation framework (from a few hours to days), so each instructor can adapt it to the time limits that suit the participants and available means. The educational material has been created in such a way that it can be used and be effective by all stakeholders of the educational sector (students, teachers, administrative staff, coaches, counsellors, etc.).
Website link (if applicable) or other relevant links:	<a href="https://education.amnesty.gr/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Εγώ-κι-Εσύ-Μαζί_Οδηγός-για-Μαθητές-και-Μαθήτριες-Δευτεροβάθμιας-Εκπαίδευσης.pdf">Εγώ-κι-Εσύ-Μαζί_Οδηγός-για-Μαθητές-και-Μαθήτριες-Δευτεροβάθμιας-Εκπαίδευσης.pdf</a> (amnesty.gr) <sup>122</sup>
More Info (e.g., staff or stakeholders involved, evaluation results)  200-500 words	<p>The staff involved was relatively small so that the good practice and all its outcomes would be viable, have adaptability and transferability, and maintain a viable implementation cost. Specifically, the staff for the creation of the material was 4-5 people (research, writing, formatting, and visual editing). The classroom implementation had 1 facilitator-trainer. Over time, the practice has involved hundreds of students from 17 schools in the last three years. In an education scale, a typical example is the participation of 3 classes with a total of 78 students, 52 boys and 26 girls. Stakeholder participation was high and amounted to hundreds of people during the implementation, mainly teachers and students. The participation rates in the educational process were very high, and this process was particularly successful because the participants (students) were particularly active.</p> <p>The <b>evaluation results</b> over the years have been particularly positive; the students are receptive and enthusiastic about the process. The material and the process have been evaluated as particularly easy, clear, and user-friendly, while at the same time introducing pupils' curiosity about issues of discrimination and promoting them to take the initiative about inclusion in</p>

<sup>122</sup> Available online: [https://education.amnesty.gr/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Εγώ-κι-Εσύ-Μαζί\\_Οδηγός-για-Μαθητές-και-Μαθήτριες-Δευτεροβάθμιας-Εκπαίδευσης.pdf](https://education.amnesty.gr/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Εγώ-κι-Εσύ-Μαζί_Οδηγός-για-Μαθητές-και-Μαθήτριες-Δευτεροβάθμιας-Εκπαίδευσης.pdf)



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school, family, and society. The high level of participation in the implementation of this practice, as well as the excellent rates of evaluation, indicate the effectiveness of this practice.



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## 7. Conclusions

In recent years great **improvement has been observed at the legislative and institutional levels** in Greece. Especially, after the beginning of the Greek #metoo movement in early 2018 observable steps forward have been made to ensure the amelioration of gender equality and the prevention of GBV incidents and the protection and support of the victims. A very **notable improvement** is the ratification and inclusion of the Istanbul Convention and the Convention 190 of the International Labour Organization in the national legislation and the amendment in the Penal Code on the definition of rape on the basis of non-consent.

However, **Greece continues to rank last on the EU Gender Equality Index** (EIGE, 2022). A lot more progress needs to be achieved accomplished in terms of **implementation of the new legislation**, public awareness on the issues of GBV as well as official data collection. The report showcases the **imperative need to elaborate the efforts at the national level to better address the issues of Gender Based Violence in the economic, social and political sectors**. The ultimate conclusion that can be drawn based on the research conducted and the available data about GBV in Greece, is that the legal framework has undergone significant improvements in recent years but the implementation of the legislation is still lagging. Clearly defined reporting mechanism, building social trust and raising awareness on the national level regarding GBV is of the utmost importance.

Also, in the **educational context**, we can notice steps towards the right direction through the establishment of **Gender Equality Committees in all Higher Education Institutions** and the **adoption of Gender Equality Action Plans**. However, **research** concerning gender-related violence in education is **almost non-existent** and this **absence of available data on GBV** is even more evident in the sector of **Vocational Education and Training**. This further stresses the value of the project and the need to increase the capacity of VET institutions to address GBV. Based on the little research that could be found, the results indicate a worrying trend about GBV being normalised among students and that the institutions lack a clearly defined path towards reporting and victim protection.

Another notable point is the **lack of intersectionality in the national network of support services for victims of GBV**. Incidents of GBV involving **LGBTQ+** people gain almost no visibility and the established national support mechanisms do not have the full capacity, in terms of training and resources, to address appropriately such incidents.

Finally, in this National Report, **two good practices for combatting GBV have been identified**. The analysis of the good practises aims to offer specific and constructive examples of interventions that have proven, actionable and transferable results.

Overall, there are noteworthy improvements and steps towards the right direction on the national level but a lot more has to be done to achieve substantial change and prevention of incidents that involve Gender Based Violence. The conclusions of the National Report amplify the need for the project’s **next steps**, which are the collection of primary data specific to the VET sector, the preparation of relevant and applicable **policy**



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**recommendations** and the preparation of **appropriate training material** for the VET trainers, students and staff.



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## Annex 3 - National report and best practices of Italy

### NATIONAL REPORT: Italy

Desk Research and collection of best practices  
to END GBV in educational structures

<b>Project</b>	<b>END GBV in VET – "Full service to increase capacity and awareness for disrupting gender-based violence in the VET sphere."</b>  Project 101049592 — CERV-2021-DAPHNE
<b>Deliverable</b>	Task 2.2 Desk Research and collection of best practices to END GBV in educational settings
<b>Relevant Work package:</b>	WP2 (T2.2)
<b>Date</b>	15-Nov-22
<b>Authors</b>	ENAIP NET Impresa sociale S.c.r.l.
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<b>Version</b>	V3.0
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Annex 1



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## Abbreviations

AICS	Italian Agency for the Development Cooperation (Agenzia italiana per la cooperazione allo sviluppo)
ANPAL	National Agency for Active Labour Market Policies (Agenzia Nazionale Politiche Attive Lavoro)
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease
DCPC	Criminal Police Central Directorate (Direzione Centrale Polizia Criminale)
DPO	Department for Equal Opportunities (Dipartimento per le Pari Opportunità)
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
FRA	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
GBV	Gender-based violence
INAPP	National Institute of the Analysis of Public Policies (Istituto Nazionale per l'Analisi delle Politiche Pubbliche)
ISTAT	The Italian National Institute of Statistics (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica)



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MIM	Ministry of Education and Merit (Ministro dell'Istruzione e del Merito)
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprise
VET	Vocational education and training



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## Executive summary

The overarching project to which the present report refers to is **END GBV in VET – “Full service to increase capacity and awareness for disrupting gender-based violence in the VET sphere”**. Its long-term objective is to deepen the understanding of the phenomenon of gender-based violence (GBV) in vocational education and training (VET) while simultaneously develop better and well-informed tools to tackle this key issue present across all the European Union member states. Within this framework, the aim of this national report is to analyse some of the key aspects at play in GBV with particular interest to the VET sphere in Italy.

The report outlines a summary of the complex education system in Italy with an in-depth examination of the technical training system. It further analyses the phenomenon of gender-based violence and the services, initiatives and tools present in the country. However, the absence of a homogeneous, comprehensive and systematic data collection system prevents a deeper understanding of GBV within the VET system. The official sources are reports to law enforcement, the national helpline and anti-violence centres which appear to be insufficient to capture the complexity of a phenomenon that often goes undenounced by its victims. Recent legislations could potentially provide the grounds for a systematic collection of data and lead to a coordinated intervention policy throughout the nation that would efficiently raise awareness.

One of the major challenges remains the fragmentation of project development and delivery of interventionist policies to address and prevent GBV. While on one hand it allowed very contextualised and original types of intervention, on the other, it exacerbates the rift between the Government’s international commitments and the difficulty in applying these at the regional and local level, where different competencies and autonomies prevail. A more coordinated effort must be made at all levels in order to select the few best practices among all member countries that then can be signposted by the support offices that should be set up in the VET context for victims, individuals at risks and family members alike. The final monitoring would allow this service to become both efficient and financially sustainable in the long run.



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## 1. Introduction

GBV has been recognised across EU member states as a recurring phenomenon affecting especially women and children. For this reason, it appears necessary to deepen the understanding of this form of violence, which aspects might foster it and in which environments it might nest. The education context appears to be particularly important as it is both a place where individuals can perpetrate violence but also where a positive capacity-building and a support system can help eradicate this serious phenomenon (EIGE, 2022; FRA, 2016).

The overarching project to which the present report refers to is **END GBV in VET – “Full service to increase capacity and awareness for disrupting gender-based violence in the VET sphere”**. This cross-country project aims at developing support offices in vocational education and training (VET) institutions that can actively provide useful information to students, teachers and also affected parents on how to face the phenomenon of gender-based violence (GBV). This project will also include the development of a specific training for all stakeholders plus the improvement of the existing structures in VET institutions which already provide support to individuals affected by GBV. Within this framework rests the present national report which scope is to deepen the understanding of GBV by analysing some of the key aspects at play in the VET institutions in Italy. This, joint to the evaluation of existing national tools, the experiences of individuals affected by GBV and shortcomings in the reporting system, will provide a starting point to develop well-informed tools to report, if not tackle, this widespread crime.

The first chapter of the present report delves into the VET system in Italy, its complexities, its recent reforms adopted also thanks to the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR), and some additional data regarding student demographics and both the national and European qualification framework. Furthermore, it analyses the legal framework surrounding the GBV, the national and international commitments and policies which have shaped how Italy is tackling this form of violence. The second chapter expands on GBV and presents some of the data and general reports of GBV in our country. In addition, the third and fourth chapters outline some of the most valuable resources, tools and support services active on the national territory. The sixth chapter wants to stress the diversity in the offer at the national and regional level and how the complexity of the regional system has an important role in shaping the response to GBV and its prevention within the wider educational context. Key projects developed in three regions are presented. Finally, three best practices are outlined, an international, a national and a local initiative with their own specific aspects,





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benefits and transferrable element. The conclusion notifies potential limitation of the present report and advances some useful recommendation for the future and for the following steps of the project.

## 2. The national context

### 2.1. The Italian VET System

In Italy, VET programmes (also known with the Italian acronym IeFP, *istruzione e formazione professionale*) are distinguished by a multilevel governance with an extensive involvement of national, regional, and local stakeholders. On one hand, the Ministry of Education and Merit with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies design the general rules and principles according to which the education and training system is run. On the other hand, regions and autonomous provinces are accountable for VET programmes and most apprenticeship schemes with the additional contribution of local partners who devise and implement employment policies related to life-long learning. Furthermore, regions and autonomous provinces cooperate with the ministries and through the State-Regions Conference by setting the certification standards and the essential standard performance levels for all regions countrywide (Cedefop, 2021). The essential standard performance levels define the minimal levels that all educational institutions need to reach in a range of subjects such as the general organisation of the regional VET system, the evaluation and certification criteria for educators and the training pathways structures. These facts demonstrate a highly fragmented overarching system due to the various stakeholders involved in its decision-making processes.

Free compulsory education is enshrined in both the Italian Constitution (art. 34) and Italian law (No. 296/2006) establishing a minimum of 10 years of education up to the age of 16 with the obtention of a final qualification at the end of the selected pathway. This is in line with the European Commission’s **European Pillar of Social Rights**, in particular with the first chapter that includes the right to a more accessible and inclusive education, training and life-long learning (European Commission, 2017a). At the age of 14, students can decide whether to enrol into a general education system (i.e., *liceo or istituto tecnico*) or a VET programme which combines a mixed learning methodology, within the workplace and the VET institution. However, the education system is not extremely strict. For example, students in the VET pathway can decide to obtain an upper secondary education diploma (and vice versa) through additional years of studies or through recognition of the years they have already attended.



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If we analyse VET at upper secondary level (see Table 1), students can select from the following pathways:

1. A three-year programme (*istruzione e formazione professionale, leFP*) allows the student to obtain a VET qualification (*attestato di qualifica di operatore professionale*, EQF level 3);
2. A four-year programme for the obtention of a technician professional diploma (*diploma professionale di tecnico*, EQF level 4);
3. A five-year programme in either technical schools or vocational schools which can lead to a general, technical or professional education diplomas (EQF level 4).

The transition from one programme to another through the attendance of additional years is also allowed.

Age	ISCED level	General education	VET education
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21	ISCED 4 & 5	Bachelor's degree (EQF 5)	ITS diploma (EQF 5)	IFTTS certificate (EQF 4)	High Apprenticeship
20					
19					
18	ISCED 3	Upper Secondary Education diploma (EQF 4)		VET diploma (EQF 4)	Apprenticeship
17					
16					
15					
14					
				VET qualification (EQF 3)	



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13	ISCED 2	Lower Secondary Education degree (EQF 1)
12		
11		

(1) VET certifications can be obtained via the school system, the VET/dual system and the apprenticeship according to the regional VET system.

(2) EQF 2 qualification refers to the compulsory education certificate which a student obtains following the completion of the first two years of any selected course.

**Table 1.** Simplified education framework in Italy starting from age 11 including: ISCED level, EQF level, qualification related to the level and type of education. (Source: Cedefop, 2022)

At post-secondary level, two are the possible higher VET pathways offered to students coming from both the general education pathway and the VET pathways (see Table 1):

1. IFTS (*Istruzione e formazione tecnica superiore*) a one-year non-academic programme which leads to a high technical specialisation **certificate** (*certificato di specializzazione tecnica superiore*, EQF level 4)
2. ITS Academy (Istituti tecnici superiori) a two/three year non-academic programme which leads to a high-level technical **diploma** (diploma di tecnico superiore, EQF level 5).

Thus, both the IFTS track and the ITS Academy intention is to train specialists who can satisfy the labour market demand in both the private and public sectors. While the former allows 4-year VET graduates to further their specialisation and access higher education, the latter is a longer two-to-three-year programme that trains highly specialised individuals.



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Finally, as an alternative to the general education system and the VET pathways, students can also decide to enrol into apprenticeships which consist of a variable 3+ years options focused on the concept of “learning by doing” directly in a work environment, based on programmes defined by educational institutions such as VET and universities. We will not delve into the specifics of general education pathway and apprenticeship as they sit outside of the scope of the present report, however, it is important to note that individuals attending apprenticeship programmes might also be affected by specific GBV issues due to a relevant part of their time being spent in working environments rather than at school.

When we turn our attention to the data on enrolment to VET, Italy exceeds both EU and OECD averages, providing a feeling of how vital the role of VET in upper secondary education in this country is. Looking at the available data, about 54% of Italians prefer VET programmes, with a total of 1.5 million students across different age groups in 2017. Of this, only 37% are reported to be female by different institutions (Cedefop, 2020a; OECD, 2020; UNESCO, 2022). According to the Italian Institute of Analysis of Public Policies (INAPP), those who were enrolled in one of the first four years of a VET course in 2020 were about 250 thousand, with COVID-19 not being a relevant issue in declining subscription but rather a decline in attendance to the training activities during the second half of 2020 and a steep decline in achieving the final certificate (INAPP, 2022).

Further analysing the data reports provided by national and international bodies (Istat, 2022; UNESCO, 2022), we notice that in 2019 only 10% of the Italian population was in the 15-24 age group. Among this demographic, one-third are unemployed, and one-fifth are enrolled in a VET course. In general terms, the enrolment rate in secondary education is similar for female and male students, if not higher for the former. Another essential factor to report is the dropout rate from education and training. In 2021, Italy was still one of the EU member countries with the highest shares (13% of the population aged 18-24) with a higher percentage of males over females. The trend of early leavers has been decreasing across the last decade thus on track to reach the EU-level target of 9% by 2030 (Eurostat, 2022). However, if we look at the percentage of inactive women, Italy fares much higher than the average recorded in the European Union with a figure that exceeds 40%. In Italy, one woman out of seven leaves either their education or the job market following maternity, an inactivity rate that has been stable for the past three decades (INAPP, 2021). This is an important factor to consider when looking at GBV as women might potentially be forced to become inactive by either the perpetrators of violence or by social stereotyping of gender roles.



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### 2.1.1. National Qualifications Framework

Since 2003, various reforms have been implemented in upper secondary general education, VET and higher education, anticipating the principles of a learning-outcomes-based national qualification framework (NFQ). Both Law n. 92/2012 on labour market reform and Decree 13/2013 represented the first important milestones towards a comprehensive and cohesive framework. In 2015, the stakeholders involved, such as multiple ministries and regional institutions, agreed on a common operational framework for recognising regional qualifications and their related skills, with over 4 thousand VET regional qualifications being classified. Furthermore, in 2018 a cohesive NFQ was established with the definition of eight levels of qualifications. This successful reform of higher education system which resulted in a comprehensive NFQ also led to the development of a national *Atlas of professions and qualifications* which brings together all qualifications across different national and regional levels of education, their related skills and links them with their corresponding EQF. This is accessible in Italian following the website [atlantelavoro.inapp.org](http://atlantelavoro.inapp.org) and is extremely useful as it allows to navigate the complexity of the heterogeneous regional systems (Cedefop, 2020b; INAPP, n.d.).

In addition, since 2017 the new National Agency for Active Labour Market Policies (ANPAL) has been hosting the EQF national coordination point (NCP) which is responsible for informing, guiding and observing the qualification framework devised by the European Union also through the constant promotion of dialogue between national and international stakeholders in the education world. The National Institute for Public Policies Analysis (INAPP) acts as an independent evaluator for levelling and referencing the NQF to the EQF. In this scenario, all formal national qualifications (general education, VET and higher education qualifications) awarded by the Ministry of Education and Merit and those awarded by the regions in the framework of State-Regions agreements are referenced to the eight EQF levels, using the EQF level descriptors (Cedefop, 2020b).

The recent reforms applied to VET by the State-Regions Conference, with a comprehensive update of the national classification repertory of professional profiles assisted, are trying to modernise this key educational system and further improve its labour market relevance, especially at the local level – where it is needed the most. The government has also reviewed the work-based learning pathways to facilitate the obtention of skills and abilities to those students who want to put into practice the competences acquired at school (European Commission, 2020a).



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### 2.1.2. Governance

In order to better understand how the VET system works in Italy, we need to introduce the principle of subsidiarity. The Italian Constitution (art. 117) establishes that this principle should be at the core of the expression of legislative powers of both State and Regions and can thus be both vertical and horizontal. With **vertical subsidiarity** we mean that the institutional bodies closest to the citizen (i.e., regions, autonomous provinces) are the first actors to intervene when it comes to the need of the people, while the State acts only when actions of the lower institutional bodies are deemed to be insufficient to respond to the necessity of the citizens. The **horizontal subsidiarity** refers to the distribution of power between local agencies and private institutions, allocating an exceptional freedom of exercising the interest of the local population to privates while public bodies intervene in relation to the coordination, supervision and promotion of collective needs. If we focus our attention to how the VET policies, practices and framework are established and to whom they are allocated within the national and local institutional bodies, the Italian system turns out to be fairly complex.

At the national level, the MIM, with the support of the Ministry of Labour, defines the VET framework for IFTS programmes and regularly updates the ITS national repertory. Additional state-run national bodies have specific roles in the supervision of the general process of VET. On the other hand, the National Institute for Documentation, Innovation and Educational Research (INDIRE) is in charge of monitoring the ITS courses, while the INAPP monitors leFP, IFTS courses, apprenticeship training pathways and continuing training interventions.

At the regional level, regions and autonomous provinces are responsible for the planning, programming and organisation of interventions provided for leFP, ITS, IFTS, post-secondary level and post-university education for most types of apprenticeship-based training and publicly funded continuing training (in agreement with the social partners). In particular, the draft of ITS and IFTS intervention planning documents known as “3-year plans” are prepared. Through these documents, the regions and autonomous provinces define their strategy for the post-secondary education and training offered, bringing together and integrating the various training chains (ITS, IFTS, training hubs) (Cedefop, 2020a; 2022).



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Additionally, as the VET system is based on a solid work-based learning approach, it requires regular collaboration among VET centres and private companies, adding a further layer of complexity involved in the decision-making of how VET courses are established. Social partners play a crucial role in regulating professional apprenticeship and in formulating training policies and the training offered. Furthermore, they also contribute towards promoting company, sectoral and territorial training programmes funded by the regions or realised thanks to the private sector’s funds, and they also help with elaborating active labour market policies (Angotti, 2019). This ecosystem of actors encourages a continuous dialogue, particularly with companies and their needs, and the involvement of experts from companies and universities as ITS faculty members in order to provide a coherent and cohesive plan of activities to VET students.

Finally, we must remember that COVID-19 has impacted severely both the way of learning, moving it towards more distance and digital practices and the labour market by halting economic growth and sending into unemployment a substantial number of individuals across Europe. This has added to the complexity of the Italian education system, the high share of leavers, an outdated infrastructure, insufficient digital education and the high territorial disparities in education levels throughout the country. All of these issues have been picked up by the Ministry of Education which has planned to **invest over 17 billion** euros thanks to the **National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR)** to positively contribute to the future of education. Among the main reforms, we have witnessed the adoption in 2022 of the one involving the VET system and its curricula (MIM, 2021). This will contribute firstly to the alignment of the national educational system to the EU dimension, but it will also improve the quality of training of skilled workers enhancing their employability.

With this VET structure in mind, we realise how deeper information, prevention and training on GBV should not only be an integral part of the VET programmes curricula, but it should also be extended to the job market involved in the delivery of VET schemes as a way of enhancing a stronger level of awareness on this pervasive crime. Students could, and should, become an integral part of this aspect by raising awareness of GBV and potential ways of addressing it. The following paragraph focuses on the definition of gender-based violence and the international and Italian legal framework which has been developing in the last two decades.

## 2.2. Legal Framework

**Gender-Based Violence** is defined by the European Commission as “**the form of violence directed against a person because of that persons’ gender or violence that affects persons of a particular gender**



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**disproportionately.**” The European Institute for Gender Equality highlights how both women and men can experience GBV, however this phenomenon negatively affects disproportionately women and girls (EIGE, 2022). For this reason, often the terms GBV and violence against women are used interchangeably, yet it is important to recognise that this form of violence is distinctly gendered and deeply rooted in **power inequalities existing between women and men** thus explaining the use of the phrase “gender-based”. A gender-neutral approach coupled with existing cultural stereotypes leads to a denial of GBV and both its tolerance and normalisation (EIGE, 2017).

GBV includes various forms such as **physical, sexual and psychological violence**. Despite the general population might believe that developed countries such as the EU member states are immune to this type of crime, the reality is far away from this idealistic picture. According to data from the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, **one in three women has experienced physical violence** since the age of 15, while over **40% have been a victim of psychological abusive** behaviours by intimate partners, employers or colleagues (FRA, 2016). This demonstrates the critical need to better understand this widespread violation of human rights, which is preventable thanks also to the role that educational institutions can play. As the present report focuses on GBV in VET, we will now move our attention to how GBV has been addressed by governmental institutions in Italy also through the national adoption of EU directives and international guidelines such as the Victims’ Rights Directive and the Istanbul Convention.

### 2.2.1. International Commitments

Since **1979**, the **United Nations (UN)** have highlighted the importance of protecting and promoting women’s rights with a special focus on non-discrimination policies through the **Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)** which was signed and ratified by Italy respectively in 1980 and in 1985. Among the critical mechanisms that the CEDAW established, there is the **Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women**, an independent body of experts that monitors the implementation of the Convention through the regular analysis of reports submitted by each State outlining the actions taken on the matter (OHCHR, n.d.).

Numerous are the additional international advances towards consolidating a legal framework that ensures protection to people fallen victim to gender-based violence and discrimination. The UN Human Rights Council established in 2016 the mandate of an **Independent Expert on protection against violence and**





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**discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.** On June 2022, Italy’s Permanent Mission to the United Nations has confirmed the commitment which the country holds in fighting against all forms of discrimination, especially intersecting forms of discrimination such as GBV and violence against LGBT individuals (OHCHR, 2022a; Permanent Mission of Italy to the UN, 2022). The UN General Assembly has also set up in 2015 the **2030 Agenda** which recognises that equality is a core and intersectional element to guarantee the respect of human rights but also to systematically fight gender discrimination which has been linked with the persistence of global poverty (AICS, 2020). The OECD, through its **Development Assistance Committee** (DAC), supports the goal of gender equality and the rights of women and girls by promoting common approaches across different development cooperation agencies. Furthermore, the European Council (2012) issued the **Victim’s Rights Directive** (Directive 2012/29/EU) which aim is to set the standards on the rights, assistance and protection of victims of crime. Italy was able to transpose and implement this directive with a legislative decree in 2015 (European Commission, 2017b). The Government of Italy has also supported the application of the UN’s Security Council’s Resolution 1325 through **the Italian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security** – developed by Inter-ministerial committee for human rights (2020) – and the **Guidelines on Gender Equality and the empowerment of Women and Girls 2020-2024** which were published by the Italian Agency for International Cooperation (AICS, 2020).

Among these however, the **Istanbul Convention** (Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, 2011) is the most comprehensive international human rights treaty on the prevention of violence against women which entered into force in August 2014. Italy signed the Convention in September 2012 and ratified it in September 2013, symbolising the country’s commitment to implement national policies to promote equality and fight GBV. The three main objectives transposed in the national legal framework have been the **3 P’s: prevent** crime, **punish** the perpetrators and **protect** the victims. However, this Convention is not only a clear reference point, but it also defines the important role that an appropriate education has in schools by teaching respect and using a suitable language that does not diminishes the brutality of GBV but highlights the potential intersectional risks that individuals, especially women, girls and sexual and gender minorities<sup>123</sup>, may encounter in these environments. Absence of violence means indeed not only facing GBV but all types of violence which are enforced by gender

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<sup>123</sup>“Gender minority” and “sexual minority” are umbrella terms that refers to individuals whose gender identity or sexuality differ from what is perceived as being the norm (i.e. gender normative and heteronormative). (European Commission, 2018; OHCHR, 2022)



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stereotypes and thus going to hit vulnerable parts of the populations such as ethnic minorities, sexual minorities and other victims of abuse.

Indeed, the role of education appears crucial according to article 14 of the Istanbul Convention (2011):

"... include teaching material on issues such as equality between women and men, non-stereotyped gender roles, mutual respect, non-violent conflict resolution in interpersonal relationships, gender-based violence against women and the right to personal integrity, adapted to the evolving capacity of learners, in formal curricula and at all levels of education." (p. 6)

### 2.2.2. National Commitments

The National Indications for the preschool curriculum and first cycle of education (**Ministerial Decree No. 254/2012**) considers a key school's task to:

"...provide the appropriate support for each person to develop a conscious and open identity. The full implementation of the recognition and guarantee of freedom and equality, respecting everyone's differences and identity' (p.3).

In addition, the National Strategic Plans against violence against women covers the five years between 2017 and 2020. It directly involves the Ministry of Education and Merit as the agent of change for a culture of respect, fight against discrimination, stereotypes/prejudices, as well as support, inclusion, autonomy for women and girls (with particular attention to minors) victims of any form of male violence.

