

STOP VIOLENCE

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WOMEN'S LAW CENTER

nr. 25 (2021)

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CELEBRATING 10 YEARS SINCE THE SIGNING OF THE ISTANBUL CONVENTION

The month of May marked the 10th anniversary of the Istanbul Convention. International institutions and non-governmental organisations organised a series of events where subject matter practitioners spoke about the realities of domestic violence in Moldova and presented the needs of victims from the perspective of the four pillars of the Istanbul Convention: prevention, protection, prosecution, and co-ordinated policies.

The Istanbul Convention is the first international document that provides a unified approach to prevent this phenomenon. Unfortunately, a series of myths and misinformation are launched in the public space, which is why we recommend you to see what the Istanbul Convention is really about and why by supporting its ratification we will be able to reduce the extent of this phenomenon in the Republic of Moldova. Based on the stories of women seeking help in situations of domestic violence, we designed a series of cards presenting the **benefits of ratifying the Istanbul Convention**.

- Women who have experienced rape will receive support and help in crisis/specialised centres, which are currently lacking in our country.

- Women who have experienced marital rape or forced marriage will be able to defend themselves in court by initiating criminal proceedings.
- Women affected by sexual violence will have access to free medical investigations and treatment, regardless of whether they have a health insurance policy or not.
- Women will also benefit from protection measures in case of threats or possible retaliation by the perpetrator.
- Women will be helped to receive free assistance of a lawyer, paid for by the state in all trials involving violence against women.
- Women and their children will benefit from support and help in specialised shelters, where they will receive legal and psychological counselling, social and medical assistance, including economic empowerment and employment assistance.
- Authorities will be obliged to adjust the regulatory framework so that children affected by and having witnessed acts of violence are not revictimised during judicial processes.
- Children who have experienced violence and witnessed acts of violence will benefit from services adapted to the needs and specificities of their age.

DRAGĂ DEPUTATĂ!), ASCULTĂ-MĂ ȘI DE MINE!

„Am intrat în casă cu furtaună. Fără vreo explicație, mi-a luat din mână o cameră și mi-a ordenat să mă duc acasă. Am început să fug, dar mi-a datoreala la poartă. Mi-a spus: «Nu poți intra așa și înveci să mă satisfaci, fiindcă sunt bărbat». Mi-a cutreierat și intrarea în viața sexuală. Mi înșelășur și mă lăsa în pace. Mă făcusea să mă simt puțin revărsat și lui era rășur să vorbească cu mine. Cu cât te știi? Cu cât te creșterea?”

MINISTERUL JUSTIȚIEI
ROMÂNIA

SONDA
#MeToo

SONDA
#MeToo

**WOMEN'S
MOVEMENT**

CUM MĂ VA AJUTA RATIFICAREA CONVENȚIEI DE LA ISTANBUL?

Beneficii:

Femeile vor
beneficia de
intervenția
urgenta și
responsabilă a
poliției pentru
protecția și
siguranța
acestora.
Pedepsele
aplicate

agresorii li
vor decușia
sa repete
actele de
violență în
familie.
Autoritățile
vor avea
obligată să
informeze
femeile ce au

trecurt prin
violență în
familie despre
eliberarea
agresorului sau
evadarea
acestuia și vor
intreprinde
mășuri de
protecție a
persoanelor
afectate.

#oprețeviolența

- They will be provided with free medical, psychological and social support.
- Women affected by domestic violence will benefit from medical assistance regardless of whether they have a health insurance policy or not.
- Specialized services (day centers, crisis and placement centers) will be available in several districts of the country so that women and their children can receive help as quickly as possible.

The information campaign on the benefits of ratifying the Istanbul Convention was carried out by Women's Law Centre and UN Women Moldova, with the support of Sweden.

