

# ANNUAL REPORT 2016

## *ANIMUS ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION*



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## II. INTRODUCTION

2016 was filled with constant conflicts with Bulgarian institutions and struggles for every single case.

Within this context, the only good news was that we achieved an extremely good cooperation with the Ministry of Justice. It is important to note that the Ministry of Justice put a lot of efforts into the signing of the Istanbul Convention as well as its main role in the preparation of the legislative amendments necessary for the ratification. It is also important to mention the Ministry's initiative to start a procedure under the Public Procurement Act for the management of the National Help Line for survivors of domestic violence. This allowed the Help Line to work 24/7.

Apart from that, for the first time this year we were forced to challenge in front of a court a Child Protection Services order related to a case for which we completely differed in our professional opinions.

Another paradox was the preparation of the Implementing Rules of the Social Assistance Act without any further public discussion and without the participation of the non-profit organizations providing these services. Following these amendments psychologists who usually work with children and parents in Centers for Social Support are now assigned to work with older people suffering for Alzheimer and other somatic diseases. As an organization running a Center for Social Support, we believe that specialists who are trained in a particular field must not make decision in a completely different sphere.

For our 23 years of working as experts on violence we have never encountered so many inadequate, unprofessional and we can even say harmful decisions made by the child protection services in relation to children victims of violence.

In the past year we also encountered cases of aggressive husbands and fathers, threats towards our employees and even a break in into our crisis unit.

Despite all the problems, we continued our work on difficult cases of women and children victims of domestic violence. Last year we worked on 24 projects and dedicated ourselves to the causes and problems of many children and families at risk, and victims of violence. Zona ZaKmila supported by UNICEF alone had 100 cases of children and their families. Working on so many projects on a practical level expanded the range of activities of the organization. For a very long time the main priority of our activities was the provision of

clinical and consultative assistance. After 23 years, the activities of the organization are already oriented towards the future by working for the prevention of violence and encouraging mental health. Our organization entered kinder gardens and schools to gain experience from the work with healthy and lively children between the ages of 5 and 8 and to teach the future Bulgarian citizens to be able to recognize their feelings and to learn constructive strategies for dealing with difficult situations in their lives.

Sometimes we feel very lonely in our attempts to help victims in the way that we understand help. We face serious difficulties when partnering with the social system and key institutions which have to provide the necessary assistance to the victims. We are certain that the support system for victims of violence in Bulgaria is in deep crisis due to the frequent changes in the government in recent years and in its employees. Nevertheless, we are aware that in order to accomplish our mission and our activities, we need to work together with state institutions and to put all our efforts into this without compromising the quality of the support we provide to our clients.

In 2016 the “Zippy’s Friends – The Future Citizens of Bulgaria” program was introduced as good practice by the Open Society Institute which encourages children’s emotional health as an investment for the future. In order to guarantee the sustainability of the program, in 2016 we started a 5-year long project called “Key to a Fear-free School” which further develops the idea for working with children in schools. This is how we started the creation of a whole school approach for the promotion of mental health and reduction of bullying at schools with a clear methodological program including all students between 1st and 10th grade.

Thanks to our project for bullying in schools - “Introducing Participatory And Child-Centered Approach For Early Identification And Prevention Of Bullying In School Setting In 7 EU Countries”, we developed and designed wonderful guides for teachers which the Ministry of Education and Science chose to use to combat school bullying. The materials for recognition and prevention of school bullying are accessible on the website of the organization.

Animus Association Foundation keeps growing and currently employs over 100 professionals. We can say that for the last 23 years Animus has become a stable organization with influence on different levels working for the benefit of our clients.

In 2016 Animus Association Foundation became a partner organization in numerous international and European projects which comes to show that the organization is a valuable and attractive partner, preferred for our highly professional expertise, our capacity to implement innovative initiatives, and good practices to administer projects. The projects that we implemented in 2016 were mainly on the topics of assistance to children and

families, child participation, domestic violence, trafficking in human beings, prevention of violence against women and children, prevention of school bullying, promotion of mental health, etc.

In the past year the total number of clients seeking counseling was 14 271, 10 428 of which received counseling on the National Helpline for Children and 1 768 - on the Helpline for Survivors of Violence. 55 clients were accommodated at the “St. Petka” Crisis Centre for Survivors of Violence and a total of 1 106 clients were assisted through services of Center for Rehabilitation, Counseling, Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis, Trauma Center of Animus Association Foundation and Child and Youth Advocacy Center “Zona ZaKmila”. Another 406 clients were supported at the Social Services Centre for Children and Families and 45 of them are mothers with babies, accommodated at “Mother and Baby” Unit.

In 2016 Animus Association Foundation continued to manage and operate the National Helpline for Children 116 111, funded and monitored by the State Agency for Child Protection as we have been doing for the last 7 years. This is the first time when for six months we did not receive any feedback from the child protection services in relation to the reported cases of children at risk.

The organization has continued the management of Social Services Centre for Children and Families, consisting of a Community Support Centre and “Mother and Baby” Unit. It has been a continuous and ongoing tendency throughout the past couple of years the number of children and families at risk, supported by the team of the Social services centre to surpass the capacity of the Center, defined in the framework of the state-delegated activity.

The management of “Mother and Baby” Unit remains a serious challenge for our organization. Apart from the underfunding that we experience, we also face problems in its management as the employees have to deal with the responsibility for infants with mothers who are traumatized, young or destructive. In addition, in 2016 we had the first baby born in the Complex and some of our colleagues were forced to assist the mother in labor.

We are deeply grateful to all those people who have supported our ideas. These are the people who believe in us, the Board members of Animus Association Foundation, our sponsors, a number of donors from different companies, private donors, the team of psychotherapists and social workers who continuously strive for professional development and provision of quality services. We are also deeply grateful to all the volunteers, university students and interns who with their contributions, time, and energy have supported our social programs – the “St. Petka” Crisis Centre, the Helpline for Survivors of Violence, the “Mother and Baby” Unit. The work that Animus Association Foundation is doing would not

have been so successful had it not been for the dedicated work of the programs' team members and the administration.



Nadejda Stoytcheva

Director  
Animus Association Foundation



Maria Tchomarova

Director  
Animus Association Foundation

### III. LIST OF PROJECTS

1. **“Trauma Center for Children and Families”** (September 1st, 2013 – August 31st, 2016), funded by Bulgarian – Swiss Cooperation Programme, Reform Fund Linked to Civil Society Participation;;
2. **“Zona ZaKmila – Child and Youth Advocacy Center”** (October 1st, 2015 – December 30th, 2016), funded by Unicef - Country Program for Bulgaria;
3. **“Social Services Center for Children and Families” - Community Support Center** (December 1st, 2014 - November 30th, 2017), funded by the Bulgarian state budget via Sofia Municipality, under the mechanism of state-delegated activities;
4. **“Social Services Center for Children and Families” - Mother&Baby Unit**, (December 1st, 2014 - November 30th, 2017), funded by the Bulgarian state budget via Sofia Municipality, under the mechanism of state-delegated activities;
5. **“St. Petka Crisis Center for Survivors of Violence”** (March 1st, 2015 – March 1st, 2018), financed by the Bulgarian state budget via Sofia Municipality, under the mechanism of state-delegated activities;
6. **“Support Center for Victims of Domestic Violence in Bulgaria”** (September 1st, 2015 – September 1st, 2018), financed by Medicor Foundation, Liechtenstein;
7. **“National Helpline for Children 116 111”** (May 8th, 2013 – May 8th, 2015; May 8th, 2015 – May 8th, 2016), funded by the Bulgarian state budget through the Bulgarian State Agency for Child Protection under public procurement procedures;
8. **“National Hotline for Support and Referral of Survivors of Violence”** (February 13th, 2015 – February 13th, 2017), funded by the Domestic Violence Fund at the Bulgarian Ministry of Justice;
9. **“Joint Efforts in Applying a Multi-level Approach to Combating Domestic Violence”** (September 1st, 2015 – September 1st, 2018), funded by OAK Foundation;
10. **“Key to a Fear-free School”** (May 1st, 2016 – May 1st, 2021) financed by OAK Boundation together with 12 Bulgarian non-profit organizations;
11. **“Zippy`s Friends” - the Future Citizens of Bulgaria** (February 3rd, 2014 – April 3rd, 2016), funded by the NGO Support Programme in Bulgaria under the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area;

12. **“Introducing Participatory And Child-Centered Approach For Early Identification And Prevention Of Bullying In School Setting In 7 EU Countries”** (December 1st, 2014 – November 30th, 2016), financed by DAPHNE III Program of the European Union;
13. **“WE GO! Women Economic-independence & Growth Opportunity”** (January 11th, 2016 – January 10th, 2018) with the financial support of the “Rights, Equality and Citizenship” Program of the European Union;
14. **“RISE - Reinforce Inner Strength Effectively to Combat Bullying”** (October 15th, 2015 – October 15th, 2017), funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Program of the European Union, with implementing organization “CIVIFORM” Animus Association Foundation is a partner in the project;
15. **“A-Z to SAFETY”** (January 1st, 2015 – December 31st, 2016), funded by the Daphne III Programme of the European Union, with implementing organization Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation, Animus Association Foundation is a partner in the project;
16. **SURT - "Alternative Future. Towards the Empowerment of Children victims of Violence in Alternative Care Through a Gender Sensitive and Child-centered Capacity Building Programme for Professionals"** (December 1st, 2015 – November 30th, 2017), funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union, with implementing organization the SURT Foundation, Animus Association Foundation is a partner in the project;
17. **TRACE - “Trafficking as a Criminal Enterprise”**, (May 1st, 2014 – March 1st, 2016), financed by the 7th Framework Program of the European Union, with implementing organization Trilateral Research and Consulting, Animus Association Foundation is a partner in the project;
18. **“Rights at Work – Tackling Labor Exploitation in All Economic Sectors in Bulgaria, Poland and Romania” (La Strada International)** (September 1st, 2016 – August 1st, 2018) with leading organization La Strada International (The Netherlands) and partners Animus Association Foundation (Bulgaria), La Strada Poland and AIDRom (Romania). The project is financed by the Dutch Ministry of Exterior via the “Human Rights” fund;
19. **“MenCare Campaign in Bulgaria”** (December 1st, 2013 – November 30th, 2016), funded by the OAK Foundation, with implementing organization Roditeli Association, Animus Association Foundation is a partner in the project;
20. **“Let’s Express Ourselves”** (June 17th, 2015 – April 30th, 2016), funded by Sofia Municipality, Animus Association Foundation is a partner in the project;
21. **“Improving Access to Specialized Legal Aid for Victims of Trafficking in Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary”** (September 1st, 2016 – April 1st, 2017);

22. **“Increasing the effectiveness of Referral, Support, Protection and Reintegration of Victims of THB, through the Practical Application of the Transnational Mechanism”**, (January 1st, 2015 – March 1st, 2016), funded by the Programme Area 30 of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009 – 2014, with implementing organization the State Agency for National Security, Animus Association Foundation is a partner in the project;
23. **“Bulgarian-Swiss Joint Efforts for Providing Immediate and Unconditional Protection of Trafficked Persons and Preventing Trafficking in Human Beings”** (January 1st, 2015 – June 30th, 2018), Bulgarian – Swiss Cooperation Programme;
24. **“United Methodist Women”** (April 1st, 2016 – April 1st, 2017);
25. **“Blaga Baba Blaga”**- social entrepreneurship

## IV. SUMMARIES OF PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED IN 2016

### 1. „Trauma Center for Children and Families”

September 1st, 2013 – August 31st, 2016

*The project is realized with the financial support of Switzerland through the Swiss-Bulgaria Cooperation Program – Reform Fund Linked to Civil Society Participation*



BULGARIAN-SWISS COOPERATION PROGRAMME  
БЪЛГАРО-ШВЕЙЦАРСКА ПРОГРАМА ЗА СЪТРУДНИЧЕСТВО



Травма център за деца и семейства /CSP 025 – 169/

„Trauma Center for Children and Families” ensures free specialized consultation programs and psychotherapy for children and their parents. The children’s ability to work through painful experiences in their lives and to cope successfully in the future is improved through psychotherapeutic work. Parents are supported in order to have greater sensitivity towards their children’s suffering and to be able to create a family environment where the child could feel safe and grow up healthy. Important figures outside the families who are crucial for the development and adaptation of the child in the society are also supported.

Through its programs the Trauma Center improves children’s endurance and their abilities to work through traumatic events in their lives and to cope in the future. It also helps parents increase their capacity to be good parents and to create

a supporting family environment where their children could grow up easily and be healthy. The Trauma Center also supports other people outside of the family who might be important for the child and who can prove to be essential for the child’s development and adaption to society.

Our experience so far shows that the programs offer a suitable and favorable setting to work with difficult cases of people suffering from trauma. The careful selection of the team members and their constant efforts for the improvement of their work quality through supervisions and discussion of every case contribute to the well developed skills for recognizing the symptoms of trauma and intervening in such cases. Supervisions and group discussions also act as a barrier to the fast professional burn-out which might be dangerous when working with complex and emotionally challenging cases. The members of the team are able to concentrate and develop their knowledge and approach to working with this specific group of clients, to support one another and to learn from their experience with the supervisions advancing these skills. Knowing and applying the psychodynamic approach to working with deep experiences and problems as well as its combination with a multidisciplinary approach and focus on the work with parents give the opportunity to better address the problems that children and families using the services of the Center might have.



## 2. “Zona ZaKрила” - Child and Youth Advocacy Center

October 1st, 2015 – December 30th, 2016

*Funded by UNICEF - Country Program for Bulgaria*



The project is developed with the support of both UNICEF and Sofia Municipality.

In 2016, the project covered a total of 100 cases – 54 cases of children and 46 cases of parents. Seven signals for children who are at risk or are victims of sexual violence were received. All of them were given to a prosecutor or taken to court. Legal representation was provided in 10 of the cases for pre-trial and trial phases. Nine of the cases reached a satisfactory ruling for protection, while one is still in pre-trial.

Our team took part in 16 multidisciplinary teams working on child abuse cases. Six of these cases involved children who were witnesses to violence and they were supported by specialists during the interrogations in a Blue room in the pre-trial court proceedings.



For this period, the Zona ZaKрила team also took part in different trainings for increasing their capacity for working with children and parents in cases of violence as well as in a number of meetings with different institutions on the topic of violence.

In the past year, the Child Advocacy and Support Center Zona ZaKрила received a license № 1079/ 11.10.2016 from the State Agency for Child Protection and a certificate for registration № 00135-0010 – order № РД 1-329/24.10.2016 from the Agency for Social Assistance which led to the registration of a new kind of integrated social service for children who are at risk or are victims of violence and their families:

- ✓ Medical consultations and expertise through a negotiated partnership with coroners and other specialists provided within this service;
- ✓ Specialized programs for psychological consultations and social accompaniment and advocacy;
- ✓ Legal consultations and representation in trial and pre-trial;

- ✓ Specialized service directed towards children who are in contact with the justice system and the police created in order to respond to their needs for preparations, support and caring environment during the interrogation;
- ✓ The team is available 24/7 to react to cases of child abuse;
- ✓ Mobile social work and emergency reaction for crisis situations;
- ✓ A team of specialists for crisis intervention.

The project will continue to develop the multidisciplinary model for working on cases of violence in 2017.

### 3. Social Services Center for Children and Families – Social Support Center

December 1st, 2014 - November 30th, 2017

*Financed by the state budget via Sofia Municipality under the mechanism of state-delegated activities*



#### Social Support Center

In 2016 the Social Support Center provided services to **406** people on **290** different cases including **144 men and 262 women**.

**158 children – 82 girls and 76 boys** – sought support in the Center. **248** of the people were **adults – 180 women and 68 men** - including **158** parents, **73** adoptive parents, **1** foster parent and **16** close friends and relatives.

In 2016 the professional team of the Center continued its work on all implemented programs. The five-year period during which we have been providing psycho-social services in the Center enabled us to analyze and characterize the main users of the service.