The theme of equality is deeply enshrined in the Italian Constitution in Article 3 and within these national guidelines, there is also a reference to the fight against discrimination in the digital world. **Law No. 71/2017** is indeed interested in the provisions for the protection of minors to prevent and contrast the phenomenon of cyberbullying. Furthermore, the **National Operational Programme (NOP)** “For Schools: Skills and Environments for Development 2014 – 2020” addresses the major issues of gender equality and the fight against discrimination, strategic priorities identified by Italy and funded through the European Union. Through the NOP, two national plans were developed. One to promote educational activities and trainings aimed at inspiring a new generation of global citizens who respect diversity and one another (“**Piano nazionale per l’educazione al rispetto**”), another to contrast the specific phenomenon of violence against

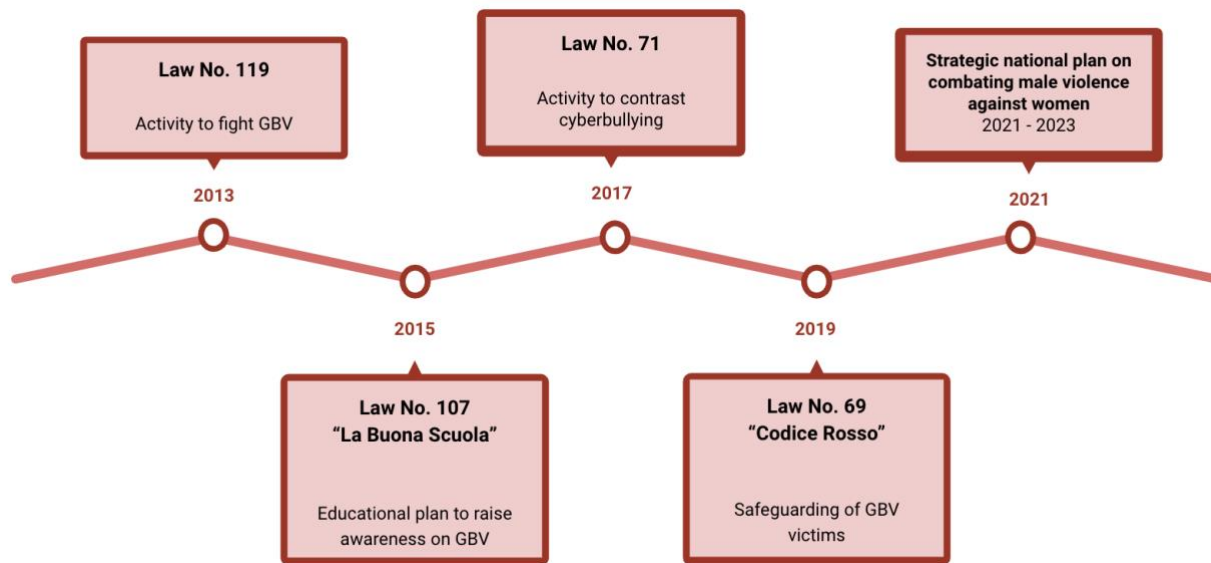


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women, strategic that has been set in 2015 and successfully renewed both in 2017 and 2021 (“**Piano strategico nazionale sulla violenza maschile contro le donne 2021-2023**”). The latter 2021 plan has also established an “observatory” which should support in monitoring the phenomenon of GBV and will be active towards the end of 2022 (MIM, 2017; DPO, n.d.). The NOP's attention to respect for women and gender differences is one of the strategic themes, as it represents one of the Horizontal Principles of the European Funds (art. 7 of the **EU Reg. No. 1303/2013**).

Besides ratifying the Istanbul Convention mentioned in the previous chapter, Italy has taken a range of additional measures to transpose its core principles into its national legislation and Graph 1 is a non-exhaustive presentation of the most impactful governmental laws that passed since 2013.



**Graph 1.** Non-exhaustive timeline of the main national laws aimed at contrasting GBV.

**Law No. 119/2013** focused on the provision for safety and for fighting against GBV by also formalising the authorities’ duty to promote a vast network of support services for victims. Additionally, art. 5 introduces the Extraordinary Action Plan against sexual and gender-based violence, an important stepping stone for the involvement of the education system in combating GBV violence. The Plan promotes:

“appropriate training of school personnel in relations and against gender-based violence and discrimination, to stimulate, [...] national indications for high schools, provide the guidelines for



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technical and professional institutes, [...] create the awareness, to prevent violence against women and gender discrimination [...].” (p.18-19)

**Law No. 107/2015** (“*La Buona Scuola*”) introduces a “Three-Year Educational Offer Plan” which ensures the further implementation of the principles of equal opportunities that should inform and raise awareness among students, teachers and parents on all aspects involving GBV. Finally, **Law No. 69/2019** (“*Codice rosso*”) aims to enhance the effectiveness of judicial responses to violence against women and improve victims’ protection. This new “red code” status has indeed introduced GBV cases in a “priority lane” which expedites these cases while, at the same time, reenforcing a pre-emptive safeguard and redefining types of offences with their related aggravating circumstances (DCPC, 2022; EIGE, 2022).

As mentioned previously, **Law No. 119/2013**, against women’s violence, has been a major turn for Italian legislation and its alignment with international positions. A budget of 30 million euros was established in order to fund numerous projects, both national and regional, that would have enhanced the prevention of vicious attacks but especially the development and enhancement of training initiatives for educators delivering courses, students perpetrating or suffering GBV but also parents or partners involved with victims and actors of this crime (MIM, 2021).

### 2.2.3 Summary of National Legislation:

#### National Legislation - Ministry of Equal Opportunity.

<https://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/dipartimento/normativa/normativa-nazionale/>

[Decreto \(estratto\) del Presidente del Consiglio dei Ministri 1° ottobre 2012 \(documento in pdf\)](#) Decree (excerpt) of the Prime Minister of 1 October 2012 (pdf document)

[Decreto dell’Autorità politica dell’8 Aprile 2019 pubblicato sulla G.U. serie generale n.113 del 16.05.2019](#)  
Decree of the Political Authority of 8 April 2019 published in the G.U. general series no. 113 of 16.05.2019

[Direttiva DPO 2021](#)

#### Constitutional sources:

- Constitution of the Italian Republic - Fundamental Principles - [Principi Fondamentali, Art.2 \(documento in pdf ITA\)](#)
- Constitution of the Italian Republic - Fundamental Principles - [Principi Fondamentali, Art.3 \(documento in pdf ITA\)](#)



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- Constitution of the Italian Republic - [Parte Prima, Art. 37 \(documento in pdf ITA\)](#)
- Constitution of the Italian Republic - [Parte Prima, Art. 51 \(documento in pdf ITA\)](#)
- Constitution of the Italian Republic - [Parte Seconda, art. 117 \(documento in pdf ITA\)](#)

### Legislation on equal opportunity

[D.lgs. 11 aprile 2006, n. 198](#), "Code of equal opportunities between men and women

### Violence against Women

- Art. 14, [comma 6](#), della Legge 7 agosto 2015, n. 124 che inserisce il comma 1-ter dopo il comma 1-bis dell'articolo 30 del D.lgs. 30 marzo 2001, n. 165
- [Art. 1, comma 16](#), della [LEGGE 13 luglio 2015, n. 107](#) "Reform of the national education and training system and delegation for the reorganisation of existing legislative provisions"
- [Art. 24](#) "Leave for women victims of gender-based violence" del [D. lgs. 15 giugno 2015, n. 80](#)
- [Decreto legge 14 agosto 2013, n. 93](#), "Urgent provisions on security and to combat gender-based violence, as well as on civil protection and the commissioning of provinces", published in the Official Gazette General Series No. 191 of 16 August 2013. Converted into law, with amendments [Legge 15 ottobre 2013, n. 119](#), pubblicata sulla Gazzetta Ufficiale n. 242 del 15 ottobre 2013
- [Legge 27 giugno 2013, n. 77](#), Ratification and implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, done in Istanbul on 11 May 2011, published in the Official Gazette - General Series No.152 of 1 July 2013
- [Decreto legge 23 febbraio 2009, n. 11](#), "Urgent measures on public safety and combating sexual violence, as well as on persecutory acts". Converted into law by Law no [L. 23 aprile 2009, n. 38](#), pubblicata sulla Gazzetta Ufficiale n. 95 del 24 aprile 2009
- [Art. 76, comma 4-ter](#), del [D.P.R. 30 maggio 2002, n. 115](#)
- [Legge 4 aprile 2001, n. 154](#), ""Measures against violence in family relationships"."
- [art.18-bis](#) (Residence permit for victims of domestic violence) of the Decree [DI 25 luglio 1998, n. 286](#) bearing the "Consolidation Act of the provisions concerning the discipline of immigration and rules on the condition of foreigners
- [Legge 15 febbraio 1996, n. 66](#), "Regulations against sexual violence"."

### FGM

- [Legge 9 gennaio 2006, n. 7](#), "Provisions concerning the prevention and prohibition of female genital mutilation practices"
- [Art. 76, comma 4-ter](#), del [D.P.R. 30 maggio 2002, n. 115](#) "Consolidated law on legal expenses"

### Maternity and paternity protection

- [Art. 14 \(pdf in ITA\)](#) ""Promotion of work-life balance in public administrations" of Law no. 124 of 7 August 2015, "Delegations to the Government on the reorganisation of public administrations"



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- [D.lgs. 15 giugno 2015, n. 80](#), , Measures for the reconciliation of care, life and work needs, in implementation of Article 1, paragraphs 8 and 9, of Law No. 183 of 10 December 2014. (15G00094) (OJ General Series No. 144 of 24-6-2015 - Ordinary Suppl. No. 34). Entry into force of the measure: 25 June 2015
- [Art. 4, comma 24 \(pdf in ITA\)](#), della [L. 28 giugno 2012, n. 92](#), "Provisions on labour market reform in a growth perspective. (12G0115) (Official Gazette General Series No 153 of 3-7-2012 - Ordinary Supplement No 136)
- [D.lgs. 26 marzo 2001, n. 151](#), "Testo unico delle disposizioni legislative in materia di tutela e sostegno della maternità e della paternità, a norma dell'articolo 15 della legge 8 marzo 2000, n. 53
- [D.lgs. 23 aprile 2003, n. 115](#) (OJ General Series no. 121 of 27-5-2003) amending and supplementing Legislative Decree no. 151 of 26 March 2001 (pdf in ITA)il [D.lgs. 26 marzo 2001, n. 151 \(pdf in ITA\)](#)
- [Legge 8 marzo 2000, n. 53](#), "Provisions for the support of motherhood and fatherhood, for the right to care and training and for the coordination of city times
- [Legge 22 maggio 1978, n. 194](#), "Regulations for the social protection of maternity and voluntary interruption of pregnancy".

#### Inmates Mothers

- [Legge 8 marzo 2001, n. 40](#), " Alternative measures to detention for the protection of the relationship between prisoners and their minor children"
- [art. 21-bis](#) e [art.47-quinquies \(pdf in ITA\)](#), della [L. 26 luglio 1975, n. 354](#) " Rules on the prison system and on the execution of measures for the deprivation and restriction of liberty"
- Criminal Code:
  - [art. 146 \(pdf in ITA\)](#) (Compulsory deferment of execution of sentence)
  - [art. 147 , comma 1, numero 3 \(pdf in ITA\)](#) (Optional deferral of enforcement of sentence)
  - [art. 211-bis \( pdf in ITA\)](#) (Postponement of enforcement of security measures)
- Code of Criminal Procedure
  - [art. 275, comma 4 \( pdf in ITA\)](#) (Criteria for choice of measures)

#### Strategy Plan to fight the male violence against women 2021-2023

<https://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/PIANO-2021-2023.pdf>

### 3. Gender-Based Violence in Italy

Gender-based violence in Italy is characterised by a **structural nature** and thus being deeply **rooted in a culture of gender inequality** where **male dominate social structures** and where education is still growing out



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of the traditionally established **gender-specific roles which encourages GBV**. The inequality of sexes, gender discrimination, gender pay gap – only to mention a few – are all still negative structural phenomena present in modern Italian society regardless of the positive legislative national framework that has been set up in the last decades which we have analysed in Chapter 1 (Capone, 2018; Montesanti, 2015).

Although some related data on **Glass Ceiling Index** report an improvement of women’s career opportunities, statistical data of the last five years indicate that GBV related attacks and charges have reached unprecedented levels, both globally and in our country (Istat, 2022). For example, reports from the calls to the National Helpline “1522” made in 2021 record a steady **increase up 24,4 points** since 2019 and 2% points compared to 2020. The Lazio regions has been confirmed the region with the highest volume of calls (69 every 100.000 women, an increase of 8.5%) with other regions such as Molise and Calabria with a diminishing trend of calls. Regarding GBV, the calls were over **32 thousand** with an **increase of 3,8%** compared to 2020 and an extreme 72% compared to data before COVID-19 with psychological and physical violence reported more often (Istat, 2022).

This trend shows us that potentially a double scenario is evolving. On one side, national awareness campaigns especially during the period surrounding the 25<sup>th</sup> of November coinciding with **International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women** appear to be helpful in reaching out more victims of GBV and prompting them to report their experiences leading to an increase in reporting **exposing a phenomenon which is still hidden**. On the other side, emerging evidence (Donato, 2020) is leading us to believe that COVID-19 has been a relevant factor in increasing the prevalence of psychological violence against women. The twofold increase in calls to the national helpline seem to be confirming this idea as governmental measures to limit the spread of the pandemic could have potentially facilitated perpetrators exerting power, with victims feeling deeply isolated and unsupported (EIGE, 2022).

Findings from the Ministry of Interior’s Department of Public Security are mixed but similarly not reassuring. Indeed, the Criminal Police Central Directorate (DCPC), in raising awareness for the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, has provided in November 2022 a report showing that crimes including stalking, abuse from a family member or partner and sexual violence all fare a percentage of **over 75% of female victims** with women being sexually abused reaching a mouth dropping 91%. All of these GBV related crimes have witnessed a **decreasing trend since 2021 except for sexual violence which has increased**. The number of homicides has also been showing a stable decreasing influx since 2012 for both



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male and female victims (DCPC, 2022). If we take a glance at the regional situation, regions such as Sicily, Lombardy and Lazio, all indicate high levels of GBV, showing that the distribution of this crime is uneven across the north and the south of the country.

However, despite the mixed official data, GBV appears to be a complex phenomenon which requires a global and national strategy to be able to reach all of those unofficial victims who are too afraid to come forward and denounce their cases and abuses to the local law enforcement. In the EU, **eight out of 10 women** do not denounce the violence they experience from their partner, in Italy, **only 12% denounced** GBV to the police (FRA, 2014; Istat, 2022). This demonstrates the **difficulty in monitoring a phenomenon which remains still hidden**, undenounced, as it is often perpetrated by a family member or a partner. This leads to observe with caution police reports, as well as reports from centres against women and non-governmental organisations, as especially decreasing trends of official violence reporting might simply indicate a lack of will from the victims to come forward due to fear.

Moreover, another relevant issue still present is **domestic violence**. In Italy, this form of violence is criminalised under the Italian criminal code, and it is considered as an aggravating factor in prosecution cases with prison sentences that can vary between 1 and 5 years. However, violence must be systematic in order to be prosecuted under domestic violence, otherwise the perpetrator might be held to account under lesser crimes such as threat which is not as strongly punished (EIGE, 2017). In 2014, **over 13 thousand cases of domestic violence** were reported to the police who has however been often accused of being both lenient with the perpetrators of violence and not being thorough enough in demonstrating systematic abuse while minimising the impact of GBV (Grevio,2020).

Finally, it is relevant to also report the situation linked to GBV experienced by **foreigners, migrants and refugees** given that Italy represents the landing point of one of the busiest migratory routes, also known as the **Central Mediterranean Route**. According to the DCPC (2022), foreign citizens of female gender are victims of between 20% and over 60% of GBV, with the highest percentage representing arranged, or forced, marriages. UNICEF in 2019 has reported reaching and assisting over 500 migrants' victims of gender-based violence, although it is evident that these numbers could be hiding a much bigger issue. Indeed, a survey run by UNICEF reports that only about 20% of migrants who are victims of GBV would access supporting services, providing a similar figure to the one related to EU women denouncing this form of crime. This highlights the





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necessity of both Italy, but also the EU, of addressing a phenomenon that is faced also by an extremely vulnerable share of its population, which is not only limited to women. Indeed, GBV is a crime faced by men, gender and sexual minorities alike. Both women and men can therefore have severe consequences at a physical and psychosocial level which are partially addressed by Italian’s local organisations, but clearly the need outweighs service availability. These individuals which are often integrated in the education system through training projects and skills-oriented courses are an important part of the population that should not be invisible or forgotten by the national aid system (Women Refugee’s Commission, 2020).

Once we move our attention to GBV phenomenon in the VET in Italy, this is an area still highly under researched and under reported. In May 2022, the Italian Parliament approved **Law No. 53/2022**, the provisions on statistics in gender violence, providing the legal basis for an adequate information flow process for regular reporting on GBV against women, to consequently help design prevention and contrast policies while ensure the effective monitoring of the phenomenon. To conduct these required periodical surveys, the Department for Equal Opportunities (Presidency of the Council of Ministers) analyses the data and surveys carried out by the Italian National Institute of Statistics (Istat) and by the National Statistical System (SISTAN). These GBV related statistics are also available on the website [violenzasulledonnes.it](https://violenzasulledonnes.it), which is an important tool for policymakers and researchers to analyse trends and develop better strategies to face this type of crime. Every three years, Istat and SISTAN carry out a sample survey dedicated to violence against women. Beside the core statistics, the reports also show an estimate of the more “invisible” types of violence, such as economic violence. The final procedure involves the two Statistical institutes publishing the results of this survey and transmitting them to the Department for Equal Opportunities as per Law No. 53/2022.

Despite the steps forward in GBV reporting, Italy requires a **comprehensive data source able to systematically map the presence of different forms of GBV in the education sector**, which is currently not captured by national statistics. The fact that GBV is an often-hidden phenomenon makes this action even more complex. [Appendix I](#) reports a table with relevant data from the Equal Opportunity Department distinguishing the social variables for both perpetrators and victims of GBV in Italy in 2020 and 2021. The most relevant information is that the proportion of victims and perpetrators in VET is very much alike, however the absolute value of women being the victim of GBV and men being the perpetrator is statistically higher.



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## 4. National Policies, Strategies, and Resources

Some of the most important policies related to the prevention and the action against GBV in the educational sector fit within the legal framework described in chapter 2. A key aspect that educational institutions need to adhere to is the aforementioned 2017 Ministry of Education’s national guidelines: "Educating to respect: for equality between the sexes, the prevention of gender-based violence and all forms of discrimination." Thus, based on this legislation, each school must adopt educational actions to encourage an education based on the respect of other individuals and on the continuous fight against discrimination and GBV, to carry out training activities concerning the topic in question to the school staff.

Within the regional system, an important strategy which has been adopted by secondary educations in collaboration with the local health authority, is the introduction of an itinerary within the school curriculum that would cover topics such as sexual education, affectivity, cyberbullying and gender-based violence prevention. Every region has its specific project and recommendations which then need to be picked up by the individual education institutions in an autonomous manner to promote a safe environment in the education field and develop a new generation equipped with an education based on respect. As an example, in the northern region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia, local health service operators of the city of Udine, joined by experts in psychology and sex education, would deliver school seminars with the objective of promoting higher self-esteem, respect and raise awareness on sexual health and GBV (Comune di Udine, 2022). These regional activities will be further analysed in Chapter 5.

Additional best practices that should be implemented by institutions within the education system at the local level, with support from state actors, to offer a positive environment for future generations have been indicated by different scholars (Paciariello, 2021). For example, it appears essential: to value the use of feminine grammatical gender, or at least distance from a masculine-centred one, to enforce specific disciplinary sanctions within school’s Disciplinary Regulations aimed at students who commit GBV, to conduct risk analysis of discrimination/violence, to involve the responsible educator for cyberbullying, to establish working groups representing the members of the School Community, which would monitor the GBV phenomenon at school and advance proposals on the subject to improve security standards. Furthermore, it is evident that best practices in education are achieved only if they are based on an appropriate analysis of the national framework and cultural identity, broader gender theories and national policies.



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#### 4.1. Existing resources and tools

In Italy, regional and local interventions are key in the operationalisation of strategies developed at the national level. Especially through recent legislation, **provincial governments have been given exclusive competence in promoting social projects**. The system of interventions in our country is based on the **crucial role of municipalities, local health authorities but also private and non-governmental organisations**. In addition to the essential public services permanently available set especially at the national level, a series of “fixed-term” projects are carried out by the third sector (NGOs Association or CSO’s or Church based Initiatives) either independently or in collaboration with public administrations. These fragmented interventions can take advantage of public funding and EU funds or can be found on private funding used by the associations.

Regarding these types of interventions: violence prevention and awareness in schools is the mostly focused on different topics and adopts various methodologies: peer education on gender-based violence prevention and discrimination, life skills, sexual/emotional education (including the prevention of intimate violence, the prevention of homophobic violence, and the prevention of sexual abuse of minors). Furthermore, interventions aim also to develop teachers' ability to recognise and respond to abuse and mistreatment and to work with children and adolescents on sexual and emotional education, gender-based violence, bullying, the recognition of stereotypes, prejudice and violent relationships. In recent years, these interventions are increasingly focusing on media education and identifying the risks associated with the use of the Internet and social media.

There is a multitude of examples of GBV interventions involving the education system. The charitable organisation **“BEAWARENOW”** is committed to raising awareness on GBV also through projects on the ground involving education in schools. The unique and innovative tool that they use for their awareness campaigns is **performing art** which allows individuals to get involved first-hand and share their experiences and ideas during the delivery of the projects. One of their recent campaigns **“Comunicatio Manifesta. Youth against gender-based violence”** involving various schools has been supported by national entity such as the central bank of Italy and private entities such as the Florence-based luxury fashion house Gucci. This innovative project uses arts and new technologies as a conduit to share knowledge and information about GBV and how this phenomenon can be contrasted by young as well as adults (2022).



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Another example of awareness campaign, this time sponsored by the Ministry of Interior through the activity of the **State Police**, is the “**This is not love**” campaign (Questo non è amore, 2022). This campaign which started in **2017** aims at preventing GBV through various events and activities such as training courses for health workers who are the first point of contact for victims of abuse, education courses in schools uprooting a culture of impunity and promoting a culture that condemns violence. The State Police appears to be an important actor in this matter as they are often the national body that can actively protect victims of GBV and need to therefore play an active role not only in raising awareness to the public but also to train their officials in order to be adequately equipped to tackle gender-based violence and related attacks.

Additional valid techniques that have been used in different educational institutions are **parenting support programs**. These are generally aimed at preventing the domestic violence of minors through early interventions at the family level based on early identification of situations of abuse or at-risk scenarios and at promoting attachment and good relationships between children and parents.

#### 4.2. Brief list of additional existing resources and tools

Educational Resources to increase Awareness and address GVB in the VET or Educational Sector in Italy		
Title	Type of Resource	Brief Description
<b>1522 – National Helpline</b> Project funded by the Italian Government	<a href="#">Phone App</a> <a href="#">Website</a>	24/7 available helpline service for victims of GBV and stalking.
<b>Comunicatio Manifesta. Youth against gender-based violence</b>	<a href="#">Website</a>	This specific campaign delivered by the NGO “BEAWARENOW” is based on performing arts to raise awareness to high school students.



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Project funded by Bank of Italy, Gucci and BEAWARENOW		
<b>Donne in Rete contro la violenza – D.i.Re. (Women against violence)</b>  Project funded by D.i.Re and partners	<a href="#">Numbers of Anti-Violence centres</a>	Mapping and numbers of Anti-Violence Centres coordinated by the D.i.Re charity.  It also presents many completed and ongoing projects developed with diverse public and private actors to promote equality, combat GBV and foster a positive reintegration of victims of violence in the work environment.
<b>In Campo Diversi ma Uguali</b> (Different on the field but equal)  Project funded by local charities and the Italian Government	<a href="#">Toolkit</a>	Toolkit developed to foster a positive social change, contrast any type of GBV, raise awareness and uproot gender stereotypes. Developed especially in the field of sport.
<b>E-LOVE (E-Learning Operator Violence Effects)</b>  Project funded by the charity Telefono Rosa, the Italian Government and the State Police	<a href="#">Free online training</a>	Online platform that provides an innovative free training based on a series of modules surrounding GBV (such as legislation, types of violence and support mechanisms) developed especially for operators assisting victims of GBV.
<b>Map of Anti-violence centres</b>  Project funded by the Italian Government	<a href="#">Shelter map</a>	Both the national Equal Opportunity Department and the 1522 national emergency number provide a map of the shelters for women affected by GBV.



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<p><b>Mind The Gap: Step up for gender equality</b></p> <p>Project funded by the EU</p>	<p><a href="#">Activities Guide</a></p>	<p>This project ran free courses for educators, teachers and trainers of all school levels on gender stereotypes and discrimination. It developed a guide to build a gender-inclusive educational environment and teach ways of combating discrimination and violence.</p>
<p><b>PARI lo imPARI a SCUOLA</b> (You learn equality at school)</p> <p>Project funded by the Italian Government and local public administration</p>	<p><a href="#">Booklet</a></p>	<p>Project delivered in a local community to raise awareness on gender equality.</p> <p>This booklet contains several activities suggestions that the educator can deliver to students ranging from primary to secondary schools.</p>
<p><b>Tool4Gender – Tools to support teachers and Educational Institutions in the Prevention of Gender Violence</b></p> <p>Project funded by the EU within the Erasmus+ Scheme</p>	<p><a href="#">Toolkit</a> <a href="#">Phone App</a></p>	<p>Including 7 EU countries, this project developed a toolkit and a phone app that support educators in delivering training and raising awareness on GBV reporting especially in primary and secondary education. It also provides best practices examples of activities that can be run in the classroom.</p>
<p><b>YouPol</b></p> <p>Project funded by the Italian Government</p>	<p><a href="#">Phone App</a></p>	<p>Phone application that allows the user to report crimes, such as domestic violence, to the Police by directly sharing with the police messages, images videos and location of the criminal events in real time.</p>
<p><b>Youth For Love</b></p>	<p><a href="#">Various materials</a></p>	<p>Integrated educational programme to prevent and combat school GBV among teenagers. It provides</p>



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Project co-funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) programme of the EU		comprehensive materials for both families, students and educators.
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## 5. Support services/systems and valuable contacts

Following the guidance of article 22 of the Istanbul Convention, in Italy, specialist services for women victims of violence are provided mainly by **anti-violence centres**. These are centres run by local or regional non-governmental organizations which support victims with short and long-term psychological counselling, trauma care, legal counselling, empowerment and support towards achieving economic independence, advocacy and outreach services, telephone helplines and specific services for children as victims or witnesses. In 2018, there were **302 centres** recognised by the Italian State which meant that there were **0,05 centres per 10 thousand citizens**, while the **Refuge Homes were 272** in total. Both these figures appear to have had a positive increase if compared to previous years. One of the most prominent organisation is D.i.Re (n.d.) which groups 82 women-led organisation who coordinate in one single unique project the direction of 106 centres, 62 Refuge Homes and over 2 thousand volunteers. In one year, they were able to assist over 20 thousand women victims of violence. They have a useful website which maps all the centres coordinated by the organisation by region.

