



International Organization for Migration (IOM)
The UN Migration Agency

PROTECT - Preventing SGBV against migrants and strengthening support to victims

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) is a prevalent human rights violation both globally and on the European level. SGBV has both physical and psychological forms, it includes domestic violence, sexual harassment and violence, harmful practices, exploitation and trafficking in human beings.

Women and men, girls and boys and LGBTQI people can all become victims of such violence however the majority of the victims are women and girls.

According to the World Health Organization Report, published in 2013, more than 35% of women globally have experienced either physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner or a non-partner.¹ Also, according to a report published by the European Commission in 2016, 7 out of 10 EU citizens think that sexual harassment is common in their country.² In the case of men, boys and LGBTQI people, SGBV is even less understood and acknowledged as it is noticed by the general lack of information and assessments on their situation.³

Sexual and gender-based violence is a major issue among the migrant population as well.⁴ **SGBV is one of the reasons why refugees and migrants leave their country of origin, and also a phenomena they experience along the migration route.** As a recent joint report by IOM and UNICEF reveals, children, especially those travelling unaccompanied, are at high risk of being trafficked or exploited while they are on the move.⁵

The majority of SGBV cases remain unreported and unaddressed because of three main factors: lack of information on how to report such crime; lack of effective procedures to identify cases and insufficient training of staff in charge of recognizing such violence.⁶ Based on the field experience of IOM staff, the trainings and effective procedures to identify cases of SGBV are almost non-existing in practice. The Project aims to address the three main factors mentioned above.

¹ http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/85239/1/9789241564625_eng.pdf?ua=1

² <http://ec.europa.eu/COMMFrontOffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/yearFrom/1974/yearTo/2016/surveyKy/2115>

³ <https://childhub.org/en/system/tdf/library/attachments/hidden-violence-preventing-and-responding-to-sexual-exploitation-and-sexual-abuse-of-adolescent-boys.pdf?file=1&type=node&id=12027>

⁴ <http://www.unhcr.org/protection/operations/569f8f419/initial-assessment-report-protection-risks-women-girls-european-refugee.html>

⁵ <https://publications.iom.int/books/harrowing-journeys-children-and-youth-move-across-mediterranean-sea-risk-trafficking-and>

⁶ <http://fra.europa.eu/en/theme/asylum-migration-borders/overviews/focus-gender-based-violence>



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Twelve IOM missions from the following EU countries are participating in the project: **Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia and Spain**. These are the main transit countries along the Central and Eastern Mediterranean routes as well as destination countries in Western Europe.

Eight national partners from four countries will also participate as implementing partners: Le Monde Selon les Femmes (Belgium), Stichting ARQ (the Netherlands), Stichting Pharos Expertisecentrum Gezondheidsverschillen (the Netherlands), Stichting Rutgers (the Netherlands), Drustvo Kulturno Informacijsko in Svetovalnosredisce Legebitra (Slovenia), Fundación Emet Arco Iris (Spain), Movimiento por la Paz, el Desarme y la Libertad (Spain), and Asociación Rumiñahui (Spain).

The overall objective of the project is to strengthen the capacities of existing national support services for sexual and gender based violence to coordinate better and make these systems available for refugee, migrant and asylum seeker victims and potential victims of SGBV. The project also aims to raise awareness among and empower these communities.

The project has the following specific objectives and activities which will be implemented during its 18-month project cycle by IOM and its partners. Most of the activities will be tailored to specific national context.

1. **Strengthen and adapt existing national support services for sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) to coordinate better and include refugees, migrants and asylum-seekers (Objective 1).**
 - a. The project aims to facilitate **regular interagency working group and multidisciplinary stakeholder meetings at both national and international levels** where state and local authorities, NGOs, education/childcare/healthcare providers as well as refugee and migrant support services and communities can coordinate to ensure access to existing support services for SGBV for refugees, migrants and asylum seekers.
 - b. The implementing countries will participate in and/or contribute to the **development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) or Guidelines or review existing SOPs and set recommendations** to ensure that available and effective national and local support services for SGBV are in place and are capable of supporting the recovery of refugee, migrant and asylum seeking victims.



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2. **Build capacity for professionals who work with and for refugees, migrants and asylum-seekers with the aim of identifying and addressing the needs of victims and potential victims of SGBV more effectively (Objective 2).**
 - a. Within the framework of the project **tools to train professionals on understanding SGBV** and how to contribute to a non-judgemental environment that encourages victims to disclose **will be developed**. To promote sustainability the developed tools will include train the trainer manuals where it is possible and relevant.
 - b. The project will facilitate **capacity-building through trainings sessions** with particular emphasis on identification of victims and potential victims of SGBV, existing referral mechanisms and prevention of SGBV to support the recovery of victims and prevent secondary victimization. The trainings will target first responders, special service providers (e.g. health care providers, victim support services, interpreters, cultural mediators) and general service providers (e.g. children's home workers, teachers in local schools where refugee, migrant and asylum seeking children are enrolled).

3. **Empower and inform refugee and migrant communities and asylum-seekers of SGBV and its prevention through a regional awareness-raising campaign (Objective 3).**
 - a. A **regional SGBV information campaign strategy** will be developed in all countries of focus in order to coordinate local awareness-raising activities among refugee and migrant communities and asylum seekers.
 - b. **Information materials (leaflets, posters, educational video) on SGBV** will be developed and distributed. Separate information materials for children will use child-friendly language. Every material will be translated to several languages which are the most relevant in the country context.
 - c. **Information sessions on SGBV prevention** will be organized for refugee and migrant communities and asylum seekers in reception centres and/or in migrant communities. Specialized sessions will be held for adults and children.



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