**The users of the Social Support Center share the following common characteristics:**

#### 1. Children with behavioral problems

Our analysis shows that this group includes about one third of the total number of users. These are children with problematic behavior in different ages. Starting with children in pre-school who suffer from problematic behavior such as hyperactivity, attention disorder, aggression, anxiety, separation issues; going through children in primary school – problems with concentration, education difficulties, communication problems; in middle and high school – skipping school, difficult communication with classmates and other similar problems. All of these children are going through various difficulties both inside and outside of their families and their way of coping is expressed through that problematic behavior. Systematic work with these children can prevent these problems from deepening. Practice shows that in order to achieve high efficacy when working with this target group it is extremely important to include the parents in the psycho-social work as well.

#### 2. Children victims of violence and their families

Children witnesses and victims of violence find it difficult to overcome the traumatic consequences of their experience and to go back to their usual way of life. Regardless of whether it is domestic, sexual or systematic emotional violence, the experience significantly

prevents the children's development and causes traumatic consequences which can be overcome only through a systemic psycho-social work in a supporting environment.

Children witnesses of domestic violence are direct victims within the meaning of article 2 of the Protection against Domestic Violence Act. In order to stop the violence, the parent who is the victim of violence must also be supported to be able to change the situation and help their child.

### **3. Children victims and perpetrators of school bullying**

Our practice shows that there is a significant increase in the number of children victims of school bullying. On the one hand, these are cases of children from vulnerable social groups. On the other hand, however, this phenomenon is observed in all kinds of schools. School bullying involves a lot shame and guilt for the children which can often be a motive not to look for help from parents or institutions. This is why the problems deepen and the cases reach the child protection system only when the consequences become aggravated.

Our team provides this group of children with direct individual help in relation to a particular incident as well as with the organization of complete multidisciplinary support to interrupt the bullying in the individual class and school.

### **4. Children at risk of dropping out of school and their parents**

Our experience shows that very often the reason for children to remain out of the education system or to fall behind in school can be found within the family – negligence, parent alienation, traumatic events, separation from an important person, recent changes in the life of the child and the family, etc. This is why we provide active psycho-social work to these children and their parents or people taking care of them especially with the goal of preventing a potential dropping out of the school system. Our main focus when working with adults is re-establishing the authority and the significance of the education system for the children as well as the support to go back to school.

### **5. Families in the society**

This target group is wide and includes families in need of support and development of their parental capabilities and skills as well as mobilizing their internal resources for dealing with difficulties when raising and educating children.

### **6. Parental Alienation Syndrome (PAS)**

This target group includes parents who are in conflict in which the child becomes involved which may lead to signs of parental alienation syndrome (PAS). Cases where there is a deep conflict between the parents and where the children are involved as well, lead to fierce emotional abuse which can result in serious behavioral problems and anti-social behavior. In order to prevent the delinquent behavior in children as well as the serious

consequences for their emotional and mental development, our team provides active psycho-social work. The specialists work with all the institutions engaged in each particular case, conduct organizational interventions and psychological work with the child and each parent separately as well as mediation.

This target group shows a stable tendency to increase the number of clients in terms of the complexity of the interventions.

### **7. Children with disabilities and their families**

There are very large numbers of children who are in conflict with the child protection system. Children with disabilities need a wide spectrum of services and opportunities for integration into the society. Parents of such children are a separate group of clients. Their needs, counseling and advocacy are covered by an additional counseling activity. Our practice shows that this group includes children with generalized disorders in their development from the autistic spectrum, children with different syndromes, children with different level of intellectual disabilities, hyperactive children, visually disabled children, etc.

## **4. Social Services Center for Children and Families – Mother and Baby Unit**

December 1st, 2014 - November 30th, 2017

*Financed by the Bulgarian state budget via Sofia Municipality under the mechanism of state-delegated activities*



In 2016 we worked with **20** mothers – **7** of them were pregnant and **3** were underage, and **25** children.

Six mothers took advantage of the opportunity to work with psychologists of the Social Services Center in individual sessions.

During the same period we concluded the work on **15** more cases including:

- **9** cases on reintegration in a family environment;
- **3** cases on an individual way of life.

Good practices from 2016 include: development and building of social competences of the mothers in relation to their empowering and subsequent reintegration; social integration and adaptation to leading an individual way of life; developing a connection and attachment between the mother and the child; accommodation and shelter in a secure environment and recognition of the pregnant women/ mother and baby's dignity with the idea to develop the relation between the mother and the baby and to develop the social competences of the mother; mediation through socio-legal and medical services – counseling, orientation and information, and visitations.

Each of the accommodated mothers took advantage of social work in the form of family mediation as well as of possibilities to connect to different institutions in Sofia and in the country.

Three of the clients received support for finding a job and accommodation, and the start of an individual life. Nine mothers were successfully integrated and returned to the family environment together with their children. One mother with a criminal record was arrested and is currently serving a 5-year sentence in the Sliven prison and her child was sent to foster care. Two of the clients were accommodated in a "Mother and Baby" Unit outside of Sofia in order to prevent any risk to the mothers and the children. Two of the mothers and their children are still taking advantage of social services in terms of accommodation in the "Mother and Baby" Unit. Seven children were registered in the Information system for the service of childcare facilities, rated and included to attend such facilities. One of the children went through surgery and was supported together with the mother during the visits to the hospital and the post-surgery period.

The clients took advantage of social advocacy in the form of different services such as connections and accompaniment to see a doctor, pediatrician, gynecologist, support for going through medical examinations for clients without health insurances, help with personal documents, subsidies for pregnancy and motherhood, assistance with credit and debit cards, assistance for specialized examinations and tests, escorting to groceries' stores and pharmacies as well as preparation of a week menu and budget. The clients also expressed a desire to develop an informal course to educate them of their civil and labor rights in the country as well as a cooking course for healthy and balanced meals.

In addition, we conducted trainings in relation to the daily routine and to raising children. Pregnant clients we provided with courses such as "Future Parents", "Structure of the Female Reproductive System", "Changes in the Organism during Pregnancy and Birth", "Gymnastics for Pregnant Women", "Nutrition for Pregnant Women and Mothers", "Preparation for Breastfeeding and Hygiene", "Signs for Going into Labor, Behavior of the Mother", etc.

Before the due date, pregnant women receive guidance and counseling for the feeding, the late nights and the care for their children as well as for the peculiarities in the development of the children such as first steps, feeding, etc.

Courses were conducted for the mother who had just give birth on topics such as: “Preparation and Welcoming of the Newborn Child”, “First Cares for The Newborn Child – Breastfeeding, Bathing, Naval Care, Dressing up, Massage, Needs of the Child Depending upon the Age”, etc.

The work with all the clients and especially with the newborns included developing of skills for the recognition and fulfillment of specific needs of children and babies depending upon their age and the peculiarities of growing up in each particular period, changes in feeding, sleep and staying awake.

Clients were given the opportunity to participate in small groups where they could discuss daily worries and difficulties they face while commutating with one another and with other members of the society.

## 5. St. Petka” Crisis Center for Victims of Violence

March 1st, 2015 – March 1st, 2018

*Financed by the Bulgarian state budget via Sofia Municipality under the mechanism of state-delegated activities*



“St. Petka” Crisis Center is the only place in Sofia to accommodate women and children victims of domestic violence. The service is used by people from Sofia and Sofia District as well as the whole country. The permanent around-the-clock mode of work of the Crisis Center allows for timely support which can be lifesaving in certain situations.

During the 17 years since its creation in 1999 the Crisis Center has never stopped working with clients.

The maintenance of the services has always been a challenge for the team as it requires investing a lot of efforts.

The Crisis Center is a well-developed and popular service within the community and it helps and supports people in a state of crisis as a result of violence. The organization of the service effectively facilitates the overcoming of this state and the recovery and reintegration of the people who turned to the Crisis Center for help. The focus of our work is mainly on dealing with the traumatic experience and the subsequent rehabilitation through psychological help in the form of crisis intervention and psycho-social work.



The provision of this service together with the multidisciplinary approach to the problem is very important for guaranteeing the legal defense of the clients and the insurance of their human rights.

The majority of the women who sought support from the Crisis Center were in a difficult position provoked by a recent beating or another act of violence towards them or their children or, in general, by an event in their lives which they are unable to handle. Usually, this is related to the feeling of a necessary change and at the same time confusion, exhaustiveness, fear for their lives, and frustration.

A stable tendency during 2016 was **the increase in the number of complicated social cases**. Most of the women do not have a supporting environment and lack the abilities to use social networks for support.

In general, the statistics is very troublesome. According to data from the National research of “Partners – Bulgaria” Foundation, Center for the Study of Democracy and Academy for Human Rights Norway conducted within the project BG 12 of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism, **around 40% of police officers and around 30% of social workers working in the field of domestic violence state that during the last several years the number of victims of domestic violence has increased despite the rise in the flow of information within the society on the topic of domestic violence.**

Another tendency among the victims of domestic violence who sought support from the Crisis Center during 2016 formed during the risk evaluations and management is the fact that some cases include **severe physical violence sometimes reaching life-threatening extremes** such as fractured ribs, open wounds on the head, murder threats, rapes within the marriage, threats for shooting, suffocation attempts. Children are usually witnesses to the described situations or are subject to emotional and physical abuse.



The fact that domestic violence reaches extreme forms including murder is very disturbing.

Under the current situation of heightened economic crisis in Bulgaria, the Crisis Center usually provides support mainly to women – alone or together with their children – who are in severe emotional and socio-economic state. Thus, the work on such cases requires longer time periods and greater resources including contact with a larger number of relevant institutions.

Our experience shows that this is a good investment which is extremely valuable for the efficacy of the work and the opportunities for emotional recovery of the clients.

In 2016 the Crisis Center continued having a crucial role in providing emergency psychological help for resolving cases of violence and proving a wider access to a wider group of victims, opportunities to have a choice as well as constant care for the women and children, as well as for preventing traumas and abandonment of children.

Thanks to the coordinators and the professional efforts of the whole team of the Crisis Center, we managed to create a real home for the victims of domestic violence and to show them an alternative life without violence.

## 6. Support Center for Victims of Domestic Violence

September 1st, 2015 – February 1st, 2018

*Funded by Medicor Foundation, Liechtenstein*



The project “Support Center for Victims of Domestic Violence” is supported by Medicor Foundation, Liechtenstein. It is a follow-up action to a previous project funded by the foundation for psycho-social support of survivors of violence. Its implementation period is September 2015 – February 2018.

The overall project goal is to provide possibilities for children, adolescents and women victims of domestic violence in Bulgaria to recover from the consequences of the experienced violence and to acquire skills for an independent life, free of violence. This is being achieved through a comprehensive set of social services. A part of the comprehensive approach is increasing the capacity of Animus Association Foundation (AAF) staff and other partners of the community to work on cases of domestic violence.

The project contributes to the achievement of AAF long-term goal to develop a specialized support center for victims of domestic violence in Bulgaria. The project plans to implement the The Minimum Standards for Services for Survivors of Domestic Violence elaborated in a previous project of AAF. The project continues and builds upon the good practice of programs already started and funded by Medicor: crisis intervention and psychotherapeutic counseling, empowerment program, pedagogical program, community work, family consultations program, advocacy program. The capacity of professionals is supported and developed through regular debriefing seminars and clinical supervision on cases.

The target groups of the project are women, adolescents and children victims of domestic violence, couples in a situation of domestic violence and/or complex separation, relatives and members of the extended families of survivors of domestic violence.

The project enables hundreds of victims who are not accommodated in the Crisis Center to receive support for recovering from the effects of domestic violence, as the Crisis Centre "Sv. Petka " is a key element of the integrated Support Center.

## 7. National Helpline for Children 116 111

May 8th, 2013 – May 8th, 2015; May 8th, 2015 – May 8th, 2016

*Funded by the Bulgarian state budget through the Bulgarian State Agency for Child Protection under public procurement procedures*



The National Helpline for Children 116 111 is established by the State Agency for Child Protection under public procurement procedures and has been running under the management of Animus Association Foundation since 2009. The Helpline uses a harmonized European number 116 111. It is free of charge and working non-stop. The main purpose of the Helpline is to provide psychological counseling, information and help to children, but can also be used by adults calling with issues related to children.

In 2016 our counsellors answered a total of **83 568** calls. **10 428** counselling sessions with clients were conducted - almost **80 %** of them were with children and the rest – with concerned adults. The leading issues children face include problems with romantic and family relationships as well as relations with their peers and friends. The Helpline is often used by both children and adults who look for information about children's rights or available services and resources.



One of the most serious problems that our counselors face is violence towards children – in 2016 around 8% (or 831) of the counseling sessions were related to this topic. Such information is usually reported by adults as it is probably harder for children to recognize violence, especially if it is systematic, or if they are too scared to talk about it. Thus, concerned adults often seek help on behalf of the children. In most cases, the people reaching out to the Helpline report cases of physical violence in the family. One of the main functions of the Helpline is to receive signals for children at risk and refer them to the Child Protection services – mostly the Child Protection Units. The Helpline team maintains emergency contacts with these organs even outside working hours. Last year 573 cases were referred to the Child Protections Units mostly related to violence towards children (both physical and psychological).

Early marriages are another serious problem that is often referred to the child protection organs – the number of such cases in 2016 was **37**. Most of them involved an underage girl being married to an adult man. These cases require complex multidisciplinary

field work. Our counselors also identify other risks for children such as negligence, child abandonment, school drop-out, parental conflicts and alienation, etc.

By providing free of charge and non-stop services, the Helpline is the main referral mechanism for cases of children at risk as well as often being the only available resource for psychological support for children from small towns and villages.

## 8. "National Hotline for Support and Guidance of People Who Have Suffered Domestic Violence"

February 13th, 2015 – February 13th, 2017

*Under a contract for providing gratuitous financial help reg. № 93-00-78 / 13.02.2015, Signed by the Ministry of Justice*



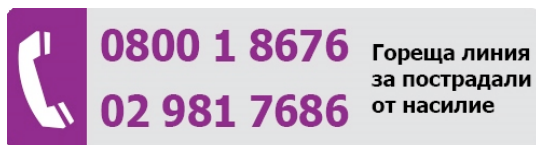
The “**Comprehensive Program for National Guidance of People Who Have Suffered Domestic Violence**” project had the following goals:

- To provide access to assistance for survivors of domestic violence through the Help-line for people who have suffered violence 02 981 76 86;
- To provide guidance to social services throughout the country to assist in cases of domestic violence;

The project provided emotional support to survivors of domestic violence – women, men, and children as well as their relatives throughout the country.

The main activities of the project were:

- Operation of a Help-line for people who have suffered domestic violence 02/981 76 86;
- Consultations of 2800 customers for half a year on the Help-line for people who have suffered domestic violence 02/981 76 86;
- Involvement and training of 60 new consultants;
- Renewed Card Services;
- Anonymous online survey for feedback from customers of the National telephone line



Achieved results for last year

01.01.2016 – 31.12.2016.:

- Within the activities of the project **1000 booklets** were prepared for information and publicity purposes;
- A total of **1768** telephone counselling sessions with survivors of violence were conducted for this period;.
- **122** telephone consultations with a lawyer were conducted in relation to the rights and help provided in the Protection against Domestic Violence Act;.
- **Two campaigns to recruit new consultants** for the Help-Line for people who have suffered violence;

- In March 2016 and in November 2016 **two five-day intensive trainings** were held with **20** new consultant each in order to introduce them to the work of the Help-line for people who have suffered domestic violence;
- A seminar for the team of consultants of the National Helpline was carried out for the annual performance evaluation and planning activities for next year.

## 9. “Joint Efforts in Applying a Multi-level Approach to Combating Domestic Violence”

September 1st, 2015 – August 31st, 2018

*Financed by OAK Foundation*



“Joint Efforts in Applying a Multi-level Approach to Combating Domestic Violence” project aims at ensuring sustainability in combating domestic violence in Bulgaria.