Law No. 119/2013 introduced the principle of state funding for anti-violence centres. This law has also laid the foundation to balance the provision of specialist services for victims and led to the conclusion, in November 2014, of the State-Region agreement on minimum requirements in line with the objectives of the Istanbul Convention. According to this agreement, local public entities and non-governmental organizations may set up anti-violence centres and shelters on the base of the required assistance (GREVIO, 2020).

In 2006 was launched the **1522 helpline**, a public utility number that can assist victims of GBV. Following the entry into force of Law No. 38/2009, the helpline specifically addresses victims of stalking as well. The service is run by the charity **Telefono Rosa** (Pink Telephone) and can be accessed free of charge anywhere in the country, 24 hours a day, every day of the year. The service is available in various languages such as Italian, English, French, Spanish and Arabic, signalling that victims might also be of different backgrounds and not necessarily of Italian mother-tongue. This service provides an initial response to the needs of gender-based



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violence victims, as well as information concerning the available general and specialist support services. All individuals are assisted with the assurance of anonymity also through the use of the mobile app. This helpline service has been essential in providing a serious practical assistance to victims of GBV which were before forgotten or “invisible”.

The 1522 helpline shares a specific technical-operational procedure thanks to the support of the State Police. The local law enforcements can also answer to GBV charges at the national 1522 public utility number for emergency cases. Data on the number of calls, the instances and types of violence reported and referrals are transmitted every three months to the Department of Equal Opportunity and are made public on the department’s website. In line with Article 13 of Law No. 38/2009, the authorities ensure the financial coverage of the helpline. Additionally, the State Police in 2020, following the spread of COVID-19 and the implementation of new governmental decrees which forced individuals to stay at home, decided to extend the service of the YouPol app to domestic violence. Indeed, individuals who face this type of violence are now able to anonymously contact the police in real time by sharing with them their location, videos, images and so on. This support service has been incredibly useful as reported by the police who received several calls in the last two years related to this form of GBV.

Since 1988, the charity *Telefono Rosa* which is present in a variety of regions across Italy such as Sicily and Veneto, has been performing a variety of different activities beside running the 24/7 call centre supporting victims of violence. Indeed, it develops **educational projects raising awareness** on GBV and uprooting gender stereotypes, it conducts a series of **volunteers and health workers trainings**, it runs a series of anti-violence centres and finally operates **legal advice service** and **psychological support** to victims of violence.

According to the Istanbul Convention’s article 25, support for victims of sexual violence also needs to be provided by the countries who ratify this treaty. In Italy, the specialist support unit for victims of sexual and domestic violence is part of the emergency service in many public hospitals which usually get financial support from the Government and private donations. These are mainly located in urban centres such as Rome, Turin and Milan. These support units operate within an effective referral system linking relevant sectors, such as health care, law enforcement, and social and legal counselling, and they comply with the required risk assessment standards, respecting the victim's informed consent and confidentiality. While some smaller hospitals may lack specialist staffing, victims who get in touch with these centres are directed to the local anti-violence centres with which the hospitals cooperate (GREVIO, 2020).





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The aforementioned Law No. 69/2019 is commonly known as Red Code (**Codice Rosso**), as it introduced a priority lane for GBV cases against women. The provision introduces essential news to the Criminal Code, the Criminal Procedure Code and other related requirements. The regulatory intervention was aimed at strengthening the pre-emptive protection system, speeding up the initiation of judicial proceedings and redefining the punitive action. New types of offences were also introduced such as compulsion or induction into marriage to combat the phenomenon of forced marriages and child brides plus the dissemination of sexually explicit images or videos, so-called revenge porn.

## 6. Regional Policies, Strategies and Initiatives

The general Italian framework linked to the fight against gender-based violence appears highly complex due to an established Regional-based approach and its fragmentary nature of sources, references and the very own nature of the proposed activities. From initial surveys, a sort of **dualism** emerges which sees the implementation of activities specifically aimed at combating GBV and of actions with this objective that are part of broader programmes, often included in activities of education for affectivity or peer violence. In the following paragraphs we present three non-exhaustive examples that demonstrate the highly differentiated programmes and approaches which Italians' Regions apply when it comes to combat the phenomenon of GBV.

**Lombardy's** legal framework includes a **four-year Regional Plan** for Equality and Prevention Policies and Contrasting Violence against Women 2020-2023 (resolution n. XI /999 of 25 February 2020 by the Regional Council) which is a system of integrated and synergistic actions aimed at preventing and combating the phenomenon of violence against women in all its forms, not only at home but also in the workplace. This Plan also affirms a culture of equal opportunities based on recognising and protecting women's fundamental rights in every context of economic, social and family life.

Within the context of these actions, an agreement scheme was defined between the Lombardy Region and the Lombardy Regional School Office for the implementation of the line of action "At school against violence against women" for the promotion of equal opportunities and the prevention and fight against the phenomenon of male violence against women (Regional Law No. 11/2012), which led to the implementation of some training interventions for teachers and school managers of the professional education system. However, for the development of this specific plan and relative training, **the professional training institutions**



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**were not involved.** Lombardy’s Regional Education Office published a tender related to the identification of pilot schools to implement the project activities.

In the implementation phase of some of the relative projects, VET professional centres were also involved as users of the training activity. Additional activities specifically oriented and designed also to involve the VET system can be identified in training actions generated by the territorial networks foreseen by the legislation. These networks, while offering both direct and online services to support and prevent the phenomenon of GBV. The identified actions pursue a prevention objective both through training teachers and by proposing workshops for students (Regione Lombardia, 2021).

One of the regional projects that stands out for being set in the VET environment is the "**Different Perspectives**" project. This is a workshop on the fight against GBV for high schools conceived by Bergamo’s Inter-institutional Anti-Violence Network and Dalmine Territorial Areas and also supported by the Office of the Equality Councilor of the Province of Bergamo. It involved four identified vocational schools (ABF, ACOF) where a series of activities raised awareness on the main gender stereotypes which perpetuates gender norms, behaviours and consequently discrimination. This project has been renewed in 2022 also for the 2023/2024 academic year. An ulterior example of a project developed and planned within the VET system thanks to European funding is the Youth for Love project.

**The Piedmont Region** has approved a **three-year plan** for 2022-2024 to combat GBV, in line with the Governmental strategy. Specific actions include the promotion of collaborations between public and private entities such as municipalities, anti-violence centres, employment agencies, training institutions, social enterprises, microcredit agencies and Third Sector, to support the personal autonomy and social reintegration of women leaving the education pathways. Furthermore, the strengthening of collaboration among entities, the drafting of operational protocols between social-health services, schools, judicial authorities and service providers for minors who are victims of violence, and awareness raising activities to build positive male identity models and free emotional relationships are all activities that have been promoted within the regional framework with a special link to VET.

A specific example of activity promoted by Piedmont based on its legal regional framework (Regional Law 4/2016) there is “**Erica**” an app that promotes security among local women. It allows users to share information such as geolocation in case you do not reach your destination at a pre-established time and to



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request help in case of danger. Additionally, this app collects and makes readily available all information regarding anti-violence centres in this region. This regional tool appears as a similar concept to the YouPol and 1522 national helpline with a more limited territorial remit.

When it comes to specific activities to prevent and combat GBV in VET, the **Move UP project** coordinated by the various regional departments in collaboration with the Regional School Office and the Police Forces focused on the promotion of respect of diversities, on raising awareness regarding types of GBV but also on how new technologies can be a weapon to both inflict and prevent gender related violence. Furthermore, the charitable organisation “EMMA Onlus” has been developing a series of activities in educational institutions, such as secondary schools of 1st and 2nd level, aimed at providing information and prevent this widespread phenomenon.

In essence, by looking at the two examples offered, it appears that there is **no structural awareness-raising action among VET system students on specific issues related to GBV** and that the planned initiatives are often correlated to an increase in educational competence, observation and need to reselect the critical problems of teachers and trainers. Prevention activities, such as the **campaigns offered in VET system appear insufficient or lacking a sustainable structure** that must be reformed rather than become further fragmented. **An objective evaluation of the projects (ongoing and completed) is required to reform the system and establish which project can be selected as excellence and thus replicated in other environments.** The VET environment and its complexities need to be adequately mapped so more coordinated events can be rolled out with a national responsibility that can assist also with its sustainability.

In **Friuli-Venezia-Giulia** the legal framework goes back to Regional Law No. 17/2000, which recognises the importance of strengthening a network of anti-violence centres and the promotions of a series of activities and programmes which fight against the GBV phenomenon considered a violation of human life and dignity and thus violating the Italian Constitution. Therefore, since the year 2000 this region has been funding a variety of projects especially aimed at promoting a culture of respect and non-violence that would lead to new generations equipped with the rights tools to fight violence but especially a common solid belief that equality is a fundamental pillar of our society if we want to live in peace and harmony.

Some specific examples of projects related to the education sector are the following. **#MaipiùBarbablù** is a regional project developed by a local NGO “Futura Onlus” which aim is to prevent, rather than fight, GBV,



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and thus remove gender stereotypes which are harmful for the younger generations and can lead to violent gender related attacks. It uses a simple but compelling book which allows students to get to know each other and each other's differences while confronting personal ideologies and challenging existing beliefs. This tool has been introduced also in the wider “**RispettAMI**” **educational project**. This project since it began in 2017 led to the involvement of over **three thousand students** and **70 educators** which received useful intersectional training on an array of topics from different actors such as judges, police enforcement, lawyers and victims of GBV. It led to an active involvement and training of both students and teachers, the latter were able to follow workshops led by psychologists and psychotherapists that allowed them to enhance their scientific knowledge at the base of this phenomenon to then promote a positive culture within the classroom environment.

An additional activity which included VET actors was spearheaded by the municipality of Pordenone and called “**Né schiave, né oggetti: solo donne**” (Nor slaves, nor objects: just women) (2019). This project was developed by the cultural association Cinemazero which organized an artistic contest for secondary schools with an overarching theme of gender discrimination. Every participating class would present a graphic art (painting, advertisement, comic...) that through students' creativity would promote a culture of change and of respect of women. The final goal was thus not simply to educate younger generation through art and creativity but to involve those same individuals which in the future could be potential victims or perpetrators of violent actions.

Finally, **FreeToChose** and **Tool4Gender** are two EU funded projects which were developed by the Friuli-Venezia-Giulia Institute of socio-economic research. The first had as an objective the analysis and recognition of gender stereotypes and the development of innovative intervention mechanisms. The second shifted its target to the educators. Interestingly, Tool4Gender looks directly at those individuals, the teachers, who should promote a deeper knowledge of the gender-based violence phenomenon and consequently actively promote an educational shift which deconstructs the gender stereotypes which individuals are still anchored to in modern times. They thus developed a toolkit filled with activities and information for educators which are potentially unequipped to introduce the topic of GBV in education institutions.

This highlights how not only it is important to focus on **preventing GBV through education of new generations**, but it is just as important to **educate and provide the tools to educators** who monitor and foster a positive environment at school and to those operators who efficiently aid GBV victims. Therefore, it



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is evident that while there are several tools, services and initiatives that have been developed at a national level but also at the European level through the funding of projects, these **should be better coordinated in the regional realities** rather than aim at generating new tools which then go unused or quickly dismissed following the termination of European Union funding. It is essential that **sustainable practices are established based on long-term projects monitoring** and that these initiatives are then boldly rolled-out at the international, national and regional level if we want to avoid the fragmentation of local activities which have not statistically brought to a decrease in GBV victims or deaths. This is not to say that regional and country-wide specific characteristics should not be taken into consideration, on the contrary, it is an invitation to avoid wasting public funds by constantly replicating similar pilot projects in the same environment but to develop culturally informed and sustainable projects that can really help to tackle the phenomenon of GBV nationally and internationally.



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## 7. Examples of Best Practices

### 7.1. Noi Siamo Pari

NOI SIAMO PARI (“WE ARE EQUAL”)	
<b>Country:</b>	ITALY
<b>Short Description (exact nature of the problem it addressed):</b> (500-1000 words)	<p>In 2015, the Ministry of Education and Merit has developed the Noi Siamo Pari (“We Are Equal”) platform with the objective of assisting teachers, educators, school staff and families and the work they constantly do to promote equal opportunities and train students on the intersectional phenomenon of discrimination. This platform is a key element of the national three-year national educational programmes of any education institution which must <b>promote</b> education and <b>prevent</b> gender-based violence and discriminations of any kind, and it shares essential information under three overarching chapters.</p> <p>1) It presents the National Observatory, an additional arena where actors such as charities, universities, VET and local municipalities, who are directly involved in the promotion of an education which aim is to teach respect to students. The Observatory is a place where these institutions can meet, share their ideas, best practices, tools and foster useful conversations that can lead to the definition of common goals and the cooperation using similar tools and initiatives. Under this chapter, are shared the main objectives established by the national plan on fostering a culture of respect and additional information linked to the actions undertaken by the Ministry of Education and Merit.</p> <p>2) It briefly outlines (inter)national recurring holidays such as International Women Day, International Day Against Homophobia and the National STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) month. It promotes national awareness campaigns such as the “Rispetta le differenze” (“Respect differences”) launched in 2017 to stimulate the</p>



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discussion on gender stereotypes, violence and educational access within the national legal framework.

3) Its main function is to gather contributions from school projects, teaching materials and proposals for new training courses, tools that can assist in raising awareness, all intended to promote activities to combat stereotypes and discrimination in an intersectional manner. This section of the platform is clearly divided into six themes: bullying, homophobia, racism and religious discrimination, gender-based violence, environmental concerns and STEM Month. For each of these overarching themes, it outlines the related national and international legislation with details regarding how the government is trying to tackle the issue. Beside the legal framework, it presents a non-exhaustive list of projects which have been developed and delivered by schools of all levels and charitable organisations. Indeed, any educational actor, from either general education or VET institutions can voluntarily upload and share on this online platform the programmes they have run in educational institutions outlining the project and how it addressed the phenomena of GBV, homophobia, racism and other types of discriminations.

Each single project describes what type of violence and discrimination they were trying to explore, the duration of the project and the cohorts involved, the institution where it took place, the aims and objectives of the activities, the materials, the costs and funding and the experts involved in the process. Only in few cases, the sustainability and the progress of the project throughout its years have been analysed and reported.

There is no readily available data or reports in relation to the impact which this website has had on the lives of young students which were actively involved in these projects, nevertheless, the fact that over 100 projects linked to combating GBV spanning over 5 years (2012 – 2021) are reported on the website with many more linked to other phenomena related to discrimination, showcases the importance of this national archive of materials for the development of future projects.



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<p><b>Trends and Potential Benefits of this Good Practice</b></p> <p>(500 words max)</p>	<p>The educational environment and its students can face the critical issue of GBV and other discrimination and violent behaviours by building an inclusive community that recognizes the diversity of everyone. This can thus become the first formative community for future generations and an important place for the personal growth and development of each person's identity. Schools, beside everyone's home, is the first place where students learn and develop. For this reason, they should foster the understanding, acceptance and development of social and personal identity of children and young adults, which also involves discovering the relationship with the opposite sex and of one's sexual orientation and be aware that we are all different and we need to respect and accept each other's differences. Introducing the topic of gender-based violence in the classroom means, first of all, raising awareness among boys and girls of the need for change in social and cultural behaviour between women and men.</p> <p>Additional benefits of this Good Practice are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Database and archive</b> of national, regional and local practices according to different phenomenon such as GBV, homophobia and racism. If properly organised, this could allow, at a glance, to understand the enormous effort put in by the educational system to raise awareness on these themes, which geographical areas are less targeted, which institutions are more virtuous and which types are lagging behind in fostering a positive environment that can educate the new generations. Which tools are found most useful by educators and students and promote these in other educational institutions in other parts of the country.</li><li>● <b>Presents up-to-date national campaigns</b>, fundraisers and activities to which whole classes, school personnel and families can get involved in.</li><li>● <b>Presents national legislation</b> regarding GBV and how are the international, national and regional institutions taking responsibility and steps forward to promote equal opportunities and to fight gender stereotypes and violence.</li></ul>
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**How this Good Practice could be used/ transferred**  
(500 words max)

In order to eliminate prejudices, customs, traditions and any other negative practices based on the idea of women's inferiority or stereotyped models, the **Hidden Curriculum** was proposed. This is a set of non-formal educational contents not found in the official curriculum, i.e. behaviours and attitudes that are consciously and unconsciously conveyed to male and female students, including from the language used. The Hidden Curriculum makes it possible to understand what knowledge and skills teachers should acquire to educate students against GBV. The Hidden Curriculum is not a set of pre-created activities but a long-life learning tool fed by the experiences formalised by the educational institutes who participate in the initiatives “Projects against Gender Discrimination”. The Noi Siamo Pari platform should be able to establish which of the numerous projects reported are best practices and which tools have worked best so that these can then be implemented within the Hidden Curriculum system or within the regular educational plan of any school.

Furthermore, this good practice is useful as it could become a national wide tool/database that can then be employed and applied by different local institutions such as regions, municipalities and private VET institutions according to what is deemed the better fit for their educational environment based on cultural, regional and traditional aspects. It would then become not only a great tool to develop awareness raising campaigns, workshops, seminars and so on, but it could also become a baseline to analyse if institutions are in line with national legislation and applying an appropriate curriculum to their students.

Finally, **intersectionality** matters. It is evident that being a woman is not the only reason why an individual can be the victim of abuse. Age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, religious beliefs, appearances are all factors that come into play when it comes to violence and discrimination. In our current multicultural world, it is clear that we cannot simply focus on GBV but a wider view that includes all diversities is essential if we want to establish a culture of deep respect and acceptance for “the other”. Noi Siamo Pari is already establishing the importance of mapping projects that combat GBV and a variety



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	<p>of other discrimination forms and other negative violent behaviours such as bullying. In the future it will be necessary to keep in mind the ability of good practices to be useful in an intersectional manner.</p>
<b>Criteria it addresses</b>	<p>It involves multiple stakeholders, both national and regional institutions, non-governmental organisations and educational institutes.</p> <p>It is financially sustainable and it does not require substantial funds but it needs minimum effort to maintain. It needs to be constantly monitored and updated with newly devised projects and tools and their related ratings.</p> <p>It is both transferable and its initiatives are scalable to larger cohorts.</p>
<b>Category of good practice</b>	<p>Online tool to raise awareness</p>
<b>Applicability status (local, regional, national, international) and justification</b>	<p>The applicability status is <b>national</b> considering the platform has been made available by the Ministry of Education within the scope of the three-year national educational programmes and the wider national legislation on the promotion of equality, equal opportunity and on the fight against GBV.</p> <p>Once we look at each project per se, the status had an impact both at the <b>local and regional levels</b>.</p>
<b>Website link:</b>	<p><a href="http://www.noisiamopari.it/">http://www.noisiamopari.it/</a></p>
<b>More Info (e.g., staff or stakeholders involved, evaluation results)</b>	<p>Several stakeholders were involved in this initiative, starting from Educational Institutions and VET workers. The platform also addressed students, families, professionals and all people interested and involved in GBV in the educational sector.</p>



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Additional stakeholder supporting this platform are the Observatory for the security against discriminatory acts (OSCAD).

## 7.2. Mind The Gap

### Mind The Gap: Step up for gender equality

<b>Countries:</b>	ITALY, PORTUGAL and SPAIN
<b>Short Description (exact nature of the problem it addressed):</b> (500-1000 words)	<p>The “Mind The Gap: Step up for gender equality” is a project co-funded by the European Union which sees as participants three Southern European countries, Italy, Portugal and Spain spanning two years from January 2021 to December 2022. These countries were heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic which exacerbated gender equality issues such as economic opportunities, pay gap and GBV. It has been thus suggested by both the European Institute of Gender Equality (EIGE) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) that schools are ideal spaces where gender stereotypes and violent behaviours can be broken down at an early stage. With this framework in mind, these countries developed a project which aim is to contribute tackling gender stereotypes in the education system and VET through the training of school professionals and educators but also students and family members on how gender roles and stereotypes can have an important (negative) impact on how the new generations will grow and develop. Especially if we consider that girls are overrepresented in professions valued and paid less while underrepresented in full-time employment, a radical shift in perspective and positive gender approaches by teachers are needed.</p> <p>The <b>project main objectives</b> are to tackle gender stereotypes in education while reducing the influence of gender normative expectations in education, work and life.</p>



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	<p>This surges especially through the development of an increased awareness and knowledge of gender stereotyping and GBV to school professionals but also family members who might be in close contact with students.</p> <p>The <b>main activities</b> which were conducted were <b>70 training sessions</b> aimed at educational staff and teachers or other professionals within the sector (guardians etc.) and students of other upper educational levels; <b>26 exchange meetings</b> attended by partners, teachers, parents and children which led to the development of new ideas and materials and the collaboration on best practices. Additional activities were <b>6 awareness raising events</b> which helped in promoting the project across the three countries and encourage a wider participation to the international events and a <b>guide</b> on “How to avoid gender bias in teaching”. This guide is a complementary handbook following up on the previously related project of Gender ABC which developed 18 useful educational modules, tools for education professional to raise awareness on gender equality and GBV.</p> <p>The direct beneficiaries of this project were <b>420</b> education professionals, <b>1200</b> University students and other high educational courses, <b>375</b> educators from non-formal systems (guardians, summer-camps’ trainers, etc.) and <b>270</b> children and parents. This does not includes all of the indirect beneficiaries and the potential stakeholders that can be involved in the future and receive a positive impact by the usage of this handbook and training modules.</p>
<p><b>Trends and Potential Benefits of this Good Practice</b> (500 words max)</p>	<p>It appears obvious that this practice fits within the framework of multilateral projects that have been recently funded by the European Union in order to contain the expenses but especially to instil to member state countries the idea that phenomena, although assuming specialised characteristics depending on which country they develop, can be tackled by similar programmes and best practices if these are shared by the actors implementing them. The potential benefits are the following:</p>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Creating a handbook addressed to education professionals</b> (but also adults involved in non-formal systems and parents of children) which can equip them with the sufficient tools to promote gender equality and respect, prevent GBV and enhance the capability of students to understand each other and build an inclusive educational environment where everyone can develop in a positive manner.</li> <li>● <b>Suggest resources and activities</b> that can be implemented in classrooms according to students’ educational level. These can vary from video lectures, personal experiences, theoretical frameworks, inclusive language explanations and so on.</li> <li>● <b>Provide an extensive bibliography</b> that can become the lead to a drastic positive change in new generations’ behaviours, attitudes and perceptions.</li> <li>● Allow different stakeholders to be involved in the process of development through workshops, meetings, trainings and seminars that can provide different platforms to teachers, adults and children alike to share ideas, what works and what does not.</li> </ul>
<p><b>How this Good Practice could be used/ transferred</b> (500 words max)</p>	<p>The way this project has been conceptualised is already transferrable as it impacted over 2 thousand individuals across 3 different EU member countries. This number does not consider the wide number of potential indirect beneficiaries which could receive a positive influence from the use of these tools within their educational context. For this reason, this project has the potential to be scaled up to other countries to cut down on times and costs but to concentrate directly on the subjects to who deliver the trainings and offered modules and which local and regional specificities might need to be added and considered in order to make it as comprehensive and inclusive as possible.</p> <p>As it being a mainly online source, if we do not consider the trainings and meetings in order to develop the handbook and its necessary local specificities, this can be easily transferred to educational contexts of any country in Europe, any age groups, any educational systems (both generalised and VET system) and any educational context. The scaling-up would require a country specific analysis of what are the cultural requirements but also which are the particular needs of VET or other technical courses. For example,</p>



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	<p>students of a mainly female attended course might require different activities compared to a mainly male attended one.</p> <p>This handbook is not only transferrable in educational contexts, but it could be adapted to engage individuals in working environments that might be usually male-oriented to raise awareness, promote a culture of respect and defend the freedom of choice of women and minorities.</p> <p>This project could take a further step and analyse different types of discrimination, such as racism and homophobia, and understand if the activities and initiatives of this handbook could be easily transferred and applied in schools to avoid these sorts of phenomena.</p>
<p><b>Core criteria it addresses</b></p>	<p>The fact that multiple and diverse EU member states were involved in this project indicates that this tool has found fertile grounds to develop and that it could easily implemented and promoted in other similar countries in the European Union.</p> <p>Although the funds required by this project were mainly coming from the European Union (80% of over 500 thousand euros), it is clear that a sustainable collaboration is required in order for the maintenance of the project life and that in the long run the financial requirements would diminish as the main tools have been already established and the main activities would be the monitoring and innovation of the existing materials.</p> <p>An extensive bibliography is provided, allowing the project to have strong theoretical basis and resources to go back to in order to further expand resources.</p>
<p><b>Category of good practice</b></p>	<p>Training the trainer, guide on gender-bias in teaching</p>



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<p><b>Applicability status (local, regional, national, international) and justification</b></p>	<p>This project has been developed across 3 different countries (Italy, Portugal and Spain) as it appears that gender stereotypes and GBV is predominant in these Mediterranean countries. Common practices in the education and VET environment are still fostering an unequal environment, enforcing gender gap and negative behaviours. For this reason, it presents an <b>international status</b> replicable also in other countries.</p>
<p><b>Website link:</b></p>	<p><a href="https://aidos.it/en/project/mind-the-gap-step-up-for-gender-equality/">https://aidos.it/en/project/mind-the-gap-step-up-for-gender-equality/</a></p>
<p><b>More Info (e.g., staff or stakeholders involved, evaluation results)</b></p>	<p>This project has recently completed so reporting and monitoring of effects would indicate the number of additional professionals, children and adults that have been positively impacted by this resource.</p> <p>The fact that the partners of this projects also completed the previous successful Gender ABC project showcase the importance of reinforcing excellence and that to maintain a durable, constant and sustainable action it is necessary that a supranational organisation can provide parts of the necessary funds but has also the responsibility to recognise the excellence, promote it and scale it up in other educational contexts such as VET institutions.</p>

### 7.3. RispettAMI!

<p><b>RispettAMI! (Respect ME!)</b></p>	
<p><b>Country:</b></p>	<p>ITALY</p>
<p><b>Short Description (exact nature of problem it addressed):</b></p>	<p>This project was born in an educational institution in Udine following the violent death of a former female student which shocked the local community. This movement generated in September 2017 when the teaching body met to kick-off the academic year and the project has since reached the 5<sup>th</sup> edition with the 2022/2023</p>



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## RispettAMI! (Respect ME!)

(500-1000 words)

academic year. Spurred by this wave of emotions, the project immediately involved an interdisciplinary group of educators, joint by experts in the field of gender studies, who developed a soft-skills training course available to classes and groups of classes. It consists of an educational gender module that has now been picked up and taught in various schools within the Friuli-Venezia-Giulia region.

Its main objectives include:

- **Raising awareness** among students on the importance of an education based on respect of others and of each other's differences, especially when it comes to language used and daily behaviours that can prevent the proliferation of GBV.
- **Promote a shift in socio-cultural behaviours**, starting from the acknowledgement of ones' emotions in order to combat prejudice, customs, traditions, language expressions, norms or any other practice based on gender stereotyping.
- **Promote the school as a reference centre** for all the regional area in relation to the education of gender practices.
- **Train the education professionals**. Offering a diverse point of view to allow them to recognise risk situations and so they are able to give value communication models linked to respect, listening each other.
- **Offer strategies to allow students to be develop a stronger emotional intelligence**. Become more self-aware of their emotions, understand them and be able to label them appropriately.

