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Action Plan for the Prevention of Domestic and Gender-Based Violence 2023-2026

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List of Abbreviations

MoLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoI	Ministry of the Interior
MoE	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MRD	Ministry for Regional Development of the Czech Republic
MIT	Ministry of Industry and Trade
MoC	Ministry of Culture
GO CR	Government Office of the Czech Republic
CTO	Czech Telecommunication Office
ICSP	Institute for Criminology and Social Prevention
ASLPC	Authority for Social and Legal Protection of Children

1. Introduction

Domestic violence and other forms of gender-based violence remain a serious problem in Czech society. It is one of the most common forms of violence, which has a major negative impact on the lives of victims and society as a whole. International and Czech studies on the incidence of domestic violence show that approximately one in three women and one in 14 men experience various forms of domestic violence during their lifetime. More than half of all cases of domestic and partner violence involve children. Approximately one in ten Czech women have experienced rape, the vast majority of whom never seek help or contact the police. The latency rate also remains high for sexual harassment, stalking, or gender-based cyber-violence.¹

The existing legislation on domestic violence dates primarily from 2004-2007, beginning with the introduction of the offence of abuse of a person living in a jointly occupied apartment or house, which was adopted by Amendment No. 91/2004 Coll. to the Criminal Act, effective 1 June 2004. The first law that attempted to cover the issue of domestic violence more comprehensively was Act No. 135/2006 Coll. amending certain laws in the field of protection against domestic violence. It amended, with effect from 1 January 2007, the Police Act, which regulated the institute of eviction of a violent person; the Civil Procedure Code, which introduced a special interim measure consisting in the protection of a person at risk (as to the place and against a specific person of the perpetrator of the violence); and the Criminal Code, which newly sanctioned serious or repeated acts consisting in the violation of a police eviction or a court interim measure. These changes were followed by the establishment of intervention centers, which were enshrined in the Social Services Act as specialized centers providing comprehensive assistance to persons at risk of domestic violence and cooperating with the Police. The new Civil Code in 2014 brought private protection from domestic violence for cohabiting persons by enshrining the possibility of limiting or excluding the right to housing. In 2013, Act No. 45/2013 Coll. on Victims of Crime was adopted as part of the transposition of the Victims Directive, which expanded the rights of victims and the assistance provided to them (as well as eliminating the shortcomings of the implementation of Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA of 15 March 2001 on the status of victims in criminal proceedings). Despite these important changes in the system of protection and assistance to victims, shortcomings persist in the long term and require a coordinated and comprehensive response.

The Action Plan for the Prevention of Domestic and Gender-Based Violence for the years 2023-2026 (hereinafter referred to as the "Action Plan") is the fourth independent strategic document of the Government of the Czech Republic in the field of prevention of domestic and gender-based violence. Its aim is to contribute to improving the position of victims and to improve the system of prevention of these forms of violence.

The Action Plan is a follow-up to the Action Plan for the Prevention of Domestic and Gender-Based Violence for 2019-2022 (hereinafter referred to as the "2019 Action Plan"), approved by Government Resolution No.318 of 6 May 2019.² The Action Plan also follows the Strategy for Gender Equality for 2021-2030 (hereinafter referred to as the "Strategy"), approved by Government Resolution No. 269 of 8 March 2021.³ One of the tasks of the Strategy is also to cover the area of domestic and gender-based violence with Action Plans. The obligation to take measures to prevent and combat domestic and gender-based violence also arises from a number of international conventions, declarations and recommendations (see chapter 1.4 for more details).

¹ For more details see chapter 2.1 Incidence of domestic and gender-based violence and chapter 2.1 of the Action Plan.

² For more details, see the Action Plan for the Prevention of Domestic and Gender-Based Violence for 2019-2022. Available at: <https://www.vlada.cz/assets/ppov/rovne-prilezitosti-zen-a-muzu/dokumenty/AP-DN---grafikaFINAL.pdf>

³ For more details, see the Gender Equality Strategy 2021-2030. Available at: : https://www.vlada.cz/assets/ppov/rovne-prilezitosti-zen-a-muzu/Aktuality/Strategie_rovnosti_zen_a_muzu.pdf

As in the previous period, in addition to domestic violence, the Action Plan also focuses on other forms of gender-based violence as commonly defined by relevant international standards.⁴ According to the available statistical data, in the context of the Czech Republic, these are mainly rape, sexual abuse or stalking. Therefore, more attention is paid to these forms of violence in the Action Plan.

Expert studies have long shown that people at risk of domestic and gender-based violence are predominantly women.⁵ The Action Plan is based on a gender-specific approach to these forms of violence. It therefore recognizes the gender-specific needs of women and men both as persons at risk and as perpetrators of violence. The intention of the Action Plan is to cover all forms of domestic and gender-based violence regardless of the gender of the person at risk of these forms of violence. Implementation of the measures set out in the Action Plan will thus contribute to improving the situation of all victims (men, women, children, senior citizens and other groups).

The Action Plan has been developed by the Department for Gender Equality of the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic (hereinafter referred to as the "Department") together with the Committee for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Violence against Women (hereinafter referred to as the "Committee"), which is a working body of the Government Council for Gender Equality (hereinafter referred to as the "Council"). The Committee brings together experts on the issue of domestic and gender-based violence from the public administration, non-governmental non-profit organizations and social service providers, academia, the police and the judiciary. The broad expertise of the Committee members, as well as their experience in practical assistance to persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence and in working with perpetrators of violence, played a key role in the preparation of the Action Plan. A list of the members of the Committee and other persons who contributed to the preparation of the Action Plan is contained in chapter 3.

The Action Plan contains a total of 22 actions and is divided into 3 strategic areas:

1. Prevention of domestic and gender-based violence;
2. Protection and support for victims of domestic and gender-based violence;
3. Systematically addressing domestic and gender-based violence and ensuring access to justice for all victims of these forms of violence.

The main measures of the Action Plan include increasing legislative protection against domestic and sexual violence, ensuring the availability of specialized services for persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence and their children (secret shelters, crisis beds, telephone crisis assistance, etc.), ensuring the availability of programs for working with persons who commit violence, supporting the establishment of specialized centers for victims of sexual violence, and training for professions that most often come into contact with persons at risk. An important part of this is the prevention of these forms of violence through awareness-raising activities or education in schools.

In implementing the individual measures of the Action Plan, the position of persons facing multiple discrimination will be taken into account across the board, especially persons with disabilities, seniors, foreign women and foreigners, homeless persons, Roma women and Roma, and other vulnerable persons.

In preparing the Action Plan, the recommendations for the development of strategic documents at the level of the Government of the Czech Republic set out in the Methodology for the Preparation of Public Strategies, which the Government of the Czech Republic took note of by

⁴ These include the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (or the general recommendations of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women) and the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence.

⁵ For more details see chapter 2.1 Incidence of domestic and gender-based violence and chapter 2.1 of the Action Plan.

Government Resolution No. 318 of 2 May 2013 and its update, approved by Government Resolution No. 71 of 28 January 2019, were taken into account.

1.1 Purpose of the Action Plan

The purpose of the Action Plan is to formulate, implement and coordinate a comprehensive system of measures at the level of the Government of the Czech Republic for the prevention and combating of domestic and gender-based violence and thus to contribute to the reduction of the incidence of these forms of violence in Czech society and to assist persons at risk of violence and persons who perpetrate violence.

The implementation of the measures set out in the Action Plan should in particular improve the current level of protection of persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence (including children living in a family with a history of domestic and gender-based violence), improve the effectiveness of the prevention of such violence, develop the education of relevant professions in the field of domestic and gender-based violence and support work with perpetrators of violence.

1.2 Users of the Action Plan

The nature of the Action Plan as a strategic document of the Government of the Czech Republic implies that it is primarily addressed to the relevant central government authorities. It imposes individual tasks on them in the timeframe 2023-2026.

Furthermore, the Action Plan is addressed to all organizations and social service providers working in the field of prevention and combating domestic and gender-based violence. The Action Plan does not impose tasks on these organizations, but it will provide them with information on the priorities and planned measures of the Government of the Czech Republic in this area. Similarly, the Action Plan will serve the regions and municipalities that formulate their own strategic documents in the field of social policy, including the prevention and combating of domestic and gender-based violence.

1.3 Basic terms used

The definitions of the basic terms used correspond to their established usage in relevant international and national documents (see Chapter 1.4).

Assisted contact between parents and children - meeting a child with a parent with whom the child does not live in the same household and with whom contact has been broken for some reason (long-term separation, domestic violence, other violence, separation and divorce in families). Assisted contact is carried out in a safe and adapted environment by specialized workers. The primary aim of assisted contact is to ensure safe contact with the parent who has perpetrated violence in the family so that the child can peacefully exercise his or her right to both parents. In these interventions, the possible risks of such encounters for the child are continuously identified and monitored, while at the same time the clear benefits of such encounters for the healthy development of each child are prioritized, also considering the wishes and needs of the child himself/herself, with an emphasis on his/her best interests. Assisted meetings should be temporary, not long-term, and should aim to enable the child to meet the parent safely on his/her own. If this cannot be ensured, the meeting should be terminated in the child's best interests.

Violence - is an act directed against another person, usually to hurt, cause pain, intimidate, or humiliate them into acting against their will, or not acting according to their will.⁶

Domestic violence - all acts of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence that occur within the family or household or between former spouses or partners, regardless of whether the perpetrator shares or has shared a household with the victim.⁷⁸

Dating violence - violence committed in the context of establishing a partner relationship at a time when the person at risk of violence and the perpetrator of violence do not share a home together and cannot be considered partners. It is violence typically occurring among adolescents in search of a partner.

Gender - a category and concept referring to socially and culturally conditioned and constructed differences between women and men that are historically and locally variable.⁹ It is not a natural and unchanging characteristic of women and men but reflects the current state of social relations between them. As such, gender complements the category of sex in the sense of biological differences between women and men.

Gender-based violence - all acts of physical, sexual, psychological economic or other forms of violence that target women because they are women or men because they are men or acts of such violence that disproportionately affect women or men. This definition is based on international legal documents such as the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Based on this definition, forms of gender-based violence include, in addition to domestic and partner violence, also sexual violence, rape, sexual harassment and stalking. Although men are also victims of these forms of violence, women clearly predominate as victims of such violence.¹⁰

Gender stereotypes - simplistic and biased ideas about the characteristics, attitudes and roles of women and men in society, work and family. Generalizations about male and female characteristics can lead to disadvantages for those whose behavior deviates from the stereotype (e.g. pressure on boys and men interested in so-called feminine activities). Certain gender stereotypes also contribute to the incidence of domestic and gender-based violence and prevent victims from getting help (e.g. the assumption that a woman should stay with her partner in all circumstances even if he is violent towards her, the assumption that a man cannot become a victim of domestic violence, or the view that a woman is in some cases co-responsible for her rape).

Cyber-violence - is an umbrella term for various forms of violence that are directly or indirectly perpetrated through information and communication technologies, and result or may result in mental, emotional, sexual, social, economic or physical harm. Cyber violence includes online harassment (harassment by unwanted messages, phone tracking, etc.), violence in close relationships (e.g. sexual violence and sexual harassment online (harassing messages with sexual connotations, forcing sexual practices, threatening to rape, starting a thread on a social networking site with the theme of rape, sexual violence, etc.), sexual assault (enticing a date

⁶ Isdal, P. (2000) In Jakobsen, B., Råkil, M. (2022) Violence can be stopped. Psychology of violence and therapy for perpetrators of violence in close relationships. 59-78.

⁷ For more details, see the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

⁸ Recognizing that different approaches working with different forms of violence use different definitions of violence, P. Isdal's definition is used for the purposes of this Action Plan.

⁹ The technical term defined in this way was established in the social sciences in the second half of the 20th century.

¹⁰ For more information see: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-based-violence/what-is-gender-based-violence>. The Action Plan focuses on forms of gender-based violence, recognizing that not all cases of gender-based violence are necessarily gendered or motivated. For example, an offence of stalking may be motivated by the sex or gender of the victim (e.g. stalking an ex-partner), but this will not always be the case (e.g. stalking for political reasons). The prevention, training of the relevant professions and other measures of this Action Plan will ultimately help all victims of these forms of violence, regardless of whether gender-based violence was involved in a particular case.

through technology and then causing bodily harm), etc. Cyber-violence is often cited as one of the new forms of gender-based violence.

Violence and other inappropriate conduct against seniors - elder abuse and neglect is a single or repeated, intentional or unintentional act or omission against an elderly person, typically in a relationship of reasonably expected trust, that results in physical, psychological, social, material, legal, or moral harm or harm, or a combination thereof. The consequence of this act or omission may be, in addition to a threat to property, health, life, liberty or human dignity, the creation or aggravation of situational, temporary or general vulnerability. Abuse, exploitation, neglect and ill-treatment of the elderly as defined above may or may not constitute a criminal offence. Its perpetrators may be individuals, institutions or the social environment.¹¹

Non-consensual pornography - in the most general sense, four forms of non-consensual pornography can be distinguished, which are usually intertwined: 1) taking intimate visual material without the consent of the person depicted, 2) creating fake intimate material depicting another person, 3) blackmailing or threatening to publish, distribute or share intimate visual material, 4) publishing, distributing or sharing intimate visual material (incl. fake) without the consent of the person depicted.

A victim/person at risk of domestic or gender-based violence - a natural person who is exposed to some form of such violence, including children living in families where domestic or gender-based violence occurs.¹²

Perpetrator of violence - a natural person who commits some form of domestic or gender-based violence.

Secondary victimization - a process during which a person at risk of domestic or gender-based violence is unnecessarily subjected to psychological stress in connection with investigating, reporting and providing assistance to various actors.

Sexual violence - any sexual conduct involving attempts to achieve sexual intercourse, unwanted sexual comments and advances, acts of trafficking or otherwise directed against an individual's sexuality that use coercion¹³. In most cases, sexual violence entails the use of sexuality as a tool of power.¹⁴

Specialized social services for persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence - specialized services are characterized by their focus on providing assistance and support tailored to the specific needs of victims of individual forms of domestic and gender-based violence and are not intended for the general public¹⁵. In the context of the Czech Republic, these include intervention centers (established under Act No. 108/2006 Coll. on Social Services, as amended), secret shelters for persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence, or professional social counselling provided exclusively to victims of domestic and gender-based violence.¹⁶

¹¹ For the purposes of the Action Plan, the term violence and other inappropriate behavior towards seniors is used.

¹² For the purposes of this Action Plan, the simplifying generic term 'victim' is used in line with criminological terminology. However, this does not mean that persons experiencing domestic and gender-based violence are seen as passive recipients and beneficiaries of violence in the context of this document.

¹³ See the definition in World Health Organization, World report on violence and health (Geneva: World Health Organization, 2002)

¹⁴ World Health Organization. 2002. World report on violence and health. Available at:

<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9241545615>.

¹⁵ For more details see: <http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/Violence-against-Women-Victim-Support-Report.pdf>.

¹⁶ For more details see: https://www.vlada.cz/assets/ppov/rovne-prilezitosti-zen-a-muzu/Aktuality/3b_Standardy_kvality_SSS_pro_obeti_DGPN_15_6_2021_rev_MP_1.pdf and http://rssh.mpsv.cz/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Anal%C3%BDza-dostupnosti-specializovan%C3%BDch-soci%C3%A1ln%C3%ADch-slu%C5%BEeb-pro-ob%C4%9Bti-DN-a-GNP-v-%C4%8CR_fin%C3%A1ln%C3%AD-%C4%8Distopis.pdf.

Tertiary victimization - the unnecessary exposure of a victim of a crime or violent act, which has not been classified as a crime, to psychological distress in relation to that act, even in the period after the primary and secondary victimization .

1.4 Related international and national documents

The Action Plan builds on a number of documents adopted at European and international level. These include both human rights conventions and strategic documents in the field of gender equality and more specific documents containing specific recommendations in the area of preventing and combating domestic and gender-based violence.

In terms of the formulation of the measures in the Action Plan, the following documents were particularly relevant:

- Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the 5th World Conference on Women in 1995;
- UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and General Recommendations Nos. 12, 19 and 35 of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women;
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
- ILO Convention No. 190 on violence and harassment in the workplace and ILO Recommendation No. 206 on violence and harassment in the workplace;
- UN General Assembly resolution of 31 January 2001 on the elimination of all forms of violence against women (A/RES/55/68);
- UN General Assembly resolution of 20 December 2004 on the elimination of all forms of violence against women (A/RES/59/167);
- UN General Assembly Resolution of 18 December 2007 on the elimination of rape and all other forms and manifestations of sexual violence, including in conflict and related situations (A/RES/62/134);
- UN General Assembly Resolution of 16 December 2020 on the intensification of efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls (A/RES/75/161);
- United Nations Security Council Resolution of 31 October 2000 (S/RES/1325), on Women Peace and Security and related resolutions;
- Conclusions of the UN Commission on the Status of Women of 15 March 2013 on the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls;
- Conclusions of the UN Commission on the Status of Women on the Elimination and Prevention of All Forms of Violence against Women and Girls;
- UN Commission on the Status of Women Conclusions of 18 March 2023: Innovation and technological change and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls;
- Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence;
- Recommendation No R(97)20 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on hate speech;
- Recommendation Rec(2002)5 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the protection of women against violence;
- EU Council Conclusions on combating violence against women and access to support services for people at risk of domestic violence of 6 December 2012;
- EU Council Conclusions on preventing and combating all forms of violence against women and girls, including female circumcision of 5 and 6 June 2014;
- EU Council Conclusions on Women, Peace and Security of 14 November 2022;

- Agenda 2030;
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Action Plan also responds to the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women addressed to the Czech Republic. Another international document that the Action Plan uses as one of its sources of inspiration is the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (hereafter referred to as the "Convention against Violence against Women"), which was opened for signature in May 2011. The Convention against Violence against Women sets out general standards for the prevention of such violence and assistance to those at risk. The Czech Republic signed the Convention against Violence against Women on 2 May 2016. Government Resolution No. 114 of 8 February 2016 instructed the Minister of Justice to submit to the Government a proposal for legislative measures to ensure its implementation by 30 June 2017. These measures were included in an amendment to the Criminal Code, which was published under No. 287/2018 Coll. and which entered into force on 1 February 2019. The Ministry of Justice has currently postponed the submission of a proposal for ratification of the Convention against Violence against Women until the end of January 2023. The Action Plan does not anticipate the eventual ratification of the Convention against Violence against Women by the Czech Republic.

The protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the rights of women and girls, together with the promotion of democracy, continue to be key objectives of the Czech Republic's foreign policy. In accordance with the Concept for the Promotion of Human Rights and Transitional Cooperation (2015), the Czech Republic supports, inter alia, equal opportunities for women and men in international organizations and actively speaks out against violence against women and girls, including sexual violence in armed conflicts, at meetings of the UN, the Council of Europe, the OSCE and other international organizations. In this regard, the Czech Republic also supports the work of UN WOMEN and contributes to the implementation of the EU guidelines on violence against women and girls and the fight against all forms of discrimination against them. In the framework of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the UN Human Rights Council, the Czech Republic formulates, inter alia, recommendations aimed at sexual abuse and trafficking in women, gender-based discrimination, eradication of female circumcision, and combating sexual and gender-based violence, including domestic violence

The measures in the Action Plan are based on the following national documents:

- Gender Equality Strategy 2021-2030;
- Crime Prevention Strategy in the Czech Republic for 2022-2027;
- National Strategy for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in the Czech Republic for the period 2020-2023;
- National Strategy for the Protection of Children's Rights 2021-2029;
- National Action Plan for Mental Health 2020-2030;
- National Strategy for the Development of Social Services 2016-2025;
- Social Inclusion Strategy 2021-2030;
- Strategy for Roma Equality, Inclusion and Participation (Roma Integration Strategy) 2021-2030;
- National Plan for the Promotion of Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities 2021-2025;
- National Strategy for the Primary Prevention of Risky Behavior in Children and Young People 2019-2027;
- National Action Plan of the Czech Republic for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security and related resolutions for the years 2021-2025;
- Strategic Framework Czech Republic 2030.

The Action Plan does not conflict with the above materials and does not create duplication of tasks or duplication of demands on the allocation of funds.

2. Current research in the field of domestic and gender-based violence

2.1 Prevalence of domestic and gender-based violence

Domestic violence can take many forms and includes acts of violence within close relationships. In many cases, it can be repeated, prolonged and cyclical, it can escalate over time and roles are often clearly divided between those subjected to violence and those perpetrating it. A specific feature of domestic violence is often its non-public nature. In some cases, roles are not clearly separated, and episodes of violence may be non-escalating, while at the same time they may be serious forms of violence. Domestic violence is perpetrated by persons against their relatives (the person subjected to violence may be, for example, a spouse, a partner, a child, a parent, a grandparent, or a sibling. The roles may also overlap, for example, a person may be subjected to violence by a spouse or partner and at the same time commit violence against children). Domestic violence takes many forms - it can be physical, psychological, sexual, economic, digital or take other forms of violence, or a combination of these.¹⁷ Physical and psychological violence takes different forms, and studies show that the consequences of all forms of violence are very serious.¹⁸ Children who grow up in a family where there is violence between parents are often referred to as children exposed to domestic violence in definitions of domestic violence. The perpetrator is always responsible for the violence. Below are the outputs of the most recent research and analysis in this area.

A summary of research on the prevalence and societal impact of domestic and gender-based violence has been detailed in the 2019 Action Plan¹⁹ and the Strategy²⁰. According to available statistics, an average of 650 cases of rape are reported to the police each year, the police deal with an average of more than 500 cases of abuse of a person living in a shared household and 75 cases of homicides motivated by personal relationships per year²¹, the social and legal protection of children authorities register approximately 2 500 cases of domestic violence in families where children are growing up each year, and on average almost 1 300 violent persons are evicted from their homes each year because of domestic violence.²² The Public Prosecutor's Office registers 500-660 cases of crimes related to domestic violence per year.²³ Below is a summary of the persons evicted according to the data provided by the intervention centers and summaries of the statistical data collected by the crime statistics surveys.

¹⁷ For more details see the National Action Plan for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Violence against Women 2011-2014. Available at: <https://www.vlada.cz/assets/media-centrum/aktualne/Narodni-akcni-plan-prevence-domaciho-nasili-na-leta-2011-2014.pdf>.

¹⁸ See World Health Organization. 2012. Understanding and addressing violence against women. Available at: https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/77431/WHO_RHR_12.43_eng.pdf?sequence=1, https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/77432/WHO_RHR_12.36_eng.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.

¹⁹ For more details, see the Action Plan for the Prevention of Domestic and Gender-Based Violence for 2019-2022. Available at: <https://www.vlada.cz/assets/ppov/rovne-prilezitosti-zen-a-muzu/dokumenty/AP-DN---grafikaFINAL.pdf>

²⁰ For more details, see the Gender Equality Strategy 2021-2030. Available at: https://www.vlada.cz/assets/ppov/rovne-prilezitosti-zen-a-muzu/Aktuality/Strategie_rovnosti_zen_a_muzu.pdf.

²¹ Rosa, a non-profit organization working in the field of victim assistance, registers more than 20 women murdered by their partners each year as a result of domestic violence. See more at: <https://www.rosacentrum.cz/tiche-svedkyne-2022-pocet-vrazd-zen-i-jejich-brutalita-roste/>.

²² In the total number of evictions in 2021, the Police of the Czech Republic identified 1 696 persons as being at risk, of whom 146 were men, 962 were women and 588 were minors. Statistical data was provided by the Association of Intervention Centre Workers of the Czech Republic, z.s. For more information see: http://www.domaci-nasili.cz/?page_id=255.

²³ For more details, see the 2021 Report on the Activities of the Public Prosecutor's Office. Available at: https://verejnazaloba.cz/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Zo%C4%8C_2021-textov%C3%A1_1_%C4%8D%C3%A1st.pdf.

Chart 1: Number of expelled persons according to the Association of Intervention Centers of the Czech Republic in 2013 - 2022²⁴

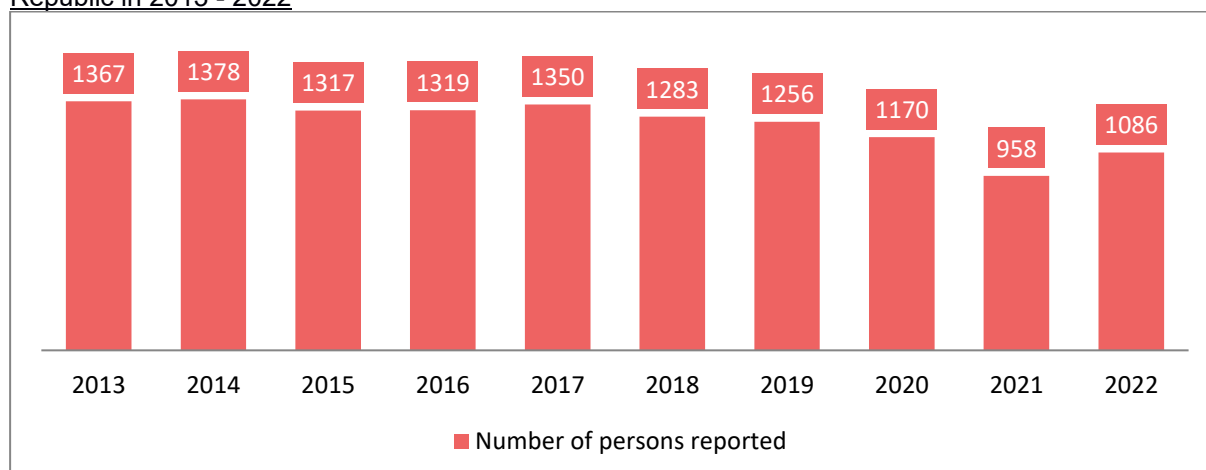
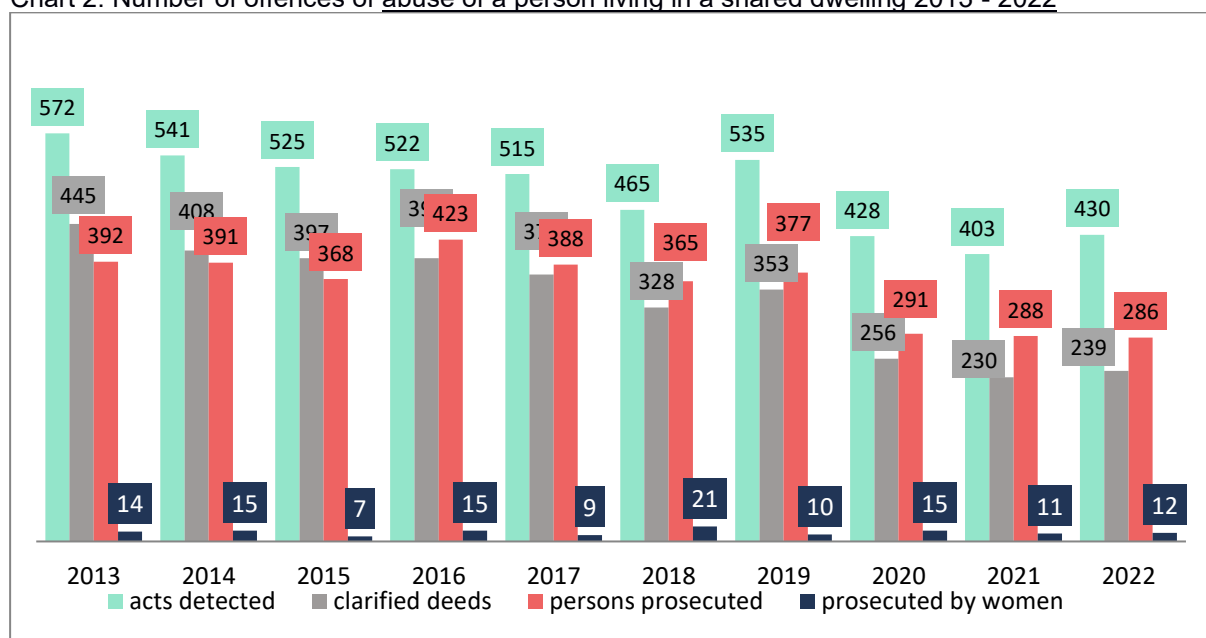


Table 2: Number of crimes of stalking 2013 - 2022²⁵

Stalking	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
acts detected	520	490	487	395	337	363	358	336	308	318
clarified deeds	380	373	355	288	238	259	260	225	212	201
persons prosecuted	328	318	282	309	268	272	289	229	238	220
prosecuted by women	27	29	29	27	26	25	24	16	15	19

Chart 2: Number of offences of abuse of a person living in a shared dwelling 2013 - 2022²⁶



²⁴ Statistical outputs are processed on the basis of data from intervention centers in the Czech Republic (§ 60 a), Act No.108/2006 Coll., on Social Services. Statistical data were provided by the Association of Workers of Intervention Centers of the Czech Republic, z.s. For more details see http://www.domaci-nasili.cz/?page_id=255.