The project has three sub-goals for 2016:

### **1. Ensuring a stable legal framework for the protection of women victims of violence and proving a full set of services to the victims.**

In 2016 the team took part in several working groups and campaigns for the signing and ratification of Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence as well as in events regarding the necessary changes in national legislation in relation to the Convention in April 2016.

The project’s experts took part in a working group for the creation of legislative changes necessary in connection to the ratification of the Convention.

The project coordinator participated in an expert group to the Ministry of Justice which produced a project for the “Strategy for Decreasing Domestic Violence 2017-2020”

### **2. Capacity-building of relevant stakeholders at local level for compliance and implementation of the requirements of the Coordination mechanism and minimal standards.**

We conducted three regional meetings in order to present the Coordination Mechanism for Assistance and Support of Victims of Domestic Violence in Plovdiv, Veliko Tarnovo and Haskovo with the participation of all institutions engaged in supporting victims of domestic violence. A total of **97** experts from those regions took part in the meetings.

We also conducted five trainings for teams of social services providers for working with domestic violence cases under the programs for crisis intervention, psychological support, social work, mobile social work and labor mediation. **89** experts from all over the country took part in the trainings.

### **3. Creation of a stable model of specialized social services for women victims of domestic violence**

In 2016 we persisted in our work on the consultative programs for support to victims of domestic violence. The project activities supported the synchronization of emergency services for victims of domestic violence – National Hot Line 02 981 76 86 and “St. Petka” Crisis Unit together with the consultative programs for women and children victims of domestic violence.

## 10. “Key to a Fear-free School”

May 1st, 2016 - May 1st, 2021

*Funded by the OAK Foundation*



Animus Association Foundation began implementing the “Key to a Fear-free School” project in May 2016. The project is co-funded by OAK Foundation, Switzerland and will run for 5 years. This important initiative is implemented in partnership with 8 NGOs active in the field of prevention of violence in school setting - GERT Foundation, Alternatives Association (main partners working in Vratza and Aitos) and Association Roditeli, National Network for Children, Pulse Foundation, Social Activities and Practices Institute, Center for Inclusive Education, Partners Foundation Bulgaria.

One of the objectives that we set in the project is to encourage the creation of a school environment which fosters healthy communication, non-violent resolution of conflicts and tolerance to differences so that violence, bullying and humiliation among students can be prevented.



The project adopts a comprehensive approach to combating violence and bullying in schools by piloting prevention programs in all classes between 1st and 10th grade in 3 schools in Bulgaria for 5 consecutive school years. The mental health promotion program Zippy’s Friends will be implemented among children in first-grade classes, while children in 2nd to 4th grade will be able to benefit from the mental promotion program Apple’s Friends. The students in 5th to 10th grade will be involved in a healthy communication program which will be developed under the project. This communication program has the draft title „Fear-free Class”.



„Zippy’s Friends” is a mental health promotion program that is acknowledged internationally. The program empowers children to cope with problems and crisis situations in a healthy and constructive way by acquiring skills to deal with specific problems as well as skills to identify and overcome emotions. The program is built around a series of illustrated short stories about a stick insect called Zippy which is reared as a pet, and its friends - a group of young children. In the program, children learn how to apply positive coping skills in dealing with difficulties, which in turn increases their self-esteem and improves their resilience to traumatic events. This also empowers children to help themselves and others, and to accept and value differences in the classroom. The program is divided into 6 modules devoted to **emotions, communication, building and**

**maintaining relationships, solving conflicts, and coping with changes, losses and adversities.**

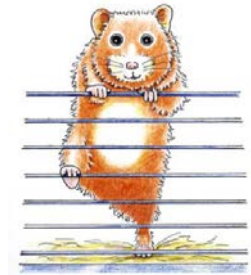
„Zippy’s Friends” has been endorsed by the World Health Organization and Bulgaria is the 28th country that started running the program. The program was launched in the 2016-2017 school year.



Apple’s Friends reinforces the coping strategies and social skills that the children acquired in Zippy’s Friends.

Apple’s Friends is suitable for children who are in 2nd to 4th grade. The project plans the launch of the program in the 2017-2018 school year and its systematic implementation among students in 2nd

– 4th grade for 4 successive school years.



Students in 5th to 10th grade will be involved in a healthy communication program called Fear-free Class. It is expected to pilot among students in 5th - 10th grade in the 2018-2019 school year and to be systematically implemented for 3 successive years.

All three programs of the whole-school prevention model focus on improving the qualifications of the teachers along the direction of acquiring psychological knowledge and skills for addressing both the specific difficulties of individual students and the problems of the class as a group. For school professionals, the effect of the project does not complete with its end as the knowledge, skills and experience that the teachers acquire while implementing the programs remain as an available tool throughout their professional paths.

The whole-school prevention model involves all children from 1st to 10th grade in appropriate prevention programs and thus changes the social climate in schools and creates an environment which fosters tolerance to differences, non-violent communication and solution of conflicts that does not harm other people. The comprehensive model which



actively involves children, teachers and parents is an effective way for dealing with violence at schools and for preventing bullying and humiliation among students so that children can step over the school threshold without fear.

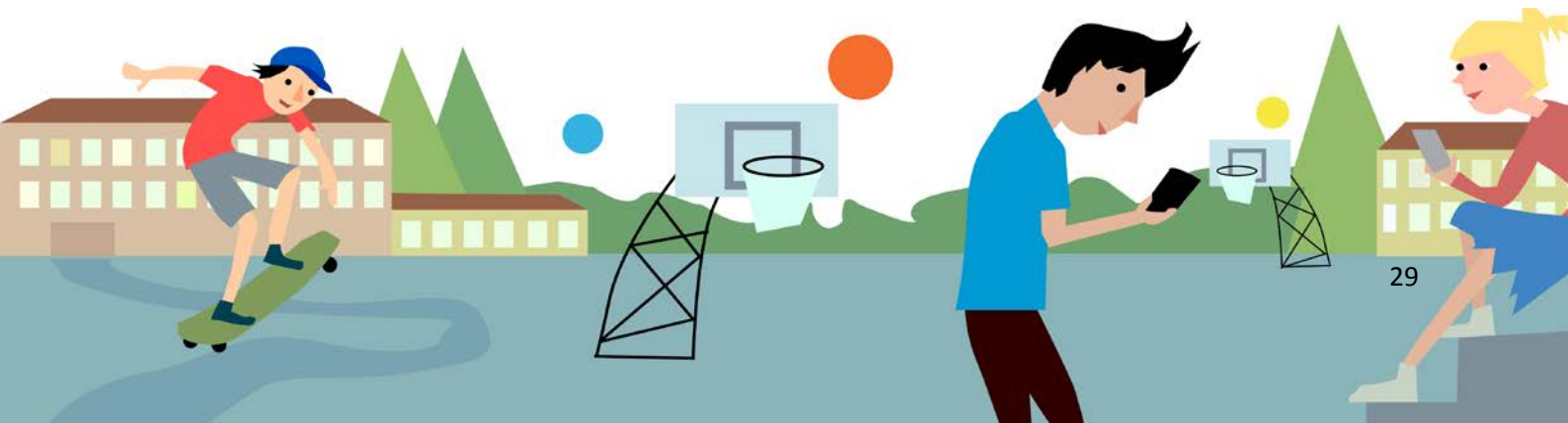
#### **Our school partner:**

- “Nikola Voyvodov” middle school in Vratsa.
- “Hristo Botev” middle school in Aitos.
- 74th middle school “Gotse Delchev” in Sofia

#### **Publications:**

„Zippy’s Friends” - Notes for Teachers with guidelines and methodological tools.

A Parents’ Guide to „Zippy’s Friends”



## 11. "Zippy's Friends" - the Future Citizens of Bulgaria

February 3rd, 2014 – April 3rd, 2016

*Funded under the program to support NGOs in Bulgaria to the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area*



Children must be able to deal with problems and crisis situations in a healthy and constructive way – both in the present and in the future. This is why Animus Association together with our Norwegian partners Voksne for Barn as well as Partnership for Children implemented in Bulgaria an internationally recognized program for the encouragement of emotional stability and social adaptability of children between the ages of 5 and 7.

“Zippy’s Friends” teaches children to have the abilities to solve concrete problems and to understand and control their own emotions as well as those of others. Each lesson of the program shows how to apply different strategies for dealing with difficulties, for increasing their own self-esteem and for improving their resilience towards traumatic experiences. This makes the children capable of helping themselves and others to accept and value the differences between the children in the class.



The project is denoted as good practice by the Open Society.



## 12. “Introducing Participatory and Child-centered Approach for Early Identification and Prevention of Bullying in School Setting in 7 EU Countries”

December 1st, 2014 - November 30th, 2016

*Funded by the DAPHNE III Program of the European Union*



### The children’s perspective on bullying is at the core of our project

Communicating with children, parents, teachers and all other adults concerned with the wellbeing and safety of school children, showed us the necessity for an in-depth look at the problems that children face at school, specifically seen from their point of view. This is why we developed an approach based on the experiences of children to assist teachers and other adults to understand the concerns that children have in relation to violence at school.

We hope that adults will learn to be supportive and respond without reproach to the children. We also hope that teachers and other adults will learn to identify and manage to stop aggression in the classroom at a very early stage.

#### **Project objectives**

The overall project goal is to involve children in preventing bullying and in creating safe school environment in a participatory and empowering way using as a guiding principle the right of children to participate in matters that concern them.

The specific objectives are to create an enabling environment for school children (aged 7-16) from 7 EU countries to share their views on bullying and to engage them in a participatory process of social change in the school setting; to develop a child-centered methodology for building teachers’ capacity to respond timely to bullying in school settings; to enhance community stakeholders’ capacity to intervene in bullying cases; to lobby for a child-centered approach when designing and applying anti-bullying policies and prevention programs.

The project established a successful partnership with seven organisations - Animus Association Foundation (Bulgaria) and the partners Barnardo’s (UK), The City of Gothenburg (Sweden), International Child Development Initiatives (The Netherlands), Linka Detskej Istoty (Slovakia), Save the Children (Romania), and SPI Forschung (Germany).

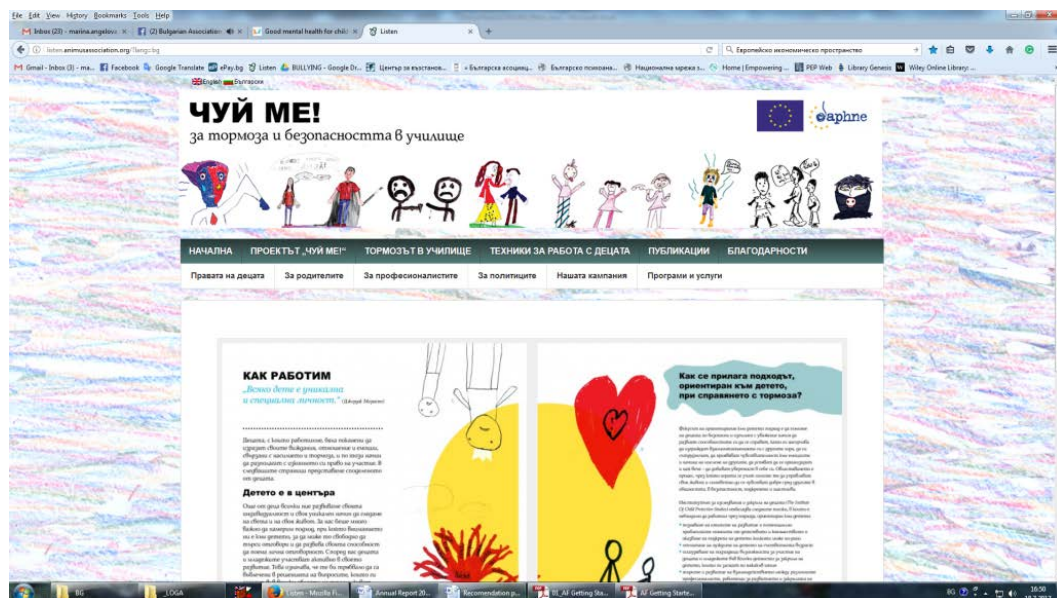
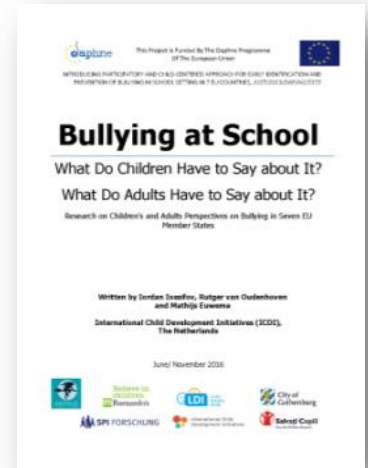
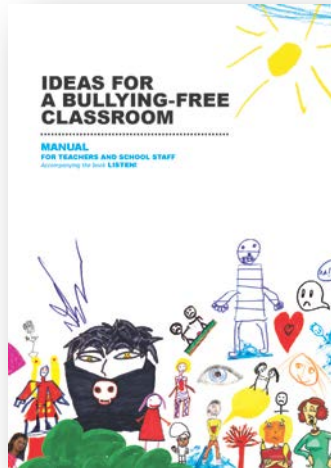
## **Activities**

We started by creating a space for school children from the participating countries to share their views on bullying, violence and safety at school by participating in interactive empowerment workshops, which provided material for the creation of a booklet with children's materials. Based on the points of view and expectations shared by the children, we provided intensive and long-term participatory training to teachers and school staff to increase their capacity to recognise early signs of bullying and to intervene effectively in school settings. Interactive prevention workshops with children together with trained teachers were held. We helped build stakeholders' capacity for taking actions for early identification and prevention of bullying in community settings by providing support to affected children and their parents via counselling programmes. We evaluated anti-bullying policies in the seven EU countries based on the children's perspectives and developed recommendations for their improvement by conducting a research and providing a research summary and a recommendation paper based on the research findings. They were also used as lobbying tools for the lobby activities on local and EU level.

## **The impact**

The main impact is an increased awareness of children's rights and greater understanding of the importance of being active and participating in decision making among the child participants. For the participating teachers and school staff, the long-term project effects cover gaining knowledge on topics related to the issue of school bullying, developing professional skills and capacity to engage children and adolescents in the design of anti-bullying policies and activities. Parents and teacher are now more open to listen to children's opinions and to review their own communication as a result of the sensitisation provided by the booklet. The booklet contains children's points of view and their feedback expressed visually and emotionally. Thanks to the awareness raising and lobby activities carried out under the project children, parents, professionals working with children, and key stakeholders in the seven EU participating countries have access to information and training materials about the prevention of bullying, and other social services and training opportunities.

The main achievement of the project is the successful application of child-centred and child-participatory approaches that were used to obtain authentic and not adult-manipulated messages from children on the topics of bullying and safety at school.



## Facts and figures

Over **514 children** aged 7 - 18 were empowered to work together for a violence-free school climate by **34 empowerment workshops** conducted in **16 schools**.

**582 children** increased their competence for non-violent communication via participation in **34 prevention workshops**.

**504 teachers and school staff** participated in **22 trainings** conducted in five countries and improved their capacity to react in a timely and effective manner in situations of bullying and to collaborate with children and other stakeholders.

**265 teachers** from Bulgaria and Germany took advantage from **22 group supervisions**.

**140 children** (victims/perpetrators) and **190 parents** were supported through community-based interventions.

## Publications

**The booklet 'Listen!' 6 400 printed copies** with materials developed by children from all project partner countries raised the children's interest and empowered them to participate in school activities.

**Manual for Teachers and School Staff** with guidelines and methodological tools for prevention and identification of bullying in school settings - 5,500 printed copies and an electronic version, available for download.

**"Is my Child Involved in Bullying?" –**

**9 500 printed copies of leaflet** describing early signs of bullying;

**Research report: 'Children's and Adults' Perspectives on Bullying'**.

[www.listen.animusassociation.org](http://www.listen.animusassociation.org)

### 13. “WEGO! Women Economic independence & Growth Opportunity”



November 1st, 2015 – November 1st, 2017

*Financed by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme 2014-2020*



“WE GO! Women Economic independence & Growth Opportunity” is a European project with the main objective to strengthen support services for women survivors of domestic violence, with a particular regard to training and advisory services that shelters/women’s centers offer to the victims.