The innovative aspect of this project is that it involves a wide range of activities that allow educators and teachers to adapt the initiatives run in their classrooms according to their perception of which option will be more suited for their students. In addition, the activities also became an integral part of the curricula of the pilot school, allowing students to have these activities recognised as course credits and be an additional academic experience added to their final-year portfolio.





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## RispettAMI! (Respect ME!)

**Examples of activities** that were run both in person and online are:

- Readings on different areas related to GBV (gender stereotypes, prevention, etc.)
- Theatrical plays
- Role games
- Videos and movies
- Seminars led by experts on national and international legislation safeguarding women’s rights (Istanbul Convention, national laws on stalking, revenge porn etc.)
- Lectures with linguists and sociologists on the topic of sexism within the Italian language
- Testimonials from volunteers and workers of anti-violence centres
- Meetings with local law enforcement agents
- Concerts, musical events
- Artistic contests (photography, poetry, music related, audio-video related)

Beside the critical work performed by the teachers involved, the active participation of students is a primary element for the success of this project. All students can take part in different ways, as part as a class but also as individuals if they have specific abilities that they want to share with their school. For example, since the first year of the project, a “reading marathon” was organised at the end of every year where students, parents, teachers and any other individuals involved in the projects could read, one-by-one, a one-minute text, poem or extract related to the established theme (GBV, important women figures, equality and so on).

This project has seen the steady increase in collaboration with public and private institutions across the region thanks to the promotion of the local municipality. In 2020, this project has also been added to the Library&School (Biblioteca&Scuola) programme which is recommended to all secondary educational institution within the local municipality.



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### RispettAMI! (Respect ME!)

The available data shows a constantly increasing number of students and classes involved both from within the lead school and from other educational institutions. Between 2017 and 2020, **over 3 thousand students** were actively involved in this academic project with over **70 teachers** receiving training on the relative subjects. This was subject to a halt during the 2020/2021 year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, nevertheless many activities were still performed online thanks to the hard-work of both teachers and students.

### Trends and Potential Benefits from this Good Practice

(500 words max)

Since 2017 an increasing trend of participants have been involved within this project, not only within the educational contexts but also from other public and private entities. This showcases a widespread involvement and interest in the modern and relevant topic of gender-based violence, stereotyping and discrimination, that need to be deeply studied, analysed and monitored in order to implement the best action to prevent further deaths and victims.

Additional potential benefits that this best practice offers are:

- **Training to educational professionals** and any other individuals involved with minors
- **Flexibility in types of activities** that can be adapted according to age and type of school.
- **Cooperation between institutions** of the area with the inclusion of schools that might not have the same financial capability and resources to establish a new curriculum.
- **Cooperation between institutions and public and private organisations** which can promptly share their experience and knowledge to take advantage of each other's strength and expertise.



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### RispettAMI! (Respect ME!)

- **Active inclusion in students in the development process of the activities.** Student must be involved in the decision-making process of which activity will suit them best.
- **Develop an enhanced emotional intelligence** in the student cohorts through specific strategies and methodologies which can help young adults to understand their emotions and feelings and how to cope with them.

**How this Good Practice could be used/ transferred**  
(500 words max)

The participation of different schools to this project in the following years after its pilot shows that it has the capacity of being **transferable to a wider educational context**. It is essential to understand the differences between general educational institutions and VET schools and how the project can be implemented thanks to the promotion of differentiated pathways according to the needs and demographic of each class. It could be highly beneficial because it has a high flexible structure that can adapt to a variety of contexts.

With a further organisation of the aforementioned activities in modules, it could provide a flexible structure which could tackle additional forms of violence and raise awareness on phenomena such as racism and homophobia.

**Collaboration** between institutions of different communities/countries which are hit by emotions of discontent and anger following violent deaths or killing of young women or girls could be an important way forward to pass the message that violence should never be a choice. The **increasing sense of belonging and community**, joint to the feeling of wanting to do more and “change the world” that would follow these dramatic events is a fertile ground and should be leveraged to promote versatile projects such as “RispettAMI!” in different countries that face GBV.



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<b>RispettAMI! (Respect ME!)</b>	
<b>Core criteria it addresses</b>	<p>The main criteria assessed were the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Wide range of activities</b> which allows flexibility when it comes to the implementation of them in the diverse VET environments.</li><li>● <b>Diverse forms of GBV</b> and other related matters that could be confronted during the activities.</li><li>● <b>Wide variety of stakeholders involved</b> such as professionals, adults and children.</li><li>● <b>Active role of students</b> in devising the initiatives.</li><li>● <b>Available training for teacher</b> and educational professionals.</li><li>● Evidence of <b>scalability</b> and <b>transferability</b> of the projects and activity.</li><li>● <b>Sustainability</b> of the activity which do not require substantial funds.</li><li>● <b>Bibliography</b> present with resources and activities which can be implemented and adapted to different contexts and schools.</li></ul>
<b>Category of good practice</b>	<p>Series of education of activities (both presential and online) to raise awareness on gender stereotypes and gender-based violence.</p>
<b>Applicability status (local, regional, national, international) and justification</b>	<p>This project was promoted by a school in 2017 in the city of Udine in the northern-east Friuli-Venezia-Giulia region. The motive underlying this project was the death of a former student which sparked rage within both the student and teaching community of the pilot school. For this reason, it presents <b>a local status</b> which has been praised and promoted by the region and in the following years, this initiative has then been picked up by different other schools within the region.</p>
<b>Website link:</b>	<p><a href="https://maipiubarbablu.it/rispettami-istituto-a-zanon/">https://maipiubarbablu.it/rispettami-istituto-a-zanon/</a></p>



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### RispettAMI! (Respect ME!)

#### More Info (e.g., staff or stakeholders involved, evaluation results)

Numerous are the stakeholders involved in this project. Not only teachers and the active involvement of students who are both direct beneficiaries and actors in this project, but also local charities, the local municipality, anti-violence centres, libraries, choirs, theatres and theatrical groups, and various legal experts such as judges, lawyers and magistrates.

The value of this project has been nationally recognised as it has received a medal from the Presidency of the Italian Republic.



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## 8. Conclusions and Limitations

The **structure of VET in Italy is evidently complex and fragmented**, although it has recently been realigned with both the European EQF system and the UNESCO’s ISCED. The school system appears well structured, but VET in Italy includes a **significant private or semi-public component**, which partly escapes the measures envisaged to support the prevention of GBV listed in this document. Many institutional and private actors are indeed involved in managing the VET training offer and for this reason have a wide autonomy in deciding which activities should be run and which projects are not essential and thus included as an integral part of the curriculum. The **regional educational spaces should also be further mapped and understood** through their sector specificity, cultural aspects and local traditions. These could lead to long-term projects that have a **bottom-up information provision joint to a top-down structural intervention** with the coordination of all service providers, from State and local police to anti-violence centres’ workers.

An important limitation observed is the **lack of comprehensive and well-structured data** related to the phenomenon of GBV in the VET sphere. The only major disaggregated data is the one presented by the Presidency of the Italian Council which structures the information according to categories such as age group, gender and employment status (see [Appendix I](#)). Recently, new regulatory provisions have made it possible to start a systematic data collection which should allow for future estimates on the various forms of GBV, including gender-based violence in the VET environment to further understand the magnitude of GBV in this specific educational context.

Another key element to be considered is the **reliability of national statistics and charitable organisations** as they often present data which is of **difficult interpretation given that GBV remains a silent phenomenon** as data is reliant on the fact that victims denounce or share their personal experiences which, as we have seen, is not always the case. Women and vulnerable individuals need to be put in the conditions to feel safe and to report any type of crime and violation that they might suffer. Additionally, the information is contextualised and lacks essential details related to the phenomenon of migration and, above all, information pertaining to the prevention and the level of awareness and knowledge of the problem. The most accurate statistic on the phenomenon is represented by the re-elaboration of data related to the complaints received by the security services (*police* and *carabinieri*) and the number 1522.



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An **improvement in legislation** is also stressed in the *Needs Assessment Report*, in which surfaced a **lack of generalised knowledge** of the most important tools of GBV prevention and therefore the presence of an important gap which needs to be filled by institutions, both legal and educational. Furthermore, the involvement of VET staff and students appear necessary in order to really understand their needs and how the existing mechanisms can be tailored in order to be suitable to their particular educational environment which often involves a quick transition to the workplace.

In the absence of comprehensive and reliable official data, the interventions proposed within the national territory are mainly linked to local initiatives and based on the availability of financial resources. This however **raises questions on the effectiveness and long-term sustainability of this fragmented and non-coordinated way of delivering support** to GBV victims **and prevention awareness campaigns** to other stakeholders, often cofounded by the European Union. Despite fragmentation making it possible to **develop projects in a very contextualised manner**, these projects are repeatedly duplicated and then “die-out” because of the lack of local, national and international funding, preventing the most effective initiatives to continue. For this reason, a better monitoring of the impact that these projects have on the targeted population is essential with an additional consideration on which is the responsible body (international, national or local) that must take charge of this analysis and then promote and disseminate the **few best practices** among all national ones.

In conclusion, GBV appears to be a relevant phenomenon which is still widespread in all of the European Union. This needs to be promptly **addressed in a coordinated manner** especially **in educational contexts which are often forgotten such as the VET system**. Students of VET are important agents of change as they will be entering the job market much faster than their peers coming from general education systems. It is thus believed that the setting up of support offices for individuals that have been affected by GBV and their families would be a useful way of providing a safe space for them to share their personal experiences, to dialogue among peers and to increase the trust in educators so that they could potentially become a credible reference figure. These support offices could leverage and take advantage of existing tools and guidelines and promote signposting activity to become a financially sustainable service which can provide also the missing data on the impact of gender-based violence in the VET sector.



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## Annex 1

Table 21 - Social variables of the **perpetrator**. Sex, age group, marital status, employment status, educational qualifications, citizenship. (*Absolute values*)

	2020				2021			
	1°	2°	3°	4°	1°	2°	3°	4°
<b>Gender</b>								
Male	1.808	4.808	3.688	3.403	3.699	3.694	3.316	3.557
Female	135	366	258	231	295	263	209	151
Unknown	1	16	136	87	87	38	22	26
NA.	159	416	43	153	229	248	205	233
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.103</b>	<b>5.606</b>	<b>4.125</b>	<b>3.874</b>	<b>4.310</b>	<b>4.243</b>	<b>3.752</b>	<b>3.967</b>
<b>Age group</b>								
up to 17 years old	13	32	9	25	16	26	20	30
18-24	82	206	60	108	113	135	121	173
25-34	277	678	104	205	174	252	317	414
35-44	435	1.168	175	314	217	317	445	583
45-54	448	1.149	153	306	278	377	433	669
55-64	228	702	149	196	188	285	315	347

Table 12 - Social variables of the **victims**. Sex, age group, marital status, employment status, educational qualifications, citizenship (*Absolute values*)

	2020				2021			
	1°	2°	3°	4°	1°	2°	3°	4°
	2.025	5.406	3.979	3.718	4.085	4.100	3.650	3.885
	74	195	146	156	223	138	99	80
	4	5	0	0	2	5	3	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.103</b>	<b>5.606</b>	<b>4.125</b>	<b>3.874</b>	<b>4.310</b>	<b>4.243</b>	<b>3.752</b>	<b>3.967</b>
	20	70	106	72	102	114	91	115
	188	432	245	256	296	351	319	380
	388	959	409	413	437	507	559	586
	531	1.215	449	644	486	640	596	756
	360	1.068	465	520	498	564	563	704
	189	590	303	293	283	380	316	343





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65 and over	223	559	168	258	234	300	289	315	161	532	300	293	358	356	317	336
NA.	10	41	106	114	19	8	206	433	266	740	1.848	1.383	1.850	1.331	991	747
									<b>2.103</b>	<b>5.606</b>	<b>4.125</b>	<b>3.874</b>	<b>4.310</b>	<b>4.243</b>	<b>3.752</b>	<b>3.967</b>
<b>Employment status</b>																
Housewife	13	40	12	20	14	12	9	6	197	544	218	438	324	329	324	335
Employed person	1.064	2.512	1.361	1.597	1.374	1.501	1.395	1.598	790	1.862	1.094	1.221	1.109	1.179	1.174	1.354
Unemployed, seeking a job	354	965	358	368	365	336	316	417	459	1.288	779	654	725	546	471	546
Retired	222	606	256	319	312	347	308	318	204	595	383	449	476	443	362	382
Work illegally	86	198	69	56	53	66	79	71	97	177	75	66	74	86	64	104
Student	45	118	41	96	47	64	52	100	155	356	235	255	275	309	278	342
Withdrawn or unable to work	16	58	36	41	21	32	32	32								
unoccupied	.	.	.		12	63	72	67					50	140	128	114
NA.	128	635	1.949	1.218	1.865	1.552	1.263	1.099	46	366	1.301	652	1.058	974	765	581
No response									155	418	40	139	219	237	186	209
									<b>2.103</b>	<b>5.606</b>	<b>4.125</b>	<b>3.874</b>	<b>4.310</b>	<b>4.243</b>	<b>3.752</b>	<b>3.967</b>
<b>Educational qualifications</b>																
University degree	139	298	41	81	61	73	109	204	261	551	84	157	118	168	189	343



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Diploma of upper secondary education and Certification of higher technical specialization	315	568	36	130	52	60	144	527	356	795	95	210	109	147	358	591
Lower secondary school certificate	213	389	25	71	13	25	48	170	174	307	30	92	34	51	71	176
A primary school certificate, no educational degree	41	53	5	29	6	2	4	36	25	50	5	20	5	2	8	40
No response									19	13	105	35	14	23	238	546
NA.									1.268	3.890	3.806	3.360	4.030	3.852	2.888	2.271
<b>Citizenship</b>																
Italian	1.692	4.452	1.957	2.354	2.312	2.679	2.601	3.037	1.758	4.694	3.695	3.400	3.762	3.639	3.200	3.349
Not Italian	185	436	212	241	207	248	297	318	218	588	391	345	359	397	385	436
NA									127	324	39	129	189	207	167	182
									<b>2.103</b>	<b>5.606</b>	<b>4.125</b>	<b>3.874</b>	<b>4.310</b>	<b>4.243</b>	<b>3.752</b>	<b>3.967</b>

Source: Equal Opportunity Department - Presidency of Italian Council



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## Annex 4 - National report and best practices of Luxembourg

<b>Project</b>	<b>END GBV in VET – “Full service to increase capacity and awareness for disrupting gender-based violence in the VET sphere”</b> Project 101049592 — CERV-2021-DAPHNE
<b>Deliverable</b>	D2.4 Desk Research and collection of best practices to END GBV in educational settings
<b>Relevant Work package:</b>	WP2 (T2.2)
<b>Dissemination level</b>	SEN - Sensitive
<b>Date</b>	05 Jan.2023
<b>Authors</b>	<b>Novel Group</b>
<b>Status</b>	Draft Document
<b>Version</b>	V4.0 (final)



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## Executive Summary

In Luxembourg, gender-based violence in VET is still a subject scarcely discussed. The country’s small population and education system make it hard for people to freely open up about it and even acknowledge that there is a problem, which makes the conduct of extensive research on the issue difficult.

First of all, this national report starts with a presentation of the national VET system in Luxembourg, explaining all of its levels and describing its governing bodies. It provides the reader with all official information found on the number of students in VET and the age groups that it targets. Next, it presents the current legal framework that exists in Luxembourg regarding gender-based violence, highlighting the fact that there are zero policies addressing gender-based violence in the VET sector. This lack of policies is even louder if we consider that two-thirds of Luxembourgish women have reported having been victims of physical, psychological, sexual or economic violence at least once in their lives.

Moreover, this national report pinpoints the existence of a loud gap in literature and research, concerning gender-based violence in VET or even in the more general education field, such as schools, higher institutions and research organizations. There is very little reliable data to support any kind of research on the subject, because as this report will show, the main focus of Luxembourg’s authorities and civil society is on one type of gender-based violence: domestic violence.

Furthermore, this report presents available national policies and strategies concerning gender-based violence (mainly domestic violence), and also support services and useful contacts of bodies (non-governmental or state actors) that are active in the field of gender equality and the provision of support to victims of violence. Lastly, in this report, we identify two best practices in Luxembourg regarding tackling gender-based violence, that could be adapted and adopted in the framework of the project.



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## 1. Introduction

The project END GBV in VET – *“Full service to increase capacity and awareness for disrupting gender-based violence in the VET sphere”* focuses on piloting a full service in the form of support offices for VET providers in an effort to increase their capacity and awareness for addressing gender-based violence in the VET sphere. This will be achieved through (a) the development of a capacity building and training program for students, their teachers/VET staff, and interested parents that will focus on addressing issues relevant to gender-based violence, and by (b) strengthening existing structures of the institutions through the operation of a full service in the campus that will provide information, training, support, and consultations. Overall, the main activities and expected results of the END GBV in VET project will include: 250 students that will be trained and 150 educators and 50 parents that will be informed on relevant issues; as well as the implementation of 1 awareness-raising campaign, 8 national events with 30 attendees each, and 1 final event with 100 attendees.

The aim of the present **National Report** is to provide insights and information regarding the legal and policy framework surrounding the phenomenon of gender-based violence in Luxembourg, highlight the magnitude of the problem by providing recent data, statistics, and identify good practices in combating the phenomenon. To that end, this report presents the **national context in Luxembourg** in terms of the prevalence and efforts to address the phenomenon, and the compilation of all data from all partners combined will offer an overview on the current state of play in Europe and indicate what the next steps should be.

Through the review of the existing literature, we will also identify and collect two best practices, documenting which methods, practices, policies, synergies or other types of interventions within Luxembourg help tackle the situation of gender-based violence in education.

In line with the above, the **main research questions** that the national report will seek to address are:

1. “What is the current situation and the existing needs in preventing and combatting gender-based violence in vocational education in Luxembourg?” and
2. “What is considered as a timeless, effective and transferable good practice in combatting GBV in vocational education and work-integrated learning contexts?”

At this point, it should be highlighted that research findings and results about gender-based violence in vocational education specifically are limited, on both EU and national level. Undoubtedly, this further stresses



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the need and value of the project, including the present desk research and the subsequent primary research that will be conducted by the project partners.

Nonetheless, gender-based violence occurs at all levels of education and across various disciplines. Thus, looking at the phenomenon from the angle of secondary or post-secondary education in general can equally offer important information for vocational schools.



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## 2. The National Context

Luxembourg is a small country (2.586 km<sup>2</sup>) that accommodates approximately 170 nationalities and has three official languages: German, French and Luxembourgish. The country ranks 21<sup>st</sup> among 230 countries for quality of living (Mercer Quality of Living Survey, 2017), 1<sup>st</sup> among 230 countries for safest city when it comes to internal stability, low crime rates and public order (Mercer Quality of Living Survey, 2016) and 6<sup>th</sup> among 64 countries for the most desirable place to live and work (Global Livable Cities Index, 2014).

According to Statista’s demographic census in 2022, the total population of Luxembourg amounted to over **645.000** people, which has increased rapidly since 2015 mainly due to immigration, having a big impact on VET (NAVET, 2020). Of these, over **325.000 are male and 321.000 female**, meaning women in Luxembourg were the minority this year (Statista, 2022).

Luxembourg is also home to a large foreign population. In 2022, over **47.1% of the people who live in the country were citizens of another state** (Statista, 2022). A significant portion of the population speaks a language other than the official languages of German, French, and Luxembourgish as their mother tongue. The **country's multilingualism** is one of its strengths, but it also presents a difficulty for education and training, because the high share of foreign nationals requires education and training and labour market integration policies (Cedefop and INFPC, 2022).

Portugal is the largest foreign country from which people migrate to Luxembourg. In fact, in Luxembourg, there are more than twice as many Portuguese as any other nationality, with French being the second largest group of foreigners (Statista, 2022).

Concerning **gender equality**, with 73.5 out of 100 points, Luxembourg ranks 9<sup>th</sup> in the EU on the Gender Equality Index (EIGE, 2022). The European Institute for Gender Equality created several indices in order to focus on different indicators. These indicators are: Time, Power, Health, Intersecting inequalities, Violence, Work, Money and Knowledge. The higher the score is, the closer the country is in achieving a gender-equal society.

More specifically, in the indicator of work the score is 76.3%, in money 92.6%, in health 90.4%, in power 59.7%, in time 69.1%, and in knowledge 68.9% (EIGE, 2022). All the scores, except the domain of power, are some of the highest in EU, and the domain of money is the highest score in EU. Luxembourg’s gender equality score has been steadily improving over the years.





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## 2.1. The national VET system

Luxembourg’s education and VET system reflects its geographic, demographic and socioeconomic context: its small size, its multicultural population and workforce and its multilingual nature (Cedefop, 2019).

The VET system in Luxembourg is also centralized. Initial Vocational Education and Training is the duty of the Ministry of National Education, Children, and Youth, whereas higher VET is the Ministry of Higher Education and Research's responsibility. The dual system, which has strong ties between classroom and workplace learning, is a significant component of secondary VET (Cedefop and INFPC, 2022).

From a European perspective, the term Vocational Education and Training (VET) is understood as “*education and training which aims to equip people with knowledge, know-how, skills and/or competences required in particular occupations or more broadly in the labor market*” (Cedefop, 2014). Irrespective of the provider or governance scheme, VET can take place at secondary, post-secondary or tertiary level in formal education and training or non-formal settings including active labor market measures.

In Luxembourg, VET can happen in 6 levels of education (Cedefop, 2022):

- **ISCED level 2:** lower secondary education (lower secondary technical programmes, also known as pre-VET)
- **ISCED level 3:** upper secondary education (vocational and technician programmes)
- **ISCED level 4:** post-secondary non-tertiary education (master craftsman programmes)
- **ISCED levels 5-7:** higher education [higher technician programmes (level 5), professional bachelor programmes (level 6) and professional master programmes (level 7)]

ISCED Levels 2, 6 and 7 consist of programmes that combine VET and general education.

Luxembourg has the highest “higher education attainment” of residents aged 25 to 64 in the EU28, while its share of low- or unqualified people is lower than the EU-28 average. According to CEDEFOP’s 2022 report, in 2020/21, among the working population aged 25-64, 46.1% have finished ISCED level 5-8 (above the EU-27 average of 34%), but only 30.7% have finished ISCED level 3-4 (13.8% below the EU-27 level). It’s also interesting to highlight that 21% of the population has a low or no qualification (ISCED 0-2), close to the EU-27 average of 21.3% (Cedefop, 2022).



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Moreover, the Luxembourgish VET system includes programs in various domains, such as agriculture, arts, commerce, communication, construction and energy, finance, human resources, languages, security and social sciences (Portal for lifelong-learning, 2022).

Lastly, there are not only public VET providers in Luxembourg, but also private ones. Non-government-regulated continuing vocational education and training, is offered by private institutions and CVET centres (*offreurs de formation*). Although the various training opportunities they offer adults frequently do not lead to qualifications within government-regulated VET, they lead to sector qualifications. Private training bodies may be specialized training bodies, commercial companies or consultancy firms/independent consultants, and are subject to the rules of the right to practice, and must hold a ministerial authorization to provide continuing training (INFPC, 2016).

### 2.1.1. Secondary Education

VET is offered mostly at secondary level (ISCED 2 and 3) and is nationally referred to as *Technical Secondary Education*. It comprises two levels: **lower cycle pre-VET (ages 12-14) (ISCED level 2)** and **upper cycle technician and vocational programmes (ages 15-18) (ISCED level 3)** (INFPC, 2016). Secondary VET prepares students for both the working world and higher education throughout VET programs that last 3 to 5 years. The dual system, which forms a strong connection between school-based education and work-based learning in firms, is a crucial component of secondary VET. Secondary VET programmes may be offered at technical secondary schools or in mixed institutions that offer VET, technical, and ordinary secondary education, depending on the occupation (Cedefop, 2022).

In 2014/15, there were 27.152 learners in *Technical Secondary Education* (INFPC, 2016), whereas in 2016/17, there were 27.221 learners (Cedefop, 2019). Moreover, in 2019/20, the number of learners in upper technical secondary and vocational programmes seem to have decreased to 26.687 learners (Cedefop, 2022).

According to the latest data, in 2020/21, there were **6.798 VET learners** accounted for in Luxembourgish Secondary Education, 4.798 under 19 years old, 1.646 between 20-22 years old and 354 in ages 23+ (MENJE, 2021).

Lastly, considering the nature of this report, it's important to pinpoint the **female share** of the secondary programmes. In 2016/17, in lower, middle and upper technical secondary programmes (27.221 learners), there were more males (53%) than females (47%) (Cedefop, 2019). Similarly, in 2019/20, in upper technical



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secondary and vocational programmes (26.687 learners), there were more males (54.1%) than females (45.9%) (Cedefop, 2022).

#### 2.1.2. Post-secondary education

Post-secondary non-tertiary education offers one type of programme, **master craftsperson programmes (ages 15+) (ISCED level 4)** (*brevet de maîtrise*), which is meant to train future entrepreneurs and industry managers. Access to this programme requires at least EQF level 3 (INFPC, 2016).

#### 2.1.3. VET at higher (tertiary) education

At the **higher education level (ISCED levels 5-7)**, VET is offered as a short-cycle (2-year) study program that leads to a higher technician certificate (ages 18+) (Cedefop, 2022). To access university programmes, learners require a general or *Technical Secondary School* leaving diploma (*diplôme de fin d'études secondaires; diplôme de fin d'études secondaires techniques*). **Higher technician programmes** in VET at tertiary level consist of **higher technician programmes (level 5)**, **professional bachelor programmes (level 6)** and **professional master programmes (level 7)** (INFPC, 2016).

#### 2.1.4. Adult education

Adults who have not completed secondary education can prepare for technical secondary diplomas and certificates or the secondary school leaving certificate. The latter can be acquired by attending evening classes or through blended learning, which can lead to a diploma, which gives access to higher education (*diplôme d'accès aux études universitaires*) (INFPC, 2016). Vocational Training and Training for Adults is provided by public and/or private VET providers and it also targets people who already hold a vocational qualification to adapt or extend this qualification to the needs of the economy and changing developments.

#### 2.1.5. Major VET reform of 2008

The **major VET reform of 2008** (SCL, 2008a) was implemented between 2010-2011 and 2013-2014. It aimed at strengthening the links between VET and the labor market and focused on competence-based and modular qualifications. Key principles of the reform are: (a) promoting VET; (b) improving VET quality; (c) easing access to lifelong learning (INFPC, 2016).



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### 2.1.6. VET Governance

The VET system in Luxembourg is centralized. Initial vocational education and training is the duty of the **Ministry of National Education, Children, and Youth**, and higher VET is the **Ministry of Higher Education and Research's** responsibility (Cedefop, 2022). The Ministries of Labour, Employment and the Social and Solidarity Economy (Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de l'Économie Sociale et Solidaire) are also responsible for training measures for the unemployed (INFPC, 2016) and they participate in the development and revision of VET programs and curricula (Cedefop, 2022).