²⁵ Source: <https://www.policie.cz/clanek/statisticke-prehledy-kriminality-za-rok-2022.aspx>.

²⁶ Statistical summaries of crime are available online at: <https://www.policie.cz/clanek/statisticke-prehledy-kriminality-za-rok-2022.aspx>.

Chart 3: Number of rape offences 2013 - 2022²⁷

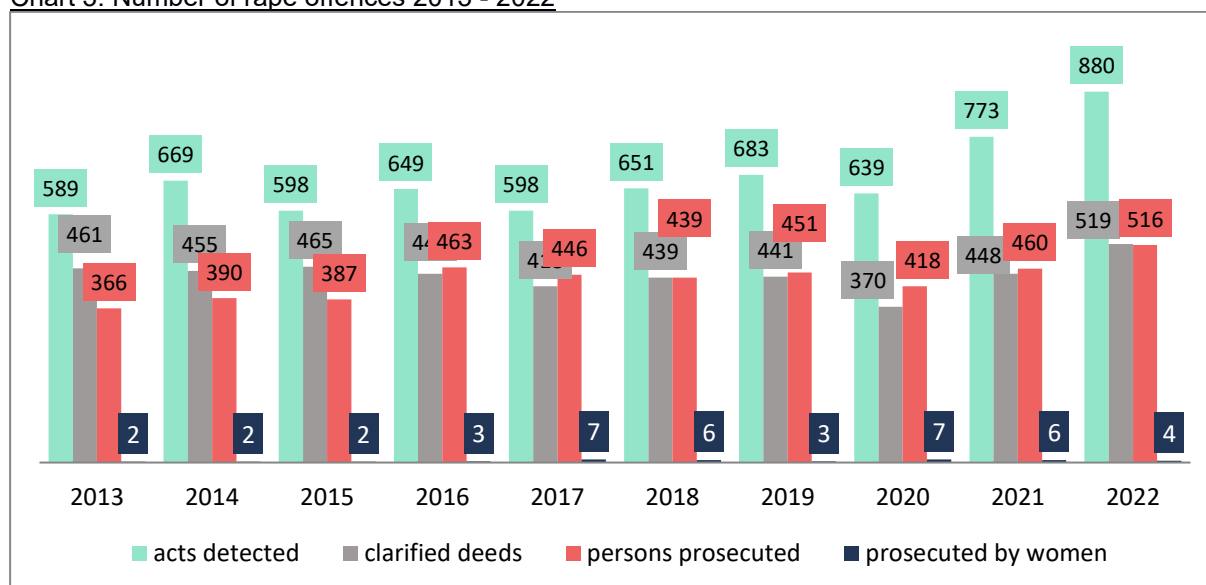


Table 3: Number of crimes of murder motivated by personal relationships 2013 - 2022²⁸

Homicides motivated by personal relationships	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
acts detected	103	78	86	74	80	65	71	76	57	76
clarified deeds	100	71	78	69	77	62	71	73	55	67
persons prosecuted	109	71	85	75	82	64	75	73	57	68
prosecuted by women	16	12	20	10	19	8	17	16	12	18

As confirmed by the analysis²⁹ of the development of crime in the period 2008-2019³⁰ prepared by the Institute for Criminology and Social Prevention (hereinafter referred to as "ICSP"), the most frequent form of domestic violence dealt with in the criminal justice system are crimes with the characteristics of domestic violence committed in the context of a partner relationship. Domestic violence in the context of a partner relationship is recorded in court statistics for a number of crimes, in particular crimes against life and health, freedom and the right to protection of personality, privacy and confidentiality, human dignity in the sexual sphere, or against the family and children, etc. Chart 4 illustrates the proportions of representation of each offence. Analyses of court statistical data show that the number of cases of crimes with the domestic violence feature in a partner relationship has been relatively stable over the long term. On average, 391 cases of domestic partner violence crimes were reported by the courts per year.

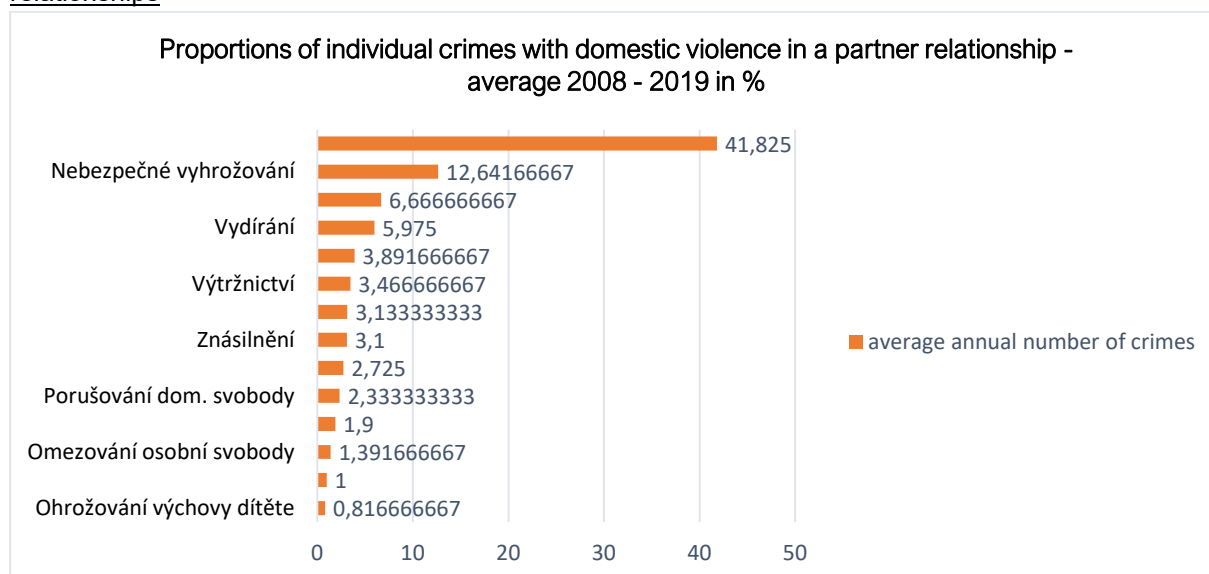
²⁷ Statistical summaries of crime are available online at: <https://www.policie.cz/clanek/statisticke-prehledy-kriminality-za-rok-2022.aspx>.

²⁸ Source: <https://www.policie.cz/clanek/statisticke-prehledy-kriminality-za-rok-2022.aspx>.

²⁹ Institute for Criminology Social Prevention, analysis within the ongoing research project PDP7 funded by Norway Grants 2014-2021, "Improvement in the treatment of perpetrators and support for victims in cases of domestic and gender-based violence in the Czech Republic". Available at: <https://violenceoff.cz/analiza-statistickych-udaju/>

³⁰ Trends are captured for the period prior to the Covid-19 pandemic in order to avoid distorting the statistical picture.

Chart 4: Representation of individual offences in the total crime with the characteristic of DN in partner relationships



However, these data represent only a cross-section of the actual incidence of these forms of violence, as most cases go unreported (with estimates that, for example, only 5-10% of actual cases of rape are reported³¹). According to the results of international and Czech surveys, almost one in three women in the Czech Republic experiences domestic violence at the hands of a partner.

Domestic violence is one of the most widespread forms of violence in general. Representative quantitative research has long shown that 17-40% of the population has experienced domestic violence.³² Prevalence rates vary according to the methodology used but are always representative samples of the population. Data from 2022 shows that almost 30% of women and 12% of men have experienced domestic violence.³³ In the majority of cases it was violence by the partner, but 17% involved abuse by other family members.³⁴ A specific feature of domestic violence is its high latency rate, with only one in five victims contacting the police. If victims confide in someone, it is most often a family member (47% of cases), while 20% of victims turn to psychologists or psychiatrists.³⁵

One of the reasons for the low rate of reporting cases of domestic violence and seeking professional help is the high rate of downplaying and blaming the victim. Recent research shows that 26% of the population believes that the victim of domestic violence is responsible for their own situation.³⁶ While 37% of men agree with this statement, only 15% of women agree.³⁷ The reasons perceived in society as legitimate for the occurrence of domestic violence are the partner's nervousness about financial responsibility for the family (31% of people), the lack of care for the household (29%) and the woman's failure to meet the man's sexual needs (54% of men and 41% of women).³⁸

³¹ See e.g. Persephone. 2016. Sexual violence in the public eye: a research press release. Available at: https://www.persephone.cz/source/pdf/TZ_Persefona_vysledky_vyzkumu.pdf.

³² DOHNAL, D., HOKR MIHOLOVÁ, P., ŠPRINCOVÁ, V., DOMESOVÁ, S. *Analysis of the incidence and latency of domestic violence in partner relationships*. Government Office, 2017. Pg. 44. Available at: https://www.vlada.cz/assets/ppov/rovne-prilezitosti-zen-a-muzu/dokumenty/Analiza-vyskytu-a-latence-DN_final.pdf.

³³ Pod Svícem, IPSOS. *Research: One in five people have been victims of domestic violence*, 2022. Available at: <https://www.pravniprostor.cz/aktuality/vyzkum-kazdy-paty-clovek-se-stal-obeti-domaciho-nasili>.

³⁴ Pod Svícem, IPSOS. *Research: One in five people have been victims of domestic violence*, 2022. Available at: <https://www.pravniprostor.cz/aktuality/vyzkum-kazdy-paty-clovek-se-stal-obeti-domaciho-nasili>.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ IKEA, Kantar. *Czech society and domestic violence*. 2022. Available at: https://www.ikea.com/cz/cs/files/pdf/e8/09/e809c5cf/211104_ikea_da_vyzkum_prezentace_final.pdf.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

According to the results of a 2016 survey by the Association of Intervention Centers of the Czech Republic, more than one-fifth of women identified themselves as victims of domestic violence. In more than half of the cases of domestic violence (56.4%) and partner violence (57.9%), children were present.³⁹ Children are often directly exposed to violence in the family, witness and perpetrate violence and are often subjected to emotional neglect as parents are negatively affected by the violence.⁴⁰ As part of a comprehensive approach to working with violence, prevention is necessary at the primary (general population), secondary (at-risk groups) and tertiary levels (those exposed to violence and perpetrators of violence).

Important findings regarding the prevalence of sexual violence and harassment in the Czech Republic were revealed by the results of a representative sociological survey conducted by MindBridge Consulting in 2021, which found that 54% of the women surveyed had experienced at least one form of sexual violence and/or harassment. One in three women has experienced more than one form of sexual violence or harassment in her lifetime. Almost one in ten women has been raped in her lifetime (9.2%). This equates to about 409,172 women.⁴¹ The most common forms of violence are verbal sexual harassment and groping (33% of women) and fondling and touching against the victim's will (31% of women). The experience of receiving unsolicited videos or photos with sexualized content is reported by 17% of women, and the experience of unsolicited kissing or kissing against their will is reported by 12% of women. On average, men experience a lower number of forms of violence and have significantly less experience of violence than women.⁴²

2.2 Public attitudes towards domestic and gender-based violence

Many stereotypes persist in society regarding domestic and gender-based violence. Public opinion and stereotypes related to domestic violence were mapped in 2021 by IKEA in cooperation with Charles University and the NeNa Coalition.⁴³ The research was conducted by Kantar Hoffman using the CAWI method on a representative sample of the Czech adult population (1 500 respondents). More than a quarter of respondents (26%) believe that the victim is at least partly responsible for the violence. The opinions of women and men differ on this question. While 37% of men agree with this statement, only 15% of women agree. One in three (31% of male and female respondents) think that it is understandable that men are nervous and sometimes aggressive because they are responsible for all the financial worries of the family. Furthermore, 29% of respondents think that if a woman does not take care of the household, it is understandable that this may provoke violence against her. Statistically significantly more men (54%) than women (41%) agree that a husband has the right to have sex with his wife. Provocation by the victim is seen as a potential reason for domestic violence by more than half of Czechs (56%). Again, the level of agreement with the statement varies by gender, with 68% of men agreeing vs. 45% of women.⁴⁴

In 2020, the Vodafone Foundation of the Czech Republic, through the Focus agency, conducted a public opinion poll entitled "The Issue of Domestic Violence through the Lens of the Czech Population".⁴⁵ The results of the survey show, among other things, that the vast majority of respondents (85%) consider domestic violence to be a serious or significant issue.

³⁹ Topinka, D. 2016. Domestic violence from the perspective of applied research. Basic facts and results. Available at: <http://www.domaci-nasili.cz/wp-content/uploads/Dom%C3%A1c%C3%AD-n%C3%A1sil%C3%AD-z-perspektivy-aplikovan%C3%A9ho-v%C3%BDzkumu.-SocioFactor-2016..pdf>.

⁴⁰ Hamby, S, Finkelhor, D., Turner, H., & Ormrod, R. (2010). The overlap of witnessing partner violence with child maltreatment and other victimizations in a nationally representative survey of youth. *Child Abuse and Neglect* 34, 734-741.

⁴¹ Calculated according to the latest available CSO data on the age structure and gender (as of 1 January 2020), see <https://www.czso.cz/csu/czso/vekove-slozeni-obyvatelstva-2020>.

⁴² For more details see: : <https://www.profem.cz/cs/vydali-jsme/vyzkumy/a/sexualni-nasili-a-sexualni-obtefovani-reprezentativni-vyzkum-2021>.

⁴³ For more details see: <https://www.koalicenena.cz/>.

⁴⁴ For more details see: https://ceskoajakdal.cz/CAJD-271-version1-211104_ikea_da_vyzkum_prezentace_final.pdf.

⁴⁵ Vodafone Foundation of the Czech Republic. 2020. Issues of domestic violence as seen through the lens of the Czech population. Available at: https://www.nadacevodafone.cz/upload/documents/prilohy/Dom%C3%A1c%C3%AD%20n%C3%A1sil%C3%AD_nadace%20Vodafone.pdf.

Almost two thirds (62%) consider it to be a topic to which not enough attention is paid. Women (73% of women vs. 50% of men), householders (75%), and more often people over 65 (66%), pensioners (65%) and students (67%) think this is the case. The findings also show that the most serious manifestations of domestic violence are perceived by the Czech public to be: threatening with a weapon, threatening to kill or killing family members, using physical violence against children with the intention of harming a partner and strangulation (almost 90% of respondents perceived this as a very serious harm). Slightly less serious, but still very significant, is attributed by respondents to: refusal to help in case of injury or illness or being left in a dangerous place or situation, and also includes slapping, hitting with a fist, kicking, pulling hair (over 70% of respondents). Around two-thirds of respondents see the potential for very serious harm in the case of: being forced to have sex or sexual practices that are unwelcome or harmful or damaging, being threatened with dangerous driving in a car, and being prevented from having contact with family, friends or children.

In 2018, Amnesty International Czech Republic repeated a representative public opinion survey on the issue of violence against women (the first survey was conducted in 2015).⁴⁶ The latest survey from 2018 shows that the Czech adult population estimates that on average up to 10,000 women are victims of rape in the Czech Republic, which is 5 times higher than in 2015. Almost half of the respondents estimated that no more than 40% of these cases are reported to the police (a decrease of 3 pp compared to 2015). Just under half (45%) of respondents were inclined to believe that of all rape cases, the perpetrator is convicted in no more than 30% (a decrease of 2 pp from 2015). A relatively significant proportion of respondents continue to identify an unknown, stranger as the most common perpetrator of rape (44%). The survey also confirmed other stereotypes about rape - an overwhelming majority of the adult population (58%) continues to hold the view that in certain cases or situations a woman is at least partially responsible for her rape: if the woman behaved in a flirtatious manner (up to 42%; down 3 pp) or was drunk (37%; down 6 pp), or did not say a clear "no" (32%; down 5 pp), or wore sexy or revealing clothes (30%; down 7 pp). Thus, although a large proportion of the public still blame the victim in some cases for their rape, the rate of these views has been trending downwards over time. The survey also found that over 70% of respondents think that the current situation of violence against women in the Czech Republic is a problem. People feel even more strongly about the need to strengthen prevention, with 84% of all respondents calling for a greater focus on preventing violence against women in the Czech Republic.

Primary prevention of gender-based violence involves raising awareness about violence and sensitizing society to violence. Contact with helping professions and students in the Czech Republic in the framework of the Government Office project shows that many of these groups have insufficient competence about violence and gender-based violence from their studies. This may result in stereotypes and attitudes, for example, which may manifest themselves in reduced sensitivity to those exposed to violence and ignorance of how to detect violence in contact with the perpetrator, both in contact with couples and families and with regard to the handling of such cases. It is therefore important that the psychology of violence (which includes the definition of violence, the topic of responsibility for violence, the impact of violence on child development and violence prevention, and the definition and specifics of violence in close relationships and gender-based violence) has been part of studies to increase competence and sensitivity to the topic, and for the helping professions to start asking about violence as part of the diagnosis. (For example, in pregnancy check-ups, in psychological examinations, with general practitioners, etc.) This is confirmed, for example, by one meta-study on the role of general practitioners in detecting violence in close relationships.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Amnesty International. 2018. Issues of violence against women through the lens of the Czech population. See more at: https://www.amnesty.cz/data/file/4254-vvm_problematika-nasili-na-zenach-optikou-ceske-populace.pptx?version=1541109702.

⁴⁷ For a closer look see Hegarty, K., McKibbin, G., & Hooker, L. (2020). Health practitioners' readiness to address domestic violence and abuse: A qualitative meta-synthesis. *PlosOne*; 15 (6): e0234067.

2.3 Economic impacts of domestic and gender-based violence

A 2017 analysis by the Office of the Czech Government quantified the annual economic impact of this violence on the Czech Republic at CZK 14.5 billion. The largest share of these costs is the loss of productivity due to the inability to work due to injuries caused in domestic violence incidents, amounting to more than CZK 8 billion. The second highest cost of domestic violence falls on the health sector. Nearly CZK 5 billion a year is estimated to be spent on treating injuries caused by violence in partner relationships, and a further CZK 250 million is spent on treating the psychological consequences of domestic violence. Police and judicial expenditure on criminal and civil cases of partner violence amounts to CZK 86 million. The cost of providing crisis assistance, specialist social counselling, sheltered housing, intervention centers and other social services is estimated at CZK 487 million. The total costs do not include the expenses of the victims of domestic violence themselves and their psychological harm, which is why the economic impact of domestic violence is underestimated.⁴⁸

All studies of the impact of violence to date report that they are underestimates⁴⁹, given that they lack, for example, an estimate of the costs associated with the fact that children who grow up in violent families are at risk of being exposed to violence again as adults or of perpetrating violence. Existing research also clearly shows that children who grow up in violent families have a greater risk of developing somatic diseases such as cancer or cardiovascular disease and mental illness, which is a significant cost to the health system.⁵⁰

The conclusion of the studies on the economic impact of domestic violence on society is unanimous; any measure that leads to the prevention of violence, mitigation of the impact of violence and stopping violence is likely to save society large economic losses, especially in terms of lost productivity and tax revenue.

2.4 Availability of specialized services for victims of domestic and gender-based violence

One of the major persistent problems in the area of domestic and gender-based violence is the lack of access to specialized services for victims of domestic and gender-based violence. In the course of 2020, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs carried out an Analysis of the availability of specialized social services for persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence in the Czech Republic.⁵¹ In addition to the analysis of the current situation, i.e. all registered social services with the target group of victims of domestic violence, criteria for specialization of services for persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence were established for the purpose of further analysis based on previous analyses and international standards in this area. A total of 122 (out of 259) social services with a registered target group of victims of domestic violence participated in the questionnaire survey. On the basis of the criteria and requirements set, 36 specialized social services for people at risk of domestic and gender-based violence were identified, which corresponds to 29.5% of the social services that took part in the questionnaire survey. The findings concerning the specialization of social services for victims of domestic and gender-based violence in the Czech Republic were subsequently used to evaluate the implementation of the Council of Europe Minimum Standards for Support Services in the Field of Violence against Women. The available data

⁴⁸ Czech Republic. 2017. Economic impacts of domestic violence. Available at: <https://www.vlada.cz/assets/ppov/rovne-prilezitosti-zen-a-muzu/dokumenty/Analiza-ekonomickych-dopadu-DN.pdf>.

⁴⁹For more details see e.g. Council of Europe (2014). Overview of Studies on the Costs of Violence Against Women and Domestic. Equality Division. Directorate General of Democracy. Strasbourg. Updated 14 October 2014.

⁵⁰ See Anda, R.F., Felitti, V.J., Bremner, J.D., Walker, J.D., Whitfield, C., Perry, B.D., Dube, S.R., & Giles, W.H. (2005): The enduring effects of abuse and related adverse experiences in childhood. A convergence of evidence from neurobiology and epidemiology. *European Archives of Psychiatry and Clinical Neuroscience*, 256, 174-186.

⁵¹ MPSV. 2021. Analysis of the availability of specialized social services for persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence in the Czech Republic. Available at: <http://rsss.mpsv.cz/projekt/vystupy-a-dokumenty>.

shows that the requirements of the Council of Europe Minimum Standards regarding the capacity and availability of different types of services are met in the Czech environment only in the case of the helpline. In the cases of counselling, shelters, crisis assistance and crisis centers for victims of sexual violence, these requirements are not met. In the case of the availability of beds (family places) in specialized shelters for victims of domestic and gender-based violence, the rapporteur identified a deficit of approximately 680 to 3 000 beds. In addition to the lack of available beds in shelters, a deficit in the capacity of counselling services was identified. In order for the Czech Republic to comply with the Council of Europe recommendations, approximately 54 additional specialized counselling services would have to be established, suitably distributed regionally. It is also necessary to mention the absence of rape crisis centers and sexual assault centers. According to the recommendations of the Council of Europe, approximately 27 rape crisis centers and 14 sexual assault centers would need to be set up, respectively, to meet these recommendations, and these would need to be located in appropriate regional locations.

In terms of the geographical accessibility of specialized services for victims of violence in general, it was found that in many regions specialized services are sufficiently accessible to a significant part of the population (distance up to 30 km). Intervention centers are the main contributors to the sufficient availability of specialized services. If the service has multiple facilities in a region and they are conveniently located in the region, there is usually sufficient geographical accessibility (within 30 km) to the specialized service in the region. In regions where there is only one facility for this service, geographical accessibility for a significant proportion of the population is insufficient. However, if we look at the availability of different types of specialized social services outside the intervention centers, we find that specialized shelters for victims are inaccessible for the majority of the population outside Prague and the South Moravian Region. The situation is similar for specialized crisis assistance services. Insufficient availability was also found for specialized social counselling. There is still no center for victims of sexual violence in the Czech Republic. However, capacity availability varies significantly between regions and does not depend on the number of specialized services in a region. It is therefore possible that, despite sufficient geographical availability, the service may be unavailable in some cases due to lack of capacity.⁵²

The persistent problem of the lack of availability of services for children at risk of family violence was highlighted by research conducted by the LOCIKA Center in collaboration with the Research Institute of Labour and Social Affairs in 2018.⁵³ These analyses showed that in cases where there is no specialized service for children experiencing violence in the area, it can take years for children to get professional help. The results of these analyses also indicate that these services are provided for only 10-15% of registered cases of domestic violence as reported by MoLSA. According to UNICEF research, 14% of Czech children experience domestic violence.⁵⁴

2.5 Current issues in the field of domestic and gender-based violence

The situation of the victims has been greatly complicated in the past two years by the covid-19 pandemic and related government measures that have locked them in violent households with little or no means of contacting help. In 2021, research published by the Institute of Sociology of the CAS and the Faculty of Humanities of the UK on "Violence against women in the context of covid-19" noted an increase in contacts of people at risk of domestic/gender-based violence with NGOs. According to its results, during the first wave of the pandemic in 2020, there was a 30-40% increase in demand for services. During the autumn, demand increased by up to 50% in some cases compared to 2019. The police, based on reporting

⁵² MPSV. 2021. Analysis of the availability of specialized social services for persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence in the Czech Republic. Available at: <http://rsss.mpsv.cz/projekt/vystupy-a-dokumenty>.

⁵³ Research Institute of Labour and Social Affairs. 2018. Providing psychotherapeutic assistance to a child in cases of domestic violence. Analysis based on data from clients of the LOCIKA Centre.