The project aims to:

- 1) carry on a research on the best practices used in Europe for women survivors of domestic violence;
- 2) carry on a research on the economic profiles of women from the target group and develop common methodologies on data collection and a comprehensive analysis framework;
- 3) Implement economic empowerment services for women, including training session;
- 4) Develop common methodological framework for empowerment activities in the form of a toolkit;
- 5) Implement trainings for social workers and professionals who are working with the target group.

In 2016 Animus Association foundation was involved in the following activities regarding WEGO! :

- One meeting between partnering organizations which consisted of a mutual learning event and a steering committee meeting.

- Data collection regarding services for economic empowerment offered to women survivors
- Start of a continuous two-year collection of data regarding the economic profiles of women survivors
- Began the preparation for ToT – training for practitioners aimed at capacity building for work with IPV survivors
- We were inspired by our Swedish partners to adopt an empowering game for women survivors of violence.
- We carried on various communication and promotional activities, including a leaflet with information about the project as well as progress reports.



Project partners:

- SURT and Fundació Mujeres – Spain
- GPF, BCWT and Animus – Bulgaria
- SEGE and WCK – Greece
- Folkuniversitetet Uppsala – Sweden
- 3 antiviolenca centres respectively from North, Central and South

Italy - Italy

## 14. “RISE - Reinforce Inner Strength Effectively to Combat Bullying”

October 15th, 2015 – October 15th, 2017

*Funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Program of the European Union*



The leading organization for this project is Civiform soc. coop. Sociale in partnership with Animus Association Foundation, CJD Berufsbildungswerk Frechen, VTI Brugge Boarding School, IDFormation и ISRE.

This intervention program created to combat school bullying at boarding schools has been established in August 2016. The program targets educators working in boarding schools and provides professional tools for prevention of school bullying. The program introduced techniques which can be used in order to intervene in school bullying situations among students. Animus Association Foundation in partnership with ISRE, Italia trained educators in order to pilot the program in Belgium, Germany and France. The program targets peers in order to train them to work with peers in relation to various topics such as relationships, communication, emotions, and also to introduce techniques by which the target group can combat situations of school bullying.

## 15. “A-Z to SAFETY”

January 1st, 2015 – December 31st, 2016

*Funded by Daphne III Program of the European Union.*



A-Z to Safety firstly addressed the specific problems of women and young girls from mainly Iranian, Kurdish, Turkish, Afghan, Arab, Roma but also from other Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups residing in partner and other EU countries. Our type of beneficiaries are migrants, refugees and asylum seekers who have arrived in EU countries either individually or with their families, due to civil unrest, economic or political difficulties and did so to start a new and safer life. Women and girls we work with are mainly from countries that deny basic human rights and have strong patriarchal roots. These women and young girls continue to be subjected to harmful practices such as forced and/ or early marriages, ‘honour’ based violence and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in host countries. Our beneficiaries include women who have never been allowed to learn skills for economic independence and become especially vulnerable when they also experience violence and abuse.

Several activities took place in 2016:

- Two international partnership meetings with all of the partners – one in Vienna and one in London, for the implementation of the project;
- Advice, information, support, protection and prevention via the National telephone helpline 116-111 was provided to young women and girls victims of violence which can be linked to harmful practices such as early and/or forced marriages, domestic violence as part of honour based violence, etc.;
- Eye-to-eye counselling for women and young girls to address and help the victims fight with anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress caused by the violence linked to the harmful practices;
- Counsellors and advisors supervisions for emotional support and better management of the cases of the victims of harmful practices;
- 3 steering group meetings of professionals to continue training and to discuss good practices for cases of harmful practices such as early and/or forced marriages, domestic violence as a part of honour "based" violence , etc;
- Dissemination of promotional materials (e.g. project flyers) to conferences, events, trainings, non-government organisations linked to harmful practices against girls and young women in order to increase the awareness and competence of professionals working with victims of harmful practices and also to increase the awareness of the Bulgarian community concerning the multifarious range of harmful practices; in

kinder gardens and schools, in district areas where there are many young girls and women at risk of or having suffered from harmful practices in order to recognise the signs of the harmful practices and where to seek help and assistance;

- 4 training workshops for professionals to increase the understanding and knowledge of the harmful practices against young women women and girls.

## 16. ALTERNATIVE FUTURE. Towards the Empowerment of Children Victims of Violence in Alternative Care through a Gender Sensitive and Child-Centered Capacity Building Programme for Professionals

ALTER  
NATIVE  
FUTURE

December 1st, 2015 – November 30th, 2017



*Funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Program of the European Union*



The project duration is two years and Animus Association Foundation is working in partnership with organizations from Spain, Italy, Germany, Austria and Scotland. In 2016 the work was in two major directions: first, assessment of needs and sensitivity to violence of young people in residential care, and second, planning seminars for professionals who are working with such youngsters on the basis of the assessment.

Our team carried out the assessment among focus groups with children and staff from four different residential facilities, run by the Animus Association Foundation, Concordia Foundation and S.O.S. – Children's Villages. The staff members filled in questionnaires as well. The assessment showed that most of the young people have been victims of various forms of violence throughout their lives and thus need specific support and new knowledge on how to develop life skills and autonomy.

In order to raise the capacity of the staff to respond to those needs two seminars for professionals were carried out at the end of the year.

## 17. TRACE: Trafficking as a Criminal Enterprise

May 1st, 2014 – March 31st, 2016

*Funded by the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration*



Trafficking as A Criminal Enterprise (TRACE) aims to support stakeholders in combating and disrupting human trafficking, one of the largest criminal enterprises in the world, by obtaining, assessing and consolidating information, surrounding the act of the trafficking of human beings, both from the perspective of the act of human trafficking, as well as supporting efforts to combat human trafficking.

TRACE adopts a multi-disciplinary approach: legal, criminological, socio-economic, psychological and law enforcement-oriented, in order to provide a full account of the phenomenon, and build upon on-going European and national projects and activities. It focuses on the activities of the perpetrators by developing an understanding of the structure, social relationships, modus operandi, travel routes and technologies associated with different types of human trafficking.

A key component of the TRACE project is the use of different European Member states to explore stakeholders' experience and understanding of the criminal enterprise behind the different types of human trafficking. Within this context, stakeholders refer to those individuals who have directly or indirectly been exposed to human trafficking, including those involved in facilitating human trafficking. Stakeholders also included policy-makers, law enforcement agencies, public authorities, subject experts and representatives of civil society organizations. Within the context of TRACE, partners focused their efforts on three types of human trafficking: trafficking for sexual exploitation, trafficking for forced labor or services and trafficking for criminal activities.

## 18. Rights at Work – Tackling Labor Exploitation in All Economic Sectors in Bulgaria, Poland, and Romania

**RIGHTS  
AT WORK!**

September 1st, 2016 – August 1st, 2018

*Funded by Dutch exterior ministry.*



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the  
Netherlands

Animus Association Foundation is a partner for the implementation of the “Rights at Work” project together with La Strada International (Netherlands), COMO (Netherlands), Fairwork (Netherlands), La Strada Poland and AIDRom (Romania)

The project aims at preventing labor exploitation especially its severe aspects such as human trafficking, and to improve the identification of cases of exploitation in all economic sectors in Bulgaria, Poland and Romania both for the citizens of these countries and for migrants.

The target group includes representatives of syndicates, state authorities, non-profit organizations and experts in the field of human trafficking prevention.

In addition, the project aims at countering labor rights abuses through the increase of awareness for labor exploitation practices and the role of the business as well as at the increase in the capacity of the workers, the syndicates, and the non-profit organizations working in the area of human rights and human trafficking prevention in Bulgaria, Poland, and Romania.

## 19. “MenCare Campaign in Bulgaria”

December 2013 and November 2016

*Financed by Oak Foundation*



“Being a Father” national campaign which is a part of the “MenCare – A Global Fatherhood Campaign” world campaign encourages active participation of men in the life of their children and families aiming at creating a family environment without violence favorable for the full development of the child. Within the framework of this project, the alliance of 10 non-profit organizations develops activities in several headings:

- Information and media campaign aiming at encouraging “positive parenthood”;
- Field work in kinder gardens and schools; creation of teaching models and methods supporting the work of educators and professions encouraging active “male inclusion”
- Creating a network of partners and applying the politics of advocacy for the dissemination of the principles of “Child Support and Protection”

Within the first heading, Animus Association Foundation actively participated in the preparation of a handbook for teachers of first graders called “Daddy goes to school, too...” published in 2016.



Within the second heading, psychologists from Animus Association Foundation conducted in January 2016 a three-day training for social workers from Child Protection Units in Sofia. The topic of the training was “Including the Fathers in the Social Work Related to Child Protection”. The aims of this training included increasing the awareness and sensitivity of social workers when it comes to the importance and the role of the fathers in their children’s developments, inclusion of the male figure in the initial evaluation and planning of the child protection cases as well as working with the fathers in their role of involuntary clients.

As a result of the training the social workers increased their awareness and sensitivity about the importance and the role of fathers and significant male figures in the life of their children as well their decisive role for the children’s development. The participants started including not only the mothers but also the fathers in the initial evaluation and planning of the work on child protection cases.

The project and its activities supported professionals so that they can rely on the resources of the fathers and the significant male figures as part of the family system. The social workers acquired abilities to identify children at risk and to find possible actions in concrete situations as well as to use the resources of the community when dealing with such cases.

## 20. BG06-242 “Let’s express ourselves” Contract № Д 03-102/17.06.2015



June 17th, 2015 – April 30th, 2016

*Funding Program BG06 "Children and youth at risk," the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area 2009-2014*

The main objective of project BG06-242 “Let’s express ourselves” is to establish an effective mechanism in seven kindergartens for socialization and educational integration, training and adaptation to the school activity of children aged 3 to 6 years from vulnerable groups such as those exposed to risk of social exclusion and poverty, children from Roma community and other ethnic groups. The project further aims at enhancing children’s motivation to participate in the educational process. The project objectives have been attained through work with children in multicultural environment, socio-psychological, educational and creative activities involving children and their families, local community authorities and civil society organisations.



В качеството си на партньор Фондация „Асоциация Анимус“ организираше работни групи за обмен на ключови компетенции с учителите от детските градини и осъществяваше консултативна работа с психолог за децата от уязвими групи, както и системна работа с родители.

During the workshops carried out for exchange of key competencies with teachers from the kindergartens, participants presented and exercised various strategies for active involvement of the fathers in their children's lives and in the activities of the kindergartens, as well as methods for assessing and supporting children victims of violence. The professionals had the opportunity to exchange experience with colleagues from other kindergartens, to discuss cases from their practice which they found challenging with the psychologists from “Animus Association” Foundation.



During the visits by psychologists from "Animus Association" Foundation in the kindergartens we conducted psychological counseling with children, their parents and relatives, as well as group sessions with children from respective kindergartens, which were met with great interest and attendance.



## 21. “Improving access to specialized legal aid for victims of human trafficking in Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary”

September 1st, 2016 – April 1st, 2017

*Funded by the Dutch Ministry of Security and Justice.*



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands

The project “Improving access to (specialized) legal aid for victims of human trafficking in Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary” (September 2016 – April 2017) with main applicant the Netherlands Helsinki Committee focuses on the formulation of recommendations and good practices for overcoming the obstacles to access to legal aid for victims of human trafficking.



Three focus groups with judges, prosecutors, lawyers, representatives of law enforcement and non-governmental organisations have been carried out in Bulgaria to outline practical and legal barriers to victims of trafficking’s access to specialized legal aid and to formulate specific proposals and recommendations for eliminating these obstacles.

The main findings and conclusions have been summarized in a national report and action plan that were presented to the final regional round table held in Budapest in March 2017 and sent to the all stakeholders involved.

The projects build on a previous project (2013-2015), in the framework of which Animus Association Foundation and the Netherlands Helsinki Committee trained 20 lawyers from around the country to consult and represent victims of trafficking, made an analysis of Bulgarian legislation compliance with international and European standards and published guides for lawyers and social workers on how to work with victims of trafficking that take part in criminal proceedings.

## **22. “Increasing the effectiveness of Referral, Support, Protection and Reintegration of Victims of THB, through the Practical Application of the Transnational Mechanism”**



January 1st, 2015 – June 31st, 2016

*Funded by Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009 – 2014 within the program BG13  
“Cooperation under the Shengen Agreement and combatting transnational and organized crime including human trafficking and wandaring crime groups”*

The beneficiary of this project is the Directorate General “Combatting Organized Crime” and Animus Association Foundation is a partner. Poland’s Ministry of Interior and National Bureau of the Police and Bulgaria’s National Commission for Combatting Traffick in Human Beings also participate in the project.

The project aims at developing the capabilities of Bulgarian law enforcement officers, social workers, other national authorities, and non-profit organizations for reffering, supporting, protecting, and reintegrating victims as well as improving and increasing the cooperation and the mutual understanding among themselves on a national and international level through the implementation of the Transnational Referral Mechanism for victims. This is based on the idea that in order to effectively combat organized crime and persecute the perpetrators, there needs to be a humane approach and care for the victims. The project is based upon the long experience of Animus and our cooperation with the police on cases of human trafficking and protection of the interests and rights of the victims.

As a partner, Animus Association Foundation supported victims of human trafficking.

We provided them with a safe and secure living environment after they have exited the trafficking situation. From January 2016 until June 2016, we supported 14 victims of human trafficking with nine of them being accommodated in the Crisis Center.

## 23. “Bulgarian-Swiss Joint Efforts for Providing Immediate and Unconditional Protection of Trafficked Persons and Preventing Trafficking in Human Beings”

January 1st, 2015 – June 30th, 2018

The project is funded by Switzerland.



BULGARIAN-SWISS COOPERATION PROGRAMME  
БЪЛГАРО-ШВЕЙЦАРСКА ПРОГРАМА ЗА СЪТРУДНИЧЕСТВО

The project aims at ensuring the rights of human trafficking victims for immediate and unconditional access to services after they have been identified in Switzerland as the country of destination and in Bulgaria as the country of origin. It works for the stable application of the measures for protection of victims of human trafficking in accordance with Swiss and Bulgarian legislation. The project is realized in partnership with the Swiss organization for supporting victims of traffic FIZ and the International Center for Migration Policy Development.

The project is a part of the Bulgarian-Swiss Cooperation Programme for combating traffic in human beings and protection of the victims implemented together with the National Commission for Combating Traffic in Human Beings and the International Organization for Migration Mission in Bulgaria, and is realized with the financial support of the Swiss Confederation through the “Security” thematic fund.

In 2016 several activities of the project were implemented:

1. Bilateral Bulgarian-Swiss guidelines for identification, protection and referral of human trafficking victims between Bulgaria and Switzerland.

We held the second bilateral Bulgarian-Swiss group for the creation of bilateral guidelines for identification, protection and referral of human trafficking victims. It took place in Switzerland where we had the chance to see for ourselves how the Swiss federal and cantonal services combat traffic and support victims. Experts from both sides exchanged experience and strengthened the cooperation in the operative work against human trafficking.



The first “Introductory” chapter of the Guidelines, which in fact comprises our main work principles with the most important being the approach based on the recognition of the victim’s rights and interests, is finalized. In 2016 we started working on Chapter 2 “Bulgarian Victims of Traffic in Switzerland – Support and Rights” and on Chapter 4 “Bulgaria –

Protection, Support and Reintegration of Human Trafficking Victims in Bulgaria” with the different parts on trafficking victims protection in Switzerland (Chapter 2) and in Bulgaria (Chapter 4) being synchronized among the partners.

2. Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the national referral and support to victims of traffic mechanism.