### 2.1.7. Sexuality Education

In Luxembourg, **sexuality education** is taught in a few classes like biology, religion and citizenship studies, which cover various topics and strands of sexuality education (Publications Office of the European Union, 2020). Moreover, Luxembourg, among several other EU Member States, has made steps towards revising the legislative framework around sexuality education over the last decade. The new **National Action Plan for the Emotional and Sexual Health** (*Plan d'action national Promotion de la santé affective et sexuelle*), which was published in February 2019, intends to advance sexuality education as a means of fostering children's and adolescents' emotional and sexual health (Publications Office of the European Union, 2020).

## 2.2. National Legal Framework

The fight against all forms of violence against women and domestic violence is not only at the heart of human rights, but has been one of the priorities of the Luxembourg government for years.

It should be first highlighted that in Luxembourg, the main regulatory focus relating to the issue of gender-based violence is the fight against **domestic violence**, regulated by the **amended Act of 8 September 2003** and **Act of 20 July 2018** approving the European Council Convention on domestic violence. While there is some understanding that gender-based violence can happen in universities, research organizations and in the VET sector, there is a big gap in legislation regarding this particular field.

Luxembourg has also laws defining **harassment** and **sexual harassment** in the workplace (implementation of EU Directives on gender equality), however expert members of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women express disappointment at the slow pace of legislative reform in the country.



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The national legal framework regarding gender-based violence is the following:

Title and number of legislations	Brief Summary
<b>Article L. 241-1(2) of the labour code</b>	This article defines <b>harassment</b> as a situation in which unwanted conduct related to the sex of a person occurs with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person and of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment (Wuiame, 2021).
<b>Article L. 245-2 of the labour code</b>	This article defines <b>sexual harassment</b> as follows: ‘any forms of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, in particular when creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment’. It is specifically laid down in the law that employers must abstain from any sexual harassment in employment relationships. The Acts contain provisions promoting a gender-balanced composition, laying down that they should contain at least 40% of the underrepresented sex (Wuiame, 2021).
<b>Article 409 of the Criminal Code</b>	This article provides penalties in cases of <b>domestic violence</b> . In principle, the perpetrator of domestic violence will be punished by imprisonment of six months up to five years and will be subject to a fine of EUR 251 up to EUR 5,000. However, the penalty is even higher in the some circumstances.
<b>Article 442-2 of the Criminal Code</b>	This article doesn’t make a distinction between stalking and harassment, and it only mentions <b>harassment</b> . As the article is fairly broad (the <b>Criminal Code</b> punishes anyone who has repeatedly harassed a person, when they knew or should have known that this behavior would seriously affect the peace of the person



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	concerned), it should cover a variety of behaviors such as <b>sexual harassment</b> or <b>moral harassment</b> .
<b>Article 1017-1 of the Civil Procedure Code</b>	<p>This article ensures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That the police, with the authorization of the state prosecutor, can make a protection order of expulsion.</li> <li>• The provision to order the abuser to move out or stay away from places that the victims frequent.</li> </ul>
<b>Law of 8 September 2003</b>	<p>Law on domestic violence (amended Act), which provides for the expulsion of a perpetrator of domestic violence, and states that domestic violence is punishable by law (Wuiame, 2021).</p> <p>Under the Law of 8 September 2003, the police, with the authorization of the state prosecutor, can make a protection order of expulsion.</p>
<b>Law of 30 July 2013</b>	Amendment of 1. the law of 8 September 2003 on domestic violence; 2. the amended law of 31 May 1999 on the Police and the General Police Inspectorate; 3. the Penal Code and 4. the New Civil Procedure Code.
<b>20 July 2018 Law</b>	<p>The Istanbul Convention bounds Luxembourg to adapt their legislation through the <b>20 July 2018 Law</b> (Chambre des Députés Website), approving the Council of Europe Convention on <i>preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence</i>, signed in Istanbul on 11 May 2011 and amending 1) the Criminal Code; 2) the Code of Criminal Procedure; 3) the amended 8 September 2003 law on domestic violence; 4) the amended 29 August 2008 law on the free movement of persons and immigration. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July 2018, the Chamber of Deputies adopted this bill.</p> <p>Regarding the <b>ratification of the Council of Europe’s Istanbul Convention</b>, the new <b>Law of 20 July 2018</b> voted by the Parliament, modifies several existing laws and</p>



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	<p>aims at preventing violence, protecting victims and reinforcing collaboration between several actors. <b>This law introduces into the penal code the legal notion of forbidding any form of violence based on gender.</b> Genital mutilation will be sanctioned by severe fines and a maximum 20-year prison sentence. <b>However, the ratification of the Convention led to the amendment of the law, but had no effect concerning gender-based violence in research institutions.</b></p>
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- **Istanbul Convention**

Luxembourg has also signed the **Istanbul Convention** in May 2011 and ratified it in August 2018, entering into force in December 2018, and the three ministries responsible for its implementation are the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Equality between Women and Men. The **Istanbul Convention** is the first internationally binding convention which, thanks to its integrated and multidisciplinary approach and gender perspective, covers all forms of violence against women and girls. It is based on the idea that ***violence against women and girls is a form of gender-based violence in that it is perpetrated against women because they are women.*** It is the responsibility of the state, under penalty of law, to effectively combat such violence in all its forms by taking measures to prevent it, protecting victims and prosecuting perpetrators. According to the convention, it is clear that equality cannot be achieved as long as gender-based violence persists on a large scale, in full view of public bodies and institutions (EIGE, Regulatory and legal framework).

The **Istanbul Convention** was from the outset not only seen as the first legally binding European treaty in the fight against violence against women and domestic violence, but also as a guideline and a concrete commitment for the three responsible ministries, in order to strengthen the legislative and procedural which was put in place well before the approval of the said agreement. The implementation of the **Istanbul Convention** represents Luxembourg’s commitment to:

- raise awareness among both professionals and the general public of the many facets of violence against women and girls;
- inform people about the support and assistance network available and to improve its access and quality;



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- bring together and involve all public and non-public actors in the fight against violence against women and girls;
- expand support and assistance for victims.

While the Convention focuses on all forms of violence against women, **it explicitly recognizes that domestic violence and other forms of violence also affect men**. For this reason, the Convention encourages states to apply the text to male victims as well. Since Luxembourg’s legislation is generally gender-neutral, the general approach is to apply the Convention to both sexes (EIGE, Regulatory and legal framework).

Luxembourg did not start from scratch. Long before the parliamentary ratification of the **Istanbul Convention**, it had already established an effective legislative mechanism for the benefit of victims of violence, including domestic violence (**Act of 8 September 2003**).

### 2.3. Institutional Policies and Frameworks

Along with the legislative progress, a number of relevant institutional bodies have emerged and are constantly being upgraded to support the above-mentioned laws.

- **Ministry of Equality between Women and Men:** Making gender equality an everyday reality.

Luxembourg is the only EU state with a Ministry whose responsibility is exclusively gender equality. It is a priority for the Luxembourgish government to promote equality between women and men in all aspects of life and society. The **Ministry of Equality between Women and Men** (French: "ministère de l'Égalité entre les femmes et les hommes", abb.: MEGA) leads and supports these ambitions. Following this concept, the **National Action Plan on Gender Equality** ("Plan d'égalité 2015-2018") runs like a common thread through the ministerial efforts. It was developed by MEGA and helps reveal possible flaws and achieve intended goals in the public sector.

One of the most important tasks of MEGA is awareness raising of the general public regarding the consequences of an imbalanced or discriminatory representation of men and women in the professional and public sector. For this reason, information campaigns have been organized on a regular basis since the foundation of the ministry in 1995 (called "Ministry for Women’s Promotion" at the time). The campaigns focus on gender-specific topics, which affect us all. A recurrent example is the deconstruction of stereotypes and gender roles traditionally attributed to women and men.





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MEGA also encourages concrete measures to promote gender equality on an economic, political and professional level of decision-making as well in the private as in the public sector. The program "actions positives" allows participants to improve equality standards in their company or administration and rewards positive and progressive development.

Today, the state public sector counts more than 120 equal opportunity representatives. Their job is to defend the specific needs of both women and men in the workplace.

- **Comité de coopération entre les professionnels dans le domaine de la lutte contre la violence – Committee gathering all professionals involved in the fight against domestic violence**

This Committee is a key instrument that gathers all professional actors (institutional and NGO) in the field of domestic violence to follow the implementation of the law on eviction of perpetrators of domestic violence (8 September 2003). This Committee, established by the Grand-Ducal regulation of 24 November 2003, is an advisory body between professionals in the field of the fight against violence and thus assumes an essential role as a forum for discussion between the various actors concerned with a view to better cooperation in this sensitive matter. It is composed of representatives of state authorities responsible for the implementation of the law on domestic violence, as well as representatives of approved support services for victims of domestic violence. The Committee has a dual mission:

- to centralize and study the statistics produced by the institutional and non-governmental bodies and,
- to examine the implementation and any problems of practical application of the law and submit to the government any proposals it deems useful.

Every year, it submits to the Government a written report containing all relevant statistics and their analysis as well as proposal or analysis on key issues.

Responsible institutions: Ministry of Equality Between Women and Men (MEGA); Ministry of Justice; Home Office; the Police and the Judiciary, NGOs supporting victims of domestic violence.

- **Gender Equality Policy, Gender Equality Officer and Gender Equality Committee of the University of Luxembourg**

The University of Luxembourg has appointed a **Gender Equality Officer** and a **Gender Equality Committee** to lead the implementation of the **Gender Equality Policy**, which was approved by the Board



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of Governors on 21 May 2021 and aims to identify and address barriers to gender equality (Wuiame, 2021).

The position of the **Gender Equality Officer** is established by Article 10 of the law on the organization of the University of Luxembourg. As per the University Regulations (Règlement d'Ordre Intérieur), the Gender Equality Officer chairs the **Gender Equality Committee**, composed of a gender-balanced team that represents university employees as well as students from the student delegation, nominated by the University council.

Their activity includes the creation and implementation of a gender equality plan that:

- promotes gender diversity in research and academic careers;
- supports women as the underrepresented gender in leadership positions;
- ensures that the training, promotion and evaluation procedures regarding University of Luxembourg staff are gender-responsive.

The focus is mainly on human resources management, but the issue of gender-based violence, sexism or harassment is not mentioned.



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### 3. Gender-Based Violence in Luxembourg

Luxembourg has made big steps regarding gender equality. 83.3% of legal frameworks that promote, enforce and monitor gender equality under the SDG indicator with a focus on violence against women, are in place, while as of February 2021, 31.7% of seats in parliament are held by women (UN Women). And even though, Luxembourg has recorded a lower-than-average number of cases of sexual or bodily harm compared to other EU member states, **over a lifetime, two out of three women in the Grand Duchy will have experienced an act of violence.**

According to the United Nations, violence against women is one of the most common human rights violations in the world. In Luxembourg, **two-thirds of women report having been victims of physical, psychological, sexual or economic violence at least once in their lives** (Dahmen, 2022). In 2017, according to EIGE, 38% of women in Luxembourg have experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15 and 71% of women who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15 have experienced health consequences as a result. Moreover, 19% of women who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by any perpetrator in the past 12 months have not told anyone. This rate is higher than the EU28 average of 13% (FRA, 2012).

As for **domestic violence**, according to the Ministry of Equality between Women and Men, in 2021, 60.69% of the victims of domestic violence were female (60.28% in 2020) and 39.31% male (39.72% in 2020). 389 victims were minors, compared to 356 in 2020, which represents an increase compared to 2020. The age groups of 35-40, 40-45 and >50 were the most affected and alone represent 39.72%. 16.76% of the victims were over 50 years old (MEGA, 2022).

As of 2022, 20% of women (43.215) aged 16-74 have been physically, sexually and/or psychologically assaulted in the past 12 months (Dahmen, 2022). Furthermore, women between 16-24 tend to be harassed more often than older age groups, says Statec, regardless of the nature of the violent act committed and one in six have been on the receiving act of mental, bodily, economic or sexual violence over the past year. This rate decreases according to the age of the victim: less than 5% of women who are older than 65, for instance, have reported psychological violence - the most prevalent kind of violent act (Heindrichs, 2022).

At societal level, violence against women costs Luxembourg an estimated EUR 235 million a year through lost economic output, service utilization and personal costs (EIGE, 2014).



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Generally speaking, the subject of sexual harassment and gender-based violence in Luxembourg is a taboo, as it is felt that the country is so small that “everybody would know about it”. And even when the issue of gender-based violence is discussed, the main focus related to it is the fight against domestic violence.

Even in the **work sector**, the issue of gender-based violence is not really discussed. While some associations are collecting data on mobbing and harassment and point to the higher number of women victims, this is not presented or considered as gender-based violence. The focus in Luxembourg is on domestic violence. The country is small with only a few RPOs, so some actions such as prevalence studies could be taken, but very little information is available on the official websites of the stakeholders (Wuiame, 2021).

As of today, there is a lack of evidence to assess gender-based violence in Luxembourg. Eurostat is currently coordinating a survey on gender-based violence in the EU, but not all Member States are taking part. EIGE, together with the EU’s Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), will collect data for the remaining countries to have an EU-wide comparable data on violence against women. Data collection will be completed in 2023, and the results will be used to update the domain of violence in the Gender Equality Index 2024 (EIGE, Regulatory and legal framework).

### 3.1. Gender-based violence in the VET sector

Although the little research that has been conducted on gender-based violence in Luxembourg has been focusing on areas such as domestic abuse and sexual harassment in the workplace, there has been less recognition about gender-based violence in education and/or the VET sector specifically. Some studies about women in VET note that women are more likely to drop out of their apprenticeship programmes than their male counterparts (Berik and Biligsoy, 2000), but have not investigated how gender-based violence might have a role in this attrition.

The VET system can deter women from enrolling in education programmes in skilled trades occupations. A VET classroom environment where gender inequality, discrimination and harassment are normalized, combined with a gender biased apprenticeship system has been found to contribute to gender segregation in the skilled trades and to act as a significant barrier to women’s employment. This allows open criticism and the derision of women’s abilities, and facilitates overt sexism that leads to sexual jokes and sexual harassment. This has implications for women’s safety in the classroom and long-term gender parity in the



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skilled trades where, despite government and industry attempts to recruit and retain women, gender segregation is extreme (Turner et al., 2021).

As of today, there are unfortunately not enough reliable data to indicate what the situation in Luxembourg is regarding gender-based violence in the VET sector.

### 3.2. Gender-based violence in Higher Education

As already stated above, **the main focus in Luxembourg, regarding gender-based violence is on domestic violence**. While there is some understanding that gender-based violence can happen in universities, VET and research organizations too, the issue is not discussed and there is a big gap in legislation regarding these particular sectors. The country is small with only a few RPOs, so, in principle, very little information is available on the official websites of the stakeholders, which makes it very difficult to assess any specific data. Furthermore, no national public opinion surveys about gender-based violence in general or in universities and research organizations have been identified. The few studies that have been undertaken are also specific to universities (and often particular faculties) and focus almost exclusively on students' experiences of sexual harassment and rape (Bosco Damous and Guillope, 2021).

Although there is a Gender Equality Officer and a Gender Equality Committee in the University of Luxembourg, which focuses on facilitating conditions that promote a gender-balanced institution, the issue of gender-based violence, sexism or harassment is not mentioned. An article by the *Gender Equality Officer of the University of Luxembourg*, deriving from the discussions about gender-based violence in universities and research organizations and new related developments, points at some inequalities between researchers. However, the focus is on the effect on women's careers (lagging behind in terms of publications) and not on gender-based violence (Makhene, 2022).

Furthermore, through the multi-annual conventions financing research institutions in Luxembourg, some requirements in terms of gender equality can be imposed. This has been the case regarding the proportion of women on the boards of such institutions. The Acts relating to the creation of the Fund for National Research and the organization of Public Research contain provisions promoting a gender-balanced composition of their boards, laying down that they should contain at least 40% of the underrepresented sex. This gender balance rule is also valid for Scientific Advisory Boards which advise the Boards of Directors on scientific matters (Makhene, 2022).



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Lastly, there is limited national data and documentation of the extent of gender-based violence on campuses (Bosco Damous and Guillope, 2021). It has been noticed that higher education institutions are hesitant to approach gender-based violence for fear of jeopardizing their reputation. The gender-based violence prevention framework therefore should make a point of identifying contextual norms, structures and cultures that reinforce gender bias and discrimination (Bosco Damous and Guillope, 2021).



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## 4. National policies, strategies and resources

### 4.1. Policies and Strategies

The **National Action Plan “Women and peace and security” (2018-2023)** adopted by the Luxemburgish Government for the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) and its resolutions follow-up (1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106, 2122 and 2242) aims to:

- prevent sexual and gender-based violence;
- strengthen protection mechanisms against sexual and gender-based violence;
- facilitate access to justice or transitional justice for victims of sexual and gender-based violence; provide them with opportunities for redress.

The National Action Plan (2018-2023) enables Luxembourg, as a member state of the UN, the EU and NATO, to consolidate efforts related to the implementation of Resolution 1325 and strengthen prevention and protection mechanisms at the national level to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women. More particularly, the "Women and Peace and Security" National Action Plan includes implementation actions grouped (Ministries and departments involved that need to undertake measures: Health, MEGA, MENJE, MIFA) in the areas of:

- prevention of sexual and gender-based violence by promoting emotional and sexual education at the national level (directly and through NGOs), and disseminate information to target audiences.
- protection from sexual and gender-based violence.
- strengthening gender-based violence training for Luxembourg staff.

Furthermore, Luxembourg’s **National Action Plan on Gender Equality (2015-2018)** by the Ministry of Equality between Women and Men (MEGA), follows a double approach, aiming both to mainstream the gender dimension in all government policies and to take affirmative action against domestic violence. MEGA pays close attention to these topics and is committed to awareness raising campaigns to tackle gender-based violence and working actively on improving the situation in Luxembourg. Cooperation with service providers and structures in the social sector allow the MEGA to be active in the field to ensure the victim’s recovery and protection, as well as holding the offender accountable for his or her actions (MEGA, 2019).



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Lastly, the **National Action Plan for Equality Between Women and Men (2020)** is Luxembourg’s new updated roadmap with targeted measures and actions to promote equality by taking into account all priorities, as well as other gender equality issues. It summarizes the main lines of action, incorporating the previous National Action Plan on Gender Equality (2015-2018).

#### 4.2. Existing Resources and Tools

Resources to increase awareness and address GVB in Luxembourg		
Title	Type of Resource	Brief Description
<p><b>AKTIV GEINT GEWALT</b> Confiance en soi pour femmes et hommes – Self-confidence for men and women</p> <p>Project funded by the state and conducted by the police of Luxembourg (Police department of prevention, in collaboration with the Ministry for Equal Opportunities and institutions involved in support to victims of violence)</p>	Training	As part of a prevention strategy to combat violence including domestic violence, this project aims to teach participants how to detect dangerous situations and how to react in an appropriate way, and is not specific for women victims of domestic violence. It is an important tool to raise awareness on gender-based violence, help women to detect signs of violence and have appropriate tools to react to it. It comprises the following modules: behaviour and prevention, self-defence, mobbing, video-surveillance, support to victims of violence, support for women victims of violence and consultation services for men (EIGE).
<p><b>Awareness raising initiative</b> “Toute personne violente sera expulsée de son domicile. C’est la loi!” – “Every violent person will</p>	<a href="#">Campaign</a>	The Ministry for Equal Opportunities (MEGA) launched a media campaign on TV and cinema. This media campaign was launched to promote the adoption of a law against domestic violence. It focuses on what happens to perpetrators of





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<p>be expelled from their home; this is the law"</p>		<p>violence: they will be expelled from their home. The TV spot shows concrete expulsion of the author of domestic violence, i.e., a man who has to leave his home in a police car. Parallel to this TV spot, a poster was design and send to NGOs, schools and waiting rooms in hospitals and physicians. During this campaign, the number of cases of violence reported increased, which is an indication that people (and victims) are better informed.</p>
<p><b>Tools for Grand Duchy Police force</b> to ensure the correct implementation of the Law of 2003 on eviction of penetrators of violence.</p>	<p><a href="#">Information sheets</a> – <a href="#">Awareness</a></p>	<p>The Police force of Grand Duchy Luxembourg has designed specific sheets of information for victims and perpetrators of violence (available in 13 languages). It explains to the victims what the law provides to them and gives them coordinates on support services. Same type of information also adapted to the situation of penetrators. The Police also uses tools to support its staff in their interventions: checklists, protocols for intervention and reporting.</p>
<p><b>The Public Prosecutor's Office</b> in Luxembourg and Diekirch</p>	<p><a href="#">Office handling gender-based violence cases</a></p>	<p>The Public Prosecutor's Office (Parquet général) forms part of the Supreme Court of Justice. It is composed of the public prosecutor and the prosecuting attorneys. It has received 1,420 cases of domestic violence, while the Grand-Ducale Police intervened 917 times in 2021 (MEGA, 2022).</p>



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## 5. Support services/systems and useful contacts

### 5.1. Support services/systems

In Luxembourg there are services that support victims and perpetrators of violence and inform people about the existing framework in Luxembourg.

- **[Observatoire de l'Égalité](#)**: A portal of Ministry of Equality for equality between men and women.
- **[CESAS](#)**: Centre national de référence pour la promotion de la santé affective et sexuelle.
- **[Femmes en détresse A.S.B.L.](#)**

The purpose of this association is to offer women, their children and young girls effective protection against violence through the development and management of homes for women and young girls in distress, information and consultation centers

- **[RIICHT ERAUS Service](#) (Counseling Service for Perpetrators of Domestic Violence)**

A contact point for perpetrators of domestic violence, part of Luxembourg Red Cross. Since its creation in 2004, the service's mission has been to accompany and advise perpetrators of domestic violence, whether they have already been convicted for their actions or not. Those who visit the service can be people under arrest, clients referred to the consultants by judicial decision or people who take this step of their own free will.

This service has carried out a total of 2,000 consultations in the context of evictions and other channels (MEGA, 2022).

- **[SAVVD](#) (Consultation Service for Assistance to Victims of Domestic Violence)**

Support service for victims of domestic violence benefiting from an expulsion order. In 2021, SAVVD carried out a total of 327 consultations and 3,304 telephone calls to assist victims in the context of the 249 eviction files communicated to the service on the basis of the amended law on domestic violence of 2003 (MEGA, 2022).



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## 5.2. Useful contacts

<p><b>Police Grand-Ducale</b></p> <p>Tel. <b>113</b></p> <p>Website: <a href="https://police.public.lu/fr.html">https://police.public.lu/fr.html</a></p>	<p>The police offers victim support services for domestic violence and rape and assault. Victims can contact the Police immediately or go to a police station. Victims are looked after by police officers who are well trained in this area. Where possible, women will be seen by a female officer.</p>
<p><b>Helpline «Häuslech Gewalt – Violence domestique – Domestic violence»</b></p> <p>Tel. <b>2060 1060</b></p> <p>E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@helpline-violence.lu">info@helpline-violence.lu</a></p> <p>Website: <a href="http://www.helpline-violence.lu">www.helpline-violence.lu</a></p>	<p>There is a helpline available for victims and witnesses of violence, in the number <b>2060 1060</b>, which is available daily from 12:00 p.m. until 20:00 p.m. This helpline aims at encouraging people to report incidents of violence, whether it’s the victim of the act of violence, the perpetrator or even a witness.</p>
<p><b>Violence.lu website</b> <a href="http://www.violence.lu">www.violence.lu</a></p>	<p>Online service that offers 43 different contact numbers that one can call, depending on the type of violence, the city/region where someone lives, their age and/or their gender.</p>
<p><b>Info Viol</b></p> <p>Tel. <b>48 59 76 58</b></p>	<p>Service for victims of rape and sexual assault.</p>
<p><b>Mobbing ASBL</b></p> <p>Tel. <b>28 37 12 12</b></p> <p>Website: <a href="http://www.mobbingasbl.lu">www.mobbingasbl.lu</a></p>	<p>Service for anyone (victim, harasser, employer, etc.) who needs support in the area of bullying/harassment and stress at work.</p>

The following counseling centers offer support and advice to women who are victims of bullying, sexual harassment, domestic violence or psychological abuse:



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- [Counseling Center Foyer Sud – Fraen a Nout](#) (by the Conseil National des Femmes Luxembourgeoises)
- [Counseling Center Visavi](#) (by Femmes en détresse A.S.B.L.)
- [Centre de consultation](#) (by Fondation Pro-Familia)
- [Centre Ozanam](#) (by Fondation Maison de la Porte Ouverte)

There are also shelters in Luxembourg available to women, girls and mothers:

- [Fraenhaus Lëtzebuerg](#) (by Femmes en détresse A.S.B.L.)
- [Fondation Paula Bové](#) (by Fondation de la Porte Ouverte)
- [Foyer Sud Fraen an Nout](#) (by the Conseil National des Femmes)
- [Foyer Sichern](#) (Fondation de la Porte Ouverte)



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## 6. Examples of Best Practices

### 6.1. Best Practice No.1: Violence.lu website in Luxembourg

<b>Title of good practice (in EN and national language, if applicable):</b>	Violence.lu
<b>Country:</b>	Luxembourg
<b>Short Description (exact nature of problem it addressed):</b>	<p>The Ministry for Equal Opportunities (MEGA) created the <b>Violence.lu</b> online tool dedicated to the dissemination of information on the different types of violence and the existing assistance networks in Luxembourg.</p> <p><b>Violence.lu</b> provides users with all available contacts to which they can report a gender-based violent crime. It consists of overall 39 contact numbers, including a major helpline (2060-1060), which is open every day at 12:00-8:00pm, at which someone can directly call with a single click. The helpline and site are addressed not only to victims, but also penetrators and witnesses, should they wish to report a violent incident. It doesn't only stop at domestic violence, but it also offers contact lists for all types of gender-based violence, such as forced abortion, sexual and moral harassment, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, rape, physical violence, psychological violence and sexual violence.</p> <p>Moreover, this tool provides information on support services for victims and on the domestic violence legal framework that exists in Luxembourg. It also provides resources, such as helpful sites that offer related support (e.g., cyber bullying, promoting sexual health, etc.), reports on the national action plan preventing gender-based violence, interviews of key informants and a toolbox for victims of domestic abuse.</p>



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<b>Trends and Potential Benefits from this Good Practice</b>	Having a dedicated online space for reporting gender-based violence crimes, with the options to delete your browser history, exit to Google or call the police and/or helpline just one easy click away, users are prompted more easily to actually take a step further and contact the authorities or the helpline to report a crime, either as victims or as witnesses or penetrators.
<b>How this Good Practice could be used/transferred</b>	Awareness raising campaigns have been launched in connection with this site. Series of radio spots launched together with the police to sensitize against violence in general. A campaign was launched for the international day against violence on women (25.11). This site also gives the possibility for users to give feedback, in order to give room for improvements, and so far, comments have been quite positive.
<b>Core criteria it addresses</b>	Gender sensitive, involvement of multiple stakeholders, accurate, reliable, accessible.
<b>Secondary criteria it addresses</b>	Timeless and financially sustainable, because it's online.
<b>Category of good practice</b>	Online service/tool
<b>Applicability status (local, regional, national, international) and justification</b>	National, considering the audience it addresses, but it's part of a bigger movement aiming to address and tackle violence and gender-based violence in Luxembourg.