⁵⁴ For more details see: <https://www.unicef.cz/aktualne/146814-ceske-deti-jak-jsme-na-tom>.

statistics, do not confirm this trend. However, domestic violence methodologists from the Police Department note that the threshold for seeking help has increased. The permanent control of violent persons over victims of violent acts played an important role. The increase in cases and intensity of violence is confirmed by the greater number of contacts after the release of pandemic measures. The pandemic and the subsequent declaration of a state of emergency facilitated the emergence and progression of violent situations, while also acting as a brake on their resolution through the institutions that are supposed to intervene in such cases. The pandemic exacerbated the psychological impact on victims of violence; the systemic shortage of shelter and social housing became more pronounced. There has been an increase in the number of abused children and child whistle-blowers. Research has identified a perceptible lack of an anchored definition of domestic violence. Courts deal with individual incidents rather than domestic violence understood in context. One of the recommendations of the study is the proposal to expand the definition of domestic violence and the relevant methodologies to include tools that detect psychological violence.⁵⁵

Last year, the Association of Intervention Centers of the Czech Republic published the publication "Domestic Violence in the First and Second Waves of the C19 Pandemic - Analysis of Data from the APIC Questionnaire Survey in the Period March 2020 - January 2021".⁵⁶ According to the results of an internal questionnaire survey of intervention centers clients, approximately 39% of respondents reported that quarantine measures in Wave 1 of the COVID-19 pandemic affected the level of exposure to domestic violence. Approximately 19% of respondents reported that the level of exposure to domestic violence had even increased significantly as a result of the quarantine measures. Around 60% of the male and female respondents were then inclined to say that the measures did not affect the level of threat. In the second wave of the pandemic, the number of respondents reporting increased exposure to domestic violence as a result of quarantine measures decreased to about 32% (a decrease of 7 percentage points). Approximately 14% (a decrease of 5 pp) declared a significant level of threat, while 68% (an increase of 8 pp) of respondents from clients of intervention centers reported unchanged levels of threat. The survey also investigated whether persons at risk of domestic violence had to change their behavioral strategies during quarantine measures in order to avoid violence. In the first wave of the covid-19 pandemic, 30% of respondents had to change their behavioral strategy, while 54% did not. In 5% of cases, cohabitation was terminated. In the second wave of the covid-19 pandemic, 30% of those at risk of domestic violence had to change their behavior to avoid violence, while 65% (an increase of 9 pp) did not. In addition, 1% of respondents reported that they were unable to change their negotiation strategy. During the pandemic and related measures, the behavior of violent persons also changed. In the first wave, 37% of violent persons' behavior worsened, 59% did not change and 1% calmed down. In the second wave, 31% of violent persons' behavior worsened (a decrease of 6 pp) and 69% remained unchanged (an increase of 10 pp). A significant proportion of those at risk of domestic violence were prevented from dealing with their situation and contacting helping institutions during the covid-19 pandemic and related measures. In the first wave of the pandemic, 38% and 42% of persons at risk of domestic violence in the second wave experienced such barriers. In the first wave, the most common obstacles were restrictions on the operation of social services, child welfare authorities (CSPOD), courts or police (22%), restrictions on the movement of people (18%), fear increased by the increase in violence (15%), school closures (9%) and closures of hotels, hostels and shelters (4%). In the second wave of the pandemic, the most common barriers to dealing with domestic violence and contacting helping institutions were fear increased by an increase in violence (21% - an increase of 6 pp), restriction of movement of people (14% - a decrease of 4 pp), closure of schools (13% - an increase of 4 pp) and restrictions on the operation of social services, the ASLPC, the court or the police (11% - a decrease of 11 pp).

One of the current serious problems in this area is the increase in partner violence among young people and adolescents. ProFem research conducted in 2019 focused on this issue and

⁵⁵ For more details see: https://www.soc.cas.cz/sites/default/files/publikace/blanka_nyklova_dana_moree_-_nasili_na_zenach_v_souvislosti_s_covid-19.pdf.

⁵⁶ For more details see: <http://www.domaci-nasili.cz/wp-content/uploads/Pr%C5%AFzkum-APIC-062020-1.pdf>.

its impact on young people's lives.⁵⁷ Partner violence among young people (aged 13-26) is a significant risk factor in domestic violence. Those who are exposed to or perpetrate it are at greater risk of experiencing relationship violence later in life. Violence in young people's relationships has similar characteristics to domestic violence, but cyber-violence may play a more significant role, for example, by flooding them with messages, checking their partner's phone without their consent, forcing them to send erotic photographs or by 'revenge porn' after the relationship has ended (threatening to post erotic photographs or videos of their partner on social networks or actually posting them). The consequences of youth partner violence are very serious. Research has shown that 43% of young people who have experienced or are experiencing relationship violence suffer from a long-term inability to concentrate at school or in their studies. Other figures are even more serious: one in four girls (or boys) experiencing relationship violence suffer anorexia or significant weight loss as a result, 18% of young people experiencing partner violence are worried about their own lives and 16% of victims think about suicide. The research also included a comparative analysis of the prevalence of such violence in other countries. In Georgia, Spain, Croatia and Austria, 23-33% of young people have experienced violence in their partner relationships. The results of the research highlight the seriousness and global nature of the phenomenon of partner violence among young people.

In this context, the Center for the Prevention of Risky Virtual Communication at the Faculty of Education at Palacký University Olomouc published a research report "Dangerous Internet Challenges as Seen by Czech Children" in 2020.⁵⁸ 4 952 primary and secondary school pupils aged 12-19 participated in the research via an online questionnaire. The survey also showed that 70.1% of children think that the internet is not a safe place. Of the children and their relatives surveyed, 17.5% had been victims of unsafe behavior online. Those who have been or know someone who has been a victim of unsafe online behavior most frequently mentioned sexting (21.7%) and cyberbullying (21.2%). Responses also included blackmail (14.5%), threats (10.1%) and 'hackers' (13.1%). Most respondents had been forced to post or send nude photos (30.1%). 86% of the children surveyed had heard of Internet challenges. 70% had seen challenges on the Internet. 24% had seen the implementation of a challenge with their own eyes. Of these, 17% have completed them and 40% of respondents know someone who has completed an internet challenge. The most familiar challenge among respondents was the Blue Whale (59.9%).⁵⁹ More than a third of respondents (38%) would confide in a parent in a crisis situation. The second most frequent response (30.6%) was a friend or a friend's friend, and the third most frequent response was family (10.1%). School was the primary source of information (48%) about the dangers associated with the Internet, and 26.4% of the children surveyed talked to their parents about these risks.

The Institute for Criminology and Social Prevention has also pointed to the rising incidence of vice-related crime, among other things related to the increase in such crime in cyberspace, in its analysis of crime trends published in 2020.⁶⁰ The analysis on crime and criminal policy trends in 2019 summarizes that the only stable upward curve in the country is that of vice crime, with the number of offences increasing by almost 60% over the last ten years. This is a 3% increase in the number of offences compared to the previous year. Compared to 2018, the number of rapes has again increased slightly (from 651 offences to 683), sexual abuse by others has also increased year-on-year, by about 40 offences. The active use of modern information technology also contributes to the increase in vice crime, as the perpetration of this type of crime is often detected through social networks. Cybercrime in general is experiencing a dynamic development worldwide. The number of offences is also increasing in the Czech Republic, currently by almost a quarter year-on-year to 8 417 offences, and there is still a significant latency period to be taken into account. The areas, most often targeted by

⁵⁷ For more details see: <http://new.profem.cz/shared/clanky/670/V%C3%BDstupy%20z%20v%C3%BDzkumu.pdf>.

⁵⁸ Centre for the Prevention of Risky Virtual Communication at the Faculty of Education, ÚPOL. 2020. Dangerous Internet challenges through the eyes of Czech children. Available at: <https://www.e-bezpeci.cz/index.php/ke-stazeni/vyzkumne-zpravy/142-nebezpecne-internetove-vyzvy-2020/file>.

⁵⁹ Blue Whale - Completing thirty tasks under the guidance and coercion of the game's curator, with the last task being suicide.

⁶⁰ Institute for Criminology and Social Prevention. 2020. Available at: <http://www.ok.cz/iksp/docs/462.pdf>.

cybercrime, are in particular the production and distribution of pornography, including child pornography, the laundering of proceeds of crime using cryptocurrencies, the use of the darknet to commit crimes, crimes targeting social network users (sexting, hate speech, hate crimes, cyberbullying, etc.), etc.

Another long-term problem in the area of domestic violence is the low level of a systemic approach to the perpetrators of domestic violence, which would significantly contribute to the protection of persons at risk and to the prevention of this type of violence. According to the current research conducted by the ICSP⁶¹ on the basis of the analyzed court statistics, more than half of the cases of crimes registered with domestic violence in a partner relationship end in suspended sentences (54%). However, there has been a decrease in the proportion of cases settled with a criminal order from 17% to 11%.

More detailed analyses of the ICSP show that domestic violence in a partner relationship most often involved the offence of abuse of a cohabitant (42% of the total proportion of this offence with a domestic violence in a partner relationship element), while 38% of cases were classified as the offence of abuse of a cohabitant alone with no other offence. More than half (58 %) of the offenders were given a suspended prison sentence for this offence, with 42 % of the cases being 'simple probation' and only 16 % of the cases being given a suspended sentence with the supervision of a probation officer who supervises the establishment and fulfilment of the conditions of supervision and therefore the overall suspended sentence. If the offence of cruelty to a person living in a shared dwelling was combined with other criminal activities, it was most often in combination with the offence of dangerous threats, abuse of a person in charge, extortion or rape. In less than a tenth (9%) of cases, the victim of the crime of abuse of a person in charge was also a child.

A smaller proportion (39%) of the unconditional convictions in the cases of the above-mentioned combinations of offences were for offenders who committed the offence of abuse of a person living in a shared dwelling in combination (concurrently) with extortion. On the other hand, acquittals were most frequent (35%) in cases involving a combination of the offences of abuse of a cohabitant and rape.

In addition to abuse, domestic partner violence was further represented by other criminal activities: threats, grievous bodily harm, battery and extortion. Non-parole sentences were most often imposed for grievous bodily harm. In other cases, the court opted for suspended sentences for almost half of the sentences.

Almost two-thirds of the offenders had previous convictions. The court identified 5% of offenders as particularly dangerous repeat offenders. Measures in criminal proceedings aimed specifically at perpetrators of domestic violence, such as interim measures aimed at ensuring the protection of vulnerable persons and the conduct of criminal proceedings (in particular, prohibition of contact with the victim or prohibition of entry into a common dwelling), as well as proportionate obligations in the form of appropriate psychological counselling programs that can be imposed by the court as part of a conviction, are used to a negligible extent. The reason for this appears to be the low level of awareness of the sentencing authorities of appropriate therapeutic programs and the very low availability of such programs.

3. The process of developing the Action Plan

The preparation of the Action Plan was initiated in December 2021, when a working group for the preparation of the Action Plan (hereinafter referred to as the "Working Group") was

⁶¹ Institute for Criminology and Social Prevention, project PDP7 funded by Norway Grants 2014-2021, *"Improving the treatment of perpetrators and support for victims in cases of domestic and gender-based violence in the Czech Republic"*. Available at: <https://violenceoff.cz/analiza-statisticky-ch-udaju/>.

established within the Committee and a timetable for the preparation of the Action Plan was set. The first meeting of the Working Group was held on 23 June 2022. Subsequent meetings were held until the end of November 2018. A total of 3 meetings of the Working Group were held during this period. At these meetings, persistent problems in the various strategic areas of the Action Plan were identified and proposals for measures aimed at addressing these problems were formulated. External experts and specialists were also invited to some of these meetings.

The draft Action Plan was discussed and approved at the Committee meeting on 16 March 2023.

The preparation of the Action Plan primarily involved experts on the issue of domestic and gender-based violence from the ranks of non-governmental non-profit organizations working in this area, the state administration, the judiciary, intervention centers and other relevant social service providers.

Members of the Committee (as at 15 December 2022):

Bálková Pavla, Ministry of Justice	Marvánová Vargová Branislava, independent expert (Chairwoman)
Bartoň Daniel, lawyer	Pešáková Kristýna, Spondea
Berkovec Jiří, Ministry of Health	Poláková Jitka, proFem, Czech Women's Lobby (vice-chair)
Bělohávková Kateřina, Ministry of the Interior	Prokopová Zdena, ROSA
Čechová Jitka, Persephone	Šimáček Martin, Center for Social Services Prague (Vice-Chairman)
Hurychová Eva, independent expert	Viktorinová Lucie, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
Chaloupková Jaroslava, Acorus	Vojtíšková Martina, Association of Intervention Center Workers
Ježková Veronika, independent expert	Vrbický Jan, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Jůzová Kotalová Kristýna, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	Wünschová Petra, Centrum Locika
Krpálková Jindřiška, Pro Dialog	

Other collaborators:

Čejka Dvořáková Michaela, Faculty of Law, Masaryk University	Petrovičová Martina, Police of the Czech Republic
Holíková Klára, Association for Integration and Migration	Presserová Petra, proFem
Jandová Hana, Persephone	Přesličková Hana, Institute for Criminology and Social Prevention
Jakobsen Barbora, Alternative to Violence	Roubalová Michaela, Institute for Criminology and Social Prevention
Josef Petr, Open Men's League	Řeháčková Jitka, Social Services Center Prague
Kornetová Andrea, Police of the Czech Republic	Sailer Markéta, Ministry of the Interior
Máchová Šárka, Ministry of Justice	

4. Revision of existing measures

The previous Action Plan 2019 represented the third comprehensive strategic document at the level of the Government of the Czech Republic specifically focused on the prevention of domestic violence and assistance to its victims. Work on the Action Plan 2019 began at the end of 2018 and was approved by Government Resolution No. 126 of 23 May 2019.

The evaluation of the implementation of the 2019 Action Plan was carried out through the Committee and an annually adopted document called the Report on the Implementation of the Action Plan 2019 - 2022 (hereinafter referred to as the "Reports"). The Reports also contain the Committee's recommendations for more effective implementation of the 2019 Action Plan, which became the basis for the formulation of some of the tasks set out in this Action Plan. The 2020 Report on the implementation of the Action Plan also included an Update of the Action Plan, which was approved by the Government Resolution of 23 August 2021.⁶² The Update included both a reformulation of some existing tasks and a number of new tasks.

In general, the implementation of the Action Plan 2019 can be assessed positively in the sense that most positive steps have been taken by the state administration in the area of awareness and education. In the framework of the implementation of the Action Plan 2019, the education of all relevant professions in the most frequent contact with victims and perpetrators of violence has been deepened. Support under the Norwegian Financial Mechanisms played an important role in the implementation of the Action Plan 2019. Thanks to the *Human Rights, Roma Inclusion and Domestic and Gender-Based Violence Program*, 5 comprehensive assistance centers for victims of domestic and gender-based violence were established, including the first ever center for victims of sexual violence in the Czech Republic. Several therapeutic programs for perpetrators of violence and awareness-raising campaigns in the field of violence prevention were also supported. At the same time, the implementation of the 2019 Action Plan has brought a number of new insights into the availability of specialized services for people at risk of such violence. These insights played an important role in the formulation of the Action Plan's measures.

Thanks to the implementation of the 2019 Action Plan, some important legislative changes have been pushed through. This includes the approval of an amendment to Act No. 250/2016 Coll. on the Responsibility for Offences and Proceedings on Offences, considering the position of children and vulnerable persons and their privacy in the relevant proceedings. An important legislative change was also the adoption of Act No. 254/2019 Coll., on experts, expert offices and expert institutes, including the standardization of their work. In connection with the implementation of the objectives of the Action Plan, in 2021, an amendment to Act No. 45/2013 Coll., on Victims of Crime, was approved, which brought about the extension of the definition of a particularly vulnerable victim to include victims of rape, abuse of a person entrusted to a person and abuse of a person living in a common dwelling, i.e. victims of crimes related to domestic and sexual violence. In 2021, an amendment to Act No. 273/2008 Coll., on the Police of the Czech Republic was also approved, thanks to which a child living in a shared dwelling where violence occurs is now automatically considered a vulnerable person. Police officers are now also obliged to provide the expelled person with information on assistance for persons with violent behavior or the possibility of undergoing a therapeutic program for working with persons committing violence in close relationships.

It remains a challenge to ensure the availability of other specialized social services for people at risk of domestic and gender-based violence (e.g. shelters for people at risk of such violence or other forms of residential services), including for victims with specific needs (e.g. availability of specialized social services in foreign languages or with the provision of interpretation) and to ensure sufficient and predictable funding for organizations working in the field of prevention and combating domestic and gender-based violence. A similar situation applies to the

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availability of therapeutic interventions/therapeutic programs for working with perpetrators of domestic and gender-based violence. The present Action Plan seeks to respond to these challenges.

Based on the experience with the implementation of the Action Plan 2019-2022, the tasks contained in this Action Plan have been formulated as specifically as possible to provide the ministries with a clear idea of the expected performance. In designing the individual tasks, efforts have been made to apply the SMART method so that the actions envisaged are sufficiently specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound.⁶³

5. Implementation of the Action Plan

The Action Plan will be implemented through the activities of individual ministries in relation to the tasks set out in the Action Plan. The coordinating role for the implementation of the Action Plan will be performed by the member of the Government of the Czech Republic whose competence includes gender equality.

The monitoring and evaluation of the Action Plan will be carried out within the framework of the Committee and the Council. It is envisaged that the various ministries, through their representatives on the Committee, will regularly report on the progress of the Action Plan and, where appropriate, consult on their actions to fulfil individual tasks. In addition to its monitoring role, the Committee will thus also play an assisting role.

The evaluation of the implementation of the Action Plan in individual years will continue to be carried out through reports according to the schedule below. Responsibility for the preparation of the reports lies with the member of the Government of the Czech Republic with responsibility for gender equality. For the purpose of collecting data for the preparation of the report on the implementation of the Action Plan by individual ministries, the Committee will prepare an outline containing an overview of the required information in relation to the indicators of the relevant tasks of the Action Plan.

Timetable for the preparation of Summary Reports:

Deadline	Activities	Host
Continuously	informing the Committee on the implementation of the Action Plan by individual ministries	Members of the Government of the Czech Republic
January of year <i>n+1</i>	requesting input from individual ministries on the implementation of the Action Plan in year <i>n</i>	Member of the Government of the Czech Republic with responsibility for gender equality
February/March of year <i>n+1</i>	processing of the implementation report for year <i>n</i>	Member of the Government of the Czech Republic with responsibility for gender equality
March of year <i>n+1</i>	discussion of the report on implementation for year <i>n</i> in the Committee	Member of the Government of the Czech Republic with responsibility for gender equality
April/May of year <i>n+1</i>	discussion of the report on implementation for year <i>n</i> in the Council	Member of the Government of the Czech Republic with

⁶³ The SMART method (abbreviation of specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound) is a tool used in project management and strategy development in the goal-setting phase, the purpose of which is to set specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound goals.

		responsibility for gender equality
June of year $n+1$	submission of the report on the implementation for the year n to the Government of the Czech Republic	Member of the Government of the Czech Republic with responsibility for gender equality

6. Budget and sources of funding

Preventing and combating domestic and gender-based violence is a complex process that takes place at various levels (international, EU, central, regional, local). Many different actors are involved in this process. This complexity is matched by a multi-source funding system. The implementation of the Action Plan will be financed both from the national central level and from EU funds (mainly EU funds).

The individual measures can be divided into two basic types in terms of financing their implementation. The first type represents measures with no direct costs, which are to be implemented within the existing activities of the gestors (e.g. legislative measures). The second type are measures, which can be financed using funds from ESF+ (especially OP Employment+) and other sources outside the state budget. Funding from OP Employment+ will also be used to cover possible staff capacities related to the implementation of projects of ministries and other gestors aimed at the implementation of the measures of the Action Plan.

7. Task part

Area 1: Prevention of domestic and gender-based violence

Priorities in Area 1:

- Consistent consideration of the topic of domestic and gender-based violence (including sexual harassment and cyber-violence) in the framework educational programs and strategic and conceptual materials of the ministries,
- Adequate methodological support for teaching staff regarding the education of male and female students on this issue,
- Implementation of education on prevention of domestic and gender-based violence (including sexual harassment and cyber violence and basic knowledge on violence⁶⁴) in primary, secondary and higher education,
- The implementation of awareness-raising activities and campaigns on the prevention of domestic and gender-based violence by the ministries and the provision of support to the civil sector in the implementation of awareness-raising activities on this issue.

Expected impacts of actions in area 1:

- The issue of domestic and gender-based violence (including sexual harassment, gender-based cyber-violence and basic knowledge about violence) is consistently reflected in the framework education programs for primary and secondary schools, up to the level of learning outcomes;
- Teaching staff have sufficient and appropriate professional materials and are continuously supported in methodically educating male and female students on domestic and gender-based violence (including sexual harassment, cyber-violence and basic knowledge about violence);
- Students in primary, secondary and higher education are introduced to the issue of domestic and gender-based violence (including sexual harassment, gender-based cyber-violence and basic knowledge about violence) in an age-appropriate manner;
- Secondary, primary and higher education institutions have clearly defined internal rules on how to deal with the occurrence of domestic and gender-based violence among students, pupils and teaching staff,
- There is sufficient public awareness of the seriousness of the issue of domestic and gender-based violence (including cyber-violence and dating violence);
- The topic of domestic and gender-based violence (including sexual harassment and gender-based cyber-violence and basic knowledge about violence) is given sufficient attention by the state administration, the topic is reflected in relevant strategic and conceptual materials and awareness is disseminated.

⁶⁴ Basic knowledge of violence or basic psychology of violence: definition of violence, knowledge of the impact of violence, understanding of how violence is perceived by those who are exposed to it and those who perpetrate it, knowledge that the perpetrator is responsible for the violence.

Action 01: Include the issue of domestic and gender-based violence in the framework education programs, provide methodological support for education in this area and raise awareness of this violence (including sexual harassment, gender-based cyber-violence and basic knowledge about violence) among students in primary, secondary and higher education

Gestor: The Ministry of Education and Science in cooperation with the Czech Government Office and NPI Czech Republic

Outputs	Indicator	Date and gestor
Increased emphasis on domestic and gender-based violence (including sexual harassment, gender-based cyber-violence and basic knowledge about violence) in the revision of the framework curricula for primary and secondary schools, up to the level of expected learning outcomes.	a) Issues consistently reflected and explicitly mentioned in the updated Framework Education Programs b) Issues consistently considered and explicitly stated in the expected learning outcomes.	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoE in cooperation with the Czech Republic
Provided methodological support for primary and secondary school teachers, including ways to teach about domestic and gender-based violence (including sexual harassment, cyber-violence and basic knowledge about violence) in an age-appropriate manner, including links to relevant teaching materials and available support.	a) Methodological support for the development of this education developed b) Scope and content of education on the issue in primary and secondary schools	31. 12. 2024 MoE NPI CR in cooperation with the Czech Republic
The elaborated and expanded binding methodological guideline for a uniform procedure of primary and secondary schools in cases of detection of domestic and sexual violence (including sexual harassment, cyber-violence and basic knowledge about violence) among students, pupils and teaching staff. Recommendations to universities to implement similar uniform practices.	a) Elaborated guideline (b) Method of extending the instruction (c) Elaborated and expanded recommendations	31. 12. 2024 MoE in cooperation with the Czech Republic
Created a methodological document for universities including recommended procedures in cases of gender-based violence, including sexual harassment and abuse, and regulating the activities of ombudsmen in this area.	Created methodological document	31. 12. 2024 MoE
Ensuring that training on prevention of gender-based violence, including sexual harassment and abuse, is	(a) Scheduled training	31 December 2024

offered to all male and female academic staff and other staff at all levels of universities and that they are motivated to attend such training.	(b) Number of persons trained	and continuously in the following years MoE (NPI CR)
Educational activities using film materials on the issue of domestic and gender-based violence for school methodologists and prevention methodologists, school psychologists and psychologists and other educational workers".	a) Training offer created by NPI (b) Number of persons involved	31.12.2023 and continuously in the following years MoE, NPI CZECH REPUBLIC

A more detailed description of the measures:

The aim of this measure is to provide education to primary school pupils, secondary and university students and relevant teaching staff on domestic and gender-based violence (including sexual harassment, cyber-violence and basic knowledge about violence) in order to ensure the prevention of such violence. The measure is also aimed at ensuring adequate methodological support in this area for teachers, school methodologists and prevention methodologists, school psychologists and psychologists and other educational staff.

Justification:

Education plays a crucial role in the prevention of domestic and gender-based violence. As part of the prevention of domestic and gender-based violence, it is essential to ensure that education on basic knowledge about violence, gender stereotypes that promote violent behavior, non-violent conflict resolution in interpersonal relationships and gender-based violence, including sexual harassment and cyber-violence, is adapted to the changing level of pupils' perceptions and included in educational programs at all levels of the education system.

School prevention officers and prevention methodologists, school psychologists and psychologists and other educational staff also have a key role in preventing and educating about these forms of violence, identifying the risks associated with violence and providing information about available assistance. In this context, it is also necessary to provide systematic training in the field of domestic and gender-based violence for these workers and to provide them with appropriate methodological support.

Contact with helping professions and students in the Czech Republic in the framework of the project of the Government Office and ATV shows that many of these groups do not have basic competences about violence and gender-based violence from their studies. This may result, for example, in stereotypes and attitudes which may manifest themselves in reduced sensitivity to persons exposed to violence, and ignorance of how to detect violence in contact with the perpetrator, both in contact with couples and families and with regard to the handling of such cases. It is therefore important that basic knowledge about violence or the basics of the psychology of violence (which includes the definition of violence, the topic of responsibility for violence, the effects of violence on child development and violence prevention, and the definition and specifics of violence in close relationships and gender-based violence) be part of studies and training to increase competence and sensitivity to the topic, and that the helping professions begin to ask about violence as part of their diagnosis. (e.g. in pregnancy check-ups, in psychological examinations, in contact with pupils with challenging behavior, with general practitioners, etc.) This is confirmed by one meta-study on the role of general practitioners in detecting violence in close relationships.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ For a closer look see Hegarty, K., McKibbin, G.,m& Hooker, L. (2020). Health practitioners' readiness to address domestic violence and abuse: A qualitative meta-synthesis. PlosOne; 15 (6): e0234067.

The seriousness of the issue of sexual harassment in the Czech Republic was highlighted years ago by research conducted by Charles University, according to the results of which as many as 78% of students have encountered conduct that meets the definition of sexual harassment on campus. More than 80% of students said they knew someone who had been sexually harassed. Sexual harassment has serious negative psychological, physical, and interpersonal effects on learners, including changing their educational path or dropping out of college.⁶⁶

The hierarchical environment of universities is characterized by a high dependence of students on teachers, which creates an environment with a high prevalence of gender-based violence (two-thirds of people at universities have experienced some form of gender-based violence).⁶⁷ Universities, as educational institutions, have a duty to create a safe and non-discriminatory environment. Universities are also employers and as such have a responsibility to create a safe working environment and to provide ongoing staff training as part of their teaching skills, including in the area of appropriate and inappropriate behavior.⁶⁸ However, colleges do not currently have uniform guidance on how to deal with the occurrence of these forms of violence and harassment. A binding internal guideline for a uniform procedure to be followed by primary and secondary schools in cases where domestic and sexual violence (including sexual harassment and cyber-violence) is found to be present in both students and academic staff should help to address this problem. At the same time, a similar uniform procedure should be recommended to universities.

According to a survey by Charles University, two-thirds of students have experienced some type of sexual harassment occasionally or frequently in high school. One in three students has been subjected to intimate glances from a teacher, about a quarter have experienced inappropriate comments or touching, and 40% have experienced inappropriate comments or jokes. These phenomena are part of sexual harassment in general and are associated with the same causes, myths and consequences. Victims often experience trauma, psychological problems or poorer academic performance.⁶⁹

Comprehensive sex education in secondary schools, which has a strong preventive function precisely in relation to sexual harassment and gender stereotypes, is not sufficiently implemented in schools. Research by the Czech Secondary School Union shows that 72% of learners have not learned anything about consent in sexual life at school, and 47% of learners have had no sex education at school at all. 28% of learners said that they do not get space for questions in sex education classes.⁷⁰

Research conducted by proFem in 2021 showed that almost one third of young people (16-26 years old) have experienced violence in a partner relationship. According to its results, 43% of young people who have experienced or are experiencing relationship violence suffer from a long-term inability to concentrate at school or in their studies. Other figures are even more serious: one in four girls (or boys) experiencing relationship violence suffer from anorexia or significant weight loss as a result, 18% of young people experiencing partner violence are worried about their own lives and a full 16% of victims think about suicide.⁷¹

⁶⁶ For more details see: https://gender.fhs.cuni.cz/KGS-11-version1-metodika_pro_vyucujici_fi.pdf.