The evaluation is conducted by the International Center for Migration Policy Development – an independent and external organization for Bulgaria with large experience in developing migration policies for the protection of victims of traffic. In 2016 we developed the evaluation criteria for the National Referral Mechanism and we conducted several interviews with a large part of the participants in the Mechanism as well as with several of the victims. The process of preparation and evaluation is fully supported by the National Commission for Combating Traffic in Human Beings which coordinates and is engaged in applying the National Referral Mechanism.

3. “Working abroad might be a trap” prevention campaign.

For a second consecutive year in 2016 we organized an information campaign on the topic of labor exploitation prevention among the human trafficking risk groups in Bulgaria. The slogan on this second campaign was “Working Abroad Might Be a Trap” and it involved different communication and partnering channels.



Three different animated banners were published online in websites such as [www.rabota.bg](http://www.rabota.bg); [www.OLX.bg](http://www.OLX.bg); [www.dama.bg](http://www.dama.bg); [www.gong.bg](http://www.gong.bg); и [www.edna.bg](http://www.edna.bg) which redirected users to the Animus website where they could find a warning about the risk of deceptions, abuses and exploitation. 3500 posters were distributed throughout the country with the help of our partners – Bulgarian Posts, the National Commission for Combating Traffic in Human Beings, Local Commission for Combating Traffic in Human Beings in nine cities, the Agency of Employment through its local structures, the Agency for Social

Assistance through regional directorates for social assistance in the country, Directorate General “Border Police”. Larger billboards situated on Terminal 1 and 2 of Sofia Airport pointed the attention of the passengers to the risks of traffic.



The partners involved in the campaign were „New Moments, New Ideas”, Bulgarian Posts, the National Commission for Combating Traffic in Human Beings and all its local structures, the Agency of Employment, the State Agency for Social Assistance, Directorate General “Border Police”

4. Increasing the capacity of the crisis center and its development into a transit center for victims of traffic trainings and supervisions for social workers.

Within the project, we conducted a specialized training for working with difficult clients and difficult young people. Most of the trafficking victims suffer from different psychiatric problems (mental retardation, personality disorders, etc.) and a large part of them are young people and adolescents. Dr. Anastasia Nakov, a French psychoanalyst also conducted a training sharing her long experience in working with difficult adolescents.

## 24. “United Methodist Women”

April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 – April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017



The team of Animus Association Foundation conducted various trainings for children in order to prevent child trafficking within the framework of “There is Something Rotten” project, funded by United Methodist Women.

Children were trained to be more sensitive about the risk factors which can make them vulnerable. They were empowered to share their knowledge with peers in order to prevent child trafficking situations.

## **25. „Blaga Baba Blaga“- social entrepreneurship**

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In 2016 Animus Association Foundation started advancing a new initiative for the development of social entrepreneurship. Our vision for the realization of this initiative is a snack bar called “Blaga baba Blaga” which combines the idea of a small business with helping people and supporting women above the age of 60 who will be given the opportunity to work for the production and sale of typical homemade snacks.

This is how Animus Association Foundation will close the circle of its activities and will support our mothers and grandmothers.

In order to realize the initiative in 2016 Animus took part in a Bulgarian Center for Not-for-Profit Law program called “Social Entrepreneurship for Non-Profit Organizations” supported by America for Bulgaria Foundation and UniCredit Foundation. The program started in 2016 with a number of trainings and some of them continue in 2017. The non-profit organizations that participated in the program will benefit from a prize of 35 000 lev.

## V. ACTIVITIES OF THE TRAINING CENTER AT ANIMUS ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION

January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 – December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016

In 2016, 463 people took part in 28 training events carried out by our Training Center. Some of the trainings were also conducted throughout the whole country.

The most intensive training activity was aimed at increasing the capacity of the teams of professionals from Community Support Centers, Crisis Centers and social workers for providing help and support to people who are at risk or are victims of violence. A total of 11 trainings including 153 participants were conducted and each of them was divided into modules and built upon the basis of a theoretical framework and interactive work methods. This provided the participants with practical skills for direct work with people.



The work of the professionals in the area was also supported by supervisions of the direct work on cases. Nine individual and group supervisions were carried out which were beneficial to colleagues from two Community Support Centers and Residential Care Centers in the country. The supervisions were requested and financed by these services themselves which is a token of appreciation to the professionalism of the team of supervisors and trainers of the Training Center.

Three thematic trainings with 92 teachers from schools in Sofia were conducted in 2016 on the following topic: “Recognizing and Combating School Bullying”.

Six kinder gardens and 56 participants benefited from the trainings for creating and implementing models for support of active fatherhood.

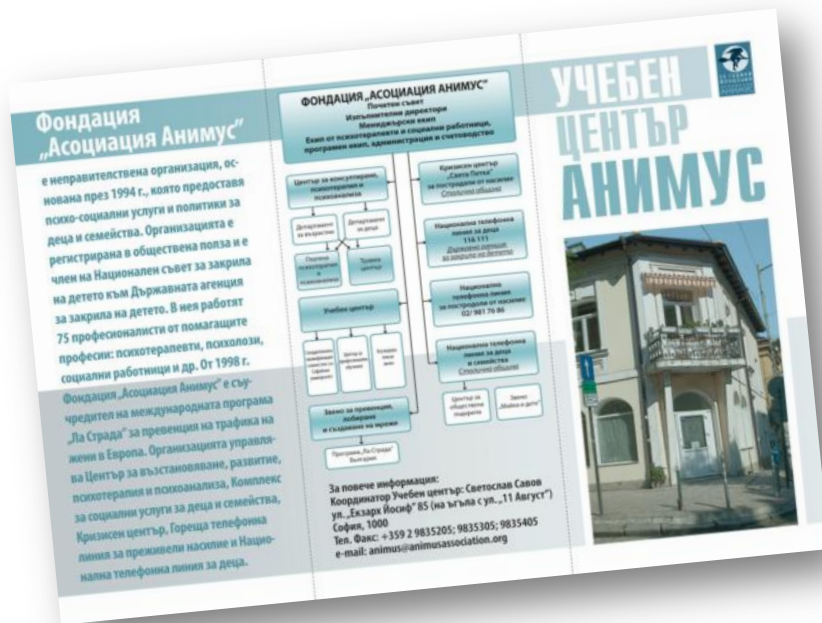
Two trainings with a total of 40 volunteers wishing to work on the National Help Line for survivors of violence within Animus Association Foundation were also conducted.

Traditionally, there were activities related to expanding the knowledge and skills of the team of therapists and consultants working at Animus Association Foundation for providing psychotherapeutic and psycho-social help to clients of different programs. 356 group supervisions for Animus’ teams were held last year which included specialists from the Counseling Center, the Social Services Centre for Children and Families, the “St. Petka” Crisis Center, the National Help-line for Children 116 111, and the National Helpline for Victims of Violence. Within the framework of these regular supervisions, the teams discussed clinical materials from the therapeutic work with children, parents, and families.

The Training Center provides professional education in the field of social services associates and social work with children and families at risk with a license №200712489

from 2007 issued on the basis of the State educational requirements.

The Training Center continued its work with students from different universities in the country by providing clinical basis for internships to students based on a contract with Sofia University – Faculty of Pedagogy and Faculty of Preschool and Primary School Education. A total of six students did their compulsory internships and practice at the



“St. Petka” Crisis Center and the “Mother and Baby” Unit.

### Feedback of the clients of the Training Center









*“I gained a lot of new knowledge and managed to systematized old knowledge in an accessible way with the opportunity to gain clarity on cases and past experience as well as valuable guidance on difficult current cases”*

*“I liked to combination between lectures, presentations and real cases from the practice of an experienced professional.”*

*„I managed to take in a lot of new things, to learn about concrete steps in the work with cases of violence, the legal framework, etc.”*

## VI. DONORS

In 2016 Animus Association Foundation was supported through donations by different corporate and individual donors.

|   |  |
|---|--|
|    | <p>Telus International supported the “ Introducing Participatory and Child-Centered Approach for Early Identification and Prevention of Bullying in School” project JUST/2013/DAP/AG/5372, <b>for the printing of the “Listen!” Booklet – What children told us about bullying and safety in schools.</b></p>  |
|    | <p>Employers of Abbvie Pharmaceuticals supported the Animus Association Foundation’s emergency programs by providing vouchers for the needs of the clients. They supported a total of 37 women with their donation.</p>  |
|    | <p>Employers of Nielsen Bulgaria supported the “St. Petka” Crisis Center for victims of violence and “Mother and Baby” Unit as a part of the Social Services Centre for Children and Families through a donation in kind. They purchased items for the clients’ basic needs and gave them to the women and children accommodated there as gifts.</p> |
|    | <p>Henkel Bulgaria supported the clients of “St. Petka” Crisis Unit and the Social Services Centre for Children and Families with cosmetics and other sanitary materials.</p>  |
|  <p>Германия в България</p>  | <p>Germany’s First Lady Mrs. Daniela Schadt visited Animus Association Foundation and made a financial donation for the services of the Foundation.</p>  |
|    | <p>On March 8, 2016 The Young Women Empowerment Club of the American College of Sofia supported women victims of domestic violence by selling flowers. All the money was donated to “St. Petka” Crisis Center for victims of violence.</p>   |
|   | <p>Traditionally, in 2016 91 German Language School "Prof. Konstantin Gylybov" Fasching conducted a charity event in support of women and children victims of violence. The junior organizing team donated the money to the emergency programs of Animus Association Foundation.</p>   |
| <p>DGGRUOP.BG</p>   | <p>Food supplement distribution company of Vitabiotics Great Britain donated to Animus Association Foundation 100 multivitamin syrups for babies and children.</p>   |

## **VII. STATISTICS OF ANIMUS ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION FOR 2016**

### **Distribution of clients of Animus Association Foundation**

Counselling, psychotherapeutic and prevention programs – 1 106 clients

Crisis Center for Survivors of Violence - 55 accommodated clients

National Helpline for Children 116 111 - 10 428 consultations

Hotline for Survivors of Violence - 1 768 clients

Social Services Center for Children and Families - 406 clients

Mother and Baby Unit - 45 clients

Training Center - 1 067 participants in training events

**Total number of clients for 2016 – 14 271**

# Distribution of clients by type of problem and share of the services and programs

## 1. STATISTIC OF THE HOTLINE FOR SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

TOTAL – 1768 consultations

Chart 1: Distribution of clients by type of problem

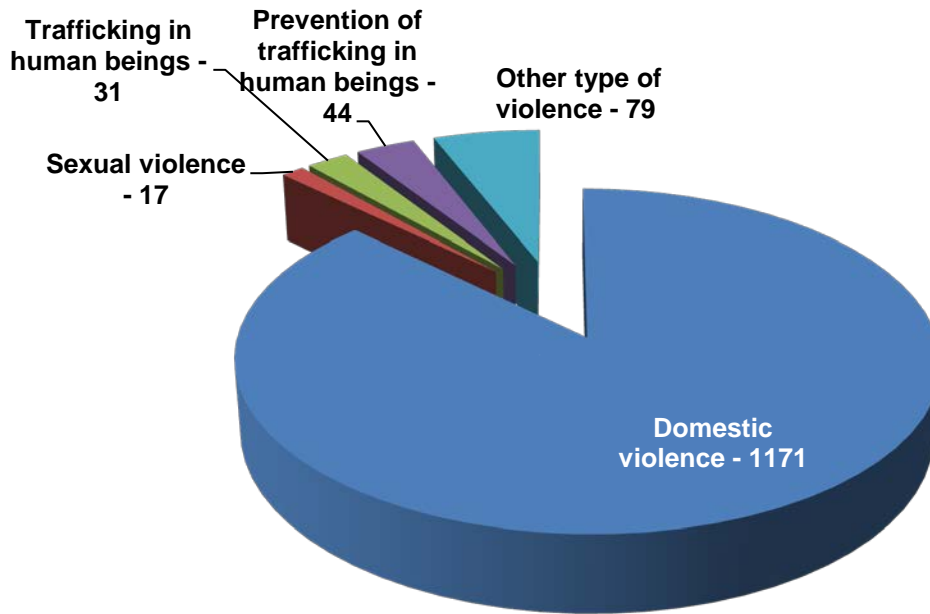
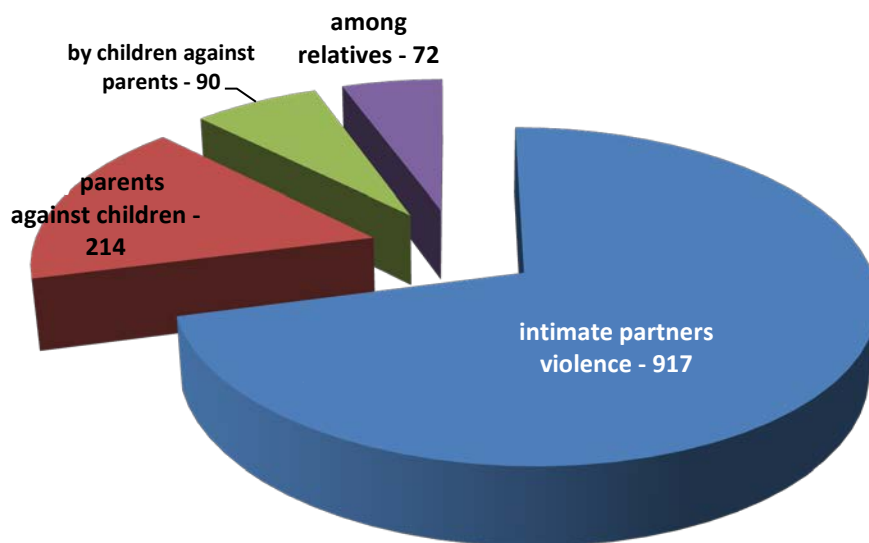
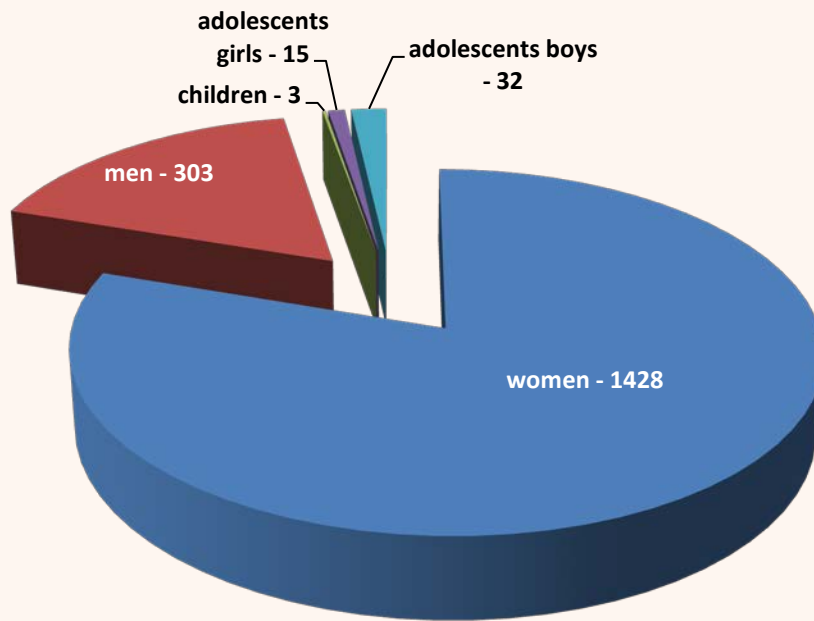