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<b>Website link:</b>	<a href="http://www.violence.lu">http://www.violence.lu</a>
<b>More Info (e.g., staff or stakeholders involved)</b>	Several stakeholders have been involved in this initiative, among them included several Ministries, formal authorities (e.g., the police), the Bee Secure helpline, international organizations (e.g., UN Women), national committees and European bodies (e.g., European Commission).

## 6.2. Best practice No. 2: Gender Equality Policy of University of Luxembourg

<b>Title of good practice (in EN and national language, if applicable):</b>	The Gender Equality Policy
<b>Country:</b>	Luxembourg
<b>Short Description (exact nature of problem it addressed):</b>	<p>The Gender Equality Officer and the Gender Equality Committee of the University of Luxembourg lead the implementation of the <b>Gender Equality Policy</b>, which aims to identify and address barriers to gender equality.</p> <p>The <b>Gender Equality Policy</b>, approved by the Board of Governors on 21 May 2021, is the outcome of a two-year-long study and comprehensive consultations with all university stakeholders. They undertook a research-driven analysis to identify unconscious bias and actions, in order to achieve sustainable gender equality through a systemic change. The Gender Equality audit, led from January to April 2019, sought to understand how the University of Luxembourg compares with similar universities in terms of the gender composition of staff members, along with research into staff members' own perceptions and experiences of gender equality. The audit and the thorough</p>





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	discussions that followed served as the basis for the present Gender Equality Policy.
<b>Trends and Potential Benefits from this Good Practice</b>	The Gender Equality Policy, first of all, promotes gender diversity in research and academic careers, supports women as the underrepresented gender in leadership positions and ensures that the training, promotion and evaluation procedures regarding University of Luxembourg staff are gender-responsive. The focus is on human resources management, but the issue of gender-based violence, sexism or harassment is not mentioned.
<b>How this Good Practice could be used/transferred</b>	This policy focuses on facilitating conditions that promote a gender-balanced institution. Examples of actions taken in the frame of this policy include awareness-raising seminars with policymakers, measures increasing the percentage of women in the academic staff, mentoring at all levels (BA, MA, PhD and post-doctoral), gender seminars for all students, integration of the gender dimension in research and teaching, networking at national and international level, and gender-sensitive data collection.
<b>Core criteria it addresses</b>	Gender sensitive, involvement of multiple stakeholders, accurate, reliable, accessible and sustainable.
<b>Secondary criteria it addresses</b>	Adaptable.
<b>Category of good practice</b>	Policy
<b>Applicability status (local, regional,</b>	Local/Regional, considering that it addresses students and staff members of the University of Luxembourg. But national level too, if one considers the impact of



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<b>national, international) and justification</b>	the policy externally, through the awareness it raises that influences its members' behavior outside of the university campus as well.
<b>Website link:</b>	<a href="https://www.fr.uni.lu/universite/presentation/nos_valeurs/gender_equality/policy">https://www.fr.uni.lu/universite/presentation/nos_valeurs/gender_equality/policy</a>
<b>More Info (e.g., staff or stakeholders involved)</b>	University stakeholders have been involved in this initiative, on national and international level, and mostly university staff members.



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## 7. Conclusions

While doing desk research for this report, we have confirmed **a concerning and alarming gap of data on the subject of gender-based violence in VET in Luxembourg.**

Sadly, despite the scale, the political significance and the growing interest in academia, **gender-based violence in the VET sector and higher education institutions remains largely under-reported and under-researched.** Without sufficient knowledge, infrastructure and measures in place in these institutions, it is difficult to fully prevent, protect or even prosecute.

While there are national policies and a legal framework in place to enhance the fight against gender-based violence, **the main focus of Luxembourg authorities and non-governmental bodies is still almost exclusively on domestic violence.** Not enough evidence of other forms of gender-based violence is available online to make any positive or negative correlation on any other gender-based violence type or in areas other than the home or work environments.

It's undeniable that the fight against all forms of violence has been one of **Luxembourg's priorities** for years and the country has made big steps regarding gender equality. But there is still a long way to go, to cover all types of gender-based violence equally and more so in the education sector.

Ultimately, this is the aim of the field research; to gain more knowledge and background on what's happening in the VET sector in Luxembourg today and make the first step to fill this gap.



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## Annex 5 - National report and best practices of Slovakia

### NATIONAL REPORT: Slovakia

Desk Research and collection of best practices to END GBV in educational structures

<b>Project</b>	<b>END GBV in VET – “Full service to increase capacity and awareness for disrupting gender-based violence in the VET sphere”</b> Project 101049592 — CERV-2021-DAPHNE
<b>Deliverable</b>	Task 2.2 Desk Research and collection of best practices to END GBV in educational settings
<b>Relevant Work package:</b>	WP2 (T2.2)
<b>Date</b>	06.02.2023
<b>Authors</b>	Newport Group
<b>Status</b>	Draft Document
<b>Version</b>	V2.0



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In Slovakia the issue of gender-based violence in VET is practically non-existent in public debate or policies. National legal framework, public conservatism and also the organisational structure of the educational system make it difficult to address the issue. Furthermore, there is a grave lack of comprehensive data and knowledge about the phenomenon.

In the first part, the national report provides the reader with an overview of the VET system in Slovakia. The types of schools, actors, numbers of students as well as responsible authorities and oversight bodies.

Subsequently, it describes the national legal framework with focus on the area of gender-based violence. It stresses the almost non-existent term gender-based violence and its substitution with domestic and partner violence in the legislation. As a result there is an utter lack of policies for combating gender based violence in the VET sector.

Furthermore, more research on the topic is needed. Currently the only relevant data are the police and judicial statistics and additionally number of requests from relevant support hotlines. However, these data consist of mostly violent offences in the domestic environment and partially in the work environment. Unfortunately, their relevance beyond these areas is of little use.

The report outlines that there is a need for better recognition, more data and subsequent policies in the area of VET. Furthermore, first initiatives concerning the topic in Slovakia concern only the university and academic areas.

Finally, the report lists and documents the existing measures and initiatives combating gender-based violence, domestic violence or gender harassment. From among these, the 2 best practices in Slovak conditions were chosen as potentially transferable tools within the project.



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## INTRODUCTION

### The project

The project END GBV in VET – “Full service to increase capacity and awareness for disrupting gender-based violence in the VET sphere” focuses on piloting a full service in the form of support offices for VET providers in an effort to increase their capacity and awareness for addressing gender-based violence in the VET sphere. This will be achieved through (a) the development of a capacity building and training program for students, their teachers/VET staff, and interested parents that will focus on addressing issues relevant to gender-based violence, and by (b) strengthening existing structures of the institutions through the operation of a full service in the campus that will provide information, training, support, and consultations. Overall, the main activities and expected results of the END GBV in VET project will include: 250 students that will be trained and 150 educators and 50 parents that will be informed on relevant issues; as well as the implementation of 1 awareness-raising campaign, 8 national events with 30 attendees each, and 1 final event with 100 attendees.

### National Report: Overview and purpose

The overall aim of the national report is to provide insights and information regarding the legal and policy framework surrounding the phenomenon of GBV in the participating countries, highlight the magnitude of the problem in Europe by providing recent data, statistics, and identify good practices in combating the phenomenon. To that end, this report presents the national context in Luxembourg in terms of the prevalence and efforts to address the phenomenon, and the compilation of all data from all partners combined will offer an overview on the current state of play in Europe and indicate what the next steps should be.

Through the review of the existing literature, we will also identify and collect two best practices, documenting which methods, practices, policies, synergies or other types of interventions within Luxembourg help tackle the situation of GBV in education.



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### **National Report: Objectives**

In the context of our project, the overall objective is the collection of information regarding gender-based violence in vocational education, aiming to enhance the current understanding of the aspects related to GBV in VET in each participating country.

In particular, the specific research objectives in this national report are: (a) to deeply understand the roots of the problem, (b) to explore the experiences of the project target groups in terms of their capacities to counter GBV and (c) to identify their needs and gaps in order to develop a targeted training tools providing practical guidelines on how to report a fact. At the same time, as previously noted, an equally important objective of the desk research will be (d) the identification of relevant good practices that could be adapted and adopted in the framework of the project.

In line with the above, the main research questions that the national report will seek to address are:

1. “What is the current situation and the existing needs in preventing and combatting gender-based violence in vocational education in Luxembourg?” and
2. “What is considered as a timeless, effective and transferable good practice in combatting GBV in vocational education and work-integrated learning contexts?”

At this point, it should be highlighted that research findings and results about GBV in vocational education specifically are limited, on both EU and national level. Undoubtedly, this further stresses the need and value of the project, including the present desk research and the subsequent primary research that will be conducted by the project partners.

Nonetheless, gender-based violence occurs at all levels of education and across various disciplines. Thus, looking at the phenomenon from the angle of secondary or post-secondary education in general can equally offer important information for vocational schools.



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## The National Context

### 1.1. The national VET system

Vocational Education and Training in the Slovak republic is defined and legislatively regulated by the Law No. 61 of 2015. Under this law the vocational education is understood as an educational process, in which knowledge, skills and competences are necessary for a specific vocation, group of vocations or execution of vocational activities. It is divided into theoretical and practical education.

The system of Vocational education and Training in Slovakia is based on the model established in the 1970s, which focus was to provide all students with at least upper secondary education, primarily through vocational schools. The reform of the vocational education system introduced with Law No. 61 of 2015 introduced additional elements of the dual vocational education, which is based on practical learning in the work environment provided by partner employers, which have contracts with individual students. (Cedefop, 2016)

VET education in Slovakia is predominantly provided at the upper secondary level. Pre-school and Primary school educational levels provide for mostly general education. Lower secondary level vocational programs have a small number of learners. Lower secondary, upper secondary as well as post-secondary levels of VET in Slovakia are provided by secondary vocational schools, or SOŠ – stredná odborná škola. System of VET is highly regulated thanks to strict regulation and extensive curricula. System of secondary vocational schools consists mainly of public schools. However, the number of private and church schools has gradually increased since 1990. In the school year 2021/2022 85,4% of students studied at public schools, 11,4% at private schools and only 3,2 at church-affiliated schools. The total number of students at vocational schools in Slovakia in 2021 was 121 470 students, which is continuously decreasing from 202 621 students in 2000. (CVTI, 2021)

VET in Slovakia is strictly regulated by the state. Wide variety of secondary VET programs ensures a high level of vocational education among youth as well as reduces the dropout rate in the sector. In 2019 91,3% of population between 20 – 24 years of age finished at least upper-secondary education (in comparison to 82,7% in EU-28) and in that same year only 6,9% of 18 to 24 years old left the educational system before graduating (in comparison to 11,0% in EU-28). (Cedefop, 2020)



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### 1.1.2. Secondary Education

The VET in Slovakia generally starts at 15 years of age, and can be categorized into following ISCED levels:

- ISCED 2 level, there are 2-3 years programs mainly for students who were not able to finish the elementary school education. In some cases these programs finish with vocational certificates, but are largely finished with proof of apprenticeships.

- ISCED 3 level, 4 years programs with various shares of practical education, which are finished with maturita (graduation exam) allowing students to continue their studies in tertiary level at universities. Students may also receive a vocational certificate. (ISCED 354). Additionally there are 3 year programs, which are finished only with vocational certificate, but without maturita and do not allow students to continue in tertiary level. (ISCED 353) (Cedefop, 2016)

Vocational education and training in Slovakia represents a traditionally strong part of the Slovak educational system. In spite of dropping numbers of students in the secondary VET programs and increasing interest in other educational focuses, the share of VET students remains amongst the highest across the EU. However, there is an interesting trend within the secondary VET sector, where the interest in the upper secondary programs at ISCED 3 level, with maturita graduation exam, which allows students to continue in tertiary level education, remains strong (ISCED 354). However the 3 year study programs with only vocational certificates (ISCED 353) not allowing tertiary level education are continuously falling out of interest of the students. (CVTI, 2022)

In the school year 2021/2022 there were in total 416 vocational secondary schools in Slovakia, which accounted for the total number of 121 470 students. In this school there were more enrolled students 40 803 in comparison to the graduates at 30 098. (CVTI, 2022)

### 1.1.3. Dual Education System

Historically, in former Czechoslovakia there were strong ties between the vocational education sector and the industrial sectors. Every bigger company had established its own company school, which offered education in what would today be called dual education system. However, the ties between the vocational schools and companies were loosened in the early 1990s during the years of the economic transformation,



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when many of the companies went bankrupt, were overtaken by foreign investors, or lost interest in systematic development of VET due to shifting interests.

During the years after 2010, the public debate shifted and the problem of decreasing number of VET students and increasing share of students of humanities, the employers started to indicate the unbalance on the labour market, which has continuously started to affect also the tertiary level. (Cedefop, 2016)

Therefore, with the legislative change in 2015 the system of Dual education was introduced in the school year 2015/2016. It was piloted in close cooperation with Wirtschaftskammer Österreich and was based on German and Austrian models. The change brought deeper involvement of companies in VET as well as raising focus of practical education and regulation of VET based on the needs of the labour market. Increasing role of social partners in shaping the sector varies from planning and defining the curricula, accreditation process, planning and approving the numbers of educational places, etc.

#### 1.1.4. VET at higher (tertiary) education

In Slovakia at tertiary education level there are at the moment no universities of applied sciences and no practically oriented bachelor's programs. The planned National Programme for the Development of Education and Training plans to carry out substantial reforms to address this problem in the next ten years.

Currently there are 35 higher education institutions (including 12 private) in Slovakia offering Vocational education at tertiary level. These offer bachelor, master and PhD studies and basic and applied research in various fields. In the school year of 2021/2022 there were 133.558 students in tertiary study programs. Slovak technical university is the second largest university in the country based on the number of students. (MŠVVaŠ SR, 2021)

#### 1.1.5. Adult education

Adults who did not finish the secondary level of education or who are willing to acquire additional vocational certificates or maturita can do so in special evening study programs provided by the secondary schools. This way they can acquire a license for execution of certain regulated vocation, or they can proceed with their studies at tertiary level at universities. (Cedefop, 2020)

Additionally, there is a system of adult vocational education provided by state or public providers. This system consists of providing accredited courses on a principle of requalification, re-skilling or up-skilling of either



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individuals who already hold certain vocational qualification or individuals without previous vocational qualification. These measures are designed primarily as active labour market policies with the goal to enable job-entry for job-seekers and thus to lower the unemployment rate. Or they are provided to existing employees and specialists in order to combat the challenges of technical developments and changing needs of the labour market. These measures are primarily financed by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Family.

#### 1.1.6. VET Governance

The system of Vocational education and training in Slovakia is strictly regulated. The highest authority is the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic (Ministerstvo školstva vedy výskumu a športu SR). In the sector of secondary vocational schools the authorities of Self-governing regions play an important role as founders of secondary vocational schools, thus the ministry oversees the whole system, but the secondary schools are subordinated directly to the Self-governing regions. The VET sector is specific also by the involvement of employer’s interest organizations, who are represented in the Government council for VET (Rada vlády SR pre OVP) and 8 Regional councils for VET.

The system of the adult education is simultaneously regulated by the Ministry of Social affairs and Family of the Slovak republic (Ministerstvo práce sociálnych vecí a rodiny SR), which regulates and appropriates the funding for continuous education measures as labour market policy.

#### 1.1.8. Sexuality Education

In Slovakia, sexuality education was not introduced into school curricula and currently there is ongoing debate about introducing sexuality education as a necessary part of school education, even a separate subject. At the moment, the topic is partially educated in the subjects of biology and ethics or religion, however only from the perspective of a given subject. There are initiatives for broadening the scope of sexuality education in schools, however these depend on the favour and willingness of school-director or individual pedagogues and if, then are implemented only as extra-curricular activities.



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### National Legal Framework

<b>Legal definition of GBV</b>	The Slovak legislation does not clearly define the term gender based violence, and the regulatory legal framework in the Slovak republic focuses on substitute terms of <b>domestic violence</b> instead, which is current legal praxis understood mostly as violence committed against women. In legal system of the Slovak republic there is a lack in legal definition of the Gender Based Violence, which thus hinders further subsequent legislation in this area.
<b>Penal Code of the Slovak republic</b>	By extension, the various provisions concerning the area of gender-based violence are part of the <b>Penal Code</b> . However, as there is no legal definition of GBV, none of these explicitly relate to the issue of Gender Based Violence and are instead defined as various different transgressions.  Additionally, the legislative wording of the Penal code and other <b>legal regulations in Slovakia is predominantly gender-neutral</b> . Exception to the rule is the legal offence of rape, which in Slovak legislation is defined as offence committed exclusively against women.
<b>Antidiscrimination Act Nr. 264 of 2004.</b>	Harassment and sexual harassment are subject only to Civil Law and civil penalties in the Slovak legislation and are regulated only by the <b>Antidiscrimination Act</b> . Other civil legislation, as e.g. labour law, is also only back-referenced to the Antidiscrimination Act.
<b>Istanbul Convention in Slovakia</b>	The ratification of the <b>Istanbul Convention in the Slovak republic</b> has been subject to long political and public debates. In 2019 the Slovak parliament passed the motion binding the Slovak republic <b>not to ratify</b> the Convention. Then in 2020 the Slovak parliament passed the final rejection of the Istanbul Convention. This was negated by the President of the republic, however after the 2020 parliamentary decision it cannot be returned back to the parliament by the President of the republic. Therefore, after the final signature by the President, the Slovak republic represents the country which definitely did not accept the Istanbul Convention.





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The ratification process has been contested mainly by the Catholic Church, its affiliate organizations, but also other conservative organizations within the society. During the last decade it became part of several pre-election campaigns. The conservative opponents of the Istanbul convention described it as a legislation promoting the so-called gender ideology. The arguments of the more liberal proponents of the ratification of the Istanbul Convention focused on the importance of the document in elimination of gender-based violence. The gravest subject of the political and public discussions around the topic was the definition of the concept of gender and its political and administrative implications.

The question of gender definition and its implications are becoming one of the most politically discussed questions. The discussion is basically lead between the conservative circles coming mainly from catholic and nationalistic circles. On the other part stand more liberal and progressive movements within politics and society. And with growing polarisation among the parties on the political spectre, the clear definition of gender becomes one and its acceptance becomes one of the defining signs of different political movements and parties on both sides of the political spectrum. This political and societal discussion and opposition towards it is one of the inhibitive factors for the dealing with the issues such as GBV in other fields such as academic environment or VET.

### Gender Equality in the Slovak Republic

The Equality Index is a comprehensive indicator that measures the equality aspect of women and men and helps to monitor progress on equality between women and men over time, based on the Strategic Framework of the European Union (EU). In 2021, Slovakia scored 56 out of 100 points and thus ranked 24th, which represents a score 12 points lower than the EU average. The Slovak Republic is followed only by Romania, Hungary and Greece. (EIGE, 2021)

The best results were achieved by Slovakia in the field of education, in which it ranked 12th with a score of 61.6 points. This domain tracks indicators such as educational achievement, i.e. the proportion of women



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and men with completed tertiary education and the participation of women and men in formal and non-formal education and training throughout their life, as well as segregation in tertiary education through the percentage of women and men among students in the fields of education, health, social welfare, humanities and arts. On the contrary, the greatest room for improvement can be seen in the area of power, where Slovakia ranked 23rd with 30.7 points. This domain examines the representation of women and men in national parliaments, governments, regional or local councils, as well as the balance in economic decision-making, which is reflected in the share of women and men on the boards of the largest companies listed on stock exchanges and in national central banks. (EIGE, 2021)

## **Gender-Based Violence in the Slovak Republic**

### **Gender-based violence in statistics of National Hotline for Women Experiencing Violence**

Due to the spread of coronavirus Covid-19 in the Slovak Republic, women reported domestic violence more often, which was also reflected in the higher congestion of the National Hotline for Women Experiencing Violence. In 2021, National Hotline recorded 2466 received calls. Comparing calls in 2021 from women experiencing violence with calls in 2020, we see an increase of 8%. The pandemic and the related measures imposed (e.g. curfews, restrictions on businesses and services, etc.) have meant that, despite efforts to protect the population, there has been a greater risk of stressful situations in closed households and violence in families. With the easing of measures, women began to contact various organizations more often, as evidenced by the increase in phone calls to the National Hotline. (Víteková M., 2022)

National Hotline registered 860 calls from women experiencing violence, representing 24% of all incoming calls. Of these, 454 women with experience of violence contacted the hotline for the first time in 2021. The age interface of the calling women was 31–39 years. Women who contacted the National Hotline most often lived in a violent relationship. Calls were also coming from individuals living with a woman who were experiencing violence. 20 men who were experiencing violence turned to the National hotline, they were provided with contacts on organizations dedicated to domestic violence. (Víteková M., 2022)



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### **Gender-based violence in police and judicial statistics**

According to police statistics, in 2021, the police registered 1413 records of crimes of violence in close relationships, which represents a 17% decrease compared to 2020. The records show that 721 cases concerned domestic violence and 613 cases of intimate partner violence against women. Violence also involved intimate partner violence against men, amounting to 79 cases. Among the most common forms of violence committed was psychological violence. A more significant part of 84%, was dangerous threatening. The fewest records related to intimate partner violence were against men. (Očenášová Z., 2022 b)

There were 721 cases of domestic violence. In most cases, an adult child of the injured person, parent, brother or grandchild was listed as the perpetrator. Psychological violence was reported at 56%, and economic violence at 24%. In the case of parental violence against children, it was mainly psychological violence, but also abuse. Psychological violence accounted for 52% of all cases of domestic violence, which includes the crime of dangerous threatening. This was followed by economic violence and intimate partner and child abuse. In 2021, 10 murdered persons of relatives are registered. Regarding sexual violence, the police registered 21 acts, of which 16 were cases of child sexual abuse. (Očenášová Z., 2022 b)

If we take a look at the judicial data, 2.012 people were convicted of violence against partners. Out of these, 1.052 were cases of domestic violence, 920 cases were intimate partner violence against women and 40 cases were intimate partner violence against men. The data almost coincides with the police reports. The ratio between intimate partner and domestic violence is almost balanced, with violence against women significantly prevalent in intimate partner violence cases. 1.870 persons were convicted directly by the court or as part of the approval of a plea agreement. This represented 93% of men and 7% of women. Another situation occurred with ration amongst victims, with women and girls predominating 77% versus 23% of men and boys victims. Cases of domestic violence slightly predominate in judicial data on convicts, accounting for 55%, compared to intimate partner violence against women 44%. Where in the case of police data the ratio was the opposite, where 56% were intimate partner violence against women and 40% domestic violence. (Očenášová Z., 2022b)

The data shows that 920 men have been tried for crimes related to intimate partner violence against women. 92% were convicted or found guilty as part of the approval of the plea agreement, and 735 of them were sentenced by the court to imprisonment. The year 2021 records 14 men convicted of murdering or killing their partner and 19 men for sexualized violence. The crime of dangerous threatening prevailed by convicted



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492 men, followed by the abuse of a close and trusted person by convicted 99 men, and bodily injury by 89 men.

### **Gender-based violence in the VET sector**

As described in previous chapters, the Slovak policies towards GBV focus mainly on intimate partner violence, or domestic violence or in limited cases sexual violence outside of partnership. Therefore, the GBV in VET and universities is non-existent as an issue. And few of the cases that have become publicly known in the past were dealt with as individual, isolated cases, and remained without greater response at an institutional level, or without a push for development of policy frameworks. As such, gender-based violence is rarely regulated by specifically designed policies in institutional settings. At the moment, secondary schools, universities or VET institutions in general have very rarely any regulation concerning gender-based violence. In most cases only universities have their own codes of conduct in which references to Antidiscrimination Act of 2004 or sexual harassment in general are made. However, there is a lack of specific structures designed to deal with the issue of gender-based violence across the whole sector.

Important statistics were provided by research of the Institute for Labour and Family Research (Inštitút pre výskum práce a rodiny). It implemented a survey among university students in 2019 – 2020 on the issue of gender and sexual harassment. The findings provided that there is a significant experience with these types of gender-based violence among this target group. Namely 76% people experienced gender harassment, 46% unwanted sexual attention and 3% experienced sexual coercion. (Kuruc A., Valkovičová V., 2020)

The topics of gender equality and GBV are not among the priorities of Slovak universities, schools and other educational institutions. Moreover, as a result of lacking policy frameworks in the field of VET or education in general, these issues are not part of their funding schemes conditions. The greatest part of the research and activities conducted in these areas have been funded by the European Social Fund or EEA and Norway grants. The most important contact point in this field is the subsidiary research organization of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family – The institute for Labour and Family Research. However, in spite of outputs of the mapping and research of the issue, the whole educational sector lacks its translation into effective policy frameworks. Further, the problematic issue with gender-based violence in Slovakia is, that among the few initiatives and activities in this field, these are only focused on tertiary level and academic environment. There has been no significant activity in the area of gender based violence at the level of



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secondary education in general, or more specifically at the level of secondary vocational schools. The most advanced research documents issued on the topic by the Institute for Labour and Family Research covered only the tertiary academic level. Notably the Guidline for Universities – “What to do with sexual harassment” issued by the Institute. (Kuruc A., Valkovičová V., 2020)

## National policies, strategies and resources

### National strategies

#### 1. **National Strategy for Equality between Women and Men and Equal Opportunities in the Slovak Republic for 2021-2027**

Actions and activities focus on areas such as:

- violence against women,
- bullying,
- sexual harassment,
- discrimination against women in education, science and research,
- discrimination against women in employment and jobseekers,
- the pay gap,
- invisible work,
- women and their representation in leadership positions,
- ensuring equality between women and men at institutional level.

In 2021, the Slovak Republic adopted several binding documents that significantly affect equality between women and men in Slovakia. In April 2021, it was the "National Strategy for Equality between Women and Men and Equal Opportunities in the Slovak Republic for 2021-2027" together with the relevant Action Plan for Equality between Women and Men and Equal Opportunities for 2021-2027".

#### 2. **National Action Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women for 2022-2027**



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It defines the basis for:

- providing institutional support to women victims of violence and their children and includes the strengthening of the legal and strategic framework,
- the promotion of existing and the creation of new support services available,
- training for professions dealing with violence against women (law, medicine, psychology, theology, etc.),
- primary prevention, as well as monitoring and research.

The Ministry of Social Affairs, in cooperation with NGOs and state and public administration bodies, prepared the "National Action Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women for 2022-2027", which was approved by the Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic on 12.1.2022.

The Action Plan complements the National Strategy for Equality between Women and Men and Equal Opportunities in the Slovak Republic for 2021-2027.