⁶⁷ UniSAFE (2022). Results from the largest European survey on gender-based violence in academia. Available at: <https://unisafe-gbv.eu/project-news/results-from-the-largest-european-survey-on-gender-based-violence-in-academia/>.

⁶⁸ Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences. 2022. Legal aspects of gender-based violence at universities. Available at: https://genderaveda.cz/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/pravni-prirucka-genderove-podminene-nasili_online.pdf.

⁶⁹ For more details see Smetáčková, Pavlík. 2011. Harassment of high school students by teachers. Available at: <https://e-psycholog.eu/pdf/smetackova-pavlik.pdf>.

⁷⁰ For more details see Czech Secondary School Union. 2021. Sex education in secondary schools. Available at: <https://stredoskolskaunie.cz/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Zprava-z-pruzkumu-sexualni-vychova-na-strednich-skolach.pdf>.

⁷¹ For more details see: <http://new.profem.cz/shared/clanky/670/V%C3%BDstupy%20z%20v%C3%BDzkumu.pdf>.

Measure No. 02: Raise public awareness of new forms of domestic and gender-based violence and support the implementation of awareness-raising activities in the field of domestic and gender-based violence under national grants

Gestor: the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Education and Science in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of the Interior in cooperation with the Czech Republic

Outputs	Indicator	Date and gestor
To focus on informing the public (with an emphasis on youth and adolescents) about the issue of gender-based cyberviolence, dating violence and hate speech on the Internet as part of the implementation of the Crime Prevention Strategy's measures aimed at implementing the "How I see myself on the Internet and in the online world" prevention campaign.	a) Campaign implemented b) Number of outreach outputs	31.12.2024 and continuously in the following years MoI in cooperation with the Czech Republic
Increase the protection of pupils by raising awareness of the social danger and criminality of taking, publishing and disseminating intimate visual material without the consent of the persons depicted and increasing their competence to distinguish dangerous content and behavior on the Internet.	List of awareness-raising activities	31.12.2023 and continuously in the following years MoE in cooperation with MoI
Support for the implementation of awareness-raising activities in the field of domestic and gender-based violence within the framework of the subsidy program Prevention of Socially Pathological Phenomena.	a) Allocation of the grant program (b) Number of supported projects involving the following activities	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoI
Awareness-raising activities aimed at informing potential victims of crime and a wider range of victims of domestic and sexual violence about their rights and the possibilities of fulfilling them (e.g. through the follow-up project of the Probation and Mediation Service).	Awareness-raising activities implemented	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoJ
Support for the implementation of awareness-raising activities in the field of domestic and gender-based violence within the framework of the subsidy program Family.	a) Allocation of the grant program (b) Number of supported projects involving the following activities	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoLSA

A more detailed description of the measures:

The aim of this measure is to objectively inform the public and raise their awareness of the issue of domestic and gender-based violence, including cyber-violence and dating violence, and thus contribute to combating and preventing such violence. The measure also aims to ensure support for awareness-raising under relevant grant titles.

Justification:

Raising awareness of all forms of domestic and gender-based violence is a key part of preventing such violence (in line with international documents in this area - see Chapter 1.5

for more details). According to research by the EU Agency for Fundamental Human Rights, on average only 14% of victims of such violence seek help, while 75% of women in the Czech Republic did not know of a single institution or service to turn to in such cases.⁷² Increased awareness may contribute to the willingness of those at risk to seek specialized help and support and also motivate those around the person at risk to take an active stance on the issue. The extent to which society tolerates violence in relationships creates room for secondary victimization of the person at risk. Systematic public rejection of any form of relationship violence is an important prerequisite for changing social attitudes and tolerance of violence. Research by the Association of Intervention Centers of the Czech Republic shows that awareness-raising activities in the field of domestic violence and the detabooization of this topic (as well as legislative and other measures in this area) lead to a positive development in the public's perception of this topic and its seriousness (and therefore the need to help and protect the person at risk of domestic and gender-based violence and other affected family or household members).⁷³ The persistence of dangerous stereotypes of gender-based violence among the public is reflected in a number of recent opinion polls (see Chapter 2.2 for more details).

A number of recent studies have also highlighted an increase in partner violence among young people, with up to a third of adolescents having experienced it.⁷⁴ Cybercrime is also rising significantly.⁷⁵ Research shows that up to half of pupils have been victims of cyberbullying, 1/3 of pupils have engaged in sexting and two thirds have engaged in risky behavior online. More than a quarter of pupils have received an offer from another (unknown) internet user to meet in the real world. Of those invited to the meeting, almost 70% of the children arrived.⁷⁶ However, the majority of victims never report these acts (see chapter 2.5 for more details). To this end, a global public awareness campaign should be implemented with a focus on youth and adolescents on the issue of gender-based cyber violence, dating violence and hate speech on the Internet.

⁷² FRA. 2014. EU Wide Survey on Violence against Women. See more at : https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2014-vaw-survey-main-results-apr14_en.pdf.

⁷³ Topinka, D. 2016. Domestic violence from the perspective of applied research. Basic facts and results. Available at: <http://www.domaci-nasili.cz/wp-content/uploads/Dom%C3%A1c%C3%AD-n%C3%A1sil%C3%AD-z-perspektivy-aplikovan%C3%A9ho-v%C3%BDzkumu.-SocioFactor-2016..pdf>.

⁷⁴ For more details see: <http://new.profem.cz/shared/clanky/670/V%C3%BDstupy%20z%20v%C3%BDzkumu.pdf>.

⁷⁵ Institute for Criminology and Social Prevention. 2020. Available at: <http://www.ok.cz/iksp/docs/462.pdf>.

⁷⁶ For more details see e.g. <https://www.e-bezpeci.cz/index.php/ke-stazeni/vyzkumne-zpravy/117-ceske-deti-v-kybersvete/file>.

Measure 03: Consider the prevention of domestic and gender-based violence in relevant strategic and methodological documents

Gestor: Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of the Interior

Outputs	Indicator	Date and gestor
The prevention of domestic and gender-based violence is reflected in the conceptual strategic and methodological documents on crime prevention and combating trafficking in human beings.	Consideration of the prevention of domestic and gender-based violence in relevant documents	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoF
Prevention of domestic and gender-based violence is reflected in conceptual strategic and methodological documents on health protection and promotion and disease prevention.	Consideration of the prevention of domestic and gender-based violence in relevant documents	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoH
The prevention of domestic and gender-based violence is reflected in the conceptual strategic and methodological documents for the prevention of risky behavior of children and youth.	Consideration of the prevention of domestic and gender-based violence in relevant documents	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MOE
The prevention of domestic and gender-based violence is reflected in the conceptual strategic and methodological documents on the protection of children's rights, family policy and social housing.	Consideration of the prevention of domestic and gender-based violence in relevant documents	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoLSA
The issue of domestic and gender-based violence was taken into account in relevant conceptual strategic materials in the area of the development of the Probation and Mediation Service and criminal policy, and meetings were held with providers of services for victims of crime related to domestic and sexual violence to support the development of these services under the subsidy title Development of Services for Victims of Crime Provided on the Basis of Act No. 45/2013 Coll., on Victims of Crime.	a) Considering the prevention of domestic and gender-based violence in relevant departmental conceptual materials b) Meetings with service providers	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoJ

Further description of the measures:

The aim of the measure is to ensure long-term and systematic consideration of the prevention of domestic and gender-based violence in all relevant conceptual documents of individual

ministries in order to achieve effective prevention of such violence at the level of the state administration.

Justification:

To ensure systemic and effective prevention of domestic and gender-based violence, it is necessary to take this issue into account in all relevant conceptual strategic and methodological documents of the state administration and to ensure their coherence. The issues of domestic and gender-based violence are most relevant to the conceptual strategic and methodological documents on crime prevention and combating trafficking in human beings, prevention of risky behavior of children and young people, protection of children's rights, family policy and social housing, development of services and concepts of assistance for victims of crime, health protection and promotion and disease prevention.

Area 2: Protection and support for victims of domestic and gender-based violence

Priorities in Area 2:

- Ensuring the availability of specialized services for persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence (outpatient, residential, crisis, outreach);
- Ensuring the availability of specialized services for children - persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence facing multiple disadvantages (outpatient, residential, crisis, outreach);
- Ensuring the continuation of the operation of the 24-hour free telephone assistance for victims of domestic and gender-based violence;
- Strengthening interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary cooperation;
- Increasing protection and ensuring the safety of people at risk of domestic and sexual violence during crisis situations;
- Ensuring sufficient attention to the needs of people facing multiple disadvantages (people with disabilities, migrants, senior citizens, etc.).

Expected impacts of actions in area 2:

- For adults and children at risk of domestic and gender-based violence, there is an accessible regional network of specialized services (accessible shelters, crisis beds, telephone crisis assistance, accessible safe housing, e.g. some form of "social housing") with sufficient capacity;
- The continuation of the existing 24-hour free telephone assistance for victims of domestic and gender-based violence is ensured;
- Interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary cooperation with all relevant bodies providing assistance to victims of domestic and gender-based violence is strengthened;
- The needs of persons facing multiple disadvantages are considered in the provision of assistance to victims and persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence;
- The establishment and development of specialized services for victims of sexual violence is encouraged.

Measure 04: Ensure the availability of specialized social services for persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence

Gestor: the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in cooperation with the regions and the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports

Outputs	Indicator	Date and gestor
Amendment to Act No.108/2006 Coll., on Social Services, including a new specialized social service for victims of domestic and gender-based violence, including a corresponding change in the conditions for registration of the specialized service.	a) The proposed amendment to the Act b) Inclusion of a new specialized service for victims of domestic and gender-based violence c) Possibility to register a maximum of two target groups or to identify a priority target group in the case of a specialized service for victims of domestic and gender-based violence	31. 12. 2023 MoLSA
Proposal for a method of ensuring an accessible network of specialized social services for victims of domestic and gender-based violence within the framework of the amendment to the Social Services Act.	(a) Proposal to provide an accessible network of specialized services for victims b) Number of specialized services for victims in the Czech Republic	31. 12. 2024 MoLSA in cooperation with the Czech Republic
Supporting the use of the Quality Standards for Specialized Social Services for Victims of Domestic and Gender-Based Violence as a recommended quality model for the target group and raising awareness of the Standards among social service providers and regional methodologists.	a) Support for the implementation of the Quality Standards for Specialized Social Services for Victims of Domestic and Gender-Based Violence under OP Employment+ b) Number of persons informed about the Standards in the relevant year c) Methodological support for social services working with the target group of victims of domestic violence in the use of the Standards.	31.12.2023 and continuously in the following years MoLSA in cooperation with the Czech Republic and counties
Promote the availability and predictable funding of specialized safe houses, crisis beds, crisis assistance and specialist social counselling for people at risk of domestic and gender-based violence (e.g. through multiannual funding and long-term cooperation agreements).	(a) Financial allocation allocated to support individual types of specialized social services (b) How to include longer-term financial support for specialized services	31.12.2023 and continuously in the following years MoLSA in cooperation with regions

Consideration of the target group of victims of domestic and gender-based violence and their needs in the context of supporting the availability of social housing	Number and capacity of accommodation for persons at risk of domestic violence in social housing in individual years	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoLSA, MRD
Evaluation of the current financing and availability of specialized social services for persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence and individual types of these services in relation to the outputs of the Analysis of specialized social services for persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence in the Czech Republic.	Publication of a report containing an evaluation of the current funding, including the allocation allocated to support individual types of specialized social services	31. 12. 2023 MoLSA in cooperation with regions

A more detailed description of the measures:

The aim of the measure is to ensure the availability of specialized social services (in particular, shelters and crisis beds) for persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence that take into account the specific needs of victims and reflect the dynamics of domestic and gender-based violence when working with them.⁷⁷

Justification:

Victims of domestic and sexual violence and their children face very limited access to specialized services, which play a crucial role in ensuring their safety. The measures under this strategic objective therefore primarily focus on promoting the availability of all services for victims of domestic and gender-based violence (shelters, crisis beds, counselling centers, telephone lines, etc.). In view of the very low percentage of victims who turn to the relevant institutions, the measures under this strategic objective are also aimed at victims of domestic violence in order to raise their awareness of the possibilities of dealing with their situation and the forms of assistance available. The assistance measures also include activities aimed at raising victims' awareness of the possibilities of dealing with their situation and the forms of assistance available to them and at increasing their safety.

A study by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) on services for victims of domestic and gender-based violence distinguishes between general and specialized services for victims of domestic violence.⁷⁸ General services are aimed at the general public and therefore may not respond adequately to the specific needs and traumatic experiences of victims. General services meet the full range of needs of male and female clients, but on a more general level, without regard to their specific needs. Such services include general counselling centers, services for people with mental health problems, shelters for people at risk of losing their housing, shelters for families with children, shelters for mothers with children, marriage and family counselling, citizens' counselling centers, and helplines. Moreover, the EIGE study points out that, as women are disproportionately and disproportionately affected by relationship violence, there is a need (in line with the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action - see Chapter 1.4 for more details) for specialized support services specifically for women victims of partner violence. In this sense, the definition of general services also includes services for victims of domestic violence (i.e. both women and men) that are not gender-specific and do not reflect the discriminatory nature of violence against women in terms of human rights violations. According to the EIGE, specialized services are characterized by the fact that they aim to protect and empower women, victims of domestic and partner violence

⁷⁷ The availability of the service of intervention centers under the provisions of Section 60a of Act No. 108/2006 Coll., on Social Services, as amended, is ensured in each region, unlike other specialised social services for persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence

⁷⁸ <http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/Violence-against-Women-Victim-Support-Report.pdf>

and their children, and are tailored to the specific immediate and long-term needs of victims. These services are provided by specialized staff with knowledge of the specificities of gender-based violence. Such services include specialized telephone hotlines, specialized shelters and safe housing, short and long-term psychological support, legal counselling, outreach services and, last but not least, services for children who have witnessed or been victims of domestic violence.

The results of the Analysis of the Availability of Specialized Residential Social Services for Adult Victims of Domestic Violence prepared by the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic in 2017 showed that only 5 of the registered residential social services in the Czech Republic provide their services exclusively to victims of domestic violence. These 5 services were operated by only 3 organizations in 2 cities of the CR. The capacity of these services is approximately 90 beds - i.e. approximately 30 family places.⁷⁹ This pilot analysis showed that the capacities of these services are insufficient.

Victims of domestic violence do not seek out residential social services because they have lost their housing, but because violence occurs in their homes and therefore violates their basic human rights. For them, home is not a synonym for safety, but a place where their human dignity, health and, in many cases, their lives are threatened. They are therefore not just looking for a 'roof over their heads', but for a safe space and specialized support to enable them to cope with the effects of trauma and to take the legal or other steps necessary to end the violence.

In 2021, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs followed up on these findings and published the Analysis of the Availability of Specialized Social Services for Persons at Risk of Domestic and Gender-Based Violence in the Czech Republic.⁸⁰ In addition to the analysis of the current situation, i.e. all registered social services with the target group of victims of domestic violence, criteria for specialization of services for persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence were established for the purposes of further analysis based on previous analyses and international standards in this area. A total of 122 (out of 259) social services with a registered target group of victims of domestic violence participated in the questionnaire survey. On the basis of the criteria and requirements set, 36 specialized social services for people at risk of domestic and gender-based violence were identified, which corresponds to 29.5% of the social services that took part in the questionnaire survey. The findings concerning the specialization of social services for victims of domestic and gender-based violence in the Czech Republic were subsequently used to evaluate the implementation of the Council of Europe Minimum Standards for Support Services in the Field of Violence against Women. The available data shows that the requirements of the Council of Europe Minimum Standards regarding the capacity and availability of different types of services are met in the Czech environment only in the case of the helpline. In the cases of counselling, shelters, crisis assistance and crisis centers for victims of sexual violence, these requirements are not met. In the case of the availability of beds (family places) in specialized shelters for victims of domestic and gender-based violence, the rapporteur identified a deficit of approximately 680 to 3 000 beds. In addition to the lack of available beds in shelters, a deficit in the capacity of specialized counselling services was identified. For the Czech Republic, in order to comply with the Council of Europe recommendations, approximately 54 additional specialized counselling services would need to be established, suitably located regionally. The lack of rape crisis centers and sexual assault centers is also problematic in this respect. According to the recommendations of the Council of Europe, approximately 27 rape crisis centers and 14 sexual assault centers would need to be created and appropriately located regionally to fulfil these recommendations.

⁷⁹ The analysis is available at: https://www.vlada.cz/assets/ppov/rovne-prilezitosti-zen-a-muzu/dokumenty/Analiza-dostupnosti-a-kvality_final_s-opravami_revize-leden.pdf.

⁸⁰ MPSV. 2021. Analysis of the availability of specialized social services for persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence in the Czech Republic. Available at: <http://rssh.mpsv.cz/projekt/vystupy-a-dokumenty/>.

Measure 5: Ensure availability of services for children at risk of domestic violence

Gestor: the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Central Board of the Czech Republic and the regions,

Outputs	Indicator	Date and gestor
Consistent application of Section 6, letter g) of Act No.359/1999 Coll., on the Social and Legal Protection of Children in all cases where the ASLPC becomes aware of facts indicating that domestic violence is occurring in the family.	(a) Methodological recommendation including the consistent application of Section 6(g) of the Act on Social and Legal Protection of Children in cases of violence (b) Number of children covered by the provisions of Section 6(g) of the Act on Social and Legal Protection of Children in the relevant year	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoLSA
Ensuring sufficient personnel and professional capacity of intervention centers for work with children at risk of family violence within the framework of the amendment to the Social Services Act.	Method of ensuring the IC's staffing and professional capacities for work with children at risk of family violence	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoLSA in cooperation with regions
Supporting the availability of a network of professional assistance services for children in connection with the detection of family violence falling within the scope of social and legal protection of children.	a) Support for services under the Family Grant Program b) Number of supported organizations including financial allocation (c) Number of families and children receiving professional assistance	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoLSA
Supporting the availability of specialized crisis assistance for children at risk of family violence under Section 60 of the Social Services Act at the regional level.	a) Prioritization of services within the subsidy program of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs for social service providers b) Number of supported organizations including financial allocation (c) Existence of a monitoring mechanism to determine the number of children who have received professional assistance due to domestic violence	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoLSA in cooperation with regions

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the existing system of support for work with children at risk of family violence.	Published evaluation of the effectiveness of the system of work with children at risk of domestic violence and proposal to strengthen it	31. 12. 2023 MoLSA in cooperation with regions
Proposal for a guaranteed network of preventive and professional services in the system of care for children and families at risk, including services to help children at risk of domestic violence.	Published draft service network including services for children at risk of domestic violence	31. 12. 2024 MoLSA in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and the Czech Republic
The analysis and the proposal for a solution to the reform of public law protection of children and the judiciary in matters of protection of children at risk, including the definition and anchoring of the issue of assisted contacts.	a) Analysis carried out b) Draft reform proposal containing the definition and anchoring of assisted contacts	31. 12. 2023 MoLSA in cooperation with regions
Amendments to the Civil Code regulating the unacceptability of physical punishment of children.	The proposed amendment	31. 12. 2024 MoJ

Further description of the measures:

The aim of the measure is to support the availability of services for children at risk of domestic and gender-based violence and to ensure early crisis intervention in such cases.

Justification:

The ASLPC registers approximately 2 500 cases of domestic violence involving minors every year. At the same time, the number of adult victims who seek help because of domestic violence, in whose families minor children grow up, suggests that the actual number of children who are threatened or exposed to domestic violence is much higher.

The seriousness of the impact of domestic violence on children (whether it is violence by one parent against another, between parents or directly against children) is confirmed by foreign studies.⁸¹ Around 50% of children who grow up in a family where domestic violence occurs are also directly exposed to physical violence.⁸² Violence negatively affects both the mental and physical health of children⁸³ ; negatively affects brain development⁸⁴ , the development of relational attachment and the ability to regulate emotions.⁸⁵ Violence and neglect puts a child

⁸¹ See e.g. Norwegian NOU 2017:12 (2017). Svikt og svik. En gjennomgang av saker hvor barn har vært utsatt for seksuelle overgrep og omsorgssvikt. Oslo: Barne- og likestillingsdepartementet.

⁸² For more details see Braarud, H.C., Raundalen M., (2011) In Jakobsen, B., Råkil, M. (2022) Violence can be stopped. Psychology of violence and therapy for perpetrators of violence in close relationships. 333-343.

⁸³ Anda, R.F., Felitti, V.J., Bremner, J.D. et al. The enduring effects of abuse and related adverse experiences in childhood. Eur Arch Psychiatry Clin Neurosci 256, 174-186 (2006). Available online at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00406-005-0624-4>, Edwards VJ, Holden GW, Felitti VJ, Anda R.F. Relationship between multiple forms of childhood maltreatment and adult mental health in community respondents: results from the adverse childhood experiences study. Am J Psychiatry. 2003 Aug;160(8):1453-60, available online at: <https://ajp.psychiatryonline.org/doi/full/10.1176/appi.ajp.160.8.1453>.

⁸⁴ For a closer look see Teicher, M. H., Samson, J. A., Anderson, C. M., & Ohashi, K. (2016). The effects of childhood maltreatment on brain structure, function and connectivity. Nature Reviews Neuroscience, 17(10), 652-666. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1038/nrn.2016.111>.

⁸⁵ Holt, T., & Hafstad, G. S. (2016). Barn og traumer: et utviklingspsykologisk perspektiv. I C. Øverlien, M.-I. Hauge & J.-H. Schultz (eds.), Barn, vold og traumer. Møter med unge i utsatte livssituasjoner (pp. 281-295). Universitetsforlaget.

at risk of experiencing violence as an adult: a greater risk of being exposed to or perpetrating violence again. C. P. Cowan and P. A. Cowan⁸⁶, who have more than 40 years of experience working with families in which violence occurs, emphasize the importance of measures that prevent the transgenerational transmission of violence and neglect.

Protecting children from neglect and violence is also crucial in preventing mental and somatic illnesses such as cardiovascular disease and cancer, or suicidality and alcohol and substance abuse. These findings are supported by the Adverse Childhood Experience study⁸⁷, which shows an exponential increase in the risk of relationship problems, poorer mental and physical health in relation to the frequency of negative childhood experiences, including family violence.

In addition to stopping the violence, children exposed to violence need crisis intervention in the form of information about the violence and their situation, they need to be able to express how they perceived the violence and to be able to talk about the violence in a way that puts it in context within their experience.⁸⁸ It is also necessary to assess whether the children and family need further therapeutic support.

At the same time, however, the availability of specialized crisis assistance for children at risk of domestic and gender-based violence is not ensured at the regional and regional level. As a consequence, many children are left without specialized help and support or have to wait disproportionately long for such help. It is therefore necessary to create a network of preventive and specialized services in the care system for children at risk.

From the point of view of prevention and protection against domestic violence, it would be advisable to methodically adjust the procedure of the ASLPC so that underage children are taken under social legal protection under the provisions of section 6 (g) of Act No.359/1999 Coll., on social legal protection of children, as amended, already in the case of suspicion of the occurrence of domestic violence in the family, until proven otherwise.

In January 2022, the provisions of Section 44(1) and (3) of Act No.273/2008 Coll., on the Police of the Czech Republic, as amended, were amended, on the basis of which the police are obliged to designate all minor children living in the household as persons at risk when evicting a violent person from a common household. This fact leads to the obligation of intervention centers in the region to offer their services to these minors, regardless of the age category of the service. These services may be offered through the legal guardian, but if the guardian is not cooperating, the services are also offered directly to the child in a form appropriate to the child's age. This places greater demands on interdisciplinary cooperation, particularly with the locally competent children's social welfare department, in order to offer services to these children. These changes also need to be reflected in the development priorities for intervention centers - strengthening their professional and staff capacity to work with minors. It is also desirable to improve interdisciplinary cooperation between intervention centers and the relevant department of social legal protection of children and to lead the ASLPC workplaces to apply the principle of zero tolerance of violence against minors.

The application of the principle of zero tolerance of violence in the prevention of violence and related serious negative impacts on children includes the unacceptability of physical punishment of children. The Convention on the Rights of the Child defines "corporal" or "physical" punishment as any punishment in which the physical force used is intended to cause

⁸⁶ Cowan, C.P. & Cowan, P.A. (2019) Enhancing Parenting Effectiveness, Fathers' Involvement, Couple Relationship Quality, and Children's Development: Breaking Down Silos in Family Policy Making and Service Delivery. *Journal of Family Theory & Review* 11, 92-111.

⁸⁷ Anda, R.F., Felitti, V.J., Bremner, J.D. et al. The enduring effects of abuse and related adverse experiences in childhood. *Eur Arch Psychiatry Clin Neurosci* 256, 174-186 (2006). Available online at : <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00406-005-0624-4>.

⁸⁸ For a closer look see Raundalen, M. (2011) Vi må snakke med barna om volden. I Heltne, U. & Steinsvåg, P.Ø. (ed) *Barn som lever med vold i familien. Grunnlag for beskyttelse og hjelp*. (2. utg., pp. 175-183). Universitetsforlaget.

some degree of pain or discomfort, however slight.⁸⁹ In this context, it is proposed to amend the Civil Code to regulate the unacceptability of physical punishment of children.

⁸⁹ For more details see MoLSA. 2016. Convention on the Rights of the Child and related documents. Available at: <https://www.vlada.cz/assets/ppov/rfp/vybory/pro-prava-ditete/Preklady-dokumentu-OSN.pdf>.