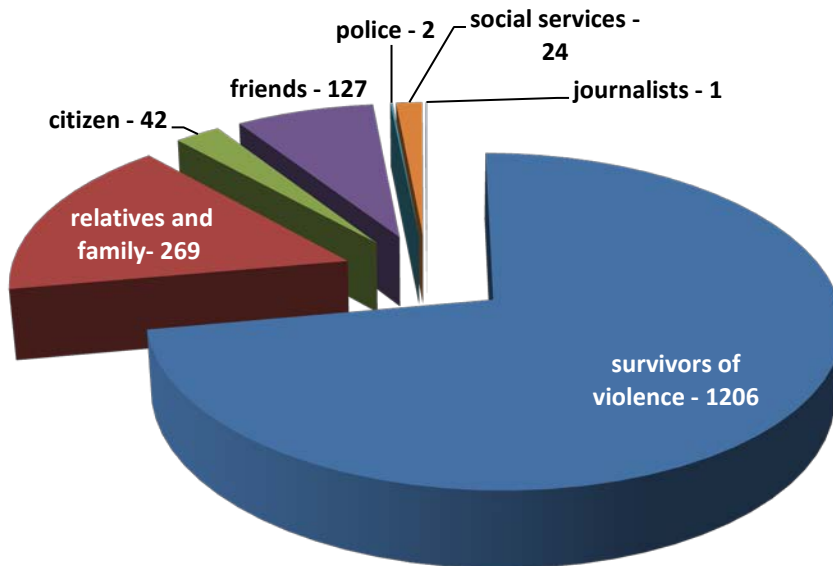
Chart 2: Distribution of clients by type of domestic violence



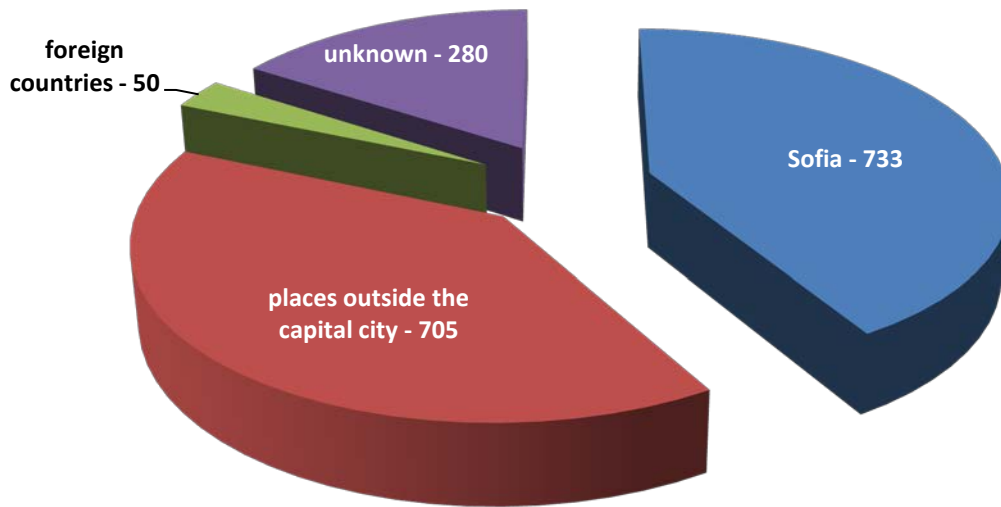
**Chart 3: Distribution of clients by gender**



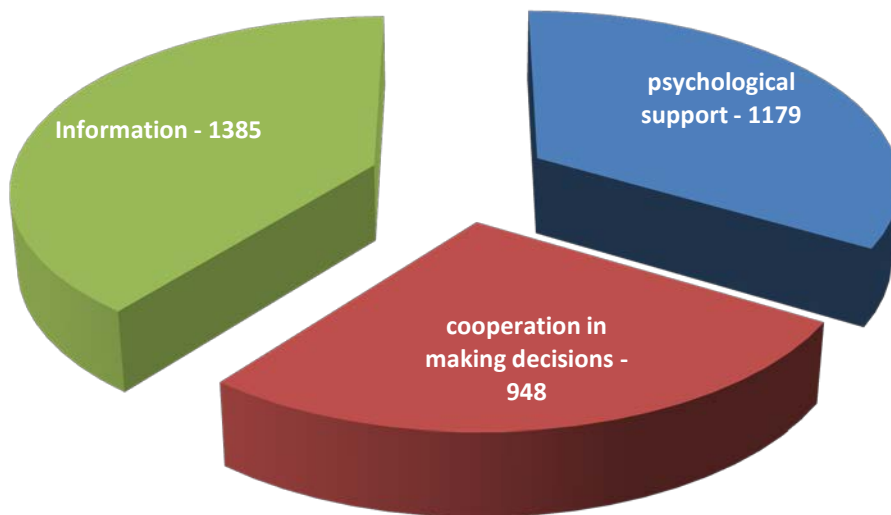
**Chart 4: Share of consultations by the type of caller**



**Chart 5: Distribution of callers by the place of residence**



**Chart 6: Distribution of clients by the type of support provided**



2. STATISTICS OF THE NATIONAL HELPLINE FOR CHILDREN 116 111

TOTAL – 10 428 consultations

Chart 7: Share of consultations by type of problem

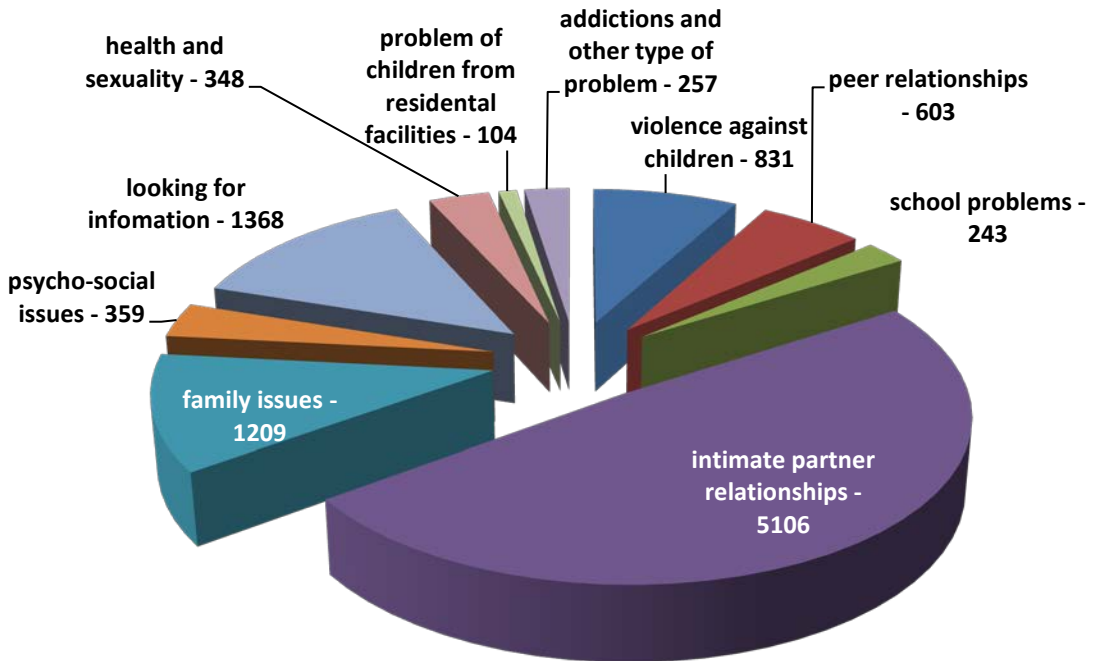
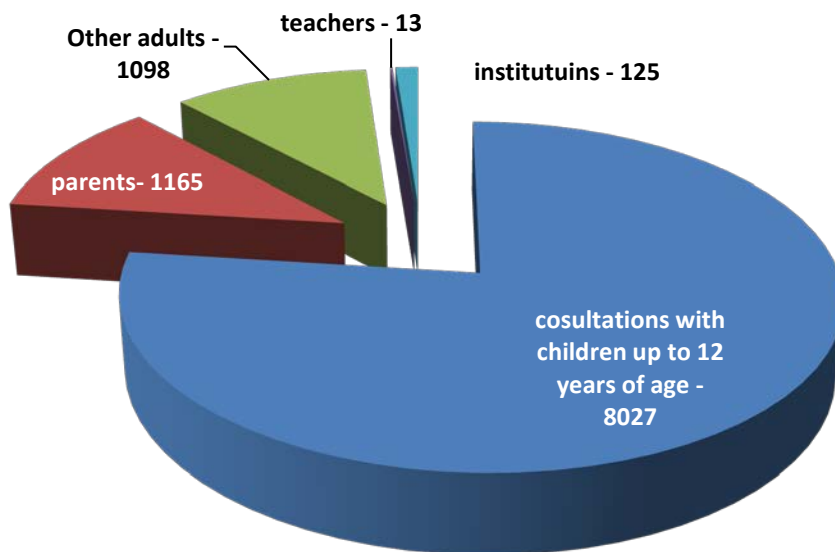
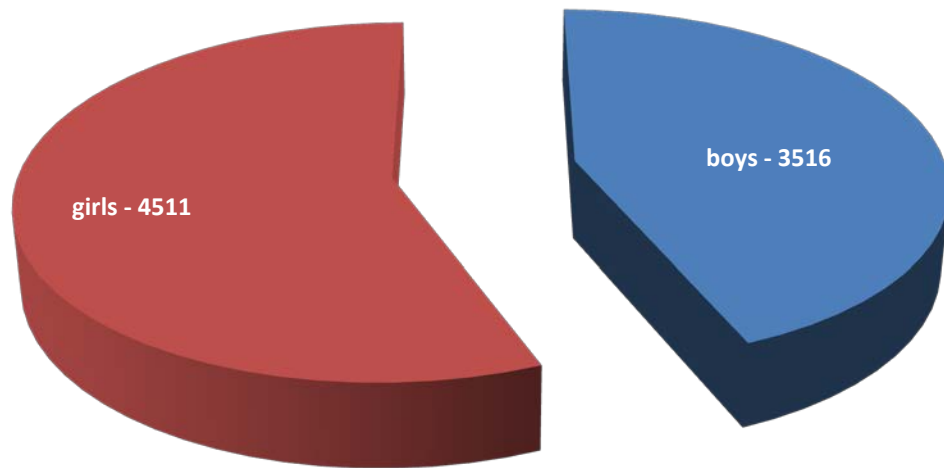


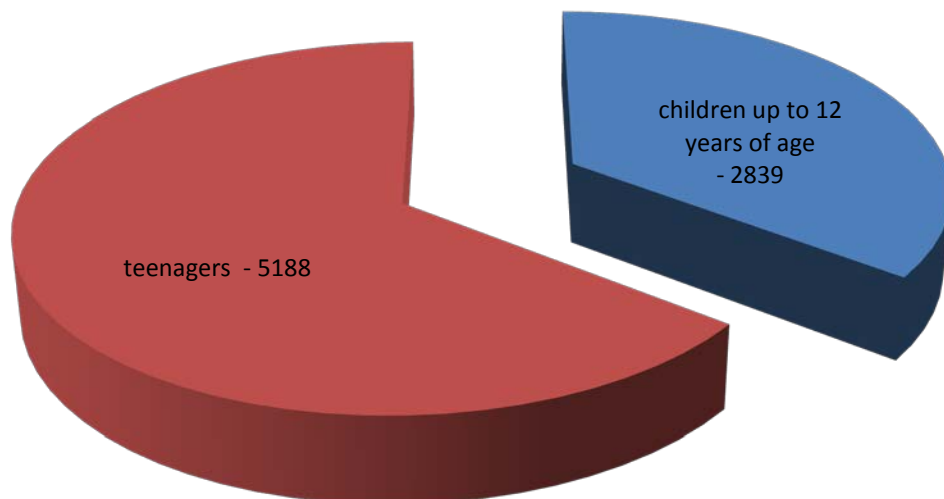
Chart 8. Share of consultations by type of caller



**Chart 9. Distribution of under-age callers by gender**



**Chart 9a. Percentage of counselling session of children under the age of 12 and teenagers**



3. STATISTICS OF THE CENTER FOR COUNSELLING, PSYCHOTHERAPY, PSYCHOANALYSIS, TRAUMA CENTER AND "PROTECTION ZONE"

TOTAL – 1106 clients

Chart 10: Distribution of clients of Animus Association Foundation by type of program

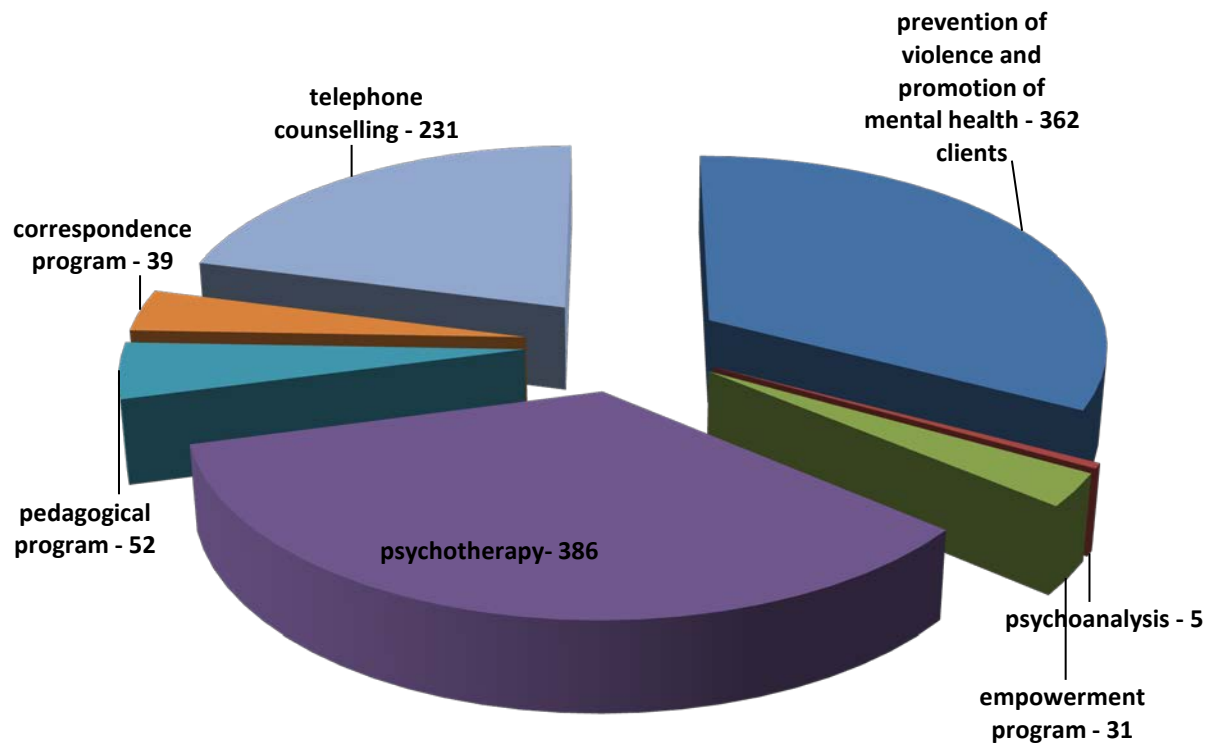


Chart 11: Distribution of clients of the program for psychotherapy, psychoanalysis and empowerment by type of problem