#### National policies

1. The Institute for Labour and Family Research issued in 2020 the **Guideline for High Schools – “What to do with sexual harassment”** (Kuruc A., Valkovičová V., 2020), which is the most advanced documents in Slovak conditions dealing with the topic of gender based violence and gender harassment. It defines:
  - Sexual harassment and its signs
  - Incidence of sexual harassment at universities abroad and in Slovakia
  - Sexual harassment and its implications for individuals and collectives
  - Prevention instruments in academic environment
  - Information and counselling for affected
2. Online anonymous counselling of Institute for research of Labour and Family – webpage **“This is equality”** ([www.totojerovnost.eu](http://www.totojerovnost.eu)), which provides support and information to the victims or individuals experiencing sexual harassment in work or school environment. The webpage provides information on:



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- Legal instruments
  - Support with writing and filing a complaint to employer, school directorate, work-inspectorate, etc.
  - Support with writing a legal action based on Antidiscrimination Act
  - Support with other solutions of sexual harassment
3. **Slovak national center for Human rights** (Slovenské národné stredisko pre ľudské práva) (<http://www.snslp.sk/>) By provision of legal services, the Centre issues expert opinions on matters of discrimination, represents participants free of charge in proceedings for violation of the principle of equal treatment (including sexual harassment) in court, and provides legal assistance to victims of discrimination, sexual harassment and expressions of intolerance. The centre has regional offices in Bratislava, Banská Bystrica, Košice and Žilina.
  4. **Centre for Civil and Human Rights** (Poradňa pre občianske a ľudské práva)  
In particular the Centre promotes respect for human rights in Slovakia, with a focus on the rights of the Roma ethnic minority, which is increasingly facing problems of social exclusion. It also deals with other forms of discrimination and provides free legal advice.
  5. Initiative **Citizen, Democracy and Responsibility** (Občan, demokracia a zodpovednosť) ([www.odz.sk](http://www.odz.sk))  
It provides consultations and products for public and private administrations in the field of anti-discrimination, gender equality and women's human rights.

### Support services and useful contacts

1. **Protected shelters / social facilities** – there is a network state, or non-governmental facilities which provide protected shelters to the victims of violence. These are geographically spread so that they are generally accessible and provide accommodation, legal support, social support and social protection. The initiative “**Stop Violence**” (**Zastavme násilie**) publishes a regularly updated list of all such facilities in Slovakia. ([Link here](#))
2. **National hotline for women experiencing violence**, is available 24/7 and is free of charge on **0800 212 212**.  
The counsellors on the line are prepared to discuss all kinds of violence that women encounter in their lives. In a situation of emergency, they also provide crisis assistance and all the necessary information. They also answer basic questions about legal aid, as well as provide assistance in finding



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help (including accommodation) in the region. In a situation of acute threat and with the consent of the woman, counsellors on the line can contact the police, emergency medical service or another organisation that can help the woman.

3. Initiative “**Stop Violence**” (Zastavme násilie) provides Counselling on the Stop Violence website for people with experience of sexual violence (<http://www.zastavmenasilie.gov.sk/poradna/>)

In the "Counselling" section, information and advice are available for persons who have experienced domestic or sexual violence, as well as for people who witness such violence. The site includes a list and map of organisations that provide assistance in case of violence. The site also provides an explanation of when, how and why to seek medical (both medical and psychological) help and the police.

4. **Centre of legal support** (Centrum právnej pomoci) (<http://www.centrumpravnejpomoci.sk/potrebujem-pravnu-pomoc>)

For people in need of free legal advice and who have a low income or are in material need and are dealing with problems with discrimination, they can contact the Legal Aid Centre, which has branches throughout Slovakia. The exact procedure for contacting the Centre.

5. **Centre for Civil and Human Rights** (Poradňa pre občianske a ľudské práva)

In particular the Centre promotes respect for human rights in Slovakia, with a focus on the rights of the Roma ethnic minority, which is increasingly facing problems of social exclusion. It also deals with other forms of discrimination and provides free legal advice.

6. Information website [www.diskriminacia.sk](http://www.diskriminacia.sk) with a broad information on antidiscrimination and sexual and gender discrimination.

### Best practice No. 1

- [zastavmenasilie.gov.sk](http://zastavmenasilie.gov.sk) website in Slovakia

<p><b>Title of good practice (in EN and national language, if applicable):</b></p>	<p><a href="http://zastavmenasilie.gov.sk">zastavmenasilie.gov.sk</a> – „Stop violence” website</p>
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<b>Country:</b>	Slovakia
<b>Short Description (exact nature of problem it addressed):</b>	<p>The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and family of the Slovak republic developed a dedicated website for the victims of gender-based and domestic violence. In Slovak conditions this is the first-ever online service providing the victims with all-around information and counsel for affected individuals.</p> <p>Website provides information on legal protection instruments, individual support information, contact lists of protected shelters across the country, and other direct useful contacts, which are the first contact points. Additionally the webpage provides a non-stop hotline for victims, which can with consent of a victim contact police, rescue or other first-aid services in case of need.</p> <p>Website provides the first online tool for reporting gender-based violence or domestic violence and involves basically all state and non-state actors on a national level.</p>
<b>Trends and Potential Benefits from this Good Practice</b>	<p>Online website with all necessary information for a victim in one place, from legal instruments, first-point contacts, to protected shelters in accessible distance.</p> <p>Possibility to report violence and ask for help by contacting relevant authorities and instructions on further conduct. Website provides all necessary instructions from first-contact point to reporting and protection measures.</p>
<b>How this Good Practice could be used/transferred</b>	<p>The principle could be transferred and altered directly for the sector of education. The website specifically designed as the first contact point for victims of gender-based violence should be made for the target group of students, teachers or parents. This way the information and instruments could respect the specific needs and conditions of the target group. The website could be also localised to the national conditions.</p>
<b>Core criteria it addresses</b>	Accessibility, Complexity of information, Involvement of multiple stakeholders



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<b>Secondary criteria it addresses</b>	Adaptability, Transferability and Financial sustainability
<b>Category of good practice</b>	Online service/tool
<b>Applicability status (local, regional, national, international) and justification</b>	National, sector specific for VET
<b>Website link:</b>	<a href="https://www.zastavmenasilie.gov.sk/en/">https://www.zastavmenasilie.gov.sk/en/</a>
<b>More Info (e.g., staff or stakeholders involved)</b>	Involvement of basically all state and non-state actors in the field of GBV prevention in Slovakia.

## Best practice No. 2

- *Čo so sexuálnym obťažovaním? – Príručka pre vysoké školy* by Institute for research of Labour and Family

<b>Title of good practice (in EN and national language, if applicable):</b>	<i>Čo so sexuálnym obťažovaním? – Príručka pre vysoké školy</i> <i>„What to do with gender harassment?“ – Guidelines for universities</i>
<b>Country:</b>	Slovakia
<b>Short Description (exact nature of</b>	The Institute for Research of Labour and Family is a subsidiary organisation of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. It is one of the most active



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<p><b>problem it addressed):</b></p>	<p>research organisations on a national level in the field of gender-based violence.</p> <p>The guidelines for universities on combating the issue of gender-violence is a first step in direction to not only prepare the field for introduction of comprehensive policy framework, but also for designing an organisational system for combating the GBV in the environment of universities in Slovakia</p>
<p><b>Trends and Potential Benefits from this Good Practice</b></p>	<p>The guideline represents the first documents issued by a state-affiliated organisation on the issue of the combating gender-based violence in educational organisations at tertiary level in Slovakia. It clearly defines the terminology, incidence, impact and prevention-measures related to GBV. In itself it is a first step towards comprehensive GBV prevention policy in this field.</p>
<p><b>How this Good Practice could be used/transferred</b></p>	<p>The sector of VET is similar to the university environment, however it differs in several factors, which require differentiation of effective GBV preventing measures specific for VET. Development of a guideline specific for VET sector would be the highest added value.</p>
<p><b>Core criteria it addresses</b></p>	<p>Relevant, Involvement of multiple stakeholders,</p>
<p><b>Secondary criteria it addresses</b></p>	<p>Adaptable.</p>
<p><b>Category of good practice</b></p>	<p>National policy</p>
<p><b>Applicability status (local, regional, national,</b></p>	<p>National level – awareness raising, policy recommendation</p>



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<b>international) and justification</b>	
<b>Website link:</b>	<a href="https://www.totojerovnost.eu/downloads/Co_so_sexualnym_obtazovanimPriruc_ka_pre_vysoke_skoly.pdf">https://www.totojerovnost.eu/downloads/Co_so_sexualnym_obtazovanimPriruc_ka_pre_vysoke_skoly.pdf</a>
<b>More Info (e.g., staff or stakeholders involved)</b>	Stakeholder involvement – universities, research organisations



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## CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, we can state that there is a lot of “catching-up” to do in Slovak conditions in the field of gender-based violence prevention. The most illustrative fact is that Slovakia is one of only 4 EU Countries which have not ratified the Istanbul Convention, and thus the Slovak legislation and public is only slowly finding ways around the legislative hurdles as well as opposition from some parts of the society.

There is also a substantial lack of research in the gender-based violence phenomenon in the field of education as well as in VET. Subsequently, there is a lack of effective policies as well as effective organisational infrastructure for dealing with GBV. As a result of this, we can only conclude that the GBV in VET is largely under-reported and silently, although unwillingly tolerated. However, without reliable data and knowledge of the scope of the issue, no effective measures or policies can be designed.

Furthermore, although there have been some positive developments, the issue of Gender-based violence is not among the priorities of the relevant authorities in Slovakia neither on national, nor on regional or local level. Furthermore, there is still a need to divide the definition of gender-based violence from domestic violence in the context of public or political debate on the topic. Drafting and implementation of comprehensive legislation is needed. However, there is not enough statistical evidence on the phenomenon apart from police and judicial data, which however cannot tell much about GBV in specific sectors.

And however it is clear that the authorities will have to find ways around the opposition and not-ratification of the Istanbul Convention into national legal framework, further research of the topic from state-affiliated organisations or other actors, will be highly beneficial for this process with regards to the conditions in Slovakia.



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## Annex 6 - National report and best practices of Spain

### NATIONAL REPORT: SPAIN

Desk Research and collection of Best Practices to End GBV in educational structures

<b>Project</b>	<b>END GBV in VET – “Full service to increase capacity and awareness for disrupting gender-based violence in the VET sphere”</b> Project 101049592 — CERV-2021-DAPHNE
<b>Deliverable</b>	Task 2.2 Desk Research and collection of best practices to END GBV in educational settings
<b>Relevant Work package:</b>	WP2 (T2.2)
<b>Date</b>	08/02/2023
<b>Authors</b>	CSV
<b>Status</b>	To be validated by the SC
<b>Version</b>	





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## Executive Summary

The project *END GBV in VET – “Full service to increase capacity and awareness for disrupting gender-based violence in the VET sphere”* aims on piloting support offices in Vocational Education and Training (VET) institutes in an effort to increase their capacity and awareness for addressing gender-based violence in the VET sphere. In this framework, the present National Report aims to offer insights on aspects related to Gender Based Violence in the VET sector in Spain, in terms of the national context regarding the phenomenon of GBV, the national system of VET and the legal, institutional and policy frameworks relating to GBV.

Spain has been from a legal point of view, a reference on the fight against GBV, being one of the first countries of Europe constructing a specific legal framework aimed to aid the vulnerable minorities that were suffering the most because of this phenomenon - women and the members of the LGTB+ community. This compromise was highlighted with the promotion and support of the Istanbul Convention in 2011.

Regarding the issue of GBV in the VET sector, it must be noteworthy that although the legal framework of Spain protects victims against any kind of discrimination based on their religion ethnicity and/or gender, the truth is that there is no specific legal framework neither research targeted towards this specific societal issue, with most politics against violence in schools being articulated around bullying.

However, the change of paradigm in VET, with a considerable increase in its student body in recent years, and the fact that a high percentage of said students come from backgrounds at risk of social exclusion, and therefore, more vulnerable towards suffering violence, highlights the need of specific measures tackling this issue.

Finally, the Report includes a broad record of the national structure of support mechanisms for victims of GBV as well as an inventory of useful resources address GVB in the Educational Sector in Spain. Two best practices implemented on a national level have been identified and analyzed in depth.



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## Introduction

The project END GBV in VET – “Full service to increase capacity and awareness for disrupting gender-based violence in the VET sphere” focuses on piloting support offices in VET institutes in order to increase capacity of VET providers and awareness for combating gender-based violence in the VET sphere. This will be achieved through the development of a capacity-building and training program for students, their teachers/VET staff, and interested parents that will focus on addressing issues relevant to gender-based violence. The training programme will be accompanied by the operation of a full service in the campus that will provide information, training, support, and consultations on issues of GBV.

The present National Report is developed in the framework of Work Package 2 of the project, entitled “Comparative approach on disparities among and within participating countries” and its goal is to offer insights on aspects related to Gender Based Violence in the VET sector in Spain. The Report’s specific research objectives include the deeper understanding of the roots of the problem of GBV in VET and the identification of needs and gaps on a national level regarding the reporting and combating incidents of GBV in the VET sector. The National Report is the result of extensive desk research and the collection of good practices to END GBV in educational structures. The Report starts by discussing the national context regarding the phenomenon of GBV and presents the structure of the VET system in Greece as well as the legal, institutional and policy frameworks relating to GBV on a national level. To continue, the Report presents facts and figures from research focusing on GBV in the education sector; as research on the topic of GBV in the VET sector is lacking. The report, also, maps the national policies, strategies and resources on GBV as well as the support services available for victims/survivors of GBV in Spain. The Report concludes with the presentation of two identified best practices aiming to combat the phenomenon of GBV.

Having said that, and for mere clarification purposes, we consider vital to offer a brief yet comprehensive summary on the key concepts and terms that we are going to be handling throughout this report.



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Thus, gender-based violence – hereon referred as GBV – is considered a structural practice that violates both human rights and fundamental freedoms (Pastor-Gosálbez et al. 2021, p.109), being this practice materialized when an individual suffers any type of discrimination, aggression, harassment or degradation due to their gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation. Consequently, women, LGTBI+ and racial minorities tend to be more affected by this phenomenon (Rubio Grundell 2021, p.1-5).

As beforehand mentioned, the aim of this report is to assess the phenomena of GBV in Spain.

and furthermore, to analyse how this practice affects the educational environment of the country and more specifically the School Related GBV - hereon referred as SRGBV - in the VET environment of Spain in general and the Basque Country in particular.

For doing so, we consider necessary to first provide a background that allows for the reader to assess on the one hand the VET structure in the country both the situation and the existing legal mechanisms surrounding GBV; furthermore, some figures related to GBV will be presented, in order to assess the impact of GBV on the analysed country.

Finally, there will be a section dedicated to the impact that GBV has on VET.

## The National Context

During this section of the report, we will, as beforementioned provide a full picture on the educational system in Spain, for later on provide a more detailed description of the VET National System in the very same country. We will also move forward in order to provide a description of the legal system of the country, as well as an insight on the mechanisms and institutions responsible of ensuring equality.

As it is well-known, gender-based violence has a long history in Spain, dating back to the country's patriarchal and macho culture. For many years, domestic violence and other forms of gender-based violence were largely ignored or normalized, with victims often suffering in silence. However, over the past few decades, there has been growing public awareness of the issue, and a concerted effort to address gender-based violence and promote gender equality. Some key milestones in the history of gender-based violence in Spain include:



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- The passage of the Organic Law on Comprehensive Protection Measures against Gender Violence in 2004, which marked a turning point in the legal recognition and response to gender-based violence.
- The adoption of the Istanbul Convention in 2014, which Spain ratified in 2019, and which provides a comprehensive framework for preventing and combating gender-based violence.
- The emergence of a strong feminist movement in Spain, which has pushed for greater awareness, support, and policy change to address gender-based violence and promote gender equality.
- The recognition of gender-based violence as a public health issue, with healthcare professionals playing an increasingly important role in identifying and supporting victims of gender-based violence.
- The implementation of specialized courts and prosecutors to handle cases of gender-based violence, as well as the establishment of support services and hotlines for victims.
- The inclusion of gender-based violence prevention and education in the national school curriculum, as well as public awareness campaigns to educate the public about the issue.

Despite these efforts, gender-based violence remains a significant issue in Spain, and there is still work to be done to address the root causes of this problem and provide effective support for victims. In the following section of the report, we will go through the historical context of the country, elaborating on the reasons behind GBV in the country, as well as the evolution of the awareness and the understanding of the phenomena.

### *Historical Background of GBV in Spain*

Having said that it is first of all extremely important to mention that Gender Based Violence has been a social issue worldwide since the establishment of the patriarchal dynamics of modern societies, centuries ago. Particularly in Spain, where a combination of a well-established Catholicism and a conservative dictatorship that lasted from 1939 till 1975, which embodied conservative and catholic values, entrenched traditional gender roles that, still to this day, endure.

Therefore, both domestic violence against women and homophobia are still very much present in Spanish society; Gender-based violence is a significant issue in Spain, and has been a focus of public and political attention for many years. According to data from the Spanish government, there were over 80,000 reported cases of gender-based violence in 2020, and over 1,000 women have been killed in acts of gender-based



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violence since the law was passed in 2004. However, and legally speaking, Spain has been an international landmark on its legal treatment of this kind of discrimination, offering a fortified legal framework to the most affected minorities. This apparent contradiction is derived from a very historically polarized society with clashing values among its citizens, as most commonly occurs with countries that have undergone civil conflicts (Torcal & Comellas, 2022).

Having said that, one of the historical reasons why Spain was one of the first countries in Europe to legalize same-sex marriage lies on the socialist government of Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero (2004-2011, PSOE political party). This government, ahead of its times in a lot of senses, and composed by the highest ratio of female politicians to this day was the precursor of the Organic Law 1/2004, of December 28, on Comprehensive Protection Measures against Gender Violence and the Congress of Deputies approving a reform in the criminal code that guaranteed the right for Egalitarian marriage, making Spain the fourth country in the world to allow for the same-sex marriage (Mujeres en la Red. Periódico Feminista, 2005).

This progress is entirely related to the social changes that the Spanish society underwent throughout its democratization process during the late seventies and the eighties, but also due to the political and social movements attached to this transition. In particular, the case of Ana Orantes (1997) is considered the forerunner off the Law Against GBV in Spain, as her circumstances and how her story was presented moved the most traditional pillars of the Spanish society (López Trujillo, 2022). In the absence of both a divorce law until 1981 and a legal framework for protecting the victims of GBV after that divorce – women in Spain were not traditionally encouraged to participate in the workforce during the Francoist dictatorship and they were, therefore economically dependent on their husbands – Ana Orantes had to undergone 40 years of physical, sexual and mental abuse during and after her marriage, since when she was granted the divorce the very same judge forced her to share the house with her ex-husband, as she had no economical means to escape the living situation (Minder, 2020). By sharing her story publicly, she wanted to make violence against women visible and help other victims that were suffering the very same circumstances at a time when there was still no law that protected women from domestic violence (López Trujillo, 2022).

A few days after sharing her testimony on an Andalusian regional television program, Ana Orantes was tortured and later murdered by her ex-husband (López Trujillo, 2022). Her case shocked the entire country, and sparked massive demonstrations calling for legal protection for women, even from the most conservative sectors of society. After the conservative government



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promised a reform in the penal code that never came to be, one of the reasons for the victory of the socialist party in the elections was precisely its promise to guarantee protection to the victims of domestic violence (López Trujillo, 2022). The fact that this government had ministers who openly and publicly identified themselves as members of the LGTB collective, and the support that the president and the other ministers professed to the collective also made other progressive social reforms that encouraged equality possible.

Currently, it is worth mentioning that the Congress of Deputies has given its final approval to the law of “only yes is yes” as recently as August 2022. This legislation is a mandate of the State Pact against Gender-Based Violence that adapts Spanish legislation to the Istanbul Convention. But, above all, it articulates a historical demand of the Spanish feminist movement, which led a massive wave of demonstrations across the country after the sentence of “La Manada” case, in which an eighteen-year-old girl was gang-raped during the festivities of San Fermín in 2016. The sentence concluded that the assailants had been encountered guilty of sexual abuse, not sexual assault. The great visibility given to this case and the indignation caused by the court ruling generated great social pressure to modify the law.

### The Spanish Education System

Within this section we will portray a general description of the Spanish Schooling System in order to offer a wide perspective on how the schooling system, in general, is organized and more specifically how the VET system operates in the country. In doing so, we will be able to contextualize the phenomena we will be analysing.

First of all, it is important to highlight that Spanish Education has a decentralized approach, meaning by this that at the end of the day all of them are governed by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, known as *Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional*. The competencies that the Ministry has are on the following divided and allocated to the local autonomous communities, known as *Comunidades Autónomas*, which ultimately have the responsibility to manage the fundings, generate the curriculum and determine education standards (La Moncloa, 2022).

That said, the education system is divided into four phases, infant school, which goes from ages 0 to 6 – *educación infantil* – primary education, which is compulsory and goes from ages 6 to 12 – *educación primaria*;



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*and the secondary education (separated into a compulsory part and a post-compulsory part).* Compulsory Secondary Education (ESO) consisting of four courses, takes place in between the age range of 12 to 16; on this level we could also include basic VET. Post-compulsory secondary education refers to four independent courses that require possession of the ESO title in order to be completed: the baccalaureate or bachillerato (two courses), intermediate level vocational training, intermediate level of professional training in plastic arts and design, and Middle Grade sports teachings. Superior study levels include high VET and university studies respectively (Don Quijote, 2019).

It is also worth mentioning that Spanish authorities have strongly promoted VET as a way of addressing the high unemployment rates in the country, and subsequently the number of students has risen dramatically over the last five years, with a 43,3 % increase of the students attending high VET courses (La Moncloa, 2022).

#### *The VET System in Spain*

As mentioned beforehand, the role of VET has dramatically changed over the past five years. Therefore, and taking into account the nature of the research we are tackling, during the next section we will provide a more comprehensive overview on the Spanish VET, in order to set the framework that will allow us to analyse the effects that GBV has on the Spanish VET.

Therefore, the current Spanish VET offers more than 160 different qualifications belonging to 26 different professional families. Spanish VET, as it also happens worldwide is often characterized by a higher level of practicability and applicability in comparison with other learning modalities (Cedefop, 2022).

Thus, within each professional family the following levels can be found:

- Basic Vocational Training Cycles or FPB. Once completed, the student obtains the title of Basic Professional of the cycle. In this case, they are compulsory courses offered and would correspond to the Compulsory Secondary Education degree.
- Medium Grade Cycles or FPGM. They lead to the title of Technician and are part of post-compulsory secondary education.
- Higher Degree Cycles or FPGS. The student obtains a Técnico Superior title and is paired with higher education.



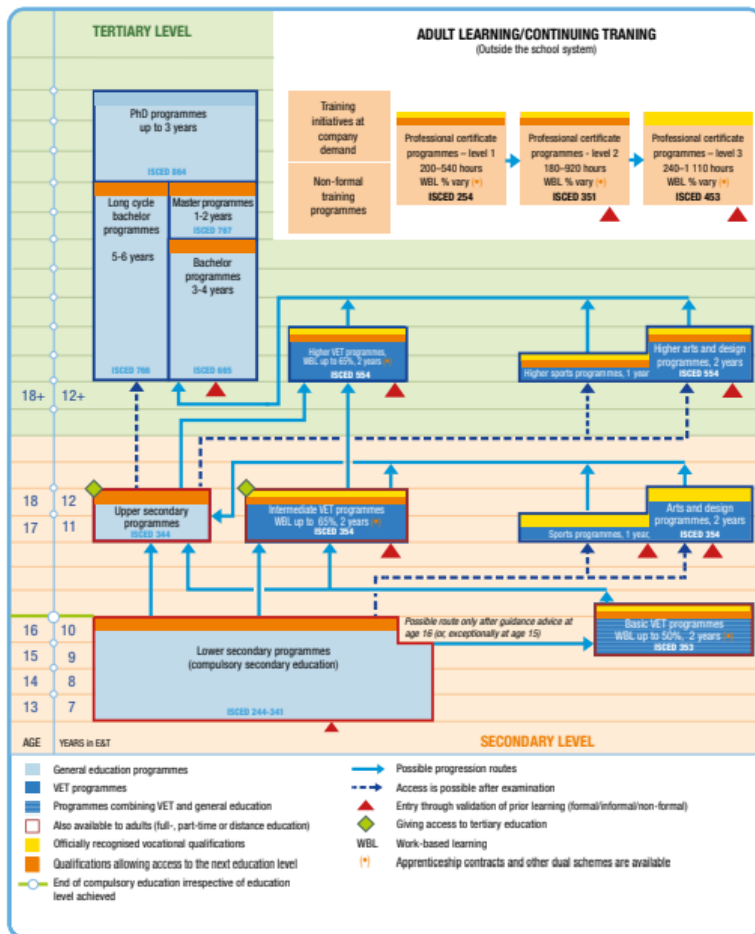


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All in all, 50% of vocational training students are divided into three professional branches: health, administration and management; information and communication technology; and sociocultural and community services (TodoFP, 2022).

That said and down below, we can take a look at the integral components of the Spanish VET through a graphic created by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, in order to ensure a more comprehensive understanding on the division of Adult Learning in Spain:



NB: ISCED-P 2011. The Spanish education system is not referenced to EQF levels.  
Source: Cedefop and ReferNet Spain.

(Cedefop;2022, p.67)



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However, and taking into account the nature of the project, we consider it highly relevant to include a gender perspective on the VET System in Spain in the following section of the report.

### *Gender perspectives in the Spanish VET*

First of all, it is important to point out that the technical VET continues to be dominated by a male audience. Following the same fashion, care-oriented vocational training branches tend to be more dominated by female profiles (Cedefop, 2022).

Despite the higher relevance of women in tertiary education in all OECD, in the VET programs managed by the educational authorities, men are the majority: 71.1% in basic VET, 56.9% in intermediate VET and 52.4% in higher VET programmes (TodoFP, 2022).

The societal gender stereotypes, and especially the educational level and occupation of the students' families, are the main factors influencing their professional aspirations (Cedefop, 2022).

Thus, it is statistically shown that while higher-income families support their children in breaking professional gender stereotypes, working-class families, the largest consumers of professional training in Spain, tend to perpetuate gender stereotypes to a greater extent (EducaWeb, 2020). This encourages women, especially, to continue to be concentrated in traditionally female jobs that are lower paid, and that contribute to fostering the wage gap in the country (EducaWeb, 2020).

Currently, Training Centres are still working on different programs that aim to reduce the gender gap in VET, being mostly focused on reducing the gender gap in the most masculinized sectors, promoting the hiring of women in the technical field, and ensuring a higher female presence among the teaching staff of technical training cycles. Unfortunately, there is no specific policy to promote the incorporation of men in the feminized sectors (TodoFP, 2022).

### *Legal Framework*

First of all, we consider necessary to provide comprehensive feedback on the Spanish national legal framework in order to be able to list all the legal mechanisms that are at the moment in place in order to protect the victims of GBV in the country. This legal framework will be expanded on the following section on a more elaborate manner in order to address the background of said laws on a more rigorous manner.