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MINISTERUL SĂNĂTĂȚII
ROMÂNIEI



MINISTERUL
EGALITĂȚII DE GENURI
ȘI FAMILIEI



MINISTERUL
JUSTIȚIEI



MINISTERUL
INTERIORULUI



MINISTERUL
DEFINȘIILOR



MINISTERUL
EDUCAȚIEI ȘI CERCETĂRII



MINISTERUL
AGRICULTURII ȘI DEZVOLTĂRII RURALE



MINISTERUL
TRANSPORTURILOR, INFRASTRUCTURII
ȘI COMUNICAȚIILOR



MINISTERUL
ENERGIEI



MINISTERUL
MEDIULI, PLANIFICĂRII URBANE
ȘI CLIMATULUI



MINISTERUL
APĂRILOR ȘI AFĂRILOR MARI



MINISTERUL
DEZVOLTĂRII REGIONALE ȘI
INFRASTRUCTURII



MINISTERUL
BUNURILOR CULTURALE ȘI
MONUMENTELOR



MINISTERUL
ECONOMIEI NAȚIONALE



MINISTERUL
AFĂRILOR EXTERNE



MINISTERUL
SECURITĂȚII NAȚIONALE



MINISTERUL
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SECURITĂȚII NAȚIONALE



MINISTERUL
SECURITĂȚII NAȚIONALE

DRĂGĂ DEPUTATĂ!, ASCULTĂ-MĂ ȘI PE MINE!

"Astăzi mi-a fost de multe ori. Am pus mâinile pe cap și mă aplec, dar eu înțeleg că din nou o prezintă. În camera pe în bucurii. Mi-a bălăi gâtului să văd și să mă simt. B. bucurii. I-am spus și căm intrat în cămășă pentru a căm haine, copile, este atârnat în două bucurii, este înțelegătoare. Cu o înțelegătoare, este înțelegătoare. Am spus la spital și am fost înțelegătoare cu comisia generală."

CUM MĂ VA AJUTA RATIFICAREA CONVENȚIEI DE LA ISTANBUL?

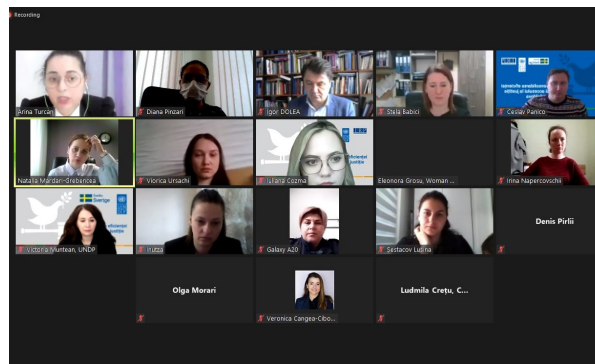
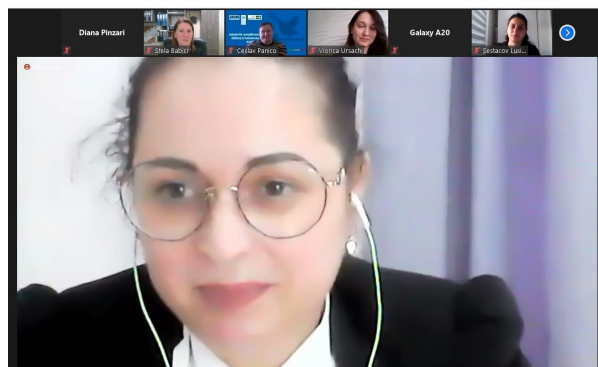
Beneficii:

Femele afectate de violență în familie vor beneficia de asistență medicală indiferent dacă dețin sau nu poliță de asigurare medicală.

Femele vor avea acces în servicii specializate existente precum: linia telefonică de suport 24/7, centre de zi, centre de noapte și plasmament în caz de răsunet.

Medicii, poliștii, asistenții în servicii specializate care cunosc sau au motive să creadă că a fost comis un act de violență în familie, vor fi obligați să se implică și să raporteze acest lucru autorităților sau organizațiilor competente.