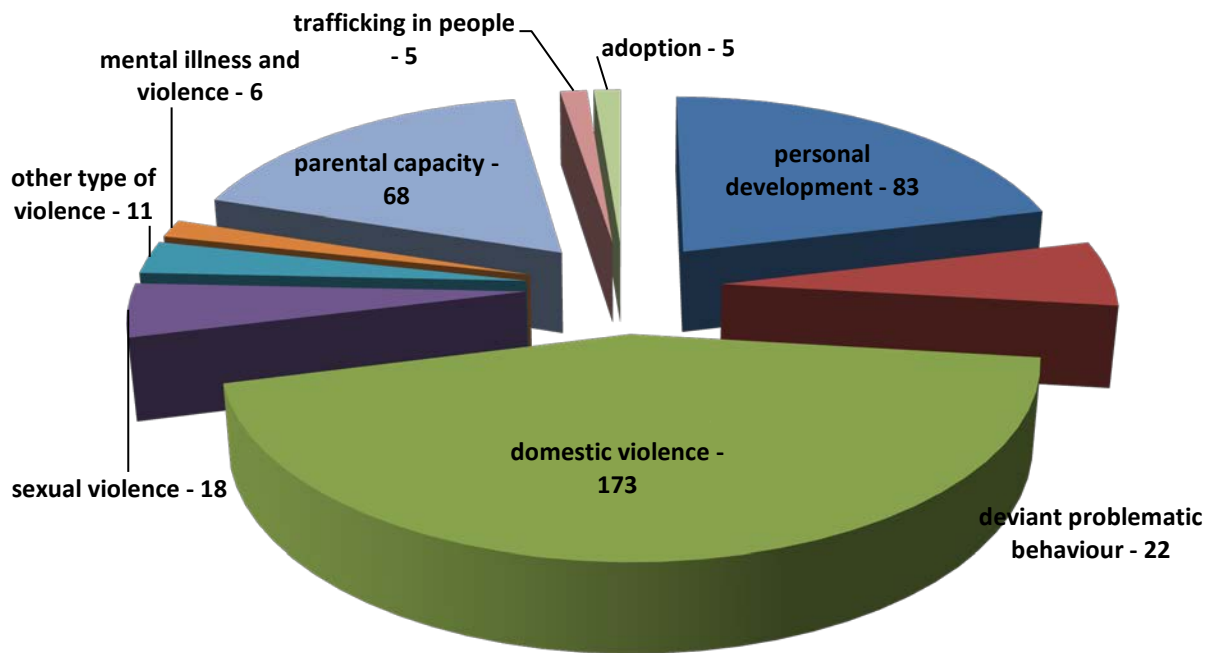
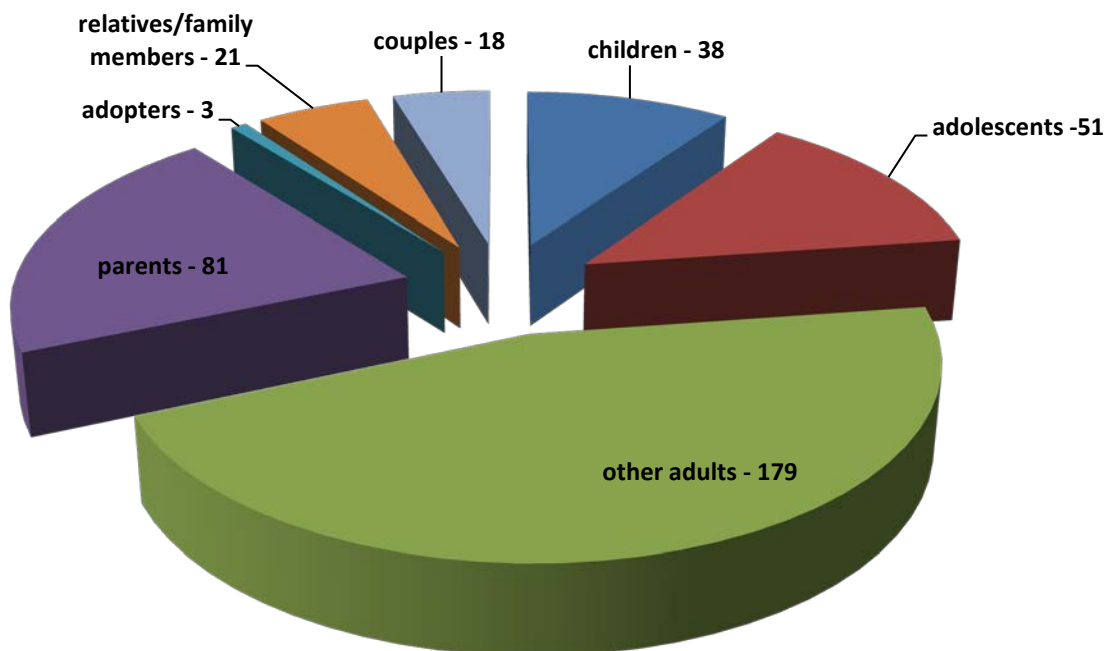
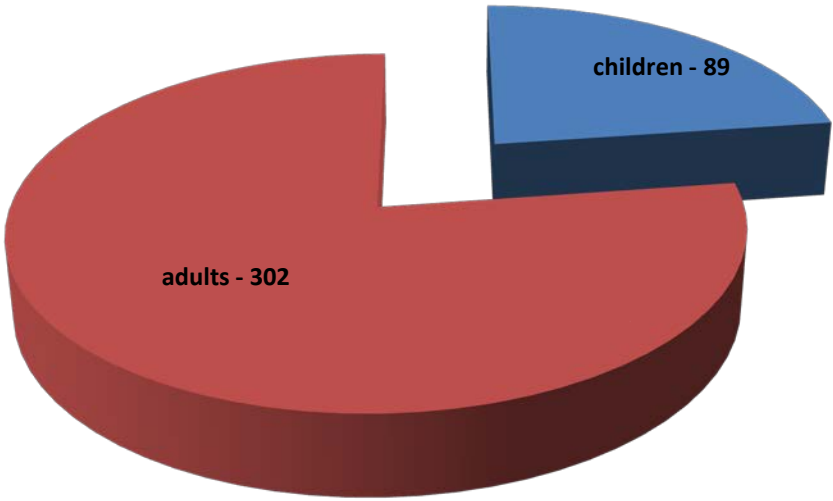


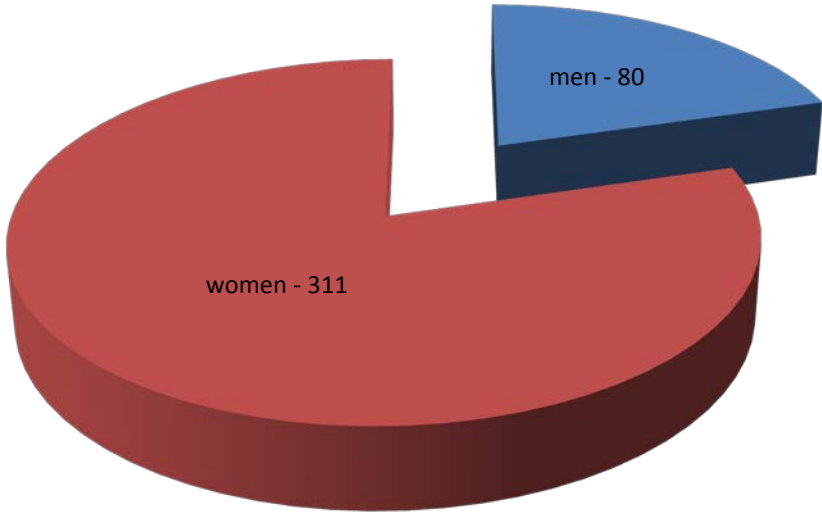
Chart 12: Distribution of clients of the program for psychotherapy, psychoanalysis and empowerment



**Chart 13: Distribution of clients of the program for psychotherapy, psychoanalysis and empowerment by age**



**Chart 14: Distribution of clients of the program for psychotherapy, psychoanalysis and empowerment by gender**



4. STATISTICS OF THE SOCIAL SERVICES CENTER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

TOTAL – 406 clients

Chart 15: Distribution of clients

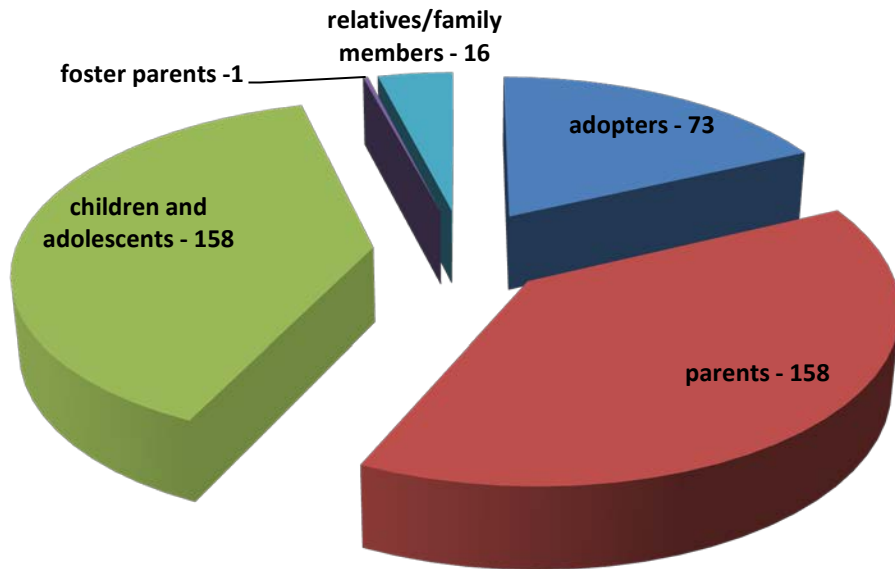


Chart 16: Distribution of clients by type of problem

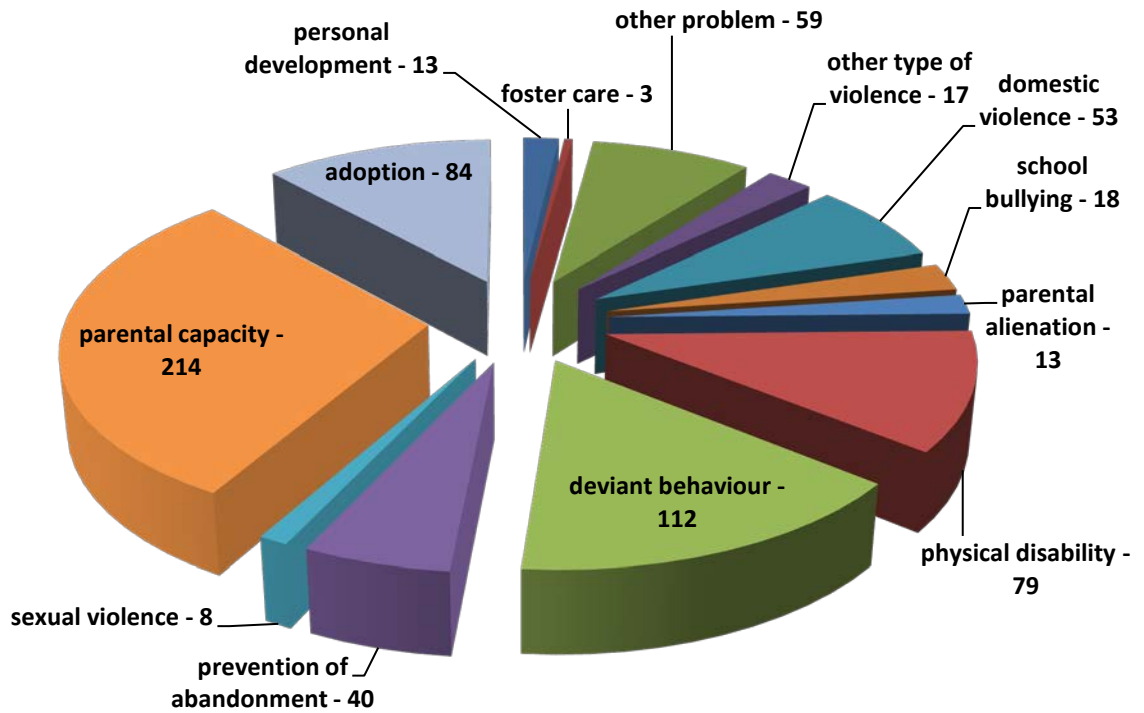


Chart 17: Distribution of clients by type of program

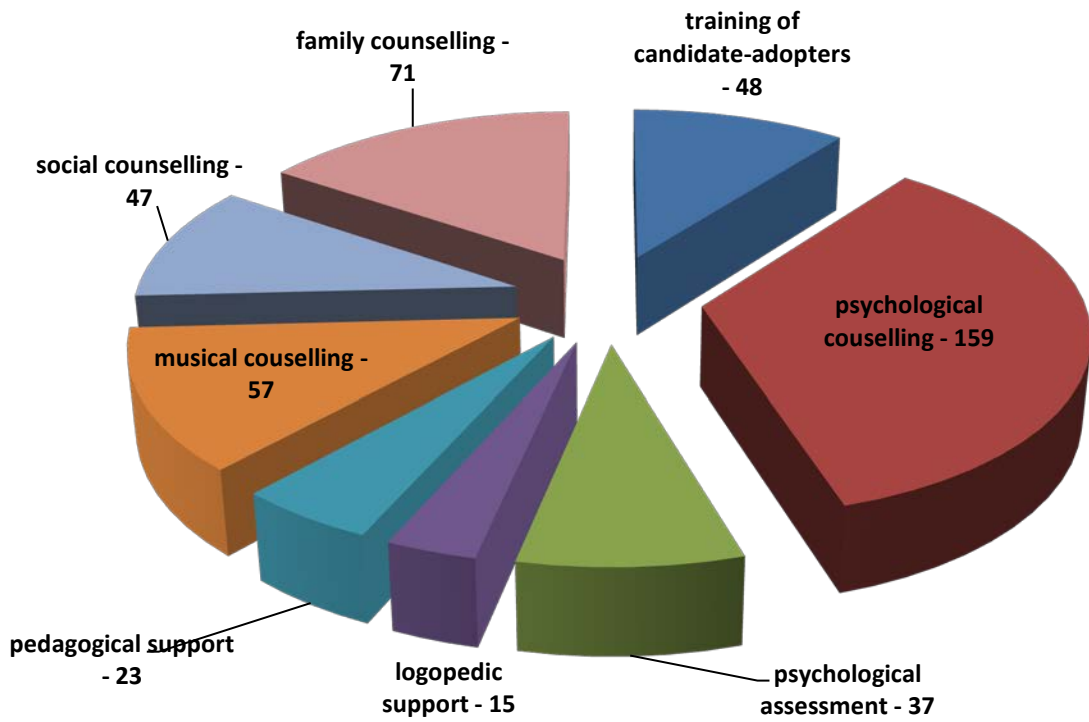
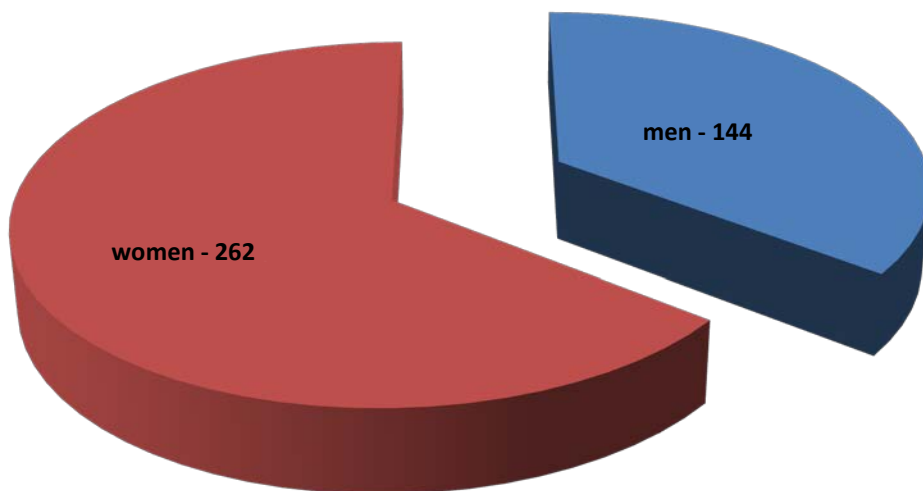
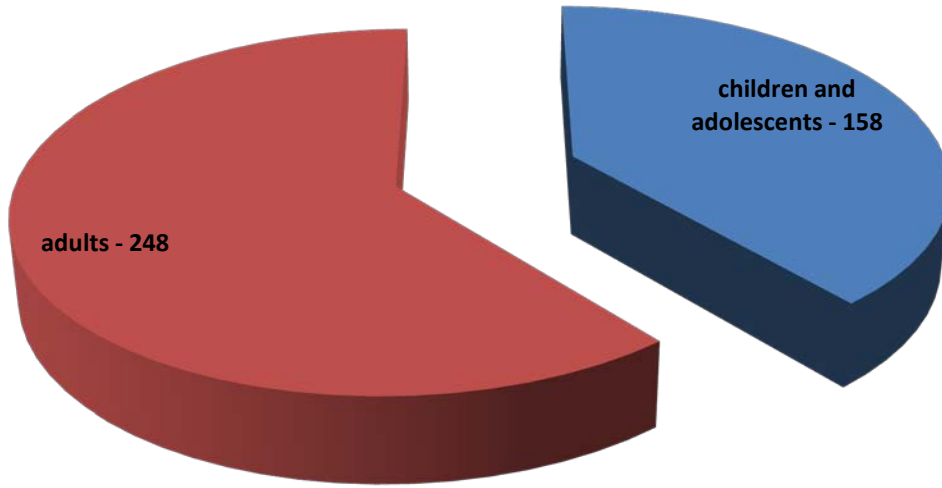