Action 6: Ensure that the needs of persons facing multiple disadvantages are consistently taken into account in the provision of assistance to victims of domestic and gender-based violence

Gestor: the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Regional Development and the Ministry of the Interior, regions and municipalities

Outputs	Indicator	Date and gestor
Making the system of assistance to victims of violence facing multiple disadvantages more transparent, e.g. by creating an overview of available services for people with multiple disadvantages in a form that is clear, transparent and understandable for providers and clients (in different languages).	Created overview	31.12.2023 MoLSA
Providing financial support and encouragement for the use of intercultural work and community interpreting services under existing crime prevention grant programs.	Intercultural work and community interpreting included among the supported activities of existing crime prevention grant programs	31.12.2023 and continuously in the following years Mol
Ensuring financial support and promotion of the use of intercultural work and community interpreting services within the framework of existing subsidy programs for family support and the development of social services.	Intercultural work and community interpreting included among the supported activities of existing family support and service development grant programs	31.12.2023 and continuously in the following years MoLSA
Providing methodological support in the area of developing the expertise of providers of specialized social services for victims of domestic and gender-based violence in relation to direct work with migrant women and migrants - victims of domestic and gender-based violence and related issues.	Number of methodological meetings in a given year	31.12.2023 and continuously in the following years MoLSA in cooperation with Mol, in cooperation with the regions of the Czech Republic
To take into account the needs of victims facing multiple disadvantages (migrants, seniors, persons with disabilities, etc.) in the training of professions in the most frequent contact with victims of domestic and gender-based violence.	(a) Educational activities taking into account the needs of victims facing multiple disadvantages (b) Number of training sessions and persons trained	31.12.2024 and continuously in the following years MoLSA, Mol, MoH
Strengthening the availability of social housing for victims facing domestic and gender-based violence and multiple disadvantages, in particular female holders of temporary protection.	Number and capacity of accommodation for victims of domestic and gender-based violence facing multiple	31.12.2024 and continuously in the following years

	disadvantages in social housing in the relevant year	MoLSA, MRD in cooperation with regions and municipalities of the Czech Republic
Inclusion of the services of intercultural workers, especially interpreting in the provision of social services, within the framework of the amendment of Act No.108/2006 Coll., on Social Services (e.g. in the category of "other professional workers who directly provide social services").	Support for intercultural work and interpretation included in the proposed amendment	31. 12. 2023 MoLSA

Further description of the measures:

The aim of the measure is to ensure quality and accessible services for victims of domestic violence who face multiple disadvantages, whether due to health or physical disabilities, language barriers, special residential status, sexual orientation, age, ethnicity or other. These vulnerable groups may face multiple disadvantages and are therefore among the most at risk. Children of migrants and migrant women are a particularly vulnerable group facing multiple disadvantages and need to be given special attention, and adequate access to assistance must be ensured.

Justification:

Victims of domestic and gender-based violence who face multiple disadvantages have to overcome specific obstacles not only in the phase of seeking or contacting help, but also in terms of the availability of e.g. specialized residential services that would be able to reflect their specific needs in a comprehensive and holistic manner.

In terms of raising awareness of the forms of assistance and services available, there is a need to provide information in different languages and in forms that are accessible and understandable to victims facing health or physical disadvantages, the elderly and other groups with specific needs. It is also important to strengthen distance and outreach forms of assistance.

An essential prerequisite for effective assistance to multiple disadvantaged groups of victims of domestic and gender-based violence is strengthening interdisciplinary cooperation and increasing the expertise and quality of social services. For example, organizations working primarily with the target group of migrant women and migrants should receive adequate support to ensure that their staff have the necessary competences and knowledge to deal with cases of violence among their clients. Similarly, organizations that focus on the target group of victims of domestic and gender-based violence should receive adequate support to ensure that their staff have the necessary competence and knowledge to deal with cases where they encounter migration status or other multiple disadvantages of their clients.

Intercultural workers can play an important role in helping migrant victims to engage with the social environment, to assert their rights and legitimate interests, and to manage their personal affairs.

The positions of intercultural workers appear to be crucial for providing assistance and support to victims of violence from other cultural backgrounds, yet this position and its methodological support are not systematically anchored. In view of the nature of this service and its essential contribution in mediating contact with the social environment, assisting in the exercise of rights, legitimate interests and in the management of personal affairs, it is proposed that the service

of intercultural workers be included in the Social Services Act, at least under the category of 'other professional workers who directly provide social services', already provided for in the current wording of Section 115(e) of the Social Services Act.

Measure 7: Strengthening the capacity of social services and social housing to provide assistance to victims of domestic and gender-based violence facing multiple disadvantages

Gestor: **MLSA, MMR**

Outputs	Indicator	Date and gestor
Enhanced capacity of residential services and shelters to receive victims of domestic and gender-based violence facing multiple disadvantages, especially holders of temporary protection (e.g. provision of wheelchair accessibility, free interpretation, etc.).	(a) Grant programs and calls involving support for capacity building (b) Number of services supported (c) Financial allocation to support capacity building of residential services and shelters	31.12.2024 and continuously in the following years MoLSA
Enhanced social housing capacity for victims of domestic and gender-based violence facing multiple disadvantages, especially female and male temporary protection holders.	a) Number of social housing units for the target group b) Number of crises flats for the target group	31.12.2024 and continuously in the following years MoLSA, MRD

Further description of the measures:

The aim of the measure is to increase the accessibility of residential services, shelters and social housing for victims of violence facing multiple disadvantages by including the provision of barrier-free accessibility, free interpretation and other measures within relevant subsidy programs and titles and by allocating social housing and crisis housing specifically to this target group.

Justification:

The capacity of specialized services for victims of partner violence is insufficient and does not meet the needs of clients with multiple disadvantages. These include both crisis assistance and shelters. Similarly, the needs of deaf or homeless women, where outreach work needs to be strengthened, are insufficiently met.

Social services are not accessible for people with multiple disadvantages and facing partner violence, especially for people who are deaf. There are currently approximately 120 interpreters in the country, i.e. 1 interpreter per 100 deaf people. There is a need to change the situation, which can only be done by increasing the capacity and, given the necessity and acute need for Deaf people to have an interpreter available in various situations, to ten times the current capacity.

Another problem is accommodation capacity. According to Decree No.505/2006 Coll., implementing certain provisions of the Social Services Act, accommodation in shelters is provided for persons at risk of social exclusion for a period not exceeding one year. For the target group of persons at risk of social exclusion, this period is in some cases insufficient to ensure intervention leading to the necessary activation and reintegration into normal life. The service set up in this way can therefore lead to clients leaving the services of the shelter after a set period of time and going to another similar facility, thus reinforcing their dependence on the assistance system and failing to fulfil the purpose of the service. A more appropriate maximum period of accommodation in an asylum house for this target group should be at least

5 years.

Due to the specific needs of clients who are exposed to multiple disadvantages and experience partner violence in their relationships, it is necessary to increase the expertise and competence of the staff of organizations providing direct care. Organizations working primarily with target groups other than victims of partner/domestic violence who face different types of disadvantages should be adequately supported to ensure that their staff have the necessary competence and knowledge to deal with cases of partner violence experienced by their clients. Conversely, organizations that target victims of partner/domestic violence should be adequately supported to ensure that their staff have the necessary competence and knowledge to deal with multiple disadvantages of their clients.

Homeless women are a separate group. Often these are women with complex needs, traumatized, dealing with addictions, psychological and social problems, or debts. According to the preliminary results of the research on Barriers in the system of institutional assistance to victims of partner violence, currently being carried out by the Institute of Sociology of the CAS in cooperation with the proFem organization, homeless women experience violence in 100% of cases. It is therefore necessary to focus on this target group by strengthening or initiating the field work of social services specializing in victims of partner violence.

The capacity of social housing does not reflect the needs of people facing partner violence and multiple disadvantages. In view of their needs, there is a need to increase the capacity of social housing (including crisis housing, which is allocated within social housing) and to simplify the process of allocating social housing and shorten the time for processing applications for social housing.

The current social housing system does not provide appropriate assistance for people facing partner violence and multiple disadvantages. In addition to the limited and insufficient capacity, which needs to be increased, the whole procedure for applying for social housing takes an unreasonably long time. In addition, in the process of applying for social housing, persons experiencing partner violence should be given points of preference so that they can leave their violent partner or persons who are in housing need as a result of partner violence (staying in shelter housing or other long-term substandard housing).

Action 8: Update existing or create new methodological support for professionals that come into contact with victims at risk of family violence, including children at risk of family violence

Gestor: the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health in cooperation with the Central Office of the Czech Republic, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in cooperation with the Central Office of the Czech Republic and the regions

Outputs	Indicator	Date and gestor
Updated methodological guideline No.3/2010 regulating the procedure of ASLPC workers determining the maximum deadline for contacting a child at risk of domestic violence and the inclusion of children under social legal protection pursuant to Section 6(g) of Act No.359/1999 Coll., on social legal protection of children, in the case of suspected family violence (in cooperation with the Committee in relation to legislative changes in the area).	Updated methodological guideline	31. 12. 2023 MoLSA in cooperation with the Czech Republic
Updated and expanded the Recommended Practice for the Investigation of Victims of Sexual Aggression in the Provision of Care to Victims of Rape and Sexual Violence to include a methodology for sensitive communication with victims of domestic and gender-based violence aimed at preventing secondary victimization and subsequent evaluation of the implementation of the methodology in practice (in cooperation with the Committee).	(a) Updated and extended methodological procedure b) Published evaluation	a) 31. 12. 2024 MoH in cooperation with the Czech Republic b) 31. 12. 2025 MoH
Updated methodological recommendations on primary prevention of risky behavior among children, pupils and students in schools and educational institutions, including ways of dealing with children at risk of family violence (in cooperation with the Committee)	Updated methodological recommendations	31. 12. 2024 MoE in cooperation with the Czech Republic

Further description of the measures:

The aim of this measure is to provide workers of all relevant professions who encounter victims of domestic and gender-based violence (including children) with sufficient methodological support for working with this particularly vulnerable target group.

Justification:

The measure aims to update all relevant methodologies to improve the quality of assistance to victims of domestic and gender-based violence (including children) at risk of family violence by all relevant professions that encounter them.

From the perspective of protecting children from domestic violence, it is necessary to update Methodological Instruction No.3/2010 regulating the procedure for ASLPC workers in cases of domestic violence so that the deadline for ASLPC to contact a child at risk of domestic violence

is explicitly set. While the current recommendation states that the ASLPC should contact the child at risk without delay, in practice it appears that this term does not have a clear and uniform interpretation.

Measure 9: Support the development of specialized services for victims of sexual violence, increase their quality and ensure the complexity of their provision.

Gestor: Government Office of the Czech Republic in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of the Interior

Outputs	Indicator	Date and gestor
Evaluation of the functioning of the pilot specialized center for victims of sexual violence, including the setting up of internal interdisciplinary cooperation within the services provided and with other entities, including recommendations for setting up similar services.	Published evaluation including recommendations	31.12.2025 GO CR
Methodological support for interdisciplinary cooperation of relevant entities working on the topic of sexual violence in relation to the recommendations from the evaluation of interdisciplinary cooperation set up within the pilot specialized center for victims of sexual violence.	Created methodology	31.12.2026 GO CR in cooperation with MoLSA, MoH, MoJ and Mol
Support for the establishment and expansion of centers for victims of sexual violence under the Operational Program Employment+.	Support for centers included in the ODA+	31. 12. 2025 and continuously in the following years MoLSA, in cooperation with the Czech Republic
Proposal for a system of funding for comprehensive services for centers for victims of sexual violence within counties.	(a) Meeting of the Working Group on the Prevention of Sexual Violence on the proposal (b) Submission of a proposal to the Committee	a) 31.12.2024 and continuously in the following years b) 31.12.2026 GO CR in cooperation with MoLSA, Mol, MoH and MoJ

Further description of the measures:

The aim of the measure is to create conditions to support the development of specialized services for victims of sexual violence, to increase their quality and to ensure the complexity of their provision. Based on the evaluation of the functioning of the pilot specialized center for victims of sexual violence, the measure will formulate recommendations for setting up similar services, including internal interdisciplinary cooperation, and develop a methodology for this cooperation, including a proposal for a financing system.

Justification:

Around 600 cases of rape are reported to the Czech Police every year. Experts and specialists

on this issue estimate that the rate of reporting incidents of this crime is only 5-10%.⁹⁰ Research from 2016 indicates that this rate is at the lower end of this range.⁹¹ Thus, the actual number of rapes in the country each year is 6-12 thousand cases. Representative research from 2021 54% of women experience some form of sexual violence or harassment⁹². According to the results of an international study by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights, victims of sexual violence most often turn to doctors, medical practitioners and healthcare institutions (22% in the case of partner sexual violence and 16% in the case of sexual violence by a person other than the partner).⁹³ Staff in health facilities are often not sufficiently trained in this issue, which increases the risk of secondary victimization of victims. Health care facilities are also not always sufficiently equipped to collect all the forensic evidence that is essential for the eventual conviction of the perpetrator and do not have adequate facilities for the eventual questioning of the victim by the police. The services provided to victims of sexual violence are fragmented, while in many cases victims who turn to professional help encounter insensitive and stereotyped attitudes, are forced to report the crime to the police (for example, the collection of forensic material or treatment at specialized outpatient clinics for rape victims is conditional on reporting), and repeatedly have to travel to different places to see different professionals (for treatment, questioning, counselling).

A pilot project is currently being implemented to establish the first center for victims of sexual violence, which will provide comprehensive and specialized assistance to such victims. However, according to the Council of Europe's recommendations, there should be at least one such center in each region, the number of which should be based on the size of the population (one center per 200-400 000 women).⁹⁴ The Convention against Violence against Women also draws attention to the need to establish a sufficient number of suitable and easily accessible centers for victims of rape or sexual violence.

The Specialized Center for Victims of Sexual Violence provides comprehensive services to victims of sexual violence in one safe space, under one roof. Thus, it integrates several disciplines in one place, namely social services (crisis assistance, including residential form, professional social counselling), psychotherapeutic services, legal services, provides basic medical treatment and collection of samples and forensic evidence, testing for sexually transmitted diseases, and also creates a space for the implementation of interrogation by the police (in a special interrogation room). Services for victims of sexual violence, provided in one safe place, reduce the risk of secondary victimization that victims face in many cases within the victim support system.

Ensuring the effective functioning of comprehensive services in the center for victims of sexual violence therefore places high demands on the setting and methodological anchoring of interdisciplinary cooperation, both within the center (within the services provided) and between external cooperating entities (police, health care facilities).

The lessons learned from the implementation of the pilot project should therefore be further developed and used in the establishment of other centers. For this reason, a key phase of the implementation is the evaluation of the functioning of the newly established center and the formulation of recommendations for other emerging centers, including the developed work methodologies and the methodology of interdisciplinary cooperation, which is crucial for ensuring the complexity of services. To ensure the development and functioning of emerging

⁹⁰ For more details see e.g. Home Office Research Study: A Gap or A Chasm? Attrition in Reported Rape Cases. 2005.

Available at: <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110314171826/http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/hors293.pdf>.

⁹¹ Persephone, Focus - Marketing & Social Research: sexual violence through the eyes of the Czech public (2016) Available at: <https://www.persefona.cz/source/pdf/Persefona%20Sen%C3%A1t%20prezentace.pdf>.

⁹² proFem, MindBridge: experience of sexual violence and sexual harassment in the Czech Republic (2021) Available at: https://www.profem.cz/shared/clanky/984/V%C3%9DZKUMN%C3%81%20ZPR%C3%81VA_sexualni%20nasili_2021%20-%20Copy%201.pdf.

⁹³ FRA. 2014. EU wide survey on violence against women. See more at: https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2014-vaw-survey-main-results-apr14_en.pdf.

⁹⁴ Council of Europe: Combating violence against women - minimum standards for support services, 2008 Available at: [https://www.coe.int/t/dg2/equality/domesticviolencecampaign/Source/EG-VAW-CONF\(2007\)Study%20rev.en.pdf](https://www.coe.int/t/dg2/equality/domesticviolencecampaign/Source/EG-VAW-CONF(2007)Study%20rev.en.pdf).

specialized centers, it is essential to set up a system of sustainable financing for them, which includes financing the establishment of new centers, as well as ensuring long-term financing for their functioning.

Action 10: Take into account the specific needs of victims of domestic and gender-based violence in mental health care reform

Gestor: Ministry of Health in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in cooperation with the Czech Republic

Outputs	Indicator	Date and gestor
The needs of victims of domestic and gender-based violence are taken into account in the context of mental health reform and the implementation of measure 4.3.1 of the National Action Plan for Mental Health "Strengthen crisis centers and services, especially to assist victims of violence", in particular the safety of victims of domestic and sexual violence in crisis accommodation (in collaboration with the Committee).	a) Number of meetings of the MoH Working Group on Mental Health Care Reform on the issue with representatives of the Committee (b) Number of crisis centers established, considering the needs and safety of victims	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoH, MoLSA in cooperation with GO CR
Within the framework of mental health reform and the introduction of new projects, increase the availability of psychotherapeutic assistance for victims of domestic and gender-based violence so that victims can benefit from at least 10 professional sessions with a therapist able to work with domestic and sexual violence issues, e.g. by introducing a special program for reimbursement of therapies or by increasing the quota for psychotherapists and psychotherapists). As part of the diagnosis of psychological disorders, actively map whether patients have experience of domestic violence.	a) Method of providing free psychotherapeutic assistance to victims (b) Number of victims who received free therapeutic assistance in a given year c) Number of patients with psychiatric disorders with experience of domestic violence detected	31. 12. 2024 MoH in cooperation with MoLSA and continuously in the following years

A more detailed description of the measures:

The aim of the measure is to ensure that the needs of victims of domestic and gender-based violence are taken into account in the ongoing reform of mental health care. This should be done by ensuring the participation of the Committee on the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Violence against Women in this reform.

Justification:

The impact of domestic and gender-based violence on the victim's experience is long-term. Victims and their children who have witnessed violence should have access not only to crisis intervention and professional social counselling, but also to follow-up psychotherapeutic care aimed at processing traumatic experiences, preventing secondary victimization, gaining insight into the dynamics of violence in relationships and preventing further victimization. Currently, victims of domestic and gender-based violence face low availability of such services. Therefore, it seems appropriate to consider the needs of this target group in the implementation of mental health care reform. Patients also often present with various symptoms of mental illness that may be related to their exposure to violence or to their perpetration of violence. Therefore, as part of mental health reform and diagnosis of mental disorders, it seems essential to map whether patients have experienced domestic violence.

Measure No. 11: Ensure the funding and continuous operation of a free telephone helpline for victims of crime and domestic violence and a free telephone helpline for victims of violence against women, including gender-based cyber-violence

Gestor: the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic in cooperation with the MIT (Czech Telecommunication Office)

Outputs	Indicator	Date and gestor
Continuous operation of the existing toll-free helpline for victims of crime and domestic violence.	Secured operation and financing of the existing line	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoI
Ensure the inclusion of one of the existing hotlines specifically targeting victims of violence against women under the newly introduced European hotline number for victims of violence against women (116 016) and financial support for the operation of the hotline.	a) One of the existing helplines for victims of violence against women incorporated into the European helpline b) Telecommunication line cost coverage discussed c) Ensuring financial support for the operation of the social services hotline	31. 12. 2024 and continuously in the following years a) GO CR in cooperation with MIT (CTO) (b) MoI (c) MoLSA

Further description of the measures:

The aim of the measure is to ensure the continued operation of the existing toll-free helpline for victims of crime and victims of domestic violence and the toll-free helpline for victims of violence against women and gender-based cyber-violence in the coming years.

Justification:

Crisis telephone assistance is one of the key elements of immediate assistance to victims of domestic and gender-based violence. The provision of round-the-clock telephone crisis assistance to victims of such violence is also a requirement of the Istanbul Convention. The current helpline registers more than 6 000 calls each year and is showing an increasing trend year on year. The most frequently addressed issues are domestic violence, stalking, dangerous threats and other crimes. In the past, the helpline was supported by the Norwegian Funds and is currently operated by the Ministry of the Interior. In this context, there is a need to ensure sufficient and predictable funding for the existing helpline in the coming years.

In November 2022, the European Commission announced the establishment of an EU-wide standard helpline for victims of violence against women. The hotline operates on 116 016. Women who are victims of violence will be able to call the same number from anywhere in the EU for advice and support. Member States must reserve a single European telephone number to connect to national helplines by the end of April 2023. Currently, the only free 24-hour helpline for victims of violence against women, including cyber-violence, is operated in the Czech Republic by Rosa. The operation of the helpline is currently ensured through funding from the Norway Grants. In order to ensure the continued operation of the hotline after 2023 and to fulfil international commitments, it is necessary to secure the operation of the hotline from national resources. For this reason, it is proposed to secure funding for the operation of the helpline after 2023 as a social service from the MoLSA, to secure the inclusion of the helpline under the established European helpline number from the MoC in cooperation with the MIT (CTO) and to secure financial support to cover telecommunication costs from the MoI, which will be discussed for the year together with the budget negotiations.

Area 3: Ensuring systemic responses to domestic and gender-based violence and ensuring access to justice for all victims of these forms of violence

Priorities in area 3:

- Providing systematic and intensive training in the field of domestic and gender-based violence for professions that come into contact with victims, in order to ensure a sensitive approach to victims, safety and access to justice for victims of these forms of violence;
- Ensuring the availability of therapeutic interventions for working with perpetrators of domestic and gender-based violence;
- Setting up systematic data collection in the field of domestic and gender-based violence;
- Protecting the elderly from violence and other inappropriate behavior;
- Revision of existing legislative protection against gender-based cyber-violence;
- Supporting the deepening of the expertise of judges and judges (including female judges-in-waiting) on the issue of domestic and gender-based violence;
- Strengthening the specialization of forensic experts in psychology and psychiatry on the issue of domestic and gender-based violence (including basic knowledge of violence) in the framework of standardization of their activities;
- Increase awareness of judges, prosecutors and female prosecutors on the issue of domestic and gender-based violence (including basic knowledge about violence);
- Raise awareness of all victims of domestic and gender-based violence about the right to seek adequate compensation;
- Expanding the possibility to help victims of domestic and gender-based violence in the most serious cases of domestic and gender-based violence (threat to life);
- Strengthening the prevention of gender-based cyber-violence, including groups facing multiple discrimination;
- Removing existing systemic deficiencies in the legal framework for protection against domestic and sexual violence and increasing legislative protection for victims of domestic and gender-based violence.

Expected impacts of actions in area 3:

- The professions that most often come into contact with persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence know the specifics of these forms of violence (including basic knowledge about violence), are aware of the possible risks, know which entities and services to refer the person at risk to, communicate sensitively with persons at risk of such violence, take into account their needs, provide them with adequate interventions, and have the competence to communicate with persons committing violence and detect such cases. At the same time, they contribute to ensuring safety and access to justice for victims of these forms of violence;
- School prevention methodologists, school psychologists and psychologists, educational counsellors and counsellors, and other educational staff are sufficiently educated in the area of domestic and gender-based violence (including sexual violence and basic knowledge about violence), how to prevent it, and how to identify and provide adequate intervention to a child affected by family violence. The education of teaching staff on this issue and its deepening is systematically supported (including sufficient supply of training events in this area);
- For perpetrators of domestic and gender-based violence who choose to address their violent behavior (or are ordered to do so by a court or misdemeanor commission), there is a therapeutic program in each county focused on working with them;

- Systematic and regular data collection on domestic and gender-based violence is set up at the level of the state administration and the data of individual entities are placed in the context of all available data;
- Workers in social services, health care, police, justice and public administration are able to recognize and address violence and other inappropriate behavior towards seniors;
- The general public has sufficient awareness of the issue of violence against seniors;
- The State has evaluated the legislative framework with regard to the highest possible level of protection for victims of gender-based cyber-violence, including gender-based hate speech, and has drafted legislation to strengthen it;
- Judicial officers-in-waiting, male and female judges are provided with the opportunity to further educate themselves annually on the issue of domestic and gender-based violence, perceive the seriousness of the issue and take violent incidents into account in their decision-making;
- Support is provided for the deepening of the specialization of prosecutors and deputies on the issue of domestic and gender-based violence through a sufficient number of professional courses at the Judicial Academy. Judges and magistrates have sufficient opportunities to further their education on this topic and are also regularly informed of the latest professional developments in this area;
- Persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence are informed in a concise, clear and consistent manner about the right to seek redress and the assistance available, and know how to exercise their rights and where to go for assistance;
- Persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence have easily traceable and clear information on their rights and the possibilities of fulfilling them, and awareness of this availability is raised;
- Existing systemic shortcomings in the legal framework for protection against domestic and sexual violence are removed and legislative protection for victims is strengthened.

Measure 12: Ensure further training and specialization of professions that come into contact with persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence in order to ensure a sensitive approach to victims, safety and access to justice for victims of these forms of violence

Gestor: Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Education, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Health, Ministry of the Interior in cooperation with the Ministry of Health,

Outputs	Indicator	Date and gestor
Training for ASLPC workers focused on a sensitive approach to victims of domestic and gender-based violence, including new forms of violence (e.g. cyberstalking), including basic knowledge about violence, information on how to work with families affected by violence and how to communicate with the perpetrator towards zero tolerance of violence so that ASLPC workers use tools to protect children at risk of violence.	a) Number of accredited courses for ASLPC staff and workers on the above topics (b) Number of persons trained	31.12.2023 and continuously in the following years MoLSA
A training program for medical and non-medical professionals in the field of work with victims of domestic and gender-based violence, focusing on a sensitive approach to victims of domestic and gender-based violence with an emphasis on victims of sexual violence (including basic knowledge about violence and the specifics of different forms of violence), ensuring safety and access to justice for victims of these forms of violence within the Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education.	Established training program within Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education	31. 12. 2023 MoH
Training for health care personnel (especially for staff of gynecological surgeries, emergency rooms and pediatricians and doctors) focused on sensitivity to victims of domestic and gender-based violence, ensuring safety and access to justice for victims of these forms of violence. Offer training on the specificities of domestic and gender-based violence within the framework of the Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education.	a) Number of training sessions (b) Number of persons trained c) Offer of training within the Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education	31.12.2023 and continuously in the following years MoH
Consistent training of methodologists and methodologists of regional directorates and territorial departments of the Police in the field of domestic violence and other forms of gender-based violence (including basic knowledge about violence). Continuation of regular training of police officers and policewomen of the riot police service and the criminal police service not only in the field of domestic violence, but also in other forms of gender-based violence (with emphasis on sexual violence), following the instruction of the President of the Police No. 291/2017 on methodological activities in the field of victims of crime and domestic violence.	a) Number of training sessions (b) Number of persons trained	31.12.2023 and continuously in the following years Mol

Training of male and female police officers on how to conduct interviews with victims of domestic and gender-based violence (including children).	a) Number of training sessions b) Number of trained police officers and policewomen	31.12.2023 and continuously in the following years MoI
Training of classroom teachers, educational counsellors and counsellors, school prevention methodologists and other pedagogical staff in the field of prevention of domestic and gender-based violence (including basic knowledge about violence), including the possibility of using educational films focused on this issue.	a) Training offer created by NPI (b) Number of persons involved	31.12.2023 and continuously in the following years MoE, NPI Czech Republic
To provide training for forensic experts in the field of psychology in the area of domestic and gender-based violence.	Implemented trainings	31 December 2024 and continuously in the following years MoJ
The Judicial Academy offers annual courses for male and female judicial officers in waiting, judges and magistrates, prosecutors and deputies focused on gender-based and domestic violence issues (e.g. decision-making on custody of a child and regulation of contact between a violent parent and a child, decision-making in cases of rape, etc.), including recovery of damages.	a) Number of training sessions (b) Number of persons trained	31.12.2023 and continuously in the following years MoJ
The annual course of the Judicial Academy for judges and magistrates on the topic of judicial decision-making in cases of sexual offences against human dignity and other offences related to sexual exploitation, including the issue of compensation for victims of such offences.	a) Listed course b) Number of participants	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoJ
Amendment to Ministry of Justice Decree No. 37/1992 Coll., on the Rules of Procedure for District and Regional Courts to introduce, under Section 2(2)(a) of the Decree, the specialization of judges in crimes against human dignity in the sexual sphere and crimes of trafficking in human beings under Section 168(1)(a) of the Decree. (a) and section 168(2)(a) of the Criminal Code, enticement to sexual intercourse (section 202 of the Criminal Code), abuse of a person in charge (section 198 of the Criminal Code) and abuse of a person living in a common dwelling (section 199 of the Criminal Code).	The draft ordinance presented.	31. 12. 2024 MoJ
To inform regional and municipal police directorates about the possibility of establishing a specialized team or group of the Police of the Czech Republic for cases of domestic and gender-based violence and to	a) Number of informed directorates of the Police	31.12.2024 and continuously in the following years

support the maintenance of the existing specialized team in Brno and the specialized system in Ostrava.	(b) How to support the maintenance of the existing dedicated team and system	Mol
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Further description of the measures:

The aim of the measure is to ensure continuous training and specialization of professions that most often come into contact with persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence. Professionals working with victims of domestic and gender-based violence should receive training to ensure sensitivity to victims, victim safety and access to justice for victims in the exercise of their profession.