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Having said that, it is first of all worth mentioning that the legal framework in Spain for addressing gender-based violence is comprehensive and includes a range of laws, policies, and initiatives aimed at preventing and addressing this issue. Some of the key elements of the legal framework in Spain include:

- **The Istanbul Convention**, which was ratified by Spain in 2019, and provides a comprehensive framework for preventing and combating gender-based violence. The Convention includes provisions related to prevention, protection, prosecution, and cooperation, and requires states to take a holistic and victim-centred approach to addressing gender-based violence.
- The **Organic Law 1/2004 on Comprehensive Protection Measures against Gender Violence, which was passed in 2004** and defines gender-based violence as any act of violence, whether physical or psychological, committed against a woman by a man. This law provides a comprehensive framework for preventing and addressing gender-based violence, including protection measures for victims, harsher penalties for perpetrators, and prevention and education programs.
- The **Criminal Code**, which includes specific provisions related to gender-based violence, including aggravated offenses and harsher penalties for perpetrators. The Criminal Code also recognizes that gender-based violence is a form of discrimination against women and provides for the protection of victims. Thus, the Spanish Criminal Code contains several specific provisions that deal with gender violence, including:
  - Article 153, which establishes penalties for habitual mistreatment of a partner or ex-partner, which can be punished with up to two years in prison.
  - Article 173, which criminalizes sexual assault, including rape, sexual abuse and sexual harassment.
  - Article 192 bis, which punishes with a prison sentence of six months to two years who, in the sphere of the couple or ex-partner, violates a restraining or protection order issued by the judge.
  - Article 197, which criminalizes harassment and psychological violence in the family or partner environment, punishable with penalties that can reach up to two years in prison.
  - Article 509, which establishes penalties for harassment, including sexual harassment, which can be punished with fines or imprisonment from three months to two years.



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- **The Spanish Constitution Article 14**, which declares that *"all the Spanish citizens are equal before the law, without any discrimination based on birth, race, sex, religion, opinion or any other personal or social condition or circumstance"* (Agencia Estatal Boletín Oficial del Estado, 2011). Furthermore, the article 9.2 of the very same legal document establishes that *"it is up to the public powers to promote the conditions so that the freedom and equality of the individual and of the groups in which he or she is integrated are real and effective; remove the obstacles that prevent or hinder its fullness and facilitate the participation of all citizens in political, economic, cultural and social life"* (Agencia Estatal Boletín Oficial del Estado, 2011), after recognizing the free development of the personality as a fundamental right of every citizen.
- The Law on Same-Sex Marriage (Ley de Matrimonio Homosexual), which was passed in 2005 and allows same-sex couples to marry and adopt children on the same terms as opposite-sex couples.
- The Law on Gender Identity (Ley de Identidad de Género), which was passed in 2007 and recognizes the right of transgender people to self-determination and to change their gender on official documents without undergoing medical or psychiatric treatment.
- The Law on Hate Crimes and Discrimination, Law 3/2016 (Ley contra la Discriminación y el Discurso de Odio), which criminalizes hate crimes and hate speech based on sexual orientation and gender identity, among other grounds.

Overall, the legal framework in Spain for addressing gender-based violence is considered one of the most comprehensive and progressive in the world, and reflects a strong commitment to promoting gender equality and protecting the rights of women.

### *Legal Measures and Context for GBV in Spain*

Within this section, we will expose the legal mechanisms surrounding the protection of the individuals against GBV in the Spanish state, as well as the stakeholders and public institutions that ensure this protection.

Having said that, any type of discrimination based on gender is considered punitive act in Spain, with the article 14 of the Spanish Constitution declaring that *"all the Spanish citizens are equal before the law, without any discrimination based on birth, race, sex, religion, opinion or any other personal or social condition or*



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*circumstance*” (Agencia Estatal Boletín Oficial del Estado, 2011). Furthermore, the article 9.2 of the very same legal document establishes that “it is up to the public powers to promote the conditions so that the freedom and equality of the individual and of the groups in which he or she is integrated are real and effective; remove the obstacles that prevent or hinder its fullness and facilitate the participation of all citizens in political, economic, cultural and social life” (Agencia Estatal Boletín Oficial del Estado, 2011), after recognizing the free development of the personality as a fundamental right of every citizen. That is why it can be concluded that in Spain it is legally punishable to discriminate against any person based on their gender; in addition, and due to the greater vulnerability of certain collectives to GBV, more specific legal measures have been taken, being these legal measures articulated around the existing patriarchal power dynamics.

Thus, this phenomenon has been legally typified through the Organic Law on Comprehensive Protection Measures against Gender Violence on December 28, 2004, describing a crime against personal integrity that is committed due to the dominance or power that men exercise over women. This crime includes physical and psychological violence, threats, coercion, assaults on sexual freedom and arbitrary deprivation of liberty, among other criminal offenses (Agencia Estatal Boletín Oficial del Estado, 2004).

In addition, in 2005 a specific body was created to deal with these cases. Therefore, the competent courts are the Courts for Violence against Women, in order to ensure protection and support (Ministerio de Justicia, 2009).

At an international level, Spain was one of the main promoters of the Istanbul Convention, which is considered the most comprehensive international instrument to combat all forms of violence against women and girls. It recognizes that violence constitutes a serious violation of the Human Rights of women and girls. It is a legally binding treaty that guides all signatory countries and public institutions in their efforts to end violence against women. It is based on four axes: Prevention, Protection, Judicial prosecution and Policy coordination. It was opened for signature on May 11, 2011 and entered into force three years later. Spain ratified it in 2014.

Regarding the LGBTQI+ community, it is specifically collected on the Law 3/2016 of the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July that Law all people, regardless of their sexual orientation, sexual diversity or gender identity, have the right to equal treatment before the law and the right to be protected against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (Agencia Estatal Boletín Oficial del Estado, 2016).



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Furthermore, the 510 article of the Criminal Code punishes hate crimes, the definition of a hate crime being:

“A) any kind of criminal offense, including offenses against persons or property, where the victim, location, or target of the offense is chosen because of their actual or perceived connection, sympathy, affiliation, support, or group membership as the ones defined on the following B subsection.

B) A group must be based on a common characteristic of its members, such as their actual or perceived race, national or ethnic origin, language, religion, gender, age, intellectual or physical disability, sexual orientation or other similar factor” (OSCE, 2003).

Quite recently, as briefly mentioned during the introduction, during December 2022 the Law of Comprehensive Guarantee of Sexual Freedom was approved by the Congress of Deputies, although it is better known as the Law of Sexual Freedom and, above all, as a law of "only yes is yes".

After more than a year of procedures, it was approved in August by the Spanish Congress of Deputies with 205 votes in favour and 141 against and entered into force on October 7. His critics, however, believe that he violates the presumption of innocence and equality before the law. And a month after it entered into force, it generated a new controversy. A "legal hole" in the rule caused its application to have an unintended consequence for its promoters: reduced sentences for some convicted. It is therefore expected that a process of modification of said law will begin shortly to guarantee the elimination of this legal loophole.

The law has its roots in the controversial case of "the herd", in which five men gangraped an 18-year-old girl in a portal during the San Fermín festivities in Pamplona in 2016. The Spanish justice system convicted them of sexual abuse, understanding that there was no violence nor intimidation, and although later there was a rectification by the Supreme Court that raising the sentences from 9 to 15 years in prison for rape. The case generated demonstrations throughout the country and the demand by Spanish society to reform the laws to protect women from sexual attacks and toughen the punishments for those who perpetrate them.

"Only yes is yes" refers to the most important and also the most controversial of the postulates of this law: consent before any sexual interaction. Thus, sexual conduct without consent will be considered assaults and will be punished with different penalties depending on the circumstances and the aggravating circumstances of the case.



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This means that a sexual assault does not necessarily imply the use of force or that the victim has tried to resist since, for example, his passivity could be conditioned by environmental intimidation or by the intake of alcohol or other substances. The new law eliminates the current distinction between abuse and sexual assault.

Thus, any sexual interaction without the consent of the other person will be an assault and will be punishable by a prison sentence of 1 to 4 years.

We can conclude by saying that in the country there is an open compromise towards targeting GBV and that there are current legal modifications that are trying to ensure an even further protection towards the victims of GBV.

Conclusively, we can extract the following: that under the Spanish law, any type of gender related discrimination is punishable, and that the minorities that are particularly affected by GBV have been ensured a further amount of defence before the law, in order to ensure their well-being and protection against this form of discrimination.

### *Institutional and policy frameworks*

During this section of the report, we will go through the Spanish institutional and policy framework surrounding GBV. Having said this, Spain has an institutional system for the prevention and approach of gender violence that is made up of different organizations and entities that work in coordination to prevent, address and eradicate this problem. Some of the main components of this system are described below:

- **Ministry of Equality:** is the body in charge of public policy on gender equality and prevention and attention to gender violence in Spain. This ministry develops policies and programs aimed at preventing gender violence and providing protection and support to victims.
- **Government Delegation for Gender Violence:** is the body responsible for coordinating policies and strategies to fight GBV-related violence in Spain. This entity's main objective is to prevent gender-based violence, provide information and support to victims, and coordinate the actions of the different organizations involved in dealing with gender-based violence.



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- **Social Services:** they are responsible for providing care, support and assistance to victims of gender violence in Spain. These services include medical and psychological care, safe accommodation and legal assistance.
- **National Police and Civil Guard:** these are the police forces in charge of investigating the cases related to GBV in Spain and providing protection and security to the victims.
- **Prosecutor's Office and Specialized Courts:** these are the bodies in charge of carrying out judicial processes related to gender violence in Spain. These courts have judges and prosecutors specialized in the subject, and their objective is to guarantee the protection and support of the victims.

In summary, the Spanish institutional system for the prevention and approach of gender violence is extensive and is made up of different entities that work in coordination to provide care and protection to victims, prevent gender violence and carry out effective judicial processes.

Having said this and conclusively, it can be extracted that gender-based violence is a priority issue on the Spanish political agenda, and numerous measures and public policies have been implemented to prevent, address and eradicate this serious problem. Some of the main policies on gender violence that have been carried out in Spain are the following:

- **National Plan for Awareness and Prevention of Gender Violence:** The National Plan for Awareness and Prevention of Gender Violence is an initiative of the Government of Spain to prevent and combat gender-based violence throughout the country. The plan was approved by the Council of Ministers in March 2021 and its main objective is to raise public awareness of this problem and prevent gender-based violence through a series of measures and actions. The plan is made up of several lines of action, including:
  - Sensitization and prevention: This line of action aims to raise awareness in society about gender violence and prevent its appearance through awareness, training and awareness campaigns in all areas.
  - Comprehensive care and protection: This line of action seeks to improve comprehensive care and protection for victims of gender violence, through the coordination of public services and the improvement of action protocols.





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- Investigation and prosecution: This line of action aims to improve the investigation and prosecution of crimes of gender violence, through the training and specialization of the professionals in charge of their investigation and prosecution.
  - International cooperation: This line of action seeks to improve international cooperation in the fight against gender violence, through collaboration with other countries and international organizations.
  - The National Plan for Awareness and Prevention of Gender Violence is an important initiative to address this serious problem in Spain and improve protection and support for victims of gender violence.
- **Action Protocols:** In Spain, action protocols have been established for the care of victims of gender violence in all areas, with the aim of guaranteeing comprehensive and coordinated care for victims. Some of the main action protocols in this area are described below:
    - Health action protocol: establishes the procedures and measures that health professionals must follow to care for victims of gender violence. This protocol includes the identification of possible cases of gender violence, health and psychological care for the victims, and coordination with other organizations to provide comprehensive care for the victims.
    - Police action protocol: establishes the procedures and measures that the police forces must follow to care for victims of gender violence. This protocol includes action in cases of emergency, protection and support for victims, investigation and prosecution of crimes of gender violence, and coordination with other organizations to provide comprehensive care for victims.
    - Protocol of judicial action: establishes the procedures and measures that the courts and tribunals must follow for the care of victims of gender violence. This protocol includes the protection and assistance to victims during the judicial process, the guarantee of their rights and the adoption of protection measures.
    - Social services action protocol: establishes the procedures and measures that social services must follow to care for victims of gender violence. This protocol includes comprehensive care for victims, coordination with other agencies to provide comprehensive care for victims and the guarantee of their rights.



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In short, the protocols for action on gender violence in Spain aim to guarantee comprehensive and coordinated care for victims, from the identification of possible cases to health, police, judicial and social care, and protection and assistance during all the processes.

- **Training and Raising Awareness-Raising Strategies:** Training and awareness on gender violence is essential in the fight against this problem in Spain. Some of the main initiatives in this area are described below:
  - Training for professionals: Numerous training courses and programs have been developed for professionals working in the field of gender-based violence, such as police forces, health professionals, social workers, lawyers and judges. These training programs aim to provide professionals with the necessary tools to identify, care for and prevent gender-based violence, as well as to guarantee comprehensive and coordinated care for victims.
  - Raising awareness of the population: awareness campaigns have been carried out aimed at the general population, with the aim of raising awareness about gender violence and promoting a culture of equality and respect towards women. These campaigns include the dissemination of messages through the media, the organization of acts and events, and collaboration with organizations and associations that work in this field.
  - Training in the educational field: training on gender violence has been incorporated into the educational field, with the aim of preventing gender violence from an early age. Educational programs and materials have been developed to work on gender equality and respect for women in the classroom.
  - Training in the business field: training programs have been developed for companies, with the aim of preventing gender violence in the workplace and guaranteeing equal opportunities between men and women.



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In short, training and awareness of gender violence is a key tool in the fight against this problem in Spain, both for the care and protection of victims and for the prevention and eradication of gender violence in society.

### *GBV in the Basque Country: an overview*

Gender violence is a problem present throughout the Spanish territory, and the Basque Country is no exception. Despite the fact that the rate of gender violence in the Basque Country is lower than the national average, it continues to be a serious problem that requires specific measures for its prevention and eradication.

In the Basque Country there are various institutions and organizations that work in the fight against gender violence, among which are:

- The Emakunde Basque Women's Institute: is an institution dependent on the Basque Government whose mission is to promote equality between women and men and prevent gender violence. Emakunde develops various initiatives for the prevention of gender violence and for the care and protection of victims.
- Euskal Herriko Mugimendu Feminista (EHMF): is a feminist organization that works to combat gender violence and promote gender equality. EHMF develops various awareness and prevention actions, as well as care and support for victims.
- Euskal Herriko Bilgune Feminista (EHBF): is an organization that works to defend women's rights and fight against gender violence. EHBF develops various awareness and prevention initiatives, as well as care and protection for victims.

In addition, the Basque Government has a **Law for the prevention and comprehensive treatment of violence against women**, which establishes specific measures for the prevention and eradication of gender violence in the Basque Country. Among the measures provided for in this law are the creation of specialized care services for victims, the training and awareness of professionals working in this field, and the promotion of gender equality and the elimination of sexist stereotypes.



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In short, the Basque Country works actively in the fight against gender violence, with the implementation of specific measures and the collaboration of various institutions and organizations. However, much remains to be done to eradicate this serious problem in Basque society and in the country as a whole.

### *Figures: GBV in Spain and the Basque Country*

Throughout the following section, we will be performing an analysis that portrays the levels that Spain suffers on SRGBV; although, as noted, it is important to take into account that there are no specific studies related to such matter, neither can we find specific figures that allow us to clarify this matter. Thus, the approach that we have decided to follow is to perform a compilation on first the figures surrounding GBV in Spain, for later on, breaking down both the presence of women on VET in Spain and the gender-related bullying statistics.

Having said that, it is important to first highlight that the number of female victims to GBV rose by 17,8% in the first three months of 2022 (Williamson, 2022), which can for once be blamed on the vigilance surrounding GBV, which has provoked a raise on the reporting of such cases (Williamson, 2022), but also on the pandemic that forced in a lot of cases for the victims to continue living with their aggressors, as in Spain there is a high percentage of GBV that could be categorized under the umbrella of domestic violence.

As beforehand mentioned, it is quite difficult to assess the effects of GBV in the school, as on one hand there are no specific figures related to school-related gender-based violence, and on the other hand, most school-related violence statistics are centred around bullying (Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional, 2022).

However, there are some common lines to follow: that teenagers are more likely to be affected by sexists' patterns in a classroom, and that that the prevention of gender-based violence from school works: the boys and girls who say they have worked at school on the issues proposed in the State Pact against Gender-Based Violence have less risk of experiencing gender-based violence (Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional, 2022).



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Having said that, most studies suggest that the main victims of the bullying phenomena are closely related to those that are more vulnerable to suffering GBV, with the very same minorities being the most affected by this type of violence, stating the following when analysing the phenomena of bullying in the country: “(2) that for once girls show more victimization and boys more aggression and (3) that there is a higher percentage of non-heterosexual victims, especially gays and bisexuals. In conclusion, LGTB people show a greater vulnerability to suffering bullying” (Larrain & Garaigordobil, 2020).

In addition, a 70% percentage of cyberbullying victims in schools are identified as females with a 95% of the victims getting subjected to comments of sexist nature online (Fundación ANAR, 2016, p.31).

Regarding other groups vulnerable to GBV, the study "Homophobic bullying and risk of suicide in adolescents and young lesbians, gays and transsexuals" (FELGTB/COGAM,2012) carried out a survey of 653 children under 25 who had suffered bullying because of their sexual orientation in educational institutions across the country. Among them, 69% admitted to having suffered bullying for more than a year, while a staking 49% suffered it daily (Generelo et al., 2018, p.36).

All in all, most of the studies agree that it is necessary to design new activities that promote respect for LGBT people and for those individuals that do not follow the stereotypes that are defined by heteronormativity. In addition, the abolition of sexist language in the classroom is also recommended, as well as the integration of women in the school curricula.

### Examples of Good Practices

In order to ensure equality in the school system in Spain, some organisms and institutions have created mechanisms and courses that allow for creating an environment that promotes equality. In the following we have shared national and regional examples of good practices on both Spain and the Basque Country respectively:

#### NATIONAL (SPAIN)

<b>Name of Best Practice:</b>	Protection, support, care and accompaniment 24 hours a day for women victims of gender-based violence through mobile devices
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<b>Country:</b>	SPAIN, 2013
<b>Short Description:</b> (300 words max)	<p>In Spain, there are several initiatives aimed at providing protection, support, care, and accompaniment to women victims of gender-based violence through mobile devices. These initiatives are designed to provide immediate assistance and support to women who may be at risk of violence, or who are experiencing violence in their homes or communities. Some examples of these initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The VioGén system</li><li>• The “Alertcops” app</li><li>• The “No Estás Sola” (You Are Not Alone) app</li></ul> <p>Overall, these initiatives are designed to provide women with immediate access to support and assistance, and to help prevent and respond to gender-based violence in Spain. They reflect a strong commitment to addressing this issue and providing effective support for women who may be at risk. On this report, we will focus on VioGén:</p> <p>The VioGén system is a national system in Spain that was launched in 2007 to provide protection and support to women who are victims of gender-based violence. The system is designed to identify and monitor women who are at risk of violence, and to provide immediate assistance in the event of an emergency.</p> <p>Under the VioGén system, women who are at risk of violence are identified by the police, social services, or other agencies, and are enrolled in the system. The system uses a database to collect information on the victim and the perpetrator, and uses an algorithm to assess the level of risk to the victim. Based on this assessment, the system provides a range of support services, including protection measures, counseling, and legal assistance.</p>



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	<p>One of the key features of the VioGén system is its mobile app, which allows women to access support and assistance 24 hours a day. The app provides a panic button that women can use to contact emergency services, as well as information on resources and support services in their area. The app also allows women to receive alerts and updates from the police or other agencies about their case, and to communicate with their case manager or support worker.</p> <p>Overall, the VioGén system reflects a strong commitment in Spain to addressing gender-based violence and providing effective support and protection to women who may be at risk. The system has been credited with reducing rates of violence against women in Spain, and has been recognized as a model for other countries seeking to address this issue.</p>
<p><b>Trends and Potential Benefits from this Best Practice</b> (250 words max)</p>	<p>1.- Support, attention and accompaniment of the victim 24 hours a day. They have a mobile with which you can contact a local police officer at any time of the day</p> <p>2.- Increased safety and confidence of the victim. This improves your quality of life.</p> <p>3.- Immediate location by GPS of the victim when pressing the "panic" button of the device so that he can</p> <p>Go to the Local Police at your request and act in the event of any danger from the aggressor.</p>
<p><b>How this Best Practice could be used/ transferred</b> (250 words max)</p>	<p>We could propose an anonymous platform where the students could contact the pedagogical services of their school centres for these kinds of issues. We could create easy access links, or an app per each educational centre that includes and facilitates for the students to access he resources that the country/the project/the school has available for tackling his/her/them problem.</p>



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<b>Website link:</b>	<a href="http://bbpp.observatorioviolencia.org/proyecto/proteccion-apoyo-atencion-y-acompanamiento-las-24-horas-del-dia-a-traves-de-dispositivos-moviles/">http://bbpp.observatorioviolencia.org/proyecto/proteccion-apoyo-atencion-y-acompanamiento-las-24-horas-del-dia-a-traves-de-dispositivos-moviles/</a> <a href="https://www.interior.gob.es/opencms/ca/servicios-al-ciudadano/violencia-contra-la-mujer/sistema-viogen/">https://www.interior.gob.es/opencms/ca/servicios-al-ciudadano/violencia-contra-la-mujer/sistema-viogen/</a> <a href="https://www.interior.gob.es/opencms/es/servicios-al-ciudadano/violencia-contra-la-mujer/supresion-de-datos-sistema-viogen/">https://www.interior.gob.es/opencms/es/servicios-al-ciudadano/violencia-contra-la-mujer/supresion-de-datos-sistema-viogen/</a>
<b>More Info:</b>	<a href="https://www.20minutos.es/tecnologia/actualidad/como-funciona-viogen-la-plataforma-del-gobierno-para-evitar-asesinatos-relacionados-con-la-violencia-de-genero-5091796/">https://www.20minutos.es/tecnologia/actualidad/como-funciona-viogen-la-plataforma-del-gobierno-para-evitar-asesinatos-relacionados-con-la-violencia-de-genero-5091796/</a>

#### REGIONAL (BASQUE COUNTRY)

<b>Name of Best Practice:</b>	"Didactic tools to tackle equality in the classroom"
<b>Country:</b>	SPAIN, Basque Country, 2022
<b>Short Description:</b> (300 words max)	Sensitization of teachers through the free online course "Didactic tools to tackle equality in the classroom". The Basque Ministry of Education offers different courses in order to improve the teachers' curricula. This course allows to integrate the gender and equality perspective into the teachers' abilities, inform them about Gender Based Violence and the sexist patterns of behaviour that we can encounter when entering a classroom, and how to identify and correct these issues. The issues that we worked on are the following:





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Gender-sensitive language: Teachers are encouraged to use inclusive language that avoids gender stereotypes and promotes equality. They are also encouraged to avoid using generic masculine terms when referring to mixed-gender groups.

Co-education: Co-education is an approach that seeks to promote equality and overcome gender stereotypes by treating boys and girls equally in the classroom. This approach is based on the idea that children should be able to choose their own interests and develop their full potential regardless of their gender.

Training for teachers: Teachers are provided with training on gender equality and strategies for promoting it in the classroom. This training includes workshops on gender stereotypes, co-education, and the use of didactic tools to promote equality.

Gender-sensitive teaching materials: Teaching materials are developed with a gender-sensitive approach that avoids stereotypes and promotes equality. For example, textbooks and reading materials are checked to ensure they are gender-neutral and free of sexist or discriminatory content.

Non-sexist toys and games: Teachers are encouraged to use non-sexist toys and games that do not reinforce gender stereotypes in the classroom. This includes games that encourage cooperation and teamwork, rather than competition and aggression.

**Trends and Potential** There are many benefits to including gender perspectives in the classroom, including:

**Benefits from this**

**Best Practice**

(250 words max)

Promoting equality: By including gender perspectives in the classroom, teachers can help promote equality between boys and girls, and help students understand that gender should not be a barrier to success.

Overcoming stereotypes: By challenging gender stereotypes in the classroom, students can learn to think critically about the messages they receive from society



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about what it means to be a boy or girl, and develop more open and flexible attitudes towards gender roles.

Enhancing empathy: When students learn about different perspectives and experiences related to gender, they are more likely to develop empathy towards others who may be different from them. This can help foster more respectful and inclusive attitudes towards people of all genders.

Encouraging critical thinking: When students are exposed to diverse viewpoints and encouraged to think critically about gender issues, they develop important skills for analyzing and evaluating information, which can be applied in many different contexts throughout their lives.

Improving academic outcomes: Studies have shown that classrooms that incorporate gender perspectives and promote gender equality have better academic outcomes for all students, regardless of their gender.

Overall, including gender perspectives in the classroom is important not only for promoting equality, but also for developing critical thinking skills and fostering empathy and understanding toward others. It can help create a more inclusive and respectful learning environment for all students, and prepare them for success in an increasingly diverse and complex world.

**How this Best Practice could be used/ transferred**  
(250 words max)

Generate a compendium of Good Practices or create a course that all the ambassadors and/or teachers from our institution could follow in order to learn how to be more inclusive and how to apply gender perspectives to their everyday life.

Generate a toolkit that compiles information and resources, that the staff from our institutions can easily access and follow in order to perfectionate their knowledge and



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	approach towards GBV. Impulse prevention and formation in order to raise awareness and prevent the issue.
<b>Website link:</b>	<a href="https://gestionv1-c75180.evolcampus.com/acceso.php?redir=%2Fcampus%2Fcurso.php%3Fid%3DckY4bSsyLzFRZVBRbkVEVWd4a3RFQkVSdUJFUmJHdDhxb1IkV3JudzZDLzNCSWFBRk1XSmt rU21xVXc1SWIXQjo65n-1jv411TZ2-ipv3aqX-w">https://gestionv1-c75180.evolcampus.com/acceso.php?redir=%2Fcampus%2Fcurso.php%3Fid%3DckY4bSsyLzFRZVBRbkVEVWd4a3RFQkVSdUJFUmJHdDhxb1IkV3JudzZDLzNCSWFBRk1XSmt rU21xVXc1SWIXQjo65n-1jv411TZ2-ipv3aqX-w</a> <a href="https://www.aldarte.org/comun/imagenes/documentos/Eskolaorientaziosexualaren aurrean.pdf">https://www.aldarte.org/comun/imagenes/documentos/Eskolaorientaziosexualaren aurrean.pdf</a> <a href="https://www.steilas.eus/files/2015/05/Genero-eta-aniztasun-sexualerako-GIDA.-STEILAS.2015.pdf">https://www.steilas.eus/files/2015/05/Genero-eta-aniztasun-sexualerako-GIDA.-STEILAS.2015.pdf</a>
<b>More Info:</b>	

### Conclusions

As it is the case in most EU countries, most specific Spanish policies regarding GBV are very much still targeted towards domestic violence and protecting the LGBTQ+ community from hate crimes; however, it could still be argued that the constitution very much ensures the equality of every Spanish citizen before the law and that therefore, the application of these laws just ensures and extra shielding for the most vulnerable groups towards this kind of violence (Pastor-Gosálbez, Belzunegui-Eraso, Calvo Merino, & Pontón Merino, 2021).

However, it cannot be denied that there are no specific policies targeting GBV in the Spanish education system, with most educational policies targeting bullying at the very most (Rubio Grundell, 2021) leaving the victims of this particular type of violence unprotected, as they lack of specific legal background that tackles their particular cases.



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In addition, with the dramatic rise that VET has experienced in Spain during the last five years, as well as the change in student pattern that this very same rise has provoked, it is undeniable that there is a need for further mechanisms that ensure the protection and the well-being of potential victims of this type of discrimination.

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