Chart 18: Distribution of clients by gender



**Chart 19: Distribution of clients by age**



5. STATISTICS OF THE MOTHER AND BABY UNIT AT THE SOCIAL SERVICES CENTER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

TOTAL – 45 clients

Chart 20: Distribution of clients by type of problem

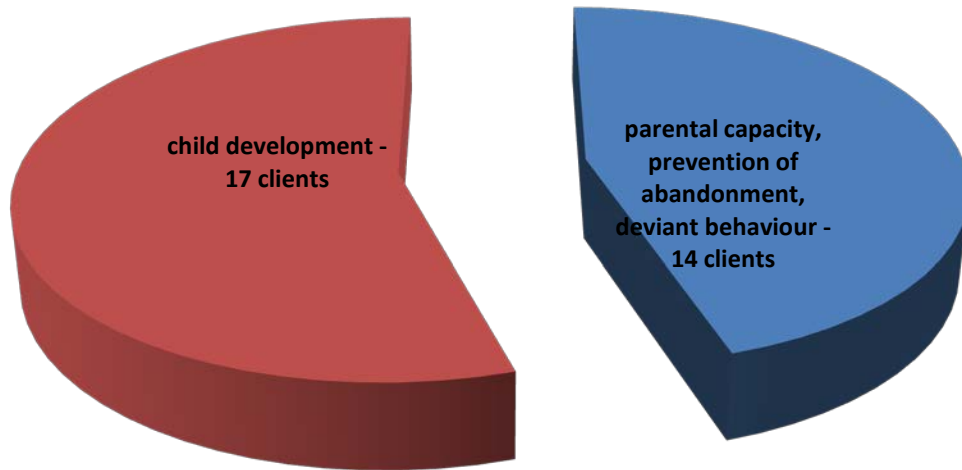


Chart 21: Distribution of clients by type of program

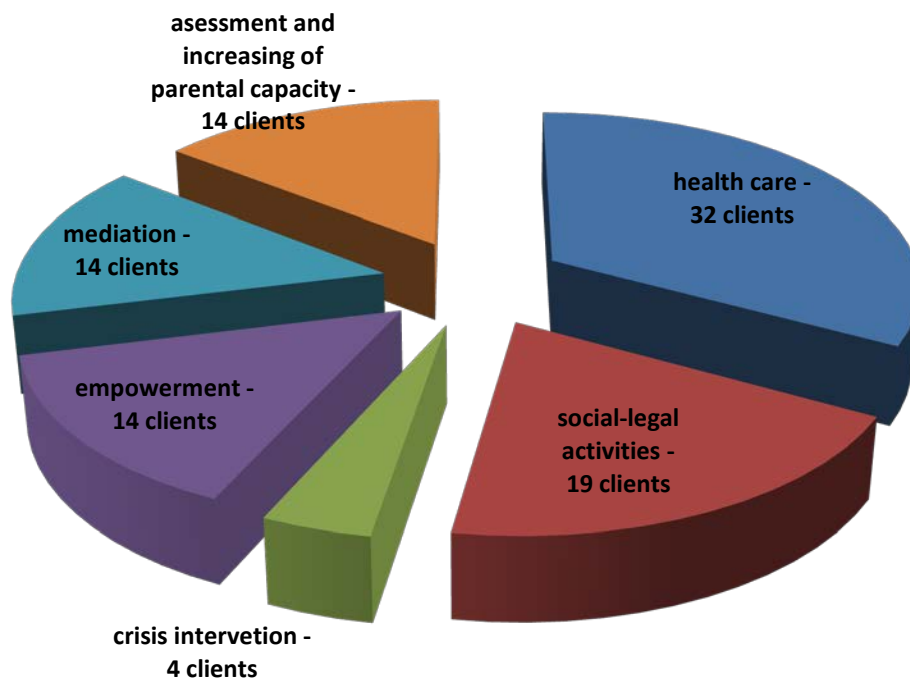


Chart 22: Distribution of clients by age

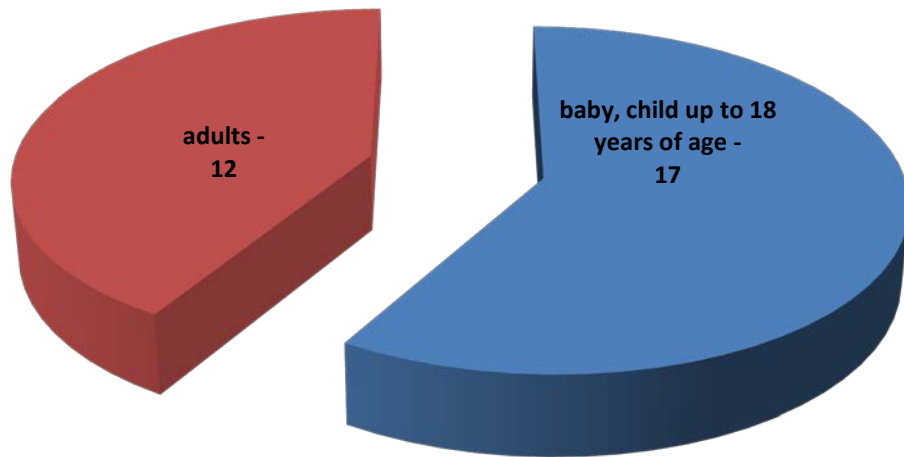
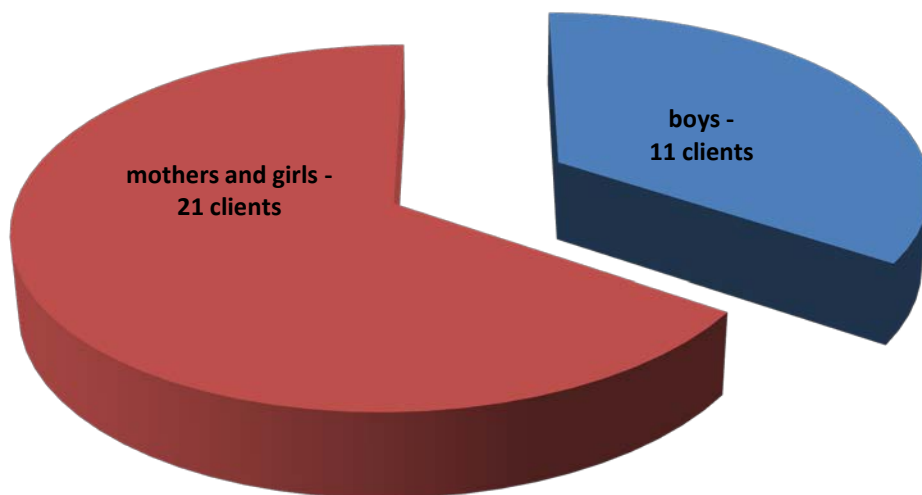


Chart 23: Distribution of clients by gender



6. STATISTICS OF THE CRISIS CENTER FOR SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

TOTAL – 55 accomodated clients

Chart 24: Distribution of clients by type of problem

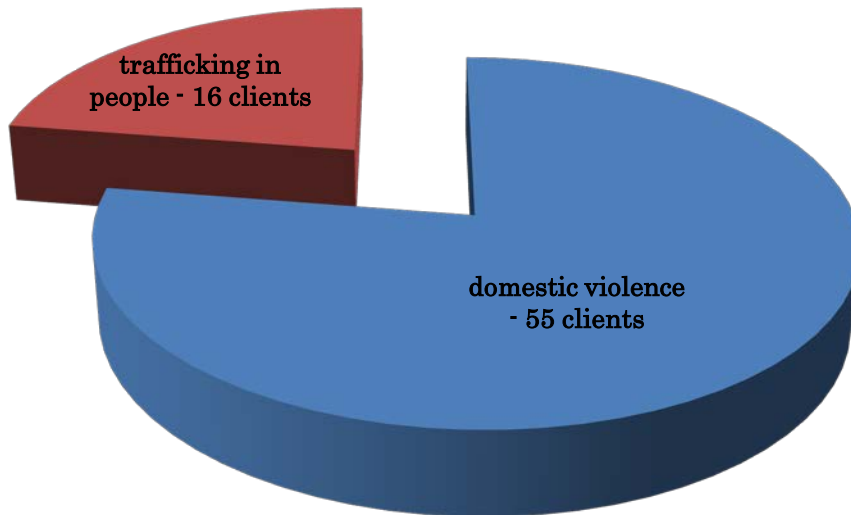
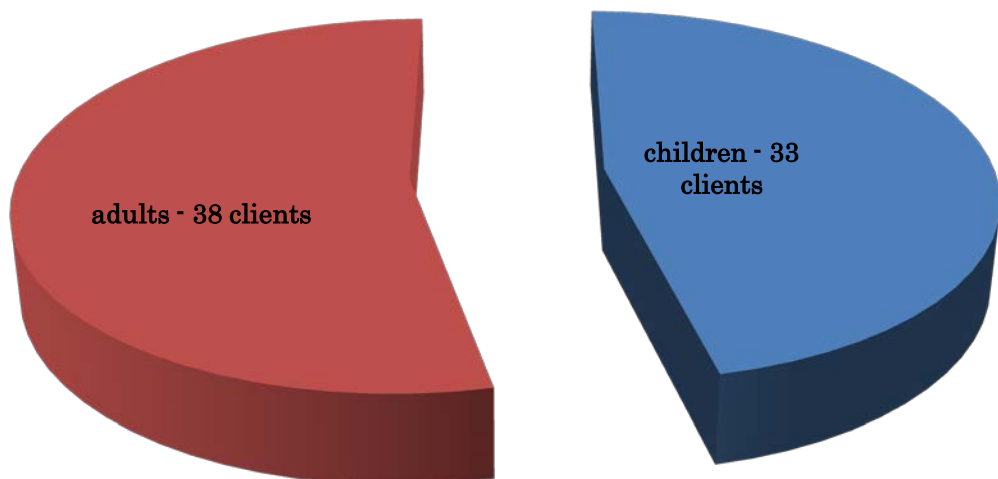
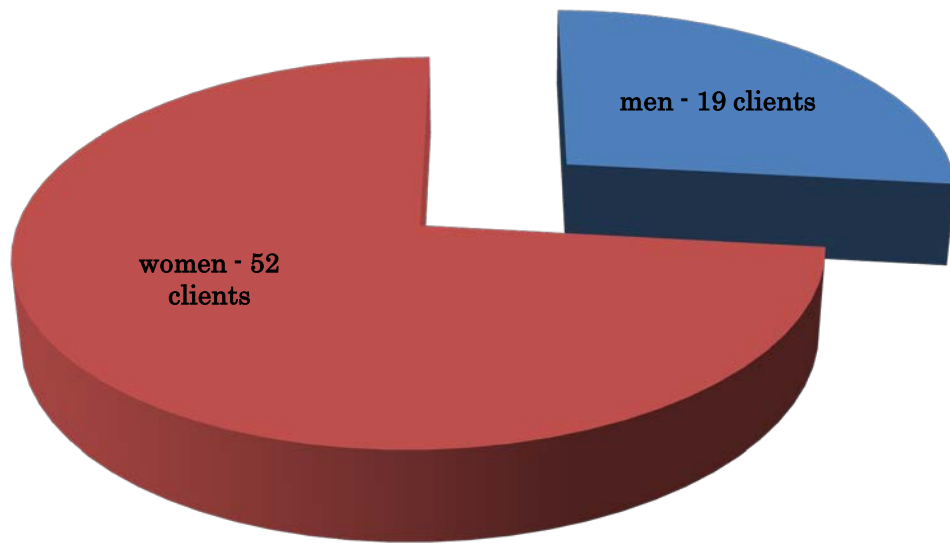


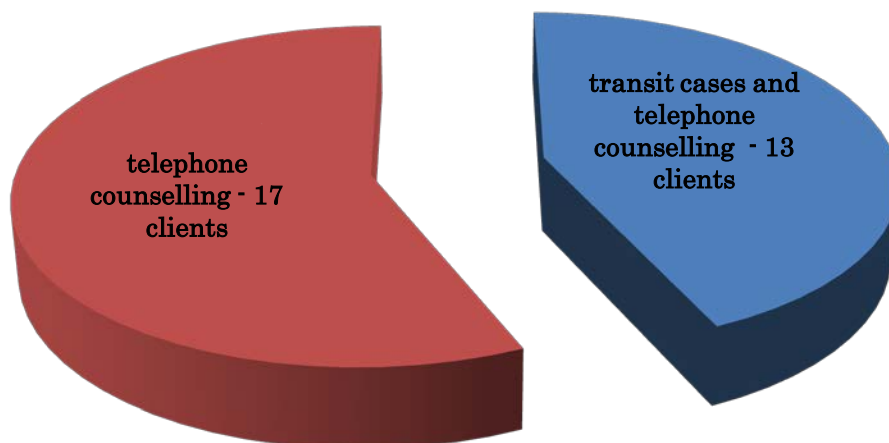
Chart 25: Distribution of clients by age



**Chart 26: Distribution of clients by gender**



**Chart: 27 Transit cases and telephone counselling related with trafficking in people**



## 7. STATISTICS OF THE TRAINING CENTER OF ANIMUS ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION

TOTAL – 28 training events with 463 participants

Chart 28: Professional help and methodological support provided by Animus Association Foundation

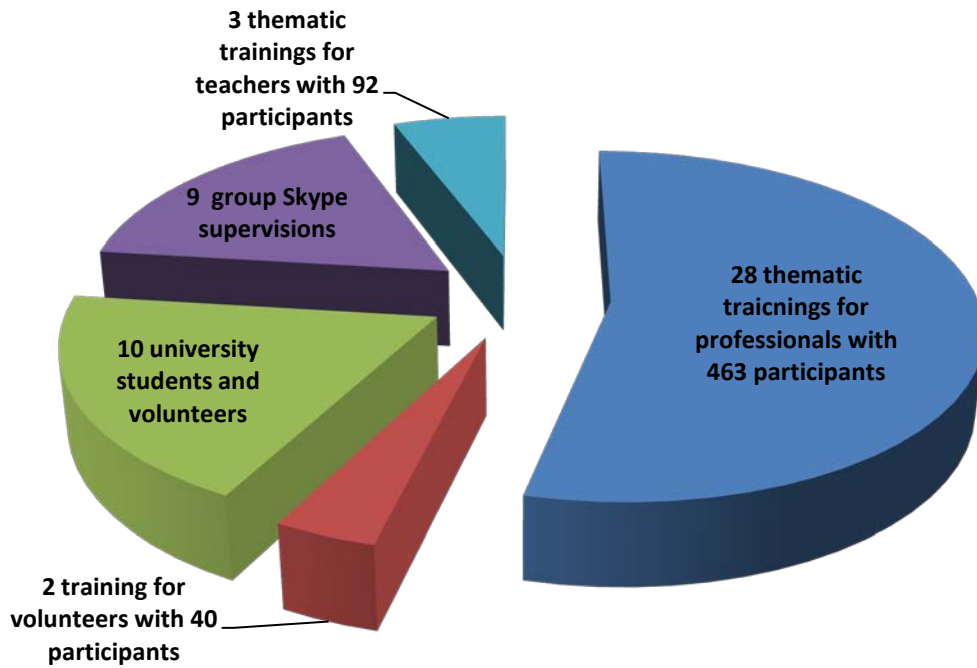


Chart 29: Professional development, methodology and standards

