

Council of Europe Campaign to Combat Violence against Women, including Domestic Violence

COUNTRY INFORMATION PAGE ON NATIONAL ACTION TO COMBAT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

AUSTRIA

I. National campaigns

1. Is your government currently carrying out a national campaign to combat violence against women, including domestic violence?

Yes No

2. Has your government carried out a national campaign to combat violence against women, including domestic violence in the past?

Yes No

If yes, which year(s)

1998-1999; also see section IV, e.g. exhibition "Behind the Curtain" touring Austria since 2006

3. Is your government planning on carrying out a national campaign to combat violence against women, including domestic violence in the future?

Yes No

If yes, which year(s)

Please provide a brief description of the present or past national campaign, by using the space in the following boxes:

- a. Campaign slogan

"Halt der Gewalt" (stop to violence);

- b. Campaign duration

december 1998 - july 1999

- c. Campaign aims, messages and/or objectives

The aim of the campaign was to make the population aware of the fact, that many women are victims of violence (in the familiy) indifferent of age and social background. Primary to the campaign a new law was introduced (Protection from Violence Act, 1997), considerably improving protective measures for victims of domestic violence. Throughout the campaign television spots were broadcasted, especially advertising a newly set up helpline (women's helpline against male violence). This 24-hour, freephone and nationwide helpline was advertised also through labels and folders. The callers are counselled exclusively by women experts. The service includes confidential primary counselling, crisis intervention and information about legal basics. If necessary, the caller is referred on to Domestic Abuse Intervention Centers or local women support services.

d. Expected or achieved results

The campaign has helped to raise awareness of the fact, that violence in the family can happen to everyone and that it is not a private matter. The possibilities to seek support (through the helpline, the Domestic Abuse Intervention Centers or other women support centres) have become better known among the target groups. The helpline still exists and the number of callers affected by violence has grown constantly. But also people from the social background of the victim, institutions and media contact the helpline for information and support. Approximately 50 phone calls per day are answered.

Since the introduction of the Protection from Violence Act in 1997 and the campaign 1998/99 domestic violence has stayed on the public agenda. Laws and measures to protect and support victims of domestic violence have been further improved and the budget for the helpline and the Domestic Abuse Intervention Centers has been increased continuously.

e. Campaign website address

II. National Plan of Action

1. Has your government adopted a national plan of action to combat violence against women, including domestic violence?

Yes No

If yes, which year

1997

2. Is your government currently implementing a national plan of action to combat violence against women, including domestic violence?

Yes No

3. Has your government implemented a national plan of action to combat violence against women, including domestic violence in the past?

Yes No

If yes, which year(s)

1997 and the following years (no timetable was fixed)

4. Is your government planning on implementing a national plan or action to combat violence against women, including domestic violence in the future?

Yes No

If yes, which year(s)

Please provide a brief description of the national plan of action, by using the space in the following boxes:

- a. Aims, activities and expected or achieved results of the national plan of action

The main aims of the NAP (decision of the council of Ministers) were awareness-raising, improved support to victims, closer cooperation among institutions and improved prosecution of cases of violence. These aims were to be achieved especially by the following measures/activities: higher budgets for specialized agencies; free psycho-social and legal court accompaniment for children (since 2006 a statutory right for all victims of

violence is introduced); legal provisions to avoid "secondary traumatisation" during police interrogation and criminal procedures; improvement of cooperation of relevant agencies and institutions, training for concerned professionals (police, prosecutors, teachers,...); education-support for parents; social work with perpetrators; awareness rising in the media; reform of the criminal law concerning sexual violence; all of the above mentioned measures have been implemented.

- b. Duration of the national plan of action
no timetable was fixed, but measures were implemented in 1997 and the following years
- c. National Plan of Action website address
no website

III. National Task Force/inter-agency working group to combat violence against women, including domestic violence

- a. Has your government set up a national Task Force or inter-agency working group to combat violence against women, including domestic violence?
Yes No
- b. If yes, please provide a brief description of this body, including its composition, mandate, duration and expected results

IV. Additional information on national action to combat violence against women

The main focus of action lies with victim protection, accordingly the funding of the Intervention Centers has been increased by 60% in 2007. An exhibition (Behind the Curtain) giving information on domestic violence is presently touring Austria (since may 2006). In March 2007 the Minister for Women, Media and Civil Service in the Federal Chancellery presented the exhibition in Vienna. The exhibition and an accompanying brochure are financed by public funds.

Furthermore it is planned to again advertise the helpline nationwide in 2007 through posters with public financial support. Public funds are also made available to inform and link NGOs and administrative authorities on the CoE-Campaign. To be able to prosecute perpetrators and to protect victims more effectively, relevant laws are planned to be revised. Rec (2002)5 will be translated and disseminated. Further activities are intended.