Justification:

The needs of victims of domestic and gender-based violence are specific and in many ways differ from the needs of other service users of individual institutions. Training of professionals is not only an effective means of preventing individual forms of violence, but also contributes to changing the attitudes and behavior of these professions with regard to people at risk, which improves the quality of the interventions provided.

Policemen and policewomen, health workers, social workers, child protection workers, and educational workers represent the professions that most often encounter persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence, with families where violence occurs, and with perpetrators of violence. Training for these professions was one of the main priorities of the 2019 Action Plan. This measure aims to build on and further deepen this training. At the same time, the training of these professions needs to be expanded to include other forms of gender-based violence (e.g. gender-based violence in cyberspace and stalking). In line with international standards (see Chapter 1.4 for more details), training should be ongoing and there should be proper monitoring of whether newly acquired skills are being adequately applied.

For example, an investigation by the Commission for the Analysis of Homicide in Partner Relationships in Norway also shows that psychologists, psychologists and doctors come into contact with couples and families in which violence is occurring but are not asked about the violence and are unsure how to work with it. They are also unsure about the interdisciplinary cooperation that is important in such cases.⁹⁵ Similar experiences are confirmed by aid organizations in the Czech Republic.

Part of identifying cases of violence is actively asking patients and clients whether they have been exposed to, experienced or perpetrated violence. Adults who are exposed to violence often want helping professions to ask about violence. So do those who perpetrate violence. Children who are exposed to violence report that no one asked them about their experience of violence during childhood and adolescence. At the same time, we know that if a person is exposed to violence, he or she can have many health problems as a result of the violence, and the helping professions come into contact with families where violence occurs without the subject of violence being addressed.

Judges and magistrates, prosecutors and female prosecutors, and judicial officers in waiting are currently insufficiently familiar with the issue of domestic and gender-based violence. In practice, it is common that domestic violence is not taken seriously enough on their part, and often court decisions reflect stereotypes persisting in social discourse, as also illustrated by

⁹⁵ For a closer look see NOU 2020:17 Varslede drap? Partnerdrapsutvalgets utredning. 2020. Oslo: Justis- og beredskapsdepartementet. Available at: <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/5f3dc96de14f443f869795a19088926a/no/pdfs/nou202020200017000dddpdfs.pdf>.

the analysis of court decisions carried out as part of the 2022 research on compensation.⁹⁶

The issue of domestic violence is not standardly included in the educational content of law faculties, or the information obtained is not sufficiently extensive and comprehensive to understand the issue of domestic and gender-based violence. In practice, there is, for example, a lack of use of punishment for the offence of dangerous threats, because prosecutors and judges do not give due weight to threats made by the perpetrators or perpetrators of violence.

Act No. 220/2021 Coll. amended, inter alia, the provisions of the Criminal Code regulating general aggravating circumstances so as to make it clear that a crime that is "committed to the detriment" in Section 42(h) of the Criminal Code is a crime that is "committed to the detriment of", means not only an offence by which damage is caused to the person concerned, but also an offence by which injury or damage to health is caused to that person. However, a former partner is not considered a close person per se. Another problematic area is the use of mediation in cases of domestic violence. Mediation is now commonly proposed in cases of violence, for example in divorces. Judges and magistrates do not yet associate the resolution of domestic violence with civil proceedings. However, this approach can lead to secondary victimization of victims as they are pressured to come to an agreement with the perpetrator.

At the same time, it is necessary to ensure the quality of expert activities in the field of domestic and gender-based violence by strengthening the specialization of forensic experts in psychology and psychiatry on the issue of domestic and gender-based violence within the framework of its standardization. The issue of low quality of expert opinions is highlighted, among other things, by the research of the Institute of Sociology of the CAS and the Faculty of Social Sciences of Charles University in Prague *Violence against women in connection with covid - 19*.⁹⁷

The issue of various forms of domestic and gender-based violence (e.g. crimes of abuse of a person living in a shared home, rape or stalking) is a very specific area that places high demands on the professional competence of entities coming into contact with persons at risk, witnesses and accused persons. Experience from abroad and the Czech Republic shows that the advantage of specialization is the improvement of the quality of work due to a deeper substantive knowledge of the issue. Specialization of prosecutors also leads to increased confidence in the ability of the justice system to deal with cases of domestic and gender-based violence.

Given the demands that the issue of domestic and gender-based violence places on expertise and knowledge, there is a need to provide sufficient opportunities for judges and magistrates to educate themselves on this topic. Specialization in cases of domestic and sexual violence is currently established at the level of the Police of the Czech Republic and at the level of prosecutors' offices. At the level of courts, there is no specialization on these forms of violence (or related crimes). According to Article 2(2)(a) of Ministry of Justice Decree No. 37/1992 Coll., on the Rules of Procedure for District and Regional Courts, specialization of court departments in the criminal section is introduced in the following cases: 1) juveniles, 2) foreigners, 3) traffic crime, 4) financial and banking crime, 5) military crimes, 6) serious organized crime (in particular participation in an organized criminal group and crimes committed by an organized group). Thus, the specialization of judicial departments in the criminal section in certain specific cases is already taking place. The definition of specialization under Article 2(2)(a) of Ministry of Justice Decree No 37/1992 Coll. on the Rules of Procedure for District and Regional Courts

⁹⁶ ProFem. 2022. Compensation for victims of crime in the context of violence against women: lessons from theory and practice and suggestions for improvement. Prague: proFem - Centre for Victims of Domestic and Sexual Violence, 2022. ISBN 978-80-907512-9-3. Available at: [https://profem.cz/shared/clanky/1053/PROFEM_vico_publikace%20\(A5\)%20WEB%20-%20Copy%201.pdf](https://profem.cz/shared/clanky/1053/PROFEM_vico_publikace%20(A5)%20WEB%20-%20Copy%201.pdf), <https://www.profem.cz/cs/vydali-jsme/vyzkumy/a/odskodnovani-obeti-nasili-na-zenach>.

⁹⁷ NYKLOVÁ, Blanka and Dana MOORE. Violence against women in the context of covid - 19. Prague: Institute of Sociology of the CAS, v. v. i and Faculty of Humanities, UK, 2021. ISBN 978-80-7330-380-8. Available at: https://www.soc.cas.cz/sites/default/files/publikace/blanka_nyklova_dana_moree_-_nasili_na_zenach_v_souvislosti_s_covid-19.pdf.

is demonstrative, i.e. under the current legislation, specialization in cases of domestic and sexual violence is in principle possible. However, this possibility is not used by the courts. A related measure aims to explicitly include the issue of domestic and sexual violence among the matters on which the courts in the criminal division are to provide specialization. Specifically, it is proposed to ensure specialization in cases of crimes against human dignity in the sexual sphere (Title III of the Criminal Code), crimes of trafficking in human beings under Article 168(1)(a) and 168(2)(a) of the Criminal Code, enticement to sexual intercourse under Article 202 of the Criminal Code, abuse of a person entrusted to one's care under Article 198 of the Criminal Code, abuse of a person living in a common dwelling under Article 199 of the Criminal Code.

Action 13: Increase the competence of relevant professions to recognize and intervene in cases of various forms of gender-based cyber violence, including the impact of these forms of violence on victims and options for addressing them

Gestor: Ministry of Education, Ministry of Education, Ministry of the Interior in cooperation with the Czech Republic

Outputs	Indicator	Date and gestor
Increase the competence of the Police of the Czech Republic to recognize various forms of gender-based cyber violence (cyberbullying, cyberstalking, non-consensual sharing of intimate records, etc.) and to intervene in these cases, including the impact of these forms of violence on victims and the possibilities of their solution through training of police officers in this issue.	Number of training courses implemented	31.12.2023 and continuously in the following years MoI in cooperation with the Czech Republic
Offering Justice Academy courses for male and female judicial officers, judges and magistrates on the topic of gender-based cyber-violence (cyberbullying, sexual abuse in cyberspace, cyberstalking, non-consensual sharing of intimate records, etc. including information on the impact of these forms of violence on victims and forms of disclosure in cyberspace.	a) Number of courses offered b) Number of participants	31.12.2023 and continuously in the following years MoJ
Training of classroom teachers, guidance counsellors, school counsellors and prevention methodologists in the field of gender-based cyber violence (cyberbullying, sexual abuse in cyberspace, cyberstalking, non-consensual sharing of intimate records, etc.)	a) Training offer created by NPI (b) Number of persons involved	31.12.2023 and continuously in the following years <i>Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports</i>

A more detailed description of the measures:

The aim of the measure is to strengthen the prevention of cyber-violence by including the issue in the education of primary and secondary school students and increasing their protection and competences to distinguish dangerous content and actions on the Internet, increasing the competences of police officers, prosecutors, judges and magistrates regarding this issue, raising public awareness of the seriousness of this issue and revising the existing legislation on this issue.

Justification:

A 2019 study by the Institute for Criminology and Social Prevention shows that the number of cybercrime-related offences in the Czech Republic is steadily increasing. In 2019, cybercrime increased by almost a quarter year-on-year, and the high latency of this phenomenon must be taken into account.⁹⁸

One of the areas most often targeted by cybercrime is crimes targeting social network users. Recent research also points to an increase in violence in close relationships between young people and adolescents, in which cyber violence plays a much more significant role: flooding messages, checking a partner's phone without their consent, forcing them to send erotic photos or so-called revenge porn after the end of a relationship (threatening to post erotic photos or videos of a partner on social networks or actually posting them).⁹⁹ The consequences

⁹⁸ Institute for Criminology and Social Prevention. 2020. Available at: <http://www.ok.cz/iksp/docs/462.pdf>.

⁹⁹ See <http://new.profem.cz/shared/clanky/670/V%C3%BDstupy%20z%20v%C3%BDzkumu.pdf> for more details.

of these forms of violence in close relationships can be very serious (e.g. anorexia, self-harm, and can often end in suicide of the victim). The increasing incidence of violence and dangerous behavior in cyberspace is confirmed by the findings of the Police of the Czech Republic and the experience of social service providers.

Worrying results came from a recent survey, which found that 40% of children would have no problem going out with someone they only know online and 63% would have no problem sharing sensitive personal information online. These figures are increasing over time.¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, research results in this area show that 17.5% of primary and secondary school pupils have been victims or know someone who has been a victim of unsafe behavior online. Most of these children have not reported these acts to the relevant authorities.¹⁰¹ A major debate on the issue of cyber-violence was opened in 2020 by the documentary 'In the Net'.¹⁰²

For the reasons mentioned above, it is therefore necessary to strengthen the prevention of cyber violence, which should contribute to the inclusion of the issue in the education of primary and secondary schools about the social danger and criminality of the acquisition, publication and dissemination of intimate visual material without the consent of the persons depicted and to increase their competence to distinguish dangerous content and actions on the Internet. At the same time, it is necessary to strengthen the availability of victim protection by, inter alia, increasing the competence of police officers, prosecutors, judges and magistrates to intervene and address this issue. Increasing the competence of representatives of the relevant professions should be based on the highest level of knowledge and be based on facts. In relation to cybercrime, this means taking into account the norms of the behavior of persons on the Internet, however risky (e.g. sexting), and creating prevention tools aimed at the perpetrators of criminal behavior. The stigmatization of risky behavior, which includes the threat of prosecution of children and adolescents for photos and videos of themselves under Section 192 of the Criminal Code (production and other disposal of child pornography), discourages victims of the publication and dissemination of intimate visual material without the consent of the persons depicted from seeking help and reporting the behavior to the police. This makes victims more vulnerable and puts them in a desperate situation.

¹⁰⁰ See <https://www.e-bezpecni.cz/> for more details.

¹⁰¹ For more details see: <https://www.e-bezpecni.cz/index.php/ke-stazeni/vyzkumne-zpravy/142-nebezpecne-internetove-vyzvy-2020/file>.

¹⁰² For more details see: <https://vsitifilm.cz/>.

Measure 14: Develop a concept for working with perpetrators of domestic and gender-based violence and promote the availability of therapeutic programs for working with this target group through national grants and programs

Gestor: the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior

Outputs	Indicator	Date and gestor
Concept and setting up of a system of work with perpetrators of domestic and gender-based violence, including a system of financing.	Created concept	31. 12. 2024 GO CR in cooperation with MoE, MoI and MoLSA
Support for therapeutic interventions for perpetrators of violence through the grant title Prevention of Socially Pathological Phenomena for work with perpetrators of violence.	a) Allocation of the grant program or title in each year b) Number of supported projects aimed at working with perpetrators of violence	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoI
Support for therapeutic interventions for perpetrators of violence through the grant title Development of Probation and Resocialization Programs for Adult Offenders.	a) Allocation of the grant program or title in each year b) Number of supported projects aimed at working with perpetrators of violence	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoJ
Continued support for work with perpetrators of violence under the Family Grant Program and raising awareness of this option among potential beneficiaries.	Number of supported projects focusing on the following activities	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MOLSA
Anchorage of binding compliance with the Minimum Standards for Work with Persons Committing Violence in the Czech Republic, enshrined in the framework of individual subsidy titles and programs.	Method of ensuring mandatory compliance with the standards (e.g. their inclusion in the training of evaluators and assessors of applications)	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoI, MoJ, MoLSA
Update of the Minimum Standards for Work with Persons Committing Violence in the Czech Republic with regard to the findings and outcomes of the developed concept of work with persons committing violence in close relationships	Updates to the Minimum Standards	31.12. 2025 GO CR

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Further description of the measures:

The aim of the measure is to develop a concept for working with perpetrators and to ensure the availability and sufficient and predictable funding of programs for working with perpetrators of domestic and gender-based violence.

Justification:

The task is aimed at developing a concept for working with perpetrators of violence and ensuring national funding for programs for perpetrators of violence.

Part of a comprehensive approach to working with domestic violence is the availability of services for perpetrators of violence. The main goal of therapeutic work with perpetrators of violence is to detect cases and end violent behavior, which means contributing to safety for those exposed to violence (Minimum Standards for Working with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence in Close Relationships in the Czech Republic, Government 2018). Therapeutic work with perpetrators of violence against their spouse, children and other loved ones contributes to preventing the violence from spreading within the relationship, in new relationships and from being passed onto future generations. This is based not only on role learning, but also, as research shows, in that violence and neglect is a traumatic experience for a child and puts a person at risk of perpetrating violence against a partner, spouse or children in adulthood or being exposed to violence again and at risk of poorer mental and physical health. It is therefore part of the prevention of domestic violence, but also of mental and physical health prevention in general.¹⁰³

According to current research, a therapeutic approach is needed to ensure the quality and effectiveness of work with perpetrators of violence. Analyses of various interventions show that purely psychoeducational approaches, which are referred to as programs and which are often court-ordered ("Batterer Intervention Programs" based on the Duluth model, for example), do not have stable results¹⁰⁴ or do not result in a reduction in violence, and graduates reoffend as often as control group respondents without participating in the program.¹⁰⁵ It is therefore more efficient to spend resources on introducing a therapeutic offer for perpetrators of violence who are recommended or self-motivated to receive the intervention. Such measures can help to stop violence and prevent transgenerational transmission. What research-based therapeutic interventions have in common is that the work focuses on the following themes: safety, gender roles, working with trauma, mental health, substance abuse issues, and supporting relational and parenting competencies when children are in a relationship. These interventions take as their starting point that the person perpetrating the violence is responsible for the violence.¹⁰⁶ Such interventions have good empirical support and significantly better efficacy than traditional "Batterer Intervention Programs" which are based on teaching men how gender role patterns and perpetration of violence are linked.¹¹⁰ The work also involves

¹⁰³ Jakobsen, B., Råkil, M. (eds.) (2022): Violence can be stopped. The psychology of violence and *therapy for perpetrators of violence in close relationships* (13-21).

¹⁰⁴ Karakurt, G., Koç, E., Çetinsaya, E. E., Ayluçtarhan, Z., and Bolen, S. (2019). Meta-analysis and systematic review for the treatment of perpetrators of intimate partner violence. *Neurosci. Biobehav. Rev.* 105, 220-230. doi:10.1016/j.neubiorev.2019.08.006

¹⁰⁵ Sneed, A.L., Bennett, V.E., & Babcock, J.C. (2018). Treatments that Work for Intimate Partner Violence: Beyond the Duluth Model. In E. L. Jeglic, C. Calkins (Eds.), *New Frontiers in Offender Treatment*. Springer Nature Switzerland

¹⁰⁶ Askeland, I.R., & Råkil, M. (2017): Models on Treatment of Intimate Partner Violence. In Holt, S., Øverlien, C., & Devaney, J. (eds): *Responding to Domestic Violence. Emerging Challenges for Policy, Practice, and Research in Europe* (267-289). London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

¹⁰⁷ Cowan, C.P. & Cowan, P.A. (2019) Enhancing Parenting Effectiveness, Fathers' Involvement, Couple Relationship Quality, and Children's Development: Breaking Down Silos in Family Policy Making and Service Delivery. *Journal of Family Theory & Review* 11, 92-111.

¹⁰⁸ Scott, K., & Lishack, V. (2012). Intervention for maltreating fathers: Statistically and clinically significant change. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 36(9), 680-684.

¹⁰⁹ Stover, C.S., Meadows, A.L., & Kaufman, J. (2009). Interventions for intimate partner violence: Review and implications for evidence-based practice. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 40(3), 223-233.

¹¹⁰ Stover, C.S., Meadows, A.L., & Kaufman, J. (2009). Interventions for intimate partner violence: Review and implications for evidence-based practice. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 40(3), 223-233.

interdisciplinary collaboration with the police, the ASLPC or organizations that focus on working with people exposed to violence. These findings should be part of the new standards for working with perpetrators of violence.

In the Czech Republic, there is currently no stable state funding for the provision of therapeutic interventions and organizations providing such interventions are dependent on subsidies from the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs or other sources of funding. The Ministry of the Interior implements the subsidy title Prevention of Socially Pathological Phenomena, the Ministry of Justice implements the subsidy title Probation and Resocialization Programs for Adult Offenders to support the programs. From 2019, support for these activities is also possible under the Family grant program. The allocation of these grant titles and programs for work with perpetrators of violence and the capacity of these programs has long been insufficient. To this end, there is a need to maintain the focus of the existing grant titles and programs and ensure that minimum standards are met by project implementers. Support for these therapeutic programs should be directed so that at least one program for this target group is available in each region of the Czech Republic.

In terms of the economic and societal impact of violence on the health of the population and its economic activity, the measures presented are an investment. With regard to the benefits of therapeutic interventions, it is necessary to develop a concept and set up a system of work with perpetrators of domestic and gender-based violence in the Czech Republic, including a system of financing. The design of the system will be based, inter alia, on the outcomes and recommendations of the ICSP project *'Improving the treatment of perpetrators and support for victims in cases of domestic and gender-based violence in the Czech Republic'* (ViolenceOff).¹¹¹

¹¹¹ For more details see: <https://violenceoff.cz/#o-projektu>.

Measure 15: Ensure systematic data collection and research and analysis in the area of domestic and gender-based violence

Gestor: Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Education and Science

Outputs	Indicator	Date and gestor
Establish a unified system of data collection in the area of crimes typically related to domestic violence and crimes against human dignity in the sexual sphere and other crimes related to sexual exploitation, ensure the collection of sex-disaggregated data, information on the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator and other relevant data in this area as recommended by the EIGE ¹¹² and publish relevant data annually.	a) Existing uniform data collection system (b) annually published data	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoI, MoJ
Coordinated collection and evaluation of data in the area of gender-based and domestic violence in the Czech Republic, including requirements for the introduction of new indicators and collection of sex-disaggregated data and other relevant data in this area according to EIGE recommendations. ¹¹³	Annual evaluation of data in the area	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoJ in cooperation with GO CR, MoLSA and MoH
Ensuring effective and intensive data collection on domestic and gender-based violence in the field of social services, inter alia, through the introduction of registration of acts related to the target group "victims of domestic violence" in the social services register (following the amendment of the Social Services Act).	a) Existence of an effective data collection mechanism in the relevant area b) Annual published data	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoLSA
Established a system for recording performances related to domestic and sexual and gender-based violence in health care facilities.	a) Established system (b) Annually published data on performance related to gender-based violence, including domestic and sexual violence	31.12.2024 and continuously in the following years MoH
Support and implementation of research activities in the field of domestic and gender-based violence in the Czech Republic.	Research activities carried out in the relevant year	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years

¹¹² For more details see: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-based-violence/data-collection>.

¹¹³ Ibid.

		GO CR
Research conducted on violence against persons in politics, including gender-based violence and online forms of violence, and recommendations for the field.	Published research and recommendations	31. 12. 2024 GO CR
Annual information on the use of interrogation rooms in cases of domestic and gender-based violence, including statistical data broken down by region, territorial departments.	Statistical information on the use of the SVM presented to the Committee	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoI
Ongoing evaluation of police records of joint home visits for possible increases in domestic violence.	Information on the number of police calls to the common household and evaluation information for the year	31.12.2023 and continuously in the following years MoI
Provision of technical means (software) for the transcription of interrogations conducted in special interrogation rooms.	Secured technical means	31. 12. 2025 MoI
A prevalence study of the prevalence of various forms of gender-based violence (including sexual harassment) in academic settings, including recommendations for the field.	Published data analysis	31. 12. 2025 MoE

A more detailed description of the measures:

The aim of the measure is to ensure systematic data collection and analysis in the area of domestic and gender-based violence at the level of the state administration in order to formulate effective measures and policies in this area.

Justification:

In order to implement effective measures and to assess whether they meet the needs of persons exposed to violence, it is essential that the State, through its institutions, systematically and regularly collects relevant statistical data on all forms of domestic and gender-based violence. Statistical data on cases of domestic violence, its victims and perpetrators, are key information for long-term planning of systemic measures and for conceptualizing the availability and need for specialized services for persons at risk, their children and perpetrators.

Although individual ministries have partial data on the number of cases of domestic and gender-based violence, these data are not comparable at the national, inter-ministerial level or in an international context. In some ministries, the systematic collection of data on cases of domestic and gender-based violence is completely absent, despite the fact that they play an important role in preventing and combating these forms of violence and assisting its victims. This situation is highlighted, for example, by Michaela Roubalová, researcher at the Institute for Criminology and Social Prevention, in her essay "What we (don't) know about victims of

crime from statistics".¹¹⁴ In line with the requirements of the Convention against Violence against Women and other international standards (see chapter 1.4 for more details), data on the victim and perpetrator should be recorded, disaggregated by gender, age, type of violence and the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim. It would also be appropriate to include other categories of data, such as information on the outcome of proceedings and the form/rate of conviction of perpetrators, the number of protection measures issued, information on possible multiple victimization of the victim, etc.

Although there is research on the incidence of domestic and gender-based violence in the Czech Republic, usually conducted by scientific institutions and non-governmental non-profit organizations, more comprehensive knowledge of these forms of violence and their development remains insufficient at the national level.¹¹⁵ The main problem in this context is that, unlike in other countries, the Czech Republic does not systematically and regularly collect data on the incidence of domestic and gender-based violence from the level of state administration. Detailed data on domestic violence is collected by the Association of Center Workers of the Czech Republic, which provides data to the Police Presidium of the Czech Republic and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. However, there is currently no system set up within the state administration to place this data in the context of other data (e.g. data from the courts, police, health care).

Consequently, the limitations of the insufficient knowledge base are reflected in the effectiveness of relevant measures at the national level. Therefore, the aim of the above research activities in the field of domestic and gender-based violence is also to support evidence-based policies and practices and to propose effective measures to improve the system of work with violent persons and, at the same time, to improve the situation of victims of domestic and gender-based violence.

According to the experience of organizations working with persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence, in current practice there is an excessive repetition of interrogations of child and adult victims of these forms of violence in criminal proceedings. According to the information provided by the organizations, persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence are interrogated on average 5-7 times, while this number is lower for child victims, but even so, it is repeated several times. This practice carries a significant risk of retraumatization and secondary to tertiary victimization of these victims. The need to minimize the number of interrogations has been addressed, among other things, by the introduction of specialized interrogation rooms for particularly vulnerable victims pursuant to Act No. 45/2013 Coll., on victims of crime. On the basis of the measures of the Action Plans for the Prevention of Domestic and Gender-Based Violence, intensive training of police officers on how to conduct interrogations of victims of domestic and gender-based violence has been conducted in recent years, which should include information on the use of special interrogation rooms, including practical training of such interrogations. The aim of the analysis is to examine the use of interrogation rooms for victims of domestic and sexual violence and to formulate recommendations for further increasing their use by the Police of the Czech Republic in order to prevent secondary victimization of victims. The analysis should cover the period from the introduction of specialized interrogation rooms to the present and should include data on their use in individual years for interrogations of victims of domestic and sexual violence, broken down by region. The analysis should also cover cases where there have been repeated interrogations of victims of domestic and gender-based violence, where the specialized interview room has not been used and what the reasons were. The analysis should also include recommendations for further increasing their use by the Police in order to prevent secondary victimization of victims.

¹¹⁴ Roubalova Michaela: What we (don't) know about victims of crime from statistics. In: Czech Criminology, 1-2/2021, ISSN 2464-6210, Available at: <https://ceskakriminologie.cz/cs/archiv/2021-120132/co-ze-statistik-ne-vime-o-obetech-kriminality>.

¹¹⁵ On the issue of availability of data on the incidence of domestic violence, see e.g. Martinková, M., Slavětinská, V., Vlach, J.: Selected problems in the field of domestic violence in the Czech Republic. Institute for Criminology and Social Prevention. 2014. Available at: <http://www.ok.cz/iksp/docs/414.pdf>.

Violence against women in politics is a separate category of gender-based violence. It is an issue that is addressed at the intergovernmental level through various organizations. The issue is also increasingly being addressed by the United Nations, which in 2021 issued guidelines on the prevention of violence against women in politics.¹¹⁶ Studies on violence against women MPs conducted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union in 2016 and 2018 found that 82% of women MPs had experienced psychological violence (sexual and sexist remarks, intimidation and threats, etc.) and 65% of these women had been subjected to sexist remarks from colleagues in their own and other political parties. 25% had been subjected to physical violence.¹¹⁷ In the Czech Republic, there is insufficient relevant data (evidence on the extent, content and nature of violence against women in politics), which is crucial for a more comprehensive solution to the issue. As part of a follow-up project funded by the Operational Program Employment+, the Czech Republic will conduct research on the issue of violence against women in politics (including online violence and referrals), for example through a questionnaire survey and qualitative interviews.

