



Ministry of Social Security
and Labour of the Republic
of Lithuania



Nordisk
Ministerråd

„A roadmap towards an effective domestic violence prevention:
emergency barring order and specialised support system for the victims of
domestic violence“

International roundtable discussion and study visits

30 May – 1 June 2022, Vilnius

Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania

Part of the Nordic Council of Ministers' project „*New ways to tackle gender-based
violence: Nordic and Baltic approach in 2021-2022*“



DECLARATION OF GUIDELINES ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND VICTIM PROTECTION

As a part of the the Nordic Council of Ministers' project „New ways to tackle gender-based violence: Nordic and Baltic approach in 2021-2022“, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania organized an international roundtable discussion „A roadmap towards an effective domestic violence prevention: emergency barring order and specialised support system for the victims of domestic violence“ and study visits that took place on May 30-June 1, 2022. The experts from Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Iceland shared their experiences and good practices of gender-based violence prevention measures and discussed effective ways to ensure protection and support of the victims of such violence in the Baltic-Nordic region.

Gender-based violence, as well as domestic violence, remains one of the most widely spread violations of human rights, security, and freedom in a modern society, most often targeting women and girls.¹ In response to the general escalation of violence in times of crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and current Russia's war in Ukraine, it is essential to further strengthen interinstitutional cooperation mechanism not only at the national and local levels but at the international level as well, to secure effective and sustainable prevention and protection measures needed for the victims of all forms of gender-based violence.

To ensure a sound implementation of interinstitutional and international cooperation mechanism across the Baltic and Nordic regions and to effectively combat violence against women, policy makers and all related stakeholders should ensure the following:

I. LEGAL MEASURES OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND VICTIM PROTECTION

- 1) Temporary protection measures, such as emergency barring orders (EBO), must be implemented for an immediate protection and support of the victims of gender-based violence. It is especially important when there is a lack of evidence to start a pre-trial

¹ UN Women, Facts and figures: Ending violence against women, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures>.



- investigation, which is often the case with less evident types of violence, such as psychological, economic or sexual violence;
- 2) A risk assessment must be carried out on an individual case basis by law enforcement agencies during the investigation of domestic violence incident to ensure the need for an immediate protection, as well as the need for additional protection or other specialized support measures;
 - 3) A criminal and (or) administrative liability of a perpetrator must be ensured as violence against women and intimate partner violence are human rights violations and in cases of sexual abuse, rape, murder, or other grave violations constitute a criminal offense which must be counteracted with relevant sanctions. As well, an effective system of supervision and a list of legal measures must be ensured when a perpetrator violates EBO and does not comply with specific legal restrictions;
 - 4) The perpetrators of gender-based violence shall complete a violent behavioural change programme and/or addiction treatment programmes that are up-to-date and approved by the experts of related fields, such as prosecutors, psychologists, addiction prevention and social workers;
 - 5) It is crucial to ensure a straightforward and free of charge procedure for issuing EBO or other immediate protection measures for the victim to fight the issue of under-reportedness of gender-based violence, especially intimate partner violence.

II. SPECIALIZED SERVICES AND SUPPORT FOR THE VICTIM

- 1) It is necessary to provide specialized integrated support and advice for the victims of gender-based violence, including, inter alia, counselling, psychological and legal support, interim accommodation services, must be ensured based on individual needs and the accessibility of services, including any special needs of the victims;
- 2) A victim referral system to receive specialized support should be ensured in a well-coordinated interinstitutional basis, especially within the law enforcement agencies, such as the police;
- 3) It is important to increase early victim support and gender-based violence prevention measures through public awareness-raising campaigns that are aimed at helping to identify different types of gender-based violence, including intimate partner violence and domestic violence, to increase awareness of available specialized support, and to empower the victims to end the cycle of violence;



- 4) Such specialized integrated support should be offered in a standardized manner or as a part of an accreditation mechanism of related services on both governmental and non-governmental levels to ensure the quality and availability of such services in a well-coordinated manner.

III. INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION MECHANISM

- 1) An algorithm of concrete actions and responsibilities of different institutions and organisations working in the field of gender-based violence prevention and victim protection is crucial for an effective and well-coordinated policy;
- 2) An exchange of relevant information between national institutions and organizations, including personal data, is ensured in a confidential manner and only in so far as it is related to gender-based violence prevention, especially between the police or other law enforcement agencies and organizations that provide specialized services for the victims;
- 3) A continuous sharing of good practices and experiences on both national and international level is important to guarantee effective gender-based violence prevention measures based on a mutual learning basis and uniform understanding of related concepts, shared statistical, scientific, and other practical information;
- 4) Trainings for the experts should be ensured to improve their competences and knowledge based on science and evidence-based practices, adapted to the changing realities of our society and a growing number gender-based violence related challenges on a global level.