



PRESS RELEASE

International Day for the elimination of violence against women: according to the WE GO! Project, it's necessary to invest in women's economic empowerment

Public conference - Brussels 30 November 2017
from 9:00 until 11:00
Room ASP 3G2 - European Parliament
Altiero Spinelli Building

It's not enough to be well educated or employed to become independent from a violent partner: according to the report "**A way out of violence**" it's important to invest in women's economic empowerment in order to help women to go out from a violent relationship. This report is one of the activities of the European Project **WE GO (Women Economic-independence & Growth Opportunity)** and it will be presented at the **European Parliament in Brussels, on 30th November** during the **final conference** of the project.

WE GO! (Women Economic-independence & Growth Opportunity) is a two-year project co-financed by the European Union focusing on this specific issue affecting women undergoing intimate partner violence (IPV): the lack of economic independence to be able to leave a violent partner and ensure sustainable alternatives for themselves and (if they have) their children.

The report contains the results of a **data collection** involving the antiviolence centers (AVCs) partners in the project and centers who contributed to the project implementation. The centers are based in four EU countries: 1 in Bulgaria, 6 in Greece, 3 in Italy and 2 in Spain. The purpose of the data collection was to contribute to build knowledge on the specific issue of the economic needs of women survivors of IPV, focusing specifically on their socio-economic characteristics. A total of **552 profiles of women** assisted by AVCs centers were included in the project database.

The majority of the women assisted by AVCs are **between 30 and 39 years old (32,5%)** and **between 40 and 49 (29,2%)**. 21,8% are aged between 18 and 29 and 16,5% are 50 years old or more. **The majority of the women are well educated: 38,8% of the women have a upper secondary education and 22,7% have tertiary education.** 29,6% have primary or lower secondary education and only 9% have less than primary education.

In the **majority of cases the perpetrator of violence is the husband/partner (41,7%) or the ex husband/ex partner (48,7%)**. The **experience of violence is long**: 23,7% of the women have experienced violence for a period included between 5 to 10 years and 26,5% for more than 10 years. If the perpetrator is the husband/partner, the violence lasts longer: in this case, 27% of women suffer violence for a period included between 5 and 10 years while 32,7% for more than 10 years.

The report underlines how economic independence is a crucial element: 82,5% of the women have low level of economic independence against **17,5%** who have a high level of economic independence. **40,9% are employed while 59,1% are unemployed. Only 13,3%** of the women live in house that is their exclusive property and **14,8%** share the property with their husband or partner. **73,7%** of women **have dependent children** and most of them have children aged up to 13 years old. **53% of women were subjected to one or**



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more forms of economic abuse¹ by a partner/husband or former partner/husband. Of these, **22,6%** declare they don't have access to the household income, **19,1%** cannot use her own money freely while **17,6%** of women declare that their expenditures are monitored. **16,9%** don't know the household income and **10,8%** of women are not allowed to work/find a job.

Organizations and AVCs involved in WE GO! Project ask to national and European Institutions to **support Antiviolence Centers in their activities aimed to give an adequate response to women who decide to say "no!" to violence**; it's necessary to **include in national statistics on violence against women data collection and analysis on the socio-economic profile of women undergoing gender-based violence**, including IPV. Organizations and AVCs ask to the Institutions to **support the entrance in the world of work of the women who suffered violence**, with professional and education programs and job placement activities dedicated. Moreover, policies should include both **shelters** and **long-term temporary safe housing solutions** among the services that need to be provided and ensure that children of survivors of IPV can access **quality childcare services**, so their mothers can engage in income generating activities and have time to dedicate to their personal and professional development.

The WE GO! Project: <http://www.wegoproject.eu/>

¹ Data collected for 461 women on 552