In the area of gender-based violence in academia, partial data on prevalence was collected last in 2008/2009 and no national study was conducted at all. For example, the seriousness of the issue of sexual harassment in the Czech Republic was highlighted years ago by a study conducted by Charles University, according to the results of which up to 78% of students have encountered behavior that meets the definition of sexual harassment on campus. More than 80% of students said they knew someone who had been sexually harassed. Sexual harassment has serious negative psychological, physical, and interpersonal effects on learners, including changing their educational path or dropping out of college.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ See <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/Library/Publications/2017/Preventing-VAW-in-elections-en.PDF> for more details.

¹¹⁷ See <https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/reference/2019-11/guidelines-elimination-sexism-harassment-and-violence-against-women-in-parliament> for more details.

¹¹⁸ For more details see: https://gender.fhs.cuni.cz/KGS-11-version1-metodika_pro_vyucujici_fi.pdf.

Measure 16: Ensure the prevention of violence and other inappropriate behavior towards seniors

Gestor: Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in cooperation with regions, Ministry of Health, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of the Interior

Outputs	Indicator	Date and gestor
Training and methodological support for workers in social services, health care, police, justice and public administration focused on recognition, detection, diagnosis and methods of dealing with violence and other inappropriate behavior towards seniors.	(a) Number of training sessions conducted (b) Number of persons trained	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoLSA, MoI, MoH, MoJ
Raising public awareness of the seriousness of the issue of violence and other inappropriate behavior towards seniors and elderly women and through awareness-raising activities to raise the awareness of seniors and elderly women threatened by these forms of behavior on how to proceed in cases where they become victims of these forms of behavior.	Awareness-raising activities carried out in the relevant year	31. 12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoLSA, MoI, MoH, MoJ
Legislative anchoring of respect and protection of privacy and integrity of persons to whom social services are provided, including the inadmissibility of further inappropriate behavior, inter alia, towards seniors (including humiliation, interference with safety and integrity) and sanctions for violations under the Social Services Act.	Submission of an amendment to the Social Services Act including the inadmissibility of further inappropriate behavior towards seniors	31. 12. 2023 MoLSA
Increasing the capacity and qualifications of the staff of the Inspectorate of Social Services (ISS) to detect cases of violence and other inappropriate behavior towards the elderly, to impose corrective measures and to monitor their implementation through staff and professional strengthening.	a) Increased ISS staff capacity b) Number of ISS persons trained in the issue	31.12. 2023 and continuously in the following years MoLSA
Methodological support for regional social departments to take into account the needs of seniors and persons with disabilities who are victims of domestic and gender-based violence.	Published methodological support	31.12.2025 MoLSA in cooperation with regions

A more detailed description of the measures:

The aim of the measure is to make the prevention of violence and other inappropriate behavior towards seniors more effective in accordance with the definition approved by the Resolution of the Committee on the Rights of the Elderly under the Government Human Rights Council of 1 June 2022 on the definition of abuse, exploitation, neglect and ill-treatment of the elderly (see Chapter 1.3 for more details). The objective should be achieved by raising awareness among the general and professional public of the seriousness of these acts, increasing the awareness of victims of these forms of violence of their rights and possibilities for assistance,

developing ongoing training for the professions most often in contact with vulnerable seniors and elderly women, and legislating the inadmissibility of these acts.

Justification:

Seniors and senior women are increasingly becoming victims of domestic violence. However, only a fraction of them turns for help. This growing trend is confirmed by statistics from the Senior Helpline¹¹⁹, as well as the Police of the Czech Republic. According to the data from the Senior Helpline of the Život 90 organization, one in four seniors and senior women have encountered behavior that displays elements of bullying.¹²⁰ Non-representative surveys conducted in the Czech Republic to date show that up to 21% of seniors have encountered or been directly verbally abused or physically assaulted by their own family within their own home. Up to 6% of home care clients have experienced vulgar or undignified behavior by nurses or caregivers. As many as 9% of residents of institutions and homes for the elderly and senior citizens have experienced ridicule or disrespectful or rude treatment.¹²¹ Inadequate treatment of seniors and elderly women in residential social services facilities is highlighted in the report on systematic visits by the Ombudsman. The visits revealed the mistreatment of elderly men and women dependent on the care provided in half of the cases examined.¹²²

Insufficient protection of senior men and women from domestic violence is caused, among other things, by their social isolation. Detecting domestic and gender-based violence among older men and women living alone, including those living in institutions, requires a proactive and informed approach by workers in social services, health, police, justice and public administration. Seniors often conceal abuse and neglect, which may be due to fear of not being believed, fear of disclosure, fear of escalating violence, fear of having to testify against a loved one in court, fear of disrupting intimate relationships, fear of moving into a nursing home.¹²³

Raising awareness of all forms of violence and other inappropriate behavior towards seniors is a key part of preventing this phenomenon. Increased awareness can contribute to the willingness of those at risk to seek specialized help and support and also motivate those around the person at risk to actively speak out against such behavior. Information materials and awareness-raising activities based on the definition of violence and other inappropriate behavior towards seniors defined in the framework of the implementation of the previous measures and reflecting the current outputs of the ongoing data collection on violence and other inappropriate behavior towards seniors will serve to increase the awareness of the general and professional public on the issue of violence and other inappropriate behavior towards seniors.

Social service workers, police officers and police nurses, and workers in the social services departments of state and local governments represent the professions that most often come into contact with seniors at risk of violence and other inappropriate behavior. Their training and the methodological support they provide must be expanded to include this area so that they can identify, diagnose and apply effective methods of dealing with them. The training of professionals is not only an effective means of preventing particular forms of violence but also contributes to changing the attitudes and behavior of these professions with regard to those at risk, which improves the quality of the interventions provided.

Czech legislation does not define the inadmissibility of inappropriate behavior towards seniors, humiliation, interference with privacy, security and integrity, which is the basis for preventing this phenomenon. Inappropriate behavior may not be criminal in its scope and intensity, yet it causes suffering, pain and impairment of the quality of life of seniors and elderly women.

¹¹⁹ For more details see: <https://www.elpida.cz/linka-senioru-domaci-nasili>.

¹²⁰ For more details see: <https://www.zivot90.cz/cs>.

¹²¹ For more details see: https://is.muni.cz/el/fss/podzim2015/SPR134/um/Popis_forem_DN_analyza_pricin_prevence.pdf. (research outputs are valid mainly for the South Bohemia region, their generalizability to the whole Czech Republic is therefore limited)

¹²² For more details see The Public Defender of Rights. 2015. Report on systematic visits of the Ombudsman.

¹²³ Quinn M., Tomita S. 1997. EAN Causes, Diagnosis and Intervention Strategies. New York: Springer Publishing Company.

Existing legislation relating to domestic violence cases is ineffective in this respect for residential social services. Therefore, the offence of acting against seniors and elderly women in a way that interferes with their dignity, privacy and integrity, as defined in the implementation of the previous measures, will be included in the Social Services Act.

Action 17: Review existing legislative protections against gender-based cyber violence (including sexual violence and harassment in cyberspace) and propose effective strengthening of these protections and awareness-raising

Gestor: Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice in cooperation with Government Office of the Czech Republic, Government Office of the Czech Republic in cooperation with Ministry of Culture, Ministry of the Interior

Outputs	Indicator	Date and gestor
Revision of existing legislation on the provision of internet services to take into account the issue of gender-based cyber violence and sexual violence on the internet, sanctions and the liability of internet service providers for published content.	Published revision of existing legislation	31. 12. 2023 MIT
A bill containing legislative amendments within the scope of the Ministry of Justice to ensure the implementation of the Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on combating violence against women and domestic violence, including cybercrime, regulated by this Directive, after its adoption.	The draft law submitted	31. 12. 2025 MoJ in cooperation with GO CR
Awareness-raising activities were carried out to raise awareness of the problem of sexual violence and harassment in cyberspace directed, inter alia, against female journalists and politicians.	Awareness-raising activities carried out in the relevant year	31.12.2024 and continuously in the following years GO CR in cooperation with MoC
An analysis of the possibilities of continuous and systematic monitoring and investigation of sexual violence and harassment in cyberspace and related illegal content on the Internet.	Published analysis	31. 12. 2024 MoI

Further description of the measures:

The aim of the measure is to revise the existing legislation regarding sufficient consideration of the issue of gender-based cyber violence (including sexual violence and harassment in cyberspace) and to propose effective legislative strengthening of the protection of victims of these forms of violence, inter alia, in the context of current research in this area, the increase in crime affecting human dignity in cyberspace and foreign and international practice. The measure also aims to raise awareness of this issue and to verify the possibilities of strengthening the monitoring and investigation of these phenomena.

Justification:

A 2019 study by the Institute for Criminology and Social Prevention shows that the number of

cybercrime-related crimes in the Czech Republic is steadily increasing. One of the areas most often targeted by cybercrime is crimes targeting social network users (sexting, hate speech and hate crimes, cyberbullying, etc.). Current research also points to an increase in partner violence among young people and adolescents, in which cyber violence plays a much more prominent role.¹²⁴ The consequences of these forms of partner violence can be very serious. The increasing incidence of violence and dangerous behavior in cyberspace is confirmed both by the findings of the Police of the Czech Republic and by the experience of social service providers (see Chapter 2.5 and the justification for Measure 14 for more details).

The development of modern technology and social networks has brought with it various ways to invade people's privacy. One of the most serious is the proliferation of so-called non-consensual pornography - the creation and/or sharing of intimate or sexually explicit photographs and videos of another person without their consent. Between 2017 and 2020, international statistics show that approximately 8% of the adult population will be affected in some form by the taking, publishing and dissemination of intimate visual material without the consent of the persons depicted.¹²⁵ For the years 2020 and 2021, the data is even more worrying as it shows a significant upward trend - presumably in light of the pandemic and the associated shift to the online world, the numbers of cases have increased significantly.¹²⁶ Moreover, children are very often the victims of the taking, publishing and dissemination of intimate visual material without the consent of the persons depicted.¹²⁷ In a survey carried out in all EU Member States, more than 30% of women said they were worried about intimate images of them being circulated online.¹²⁸

The impact on the lives of those depicted in the taking, publication and dissemination of intimate visual material without their consent cannot be underestimated. The European Commission (following a call from the European Parliament) has concluded that action is needed against the taking, publishing and dissemination of intimate visual material without the consent of the persons depicted (and other forms of gender-based violence), and on 8 March 2022 presented a proposal for a Directive,¹²⁹ which would criminalize the '*sharing of intimate or manipulated material without consent*' in all EU Member States.

The proposal to explicitly criminalize the taking, publication and dissemination of intimate visual

¹²⁴ See <http://new.profem.cz/shared/clanky/670/V%C3%BDstupy%20z%20v%C3%BDzkumu.pdf> for more details.

¹²⁵ EATON, A. et al. *Nationwide Online Study of Nonconsensual Porn Victimization and Perpetration*. Cyber Civil Rights Initiative, 2017. Available at: <https://www.cybercivilrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/CCRI-2017-Research-Report.pdf>; RUVALCABA, Y. and EATON, A. *Nonconsensual Pornography Among U.S. Adults: A Sexual Scripts Framework on Victimization, Perpetration, and Health Correlates for Women and Men*. Psychology of Violence, 2019.

Available at: <https://www.cybercivilrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Psychology-of-Violence.pdf>; Half of young women have received explicit images they did not ask for. Pew Research Center, 2017. Available at: https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2017/07/11/online-harassment-2017/pi_2017-07-11_online-harassment_5-01/

¹²⁶ CARTER, Ch. *An Update on the Legal Landscape of Revenge Porn*. [online]. National Association of Attorneys General, 2021. Available at: https://www.naag.org/attorney-general-journal/an-update-on-the-legal-landscape-of-revenge-porn/#footnote_18_21493. The E-Safety Project's Cybercrime Victims' Counseling Center also reported a nearly 40 percent increase in intimate material abuse cases for both children and adults in the first quarter of 2021 compared to the previous year; KOPECKÝ, K. *The E-Safety Project's Cybercrime Victims' Counseling Center reported a nearly 40 percent increase in cases in the first quarter of 2021 compared to the previous year. Cases related to the misuse of intimate content are dominant*. E-safety.com [online]. 2021.

Available at: <https://www.e-bezpeci.cz/index.php/z-nasi-kuchyne/2186-poradna-projektu-e-bezpeci-pro-obeti-kyberneticke-kriminality-zaznamenala-za-1-ctvrtletí-roku-2021-ve-srovnání-s-předchozím-rokem-temer-ctyricetiprocetní-narůst-poctu-případů-dominantní-jdou-pak-případy-spojné-se-zneužitím-intimního-obsahu>.

¹²⁷ MORAVČÍK, O. *When 14-year-old Kristýna...* Police of the Czech Republic - KŘP Královéhradecký kraj [online]. 2019. Available at: <https://www.policie.cz/clanek/kdyz-ctvrtletí-roku-2021-ve-srovnání-s-předchozím-rokem-temer-ctyricetiprocetní-narůst-poctu-případů-dominantní-jdou-pak-případy-spojné-se-zneužitím-intimního-obsahu>; KOZUMPLÍKOVÁ, M.: *Before you send a nude photo, think!* Police České republiky - KŘP Zlínský kraj online. 2019. Available at: <https://www.policie.cz/clanek/nez-posles-nahou-fotku-premyslej.aspx>; Schneeweissová, B. *Twenty-seven-year-old man molested underage girls for several years via social networks*. Police of the Czech Republic - Central Bohemian Regional Police Directorate online. 2019.

Available at: <https://www.policie.cz/clanek/sedmadvacetiletý-muž-nekolik-let-pres-socialní-site-obtěžoval-největší-dívky.aspx>; Jiroušková, P. *Love over the Internet did not go well*. Police of the Czech Republic - KŘP Moravian-Silesian Region online. 2019. Available at: <https://www.policie.cz/clanek/laska-pres-internet-nedopadla-dobře.aspx>.

¹²⁸ Boundless hate on the internet - Dramatic situation across Europe. HateAid. Online. 2021. Available at: https://hateaid.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/HateAid-Report-2021_EN.pdf.

¹²⁹ Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on combating violence against women and domestic violence 2022/0066 x(COD) online. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/CS/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52022PC0105&qid=1649755651240&from=EN>.

material without the consent of the persons depicted is based on the need to respect the basic principles of criminal law - protective, repressive and preventive. In terms of protection and repression, there is a need to cover acts that are not (or only marginally) covered by the current legislation. Secondly, explicitly enshrining the prohibition of taking, publishing and disseminating intimate visual material without the consent of the persons depicted will have a positive impact on both general prevention in relation to the potential originators and perpetrators of the conduct in question, and on individual prevention in relation to the persons who commit the conduct in question.

Some forms of gender-based cyber-violence, consisting in making available intimate images or videos or other intimate materials depicting the sexual practices of another person without his or her consent to a large number of end-users via information and communication technologies (e.g. in the form of so-called deep fakes), are subject to criminal law exclusively in relation to the circumstances surrounding the publication of the fake pornographic video, not the act itself. The legal framework is fragmented in this case (the offence of damage to the rights of others, which would probably involve misleading third parties as to the authenticity of the video, defamation within the meaning of Section 184 of the Criminal Code, or dissemination of pornography within the meaning of Section 191 of the Criminal Code, or the production and other disposal of child pornography within the meaning of Section 191 of the same Act in the case of a zoophilic or pedophilic pornographic deepfake¹³⁰). Thus, at the moment there is no criminal offence directly punishing the mere publication of (false) intimate material of another person constituting a significant interference with their privacy and right to individual self-determination.

Explicit criminal law regulation of the taking, publication and dissemination of intimate visual material without the consent of the persons depicted is appropriate from the point of view of prevention and compliance with the principle of predictability. In other words, nothing can be a criminal offence that is not designated as such by the Criminal Code. Explicitly anchoring the prohibition of taking, publishing and disseminating intimate visual material without the consent of the persons depicted fulfils a preventive function. At the moment, some originators and originators may not even be aware of the criminality of their actions and the associated consequences. If the criminality of making, publishing and disseminating intimate visual material without the consent of the persons depicted is only interpreted by the case law of the criminal courts (in particular under the facts of damaging the rights of others within the meaning of Section 181 of the Criminal Code, not in cases of child pornography, threatening or blackmailing etc.), it is difficult to assume that the originators and originators should have been aware of the criminality of their actions. Such an interpretation may be considered overly expansive to the detriment of the originators and originators and therefore problematic, to say the least. Therefore, special criminal legislation on non-consensual pornography (covering the various factual circumstances of its creation or publication) would undoubtedly contribute to the principle of predictability and legal certainty. This is also the case on the part of the victims, who may often not even know that they can defend themselves against their attackers by means of criminal law - and if they do not know about the criminality of the attacker's actions, they usually do not even report the matter. Moreover, unfortunately, the criminality may not always be recognized (especially in some of the more fact-specific cases) by the police and the case may be wrongly shelved. All these risks are significantly higher in the case where the criminality of taking, publishing and disseminating intimate visual material without the consent of the persons depicted does not follow from the Criminal Code in a completely unambiguous and explicit manner but is largely inferred only by court practice.

In an UN survey, 73% of women said they had experienced online harassment. Women are also 27 times more likely than men to be harassed in this way. Women aged 18 to 24 are the most at risk. Women in certain visible professions, such as journalists, are also more at risk,

¹³⁰ For more details see DVOŘÁKOVÁ, M. *Revenge Porn and Deepfakes: privacy in the era of modern technologies*. Review for Law and Technology[online] . 2020. Available at: <https://journals.muni.cz/revue/article/view/13416/pdf>.

as international organizations have pointed out.¹³¹ Although male journalists are of course also subject to hate speech on the Internet, according to various studies, women are the most frequent targets.¹³² According to international research, around two-thirds to three-quarters of female journalists have experienced online violence (threats, intimidation, insults, harassment, dehumanization or targeted invasion of digital privacy)¹³³, and this proportion is on the rise.¹³⁴ The triggers for these unwanted phenomena online tend to be coverage of gender, politics, human rights and social issues.¹³⁵ Moreover, although online violence can take many forms, in the case of women it is often sexualized (as threats of sexual violence are an essential component)¹³⁶ and thus more personal.

Online violence has an impact on women journalists' mental health, their sense of security and their reputation, and it also has an intimidating and silencing effect: it leads to avoidance of certain topics, self-censorship, avoidance of interaction with the audience, or even to leaving the profession.¹³⁷ The consequences of online violence are worse for female journalists than for male journalists due to gender socialization; for example, it brings them more stress and fear and more often leads to avoidance strategies.¹³⁸ This can ultimately lead to the silencing of women's voices in the media. Due to the anonymity prevailing on the internet and the sheer volume of sexual violence and harassment, it is very difficult to address them effectively, which is also why most incidents go unreported and unaddressed.¹³⁹

International practice on legislation to address violence and harassment in cyberspace varies considerably. For example, Germany and Malta apply criminal law provisions to harassment or cyberstalking, France, the United Kingdom and most US states have legislation on the non-consensual dissemination of visual intimate images (revenge porn)¹⁴⁰, and Canada has legislation on cyberbullying. In most Council of Europe countries, there are also civil or administrative remedies that can be used to address sexual violence and harassment online.

Depending on the nature, severity and type of the speech or the act associated with it, sexual violence and harassment in cyberspace can be classified under various criminal offences in the Czech Criminal Code, in particular under defamation (§ 184), violence against a group of people and against an individual (§ 352), dangerous threats (§ 353), and defamation of the nation, race, ethnic or other group of persons (§ 355), incitement to hatred against a group of

¹³¹ UNESCO, Reporters Without Borders, the International Women's Media Foundation, the International News Safety Institute and the International Center for Journalists. See also Urbániková, Marina (2022). Sexism in the media in Online sexism as an obstacle to achieving gender equality. Is the Czech Republic up to European standards?. Office of the Government.

¹³² MILLER, Kaitlin C. *The "Price You Pay" and the "Badge of Honor": Journalists, Gender, and Harassment*. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 2022 (OnlineFirst). Available at: doi:10.1177/10776990221088761; RSF. *Online Harassment of Journalists: Attack of the Trolls*. Paris: Reporters Without Borders, 2018. Also available at: https://rsf.org/sites/default/files/rsf_report_on_online_harassment.pdf.

¹³³ FERRIER, Michelle. *Attacks and Harassment: The Impact on Female Journalists and Their Reporting*. Washington, D.C.: International Women's Media Foundation and Troll-Busters.com, 2018; POSETTI, Julie, ABOULEZ, Nermine, BONTCHEVA, Kalina, HARRISON, Jackie and WAISBORD, Silvio. *Online Violence Against Women Journalists: A Global Snapshot of Incidence and Impacts*. Paris: UNESCO; International Center for Journalists, 2020; POSETTI, Julie, SHABBIR, Nabeelah, MAYNARD, Diana, BONTCHEVA, Kalina and ABOULEZ, Nermine. *The Chilling: Global trends in online violence against women journalists*. Paris: UNESCO, 2021. Available at: <https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/the-chilling.pdf>.

¹³⁴ BARTON, Alana and STORM, Hannah. *Violence and Harassment against Women in the News Media: A Global Picture*. Washington, DC: International Women's Media Foundation, International News Safety Institute, 2014. Available at: <https://www.iwmf.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Violence-and-Harassment-against-Women-in-the-News-Media.pdf>; POSETTI, Julie, et. al. 2020. opt. cit.

¹³⁵ POSETTI, Julie, et. al. 2020. opt. cit.; RSF. *Women's rights: Forbidden subject*. Paris: Reporters Without Borders, 2017. Available at: https://rsf.org/sites/default/files/womens_rights-forbidden_subject.pdf.

¹³⁶ BARTON, Alana and STORM, Hannah, 2014. opt. cit.; POSETTI, Julie, et. al. 2020. opt. cit;

¹³⁷ BARTON, Alana and STORM, Hannah, 2014. opt. cit.; FERRIER, Michelle, 2021. opt. cit.; STAHEL, Lea and SCHOEN, Constantin. *Female journalists under attack? Explaining gender differences in reactions to audiences' attacks*. *New Media & Society*, 2020. 22(10), 1849-1867. Available at: doi:10.1177/1461444819885333

¹³⁸ MILLER, Kaitlin C., 2022. opt. cit.; STAHEL, Lea and SCHOEN, Constantin, 2020. opt. cit.

¹³⁹ POSETTI, Julie, et. al. 2020. opt. cit.

¹⁴⁰ Although the term *revenge porn* is widely used in the media, by some experts and by the public, we would like to point out that it is an inadequate and misleading abbreviation that we do not recommend using. For more details see ŠIPULOVÁ, Katarína and Monika HANYCH. *Stolen intimacy: sexual harassment in the online space*. In Kateřina Šimáčková, Pavla Špondrová, Barbara Havelková. *Men's Law. Are legal rules neutral?* Prague: Wolters Kluwer, 2020.

¹⁴¹ Combating sexist hate speech, Page 27, <https://rm.coe.int/16806cac1f>.

persons or to restriction of their rights and freedoms (§ 356), incitement to a criminal offence (§ 364), approval of a criminal offence (§ 365), establishment, support and promotion of a movement aimed at suppression of human rights and freedoms (§ 403), or dissemination of a work to promote such a movement (§ 403a).

A separate issue is the effectiveness of the penalties or sanctions imposed for sexual violence and harassment in cyberspace. While when an administrative authority considers a specific act, it imposes a warning, a fine (typically in the hundreds of crowns) or forfeiture of property, the Criminal Code, on the other hand, usually provides for prison sentences of varying lengths. The effectiveness and impact of such punishment is thus very random depending on whether the specific act is judged according to criminal or, on the contrary, misdemeanor law, which, however, usually does not have a strong deterrent effect on the offender.

So far, the only coherent answer to the use of criminal law against harassing, sexist and threatening speeches in domestic case law has been offered by the Constitutional Court's ruling III.ÚS 3006/21 of 22 March 2022. In this case, the victim was a lawyer and director of a public benefit corporation, which has long been dedicated to the prevention of prejudicial violence and serious general crime, as well as to assisting their victims. In doing so, she herself has repeatedly (intensively since at least 2016) been the target of death and rape threats because of her profession.

For the above reasons, it is therefore necessary to conduct a comprehensive analysis of existing legislation in terms of preventing and combating sexual violence and harassment in cyberspace. An analysis of the requirements of the proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on combating violence against women and domestic violence in relation to cyberspace, the existing legislation and a comparison with foreign legislation will be included in the explanatory memorandum to the draft law. However, the outcome of the measures aimed at submitting a bill containing legislative amendments within the scope of the Ministry of Justice ensuring the implementation of the Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on combating violence against women and domestic violence does not predict how the punishment of the above-mentioned conduct will be enshrined in the Criminal Code.

Any legislative measures must be accompanied by prevention tools. In this area, inspiration can be drawn from abroad. The International Federation of Journalists, for example, has launched public campaigns called *Byte Back* and *You are not alone* to open up public debate, raise awareness of the problem and get media organizations and journalists' associations to create a safe working environment for journalists and to put in place mechanisms to effectively protect them from online violence.¹⁴² The International Federation of Journalists has also issued recommendations for media organizations and journalists' associations with concrete suggestions for action.¹⁴³

¹⁴² Join IFJ Campaign You are NOT alone. *International Federation of Journalists* [online]. 2019 [cited 2022-06-27]. Available at: <https://www.ifj.org/actions/ifj-campaigns/online-trolling-you-are-not-alone.html>; Byte back - against online abuse!. *International Federation of Journalists* [online]. 2017 [cited 2022-06-27]. Available at: : <https://www.ifj.org/actions/ifj-campaigns/byte-back.html>

¹⁴³ Guidelines for media and unions to combat online harassment of women journalists. *International Federation of Journalists* [online]. 2019 [cited 2022-06-16]. Available at: https://www.ifj.org/fileadmin/user_upload/guidelines_EN_final.pdf.

Action 18: Address existing systemic deficiencies in the legal framework for protection from domestic and sexual violence

Gestor: Government Office of the Czech Republic in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Health

Outputs	Indicator	Date and gestor
A bill amending certain laws in connection with protection against domestic violence, including a uniform definition of domestic violence and eliminating partial deficiencies in legislation related to protection against domestic violence.	The draft law submitted	30. 6. 2023 GO CR in cooperation with MoE, Mol, MoLSA, MoH
A draft amendment to the Criminal Code, including a redefinition of the offence of rape by, inter alia, modifying the definition of the offence of rape under Section 185 of Act No. 40/2009 Coll., the Criminal Code, as amended, so that it affects all cases of non-consensual sexual intercourse in the form of coitus or other sexual intercourse performed in a manner comparable to coitus.	Draft amendment submitted	31. 12. 2023 MoJ in cooperation with the Czech Republic

Further description of the measures:

The aim of the measure is to unify the approach to victims of domestic violence on the part of the helping professions (especially the police, ASLPC, social service providers, prosecutors, courts) by introducing a uniform definition of domestic violence. Another objective is to eliminate some of the partial shortcomings in the legislation related to protection against domestic violence that are highlighted by current practice.

Justification

At its meeting on 22 September 2022, the Government Council for Gender Equality approved a resolution in which it supported the intention of legislative changes in the area of protection from domestic violence and recommended that the Prime Minister and the Government Commissioner for Human Rights coordinate the preparation of legislative changes in the area of protection from domestic violence and submit a proposal for legislative changes to the Government of the Czech Republic by 30 June 2023. Ensuring better protection for victims of sexual and domestic violence is also one of the commitments listed in the Government's Program Statement.

International and Czech studies on the incidence of domestic violence show that approximately one in three women and one in 14 men experience various forms of domestic violence during their lifetime. More than half of all cases of domestic and partner violence involve children. The vast majority of cases are not reported to the police or the helping professions. According to recent research, domestic violence is the fifth most common cause of divorce in Czech families.

Domestic violence does not always reach such an intensity as to fulfil the elements of criminal offences (in particular, abuse of a person living in a common dwelling). Protection against domestic violence is thus provided by a number of civil, administrative and criminal law

provisions: Act No. 89/2013 Coll., the Civil Code, Act No. 99/1963 Coll., the Code of Civil Procedure, Act No. 292/2013 Coll., the Special Court Proceedings Act, Act No. 40/2009 Coll., the Criminal Code, Act No. 141/1961 Coll., the Criminal Procedure Act, Act No. 283/1993 Coll., on the Public Prosecution, Act No. 250/2016 Coll., on Liability for Offences and Proceedings thereon, Act No. 251/2016 Coll., on Certain Offences, Act No. 45/2013 Coll., on Victims of Crimes, Act No. 273/2008 Coll., on the Police of the Czech Republic, Act No. 108/2006 Coll., on Social Services and Act No. 356/299 Coll., on Social Protection of Children.

The Czech legal system (unlike other legal systems) does not define the concept of domestic violence. The lack of a uniform definition leads in practice to different approaches of professions that come into contact with victims of domestic violence and to fragmentation of the system of assistance.

At its meeting on 22 September 2022, the Government Council for Gender Equality approved a resolution in which it drew attention to the need to redefine the offence of rape so that its essence is the absence of the victim's consent to sexual intercourse and recommended that the Minister of Justice submit to the Government of the Czech Republic a draft amendment to the Criminal Code so that the definition of the facts of the offence of rape under Section 185 of Act No. 40/2009 Coll., Criminal Code, as amended, be amended to include an explicit reference to the absence of consent.

The measure aimed at redefining the crime of rape responds to the shortcomings of the current definition of the crime of rape, which does not allow in some cases to punish different forms of rape. The current definition of the offence of rape is based on violence, threat of violence, threat of other serious harm or abuse of defenselessness (see Section 185(1) of Act No. 40/2009 Coll., the Criminal Code). In particular, situations where there is no use of violence (or threat of violence) by the perpetrator and the victim is not in a state that can easily be categorized as defenseless appear to be problematic.

The interpretation of the concept of defenselessness is offered by the decision-making practice of the Supreme Court (see e.g. 3 Tdo 1358/2016). *Defenselessness is considered to be a state of the victim in which, due to the circumstances, she is unable to express her will regarding sexual intercourse with the perpetrator, or in which she is unable to resist his actions. This may be total (or absolute) defenselessness, where the victim is completely unaware of what is happening to him or her and is therefore unable to assess the situation in which he or she is having sexual intercourse with the perpetrator, and manifested by complete surrender to the perpetrator without any signs of self-will or ability to react to the demands of the accused (for example, unconsciousness, fainting, heavy intoxication with alcohol or drugs, artificial or deep sleep, etc.). ... In addition to this absolute defenselessness, however, the victim may also be in a state where, although he or she knows what is happening to him or her, he or she is unable to resist the perpetrator's actions either at all or effectively, even though he or she would like to do so. Such a state of defenselessness is usually inferred in the case of a person who is handcuffed, a person with a physical defect limiting his or her mobility, a bedridden person, an elderly person, etc. It is therefore a condition in which the victim is unable to resist the unacceptable behavior of the perpetrator due to a lack of physical strength and ability. As a result of this condition, such a person is physically defenseless, and since such a physical condition always affects the psyche of the disabled person in the manner indicated, it must also be considered that the state of his physical defenselessness may also cause his psychological defenselessness. However, the state of the victim who, although a minor, is so physically and mentally mature that he is able to understand the perpetrator's actions and to make his possible disagreement with those actions sufficiently clear is not considered to be defenseless. (cf. Šámal, P. et al. Criminal Code, 2nd edition. Prague: C. H. Beck, 2012, pp. 1839 ff.).*

The Supreme Court commented on the characteristic of violence as follows (see 3 Tdo 1498/2017). Regarding the element of violence, as defined in the facts of the offence of rape

under section 185 of the Criminal Code, it is usually understood as the use of physical force by the perpetrator in order to overcome or prevent serious resistance of the person being raped and to achieve sexual intercourse against his or her will. However, in order for the element of violence (or threat of violence or threat of other serious harm) to be fulfilled, it is not necessary that the victim put up an obvious physical resistance, as it is sufficient that the perpetrator must have manifested the victim's disapproval of his actions.

In practice, the courts find it difficult to include under the above definition of the crime of rape situations in which the victim freezes for various reasons and is unable to defend herself. At the same time, the inability to defend oneself is not due to the victim being handcuffed or having limited mobility but is a psychological reaction of the victim. The proposal seeks to address these situations by basing the definition of rape on the absence of consent.

The measure also responds to the fact that in current legal theory and practice (especially under the influence of international human rights standards) the conceptualization of rape as forcibly coerced sexual intercourse is increasingly being abandoned and replaced by the concept of non-consensual sexual intercourse. Basing the definition of rape on lack of free consent is recommended to States parties by, for example, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in its 2017 General Recommendation No. 35.¹⁴⁴

The criminal law of the European Court of Human Rights ("ECtHR") also deals with rape. For example, in the decision *M.C. v. Bulgaria of 4 December 2003, no. 39272/98*, the ECtHR held that the Contracting Parties enjoy a wide margin of appreciation in relation to the criminal definition of rape, but must ensure that the investigation of rape focuses on the issue of non-consent to sexual intercourse rather than on the issue of the use of force or overcoming resistance.

Several European countries (e.g. Denmark, Germany, Belgium, the United Kingdom, Ireland and Sweden) have in recent years moved to change the definition of rape to a consent-based definition.

¹⁴⁴ For more details see:

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/1_Global/CEDAW_C_GC_35_8267_E.pdf.

Measure 19: Increase the protection of victims of domestic and gender-based violence under the legal mechanism of eviction from the common home

Gestor: Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of the Interior in cooperation with the Czech Republic

Outputs	Indicator	Date and gestor
Setting up standardized procedures for the ASLPC, including procedures in cases of domestic violence, including the obligation to include all children exposed to domestic violence under Section 6 and setting a specific deadline for contacting children at risk, and then anchoring them by decree.	Procedures anchored by decree	31. 12. 2025 MoLSA
Updating of the methodological manual No.1/2022 of the Director of the Directorate of the Order Police Service of the Police Presidium of the Czech Republic on the implementation of the binding instruction of the Police President No.181/2020 on the implementation of evictions, including changes leading to the strengthening of the use of evictions or bans on entry as a tool for preventing escalation of violence (in cooperation with the Committee).	a) Established working group b) Updated Methodological Manual	31. 12. 2025 Mol in cooperation with GO CR
Methodological support of the Police of the Czech Republic in conducting preventive interviews with the expelled persons and imposing the obligation not to stay or approach the place where the victim is staying within the framework of eviction with emphasis on ensuring the safety of the victim of violence.	Encouraging preventive interviews and imposing the obligation not to stay at or approach the place of eviction taken into account in the framework of the update of the methodologies	31. 12. 2025 Mol

Further description of the measures:

The aim of the measure is to strengthen the institution of eviction as a preventive tool that helps prevent escalation of violence and more serious consequences by considering the needs of victims of domestic and gender-based violence and updating the relevant methodologies and support of the Police of the Czech Republic in connection with the draft law on domestic violence.

Justification:

The Domestic Violence Bill introduces several important changes affecting the Police Act. These include the extension of the eviction period to 14 days and the possibility to take away a weapon from the perpetrator of violence. The need for the measures stems in particular from new comparative data and the exchange of experience and good practice with Austria brought about by a project under the Interreg CZ-AT cross-border cooperation program.¹⁴⁵ Given that the Czech Republic has been inspired by Austria, where the legal mechanism of eviction has

¹⁴⁵ More information available at: <https://www.at-cz.eu/cz>.

been in place since 1997, when drafting laws to protect against domestic violence, it makes sense to try to further approximate Austrian legislation.

The first of the proposed changes is to extend the period of eviction from the current 10 days to 14 days, following the Austrian model. During the period of eviction of a violent person, 10 days does not provide sufficient space for the person at risk or the intervention centers to engage with him or her and provide options for dealing with his or her situation without putting all parties involved under pressure not to take the necessary steps in time.

At the same time, the current regulation of the legal mechanism of eviction does not take into account the fact that the violent person should be deprived of the weapons in his possession, including the document for these weapons. It is important to bear in mind the cycle of domestic violence and its escalation, in which case the person threatened could be in serious danger regardless of the eviction of the violent person.¹⁴⁶

Furthermore, in Austria, a shared home is not a condition for the application of the eviction mechanism; what is important is that there is a close relationship between the person at risk and the violent person. This corresponds better to the current state of interpersonal relationships (parallel relationships, offspring perpetrating various forms of domestic violence against parents/grandparents, etc.). Austrian practice is supported by the Convention against Violence against Women, which defines domestic violence as "all acts of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence occurring within the family or household or between former spouses or partners, regardless of whether the perpetrator shares or has shared a household with the victim."

The need for a number of these measures is also confirmed in the current ICSP research¹⁴⁷. In practice, the decision to evict is often based on an incorrect assessment of the situation. The good practice of some prosecutors in the Czech Republic shows that a timely assessment of whether the behavior of the expelled person fulfils the elements of a criminal offence would be greatly assisted if the prosecutor's office were notified of every police eviction of a violent person.

Currently, the person being evicted is not adequately supported during the eviction process, and eviction is often seen as a sanction rather than a preventive measure. An option is therefore to recommend their participation in a therapeutic program for perpetrators of violence. Following the example of foreign approaches (e.g. Austria or Norway), the aim of therapeutic interventions should be to work on stopping the violence with regard to safety, gender roles, trauma work, mental health, substance abuse problems, and to promote relational and parenting competences if there are children in the relationship. The starting point for interventions is that the person perpetrating violence is responsible for the violence.

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In the case of vulnerable persons - children - there is currently no set deadline for the social and legal protection authority to contact the children. However, it is very important to work with a child in a situation where he or she is at risk of violence and to provide him or her with the

¹⁴⁶ More information on the domestic violence cycle available here: <https://www.profem.cz/cs/s-cim-pomahame/domaci-nasili>.

¹⁴⁷ Institute for Criminology and Social Prevention, PDP7 "Improving the treatment of perpetrators and support for victims in cases of domestic and gender-based violence in the Czech Republic" funded by the Norwegian funds more information available: ViolenceOFF - <https://violenceoff.cz/>.

¹⁴⁸ Askeland, I.R., & Råkil, M. (2017): Models on Treatment of Intimate Partner Violence. In Holt, S., Øverlien, C., & Devaney, J. (eds): *Responding to Domestic Violence. Emerging Challenges for Policy, Practice, and Research in Europe* (267-289). London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

¹⁴⁹ Cowan, C.P. & Cowan, P.A. (2019) Enhancing Parenting Effectiveness, Fathers' Involvement, Couple Relationship Quality, and Children's Development: Breaking Down Silos in Family Policy Making and Service Delivery. *Journal of Family Theory & Review* 11, 92-111.

¹⁵⁰ Scott, K., & Lishack, V. (2012). Intervention for maltreating fathers: Statistically and clinically significant change. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 36(9), 680-684.

¹⁵¹ Stover, C.S., Meadows, A.L., & Kaufman, J. (2009). Interventions for intimate partner violence: Review and implications for evidence-based practice. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 40(3), 223-233.

necessary assistance.

In the case of persons at risk - the elderly - the police should be obliged to contact the social department at the relevant municipal office, similarly to the case of children at risk (where the social-legal protection of children is contacted by sending an official record of the eviction). Vulnerable persons of advanced age also need special protection, as the situation can be particularly challenging and opaque for them.

In general, the institution of eviction under the current statutory regulation applies only to cases where the threatened and violent person live in a common dwelling. In practice, however, there may be a number of situations where there is no cohabitation, but this does not exclude the need for the person at risk to be safe - including through the institution of eviction. This could include, for example, cottages, hotel rooms, student halls of residence, hostels or other similar facilities.

In order for the above measures to be effectively implemented and translated into improved practice, it is necessary to educate the relevant professions to apply the "zero tolerance of violence" principle. As illustrated by the analysis of barriers in the system of assistance to victims of partner violence, which was developed in the framework of the project "Removing barriers in the system of assistance to victims of partner violence" supported by the OSF Active Citizens Fund program, which is funded by the EEA and Norway Grants, the hierarchization and downplaying of violence by various institutions is one of the major obstacles that victims face in accessing assistance.¹⁵² In this context, the legal mechanism of eviction should be seen by these personnel as a preventive tool that can prevent more serious consequences in the future. This means that it should apply to all situations where the person at risk feels a well-founded fear, regardless of whether violence has already occurred.

In the Czech Republic, interim measures pursuant to Section 400 et seq. of the Act on Special Court Proceedings are generally used to protect against stalking and harassment as a continuation of domestic violence. This legislation requires the person threatened to secure evidence for these interim measures himself. In addition to the concept of eviction, the institution of prohibition of entry into the home of the person threatened appears to be an effective measure.

With regard to the possibility of preventive tools, we can also draw inspiration from abroad in the form of informal tools that are directed against potentially violent persons with the aim of influencing them and minimizing further unwanted behavior. One of these is, for example, the so-called 'preventive interview', in which the interviewing authority should make suggestions on how the person concerned should behave and instruct him or her on the measures to be taken if the potential offender does not follow the recommendations and advice. The main aim of such a conversation is to prevent further violent behavior.

¹⁵² NYKLOVÁ, Blanka et al. *Barriers in the victim assistance system*. Prague: proFem - centre for victims of domestic and sexual violence, 2022. ISBN 978-80-907512-6-2. Available at: https://www.profem.cz/shared/clanky/1015/ProFem_Bariery.pdf.

Measure No. 20: To improve the implementation of the right of victims of domestic and gender-based violence to claim and recover compensation from the perpetrator and financial assistance from the State and to improve the efficiency of the provision of financial assistance to victims

Gestor: Ministry of Industry and Trade in cooperation with the Czech Republic

Outputs	Indicator	Date and gestor
Conduct meetings of the Working Commission on the New Criminal Procedure Code with representatives of the Committee for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Violence against Women to address issues related to compensation for non-pecuniary damage in criminal proceedings in cases of crimes related to domestic and sexual violence.	Implemented negotiations	31.12.2023 MoJ in cooperation with GO CR
Conduct negotiations with the Ministry of Finance to ensure more effective assistance to victims of crimes related to domestic and sexual violence, in particular to streamline and valorize the amounts of financial assistance for particularly vulnerable victims.	Implemented negotiations	31.12.2023 MoJ, GO CR
Following the outcome of the negotiations with the Ministry of Finance, prepare an amendment to Act No.45/2013 Coll., on Victims of Crime, allowing for more effective provision of financial assistance to victims referred to in Section 24(1)(d) and ensuring an adequate increase in the lump sum amount of financial assistance for particularly vulnerable victims.	Amendment submitted following the outcome of the negotiations	31.12.2024 MoJ in cooperation with GO CR

A more detailed description of the measures:

The aim of the measure is to streamline access to compensation for victims who are entitled to it and who do not receive it in the current set-up of the system and to strengthen the capacity of the competent authorities to assist victims in recovering compensation from the perpetrator.

Justification:

Monetary assistance is an option for victims to receive financial assistance from the state to bridge the period of deteriorated social situation after the crime. However, the current set-up of cash assistance is dysfunctional for victims, as confirmed by the 2022 ProFem research.¹⁵³

The issue of compensation is in many aspects unknown to the professional and lay public. In cooperation with partner organizations from Hungary and Bulgaria, proFem - Center for Victims of Domestic and Sexual Violence decided to fill the gap in data on the practice of compensation and financial assistance in the framework of the European Commission's Justice 2014-2020 project. The analysis of 556 judgments from 2019 and 2020, which were related to crimes of domestic violence, rape and stalking, revealed a number of systemic shortcomings. One of the

¹⁵³ Compensation for victims of crime in the context of violence against women: lessons from theory and practice and suggestions for improvement. Prague: proFem - Centre for Victims of Domestic and Sexual Violence, 2022. ISBN 978-80-907512-9-3. Available at : [https://profem.cz/shared/clanky/1053/PROFEM_vico_publicace%20\(A5\)%20WEB%20-%20Copy%201.pdf](https://profem.cz/shared/clanky/1053/PROFEM_vico_publicace%20(A5)%20WEB%20-%20Copy%201.pdf), <https://www.profem.cz/cs/vydali-jsme/vyzkumy/a/odskodnovani-obeti-nasili-na-zenach>.

research's findings is that around a fifth of victims who claimed compensation in criminal proceedings were referred by the court to civil proceedings with their entire claim. In practice, the referral of a victim to civil proceedings constitutes a de facto rejection of the victim's claim, as victims generally do not proceed to civil proceedings. This is due to a number of factors, including, in addition to the financial burden, the fact that the victim finds the idea of further proceedings unimaginable and risky, as he or she is not afforded the privileges that he or she enjoys in criminal proceedings as a particularly vulnerable victim (e.g. the possibility of not seeing the perpetrator).

The formulation of the first outcome responds to the issue of claiming non-pecuniary damage in the case of conditional discontinuation of criminal prosecution. The application problems caused by the fact that the provision of Section 307(1) of the Criminal Code operates only with the condition of compensation for "damages", would be solved by a simple amendment that would include "damages and non-pecuniary damage." This would put compensation for non-pecuniary damage on an equal footing with damage and unjust enrichment and reinforce the perception of the importance of compensation for non-pecuniary damage.

The current cash assistance settings need to be adjusted as this tool is in many ways burdensome and dysfunctional for victims. Victims of sexual violence (according to Article 24(1)(d) of Act No. 45/2013 Coll., on Victims of Crime) should be able to apply for assistance in a lump sum, regardless of the type of their costs, like other groups of victims. Emphasis should also be placed on the introduction of automatic indexation of lump-sum amounts of financial assistance, which have not changed since 2013. This is quite alarming in the light of current inflation and rising energy prices.

Measure 21: Increase awareness of the rights of persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence

Gestor: **Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of the Interior in cooperation with intervention centers**

Outputs	Indicator	Date and gestor
Revised and clarified victim education documents, with particular emphasis on the right of particularly vulnerable victims to free representation and the right to claim compensation.	Revised Lessons Learned documents	31.12.2023 MoI
Training for male and female police officers on how to inform persons briefly and clearly at risk of domestic and gender-based violence about their rights and available assistance (including how to use the revised forms).	a) Number of training sessions b) Number of trained police officers and policewomen	31. 12. 2024 and continuously in the following years MoI
Increased awareness of victims about their rights, the possibilities of fulfilling them and the assistance available through the creation of a separate and easy-to-find website or section focused on this information, including a clear and accessible register of providers of assistance to victims and dissemination of information about the website and the register. The website or section should also allow providers to indicate specialisms in different target groups or areas, including domestic and sexual violence.	a) Creation of a website or a separate section on the issue (b) Updated register (c) List of published information on the website and the register	31. 12. 2024 and continuously in the following years MoJ
Strengthen interdisciplinary cooperation between all relevant actors and promote platforms for the transfer of experience and good practice between different actors working with victims of domestic and gender-based violence, inter alia, to improve the effectiveness of compensation for victims of violence.	a) Number of interdisciplinary meetings in the regions in the respective year (b) Number of meetings on compensation issues in the relevant year	31.12.2024 and continuously in the following years MoLSA, MoI, MoJ in cooperation with intervention centers

A more detailed description of the measures:

The aim of the measure is to ensure that persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence are always informed in a comprehensible way about their rights and the assistance available.

Justification:

Research on victim compensation conducted by proFem in 2022¹⁵⁴ found that victims are often unaware of their rights. As a result, they often do not have legal representation, do not claim

¹⁵⁴ ProFem. 2022. Compensation for victims of crime in the context of violence against women: lessons from theory and practice and suggestions for improvement. For more details see:
[https://profem.cz/shared/clanky/1053/PROFEM_vico_publikace%20\(A5\)%20WEB%20-%20Copy%201.pdf](https://profem.cz/shared/clanky/1053/PROFEM_vico_publikace%20(A5)%20WEB%20-%20Copy%201.pdf),
<https://www.profem.cz/cs/vydali-jsme/vyzkumy/a/odskodnovani-obeti-nasili-na-zenach>.

compensation, and are not in contact with specialist organizations that could help them in their difficult situation. Even those who are currently dealing with the acute situation are not clear about their rights given the set-up of the system, let alone the wider public in general awareness.

The main results of the research on victim compensation include that almost 80% of victims in criminal proceedings did not receive any compensation for non-pecuniary damage. A significant contributing factor to this finding is that only a quarter of victims apply for compensation at all due to a number of structural barriers. The main reason for this is that victims are not even aware of their rights. Moreover, the victim education documents for particularly vulnerable victims should be expanded to include their specific rights - in particular, to free representation by a commissioner.

A possible remedy is the current introduction of an obligation for police authorities to link the victim, with his or her consent, to a professional accredited victim assistance body, along the lines of eviction, within 168 hours of the receipt of a criminal complaint or the first procedural act in criminal proceedings. In addition, it is necessary to make the register of victim assistance service providers more transparent, in particular to optimize the search for entities, to improve its graphic design and to specify information on entities, as its current form is highly dysfunctional in practice.

The state should strive to raise awareness of the rights of victims in the area of compensation for victims and of the topic of violence against women in general through a nationwide awareness campaign that will break the ignorance of the general public about this issue. Anyone can become a victim of a crime and the state's interest should be to ensure that they receive everything they are entitled to in that situation.

The findings of organizations working with persons at risk of such violence show that information to victims about the basic principles and rights under the Victims of Crime Act is not always sufficiently ensured. Persons at risk are made aware of their rights in different ways. Persons at risk often do not understand what their rights are in these cases and what steps will follow. Police officers should have a uniform, concise and clear form for persons at risk of domestic violence. In this context, it is essential to continuously train police officers and policewomen on how to use these information materials correctly and to brief and clearly inform persons at risk of domestic and gender-based violence of their rights. In practice, situations repeatedly arise where persons at risk are not adequately compensated because they are not sufficiently and clearly informed about what stages of the criminal proceedings they can exercise their rights and how. The aim of the measure is to ensure that they are informed in a concise and comprehensible way about their right to claim compensation and thus improve their situation and status.

Measure No. 22: Methodologically anchor the procedure of misdemeanor commissions in misdemeanor proceedings in cases of domestic and gender-based violence and ensure the functional set-up of the system of case evaluation and other procedures of relevant authorities in this context

Gestor: the Ministry of the Interior in cooperation with the Czech Republic

Outputs	Indicator	Date and gestor
Analysis of the procedures of administrative authorities dealing with misdemeanors in connection with cases of domestic and gender-based violence and their evaluation in misdemeanor proceedings (in cooperation with the Committee).	Published analysis	31.12. 2024 Mol in cooperation with GO CR
Methodological support for members of administrative bodies dealing with misdemeanors reflecting the specifics of domestic and gender-based violence and recommended procedures in the context of cases dealt with by administrative bodies dealing with misdemeanors in relation to such violence reflecting the outputs of the analysis.	a) Working group established to prepare the handbook b) Methodological manual created	31.12. 2024 Mol in cooperation with GO CR
In the framework of regular meetings, inform methodologists and methodologists for misdemeanors and members of administrative bodies dealing with misdemeanors about the specifics of domestic and gender-based violence and recommended procedures in the context of cases dealt with by administrative bodies dealing with misdemeanors in relation to such violence in accordance with the methodological recommendation developed.	Meeting held including presentation of the methodological recommendation	31. 12. 2025 M

A more detailed description of the measures:

The aim of the measure is to anchor methodologically the procedure of misdemeanor commissions in misdemeanor proceedings in cases of domestic and gender-based violence and to ensure the functional setting of the system of case evaluation and other procedures of relevant bodies in this context through the analysis of the procedures of administrative bodies, methodological support for members of administrative bodies and training of regional methodologists and methodologists on misdemeanors and members of administrative bodies on the issue. The measure aims, inter alia, to strengthen the competence of misdemeanor commissions regarding the use of the regulation to undergo a therapeutic program for perpetrators of violence in close relationships as one of the possible corrective measures in accordance with the current wording of the Misdemeanors Act.

Justification

The research on barriers in the system of assistance carried out by proFem in cooperation with a researcher from the Institute of Sociology clearly demonstrates the inconsistency in the functioning of the system of assistance to victims and identifies obstacles that victims of partner violence must overcome, one of the identified areas that victims of partner violence repeatedly encounter is the area of misdemeanors and misdemeanor proceedings. As the research illustrates, the hierarchization and downplaying of violence, and specifically of certain forms of

violence, permeates the entire aid system. Hierarchizations leads to different agencies assessing individual acts of violence "according to a gradation of severity that is not systemically anchored - this allows for situational consideration and response to only some of these acts, which at the same time obscures the fact that in the context of partner violence, these are individuals that need to be considered as a whole."¹⁵⁵

This approach facilitates and normalizes the conception of partner violence, and domestic violence more generally, as a sequence of individual incidents rather than as a situation that continues and evolves over time. Specifically, the result is that these incidents are dealt with individually and in the aid system, and physical assault can repeatedly come before administrative authorities dealing with offences without addressing the context, i.e. partner violence and the evolving situation as a whole. At the same time, the misdemeanor procedure does not currently provide victims with any effective protection, which is ensured to them in criminal proceedings by Act No. 45/2013 Coll., on victims of crime, nor does it currently have defined procedures on how to proceed in cases of partner violence so that they can be caught in time and provide victims of partner violence with the necessary protection. At the same time, in misdemeanor proceedings, the statute of limitations is applied, which is set at only one year for this type of offence, so that in many cases this right is time-barred and de facto extinguished.

The evaluation of acts of partner violence as individual offences often leads to the reluctance of victims to contact the police again, and the system that should and could help them is thus completely lost. This approach reinforces the latency of violence in society and exacerbates its impact on individual cases.

In addition to the evaluation of individual cases by the police, who should be familiar with the specifics of domestic violence and should reflect the fact that these cases are not isolated acts, but a complex of acts that evolve over time and should be assessed in a comprehensive manner, it is necessary to focus on the administrative authorities dealing with misdemeanors, which can play a crucial role in capturing cases of partner violence. This role will be strengthened by setting up procedures for the administrative authorities dealing with cases of partner violence to ensure the early identification of such cases and the establishment of effective procedures for dealing with them, including their methodological anchoring and the methodological support available to members of the administrative authorities dealing with offences to apply the new procedures.

¹⁵⁵ ProFem. 2022. Barriers in the system of assistance to victims of partner violence. Available at: https://www.profem.cz/shared/clanky/1015/ProFem_Bariery.pdf.