CONSULTATIONS WITH PROFESSIONALS FOR A MORE EFFECTIVE CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESPONSE

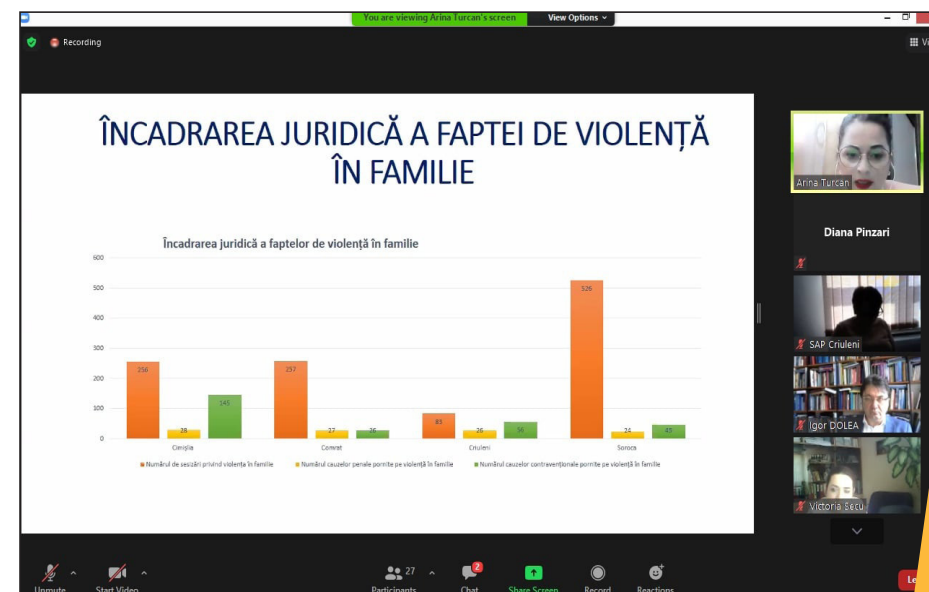


The last round of consultations with specialists from the Dialogue Platform on Access to Justice took place in April, in Cimișlia district. It evaluated the response of the criminal justice system to cases of domestic violence.

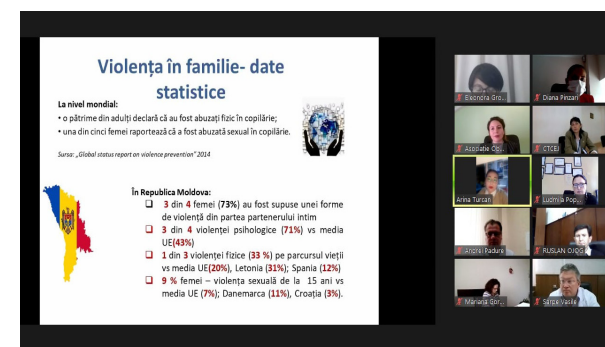
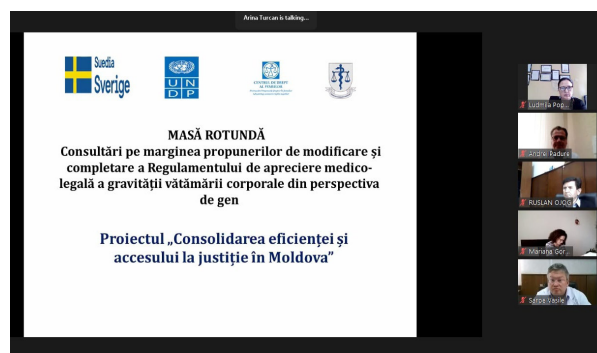
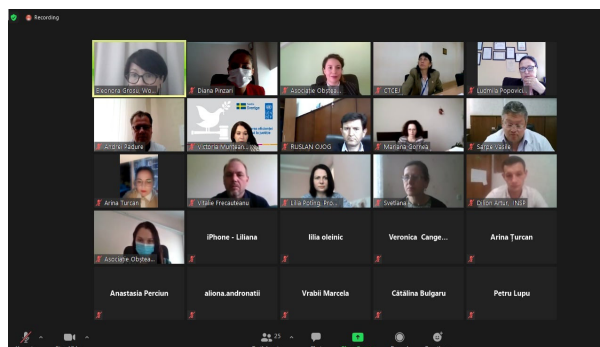
Veceslav Antoci, head of the Public Order Department in Cimișlia district who participated in the consultations, reiterated the need to carry out public awareness raising activities. 'In the first quarter of this year, 71 restraining orders were issued in Cimișlia district, while in the same period last year, only 28 orders were issued. We see that there is a considerable increase, which means that interventions have been carried out to prevent domestic violence and more victims have been protected. I recommend that the planned information activities focus on the localities where we have the largest number of reported cases of domestic violence to discourage this type of behaviour.'

All the recommendations made by the participants in the dialogue have been included in the final version of the evaluation. Subsequently, the methodology for training joint groups of professionals within the criminal justice system will be developed. At the same time, response practices to domestic violence will be adjusted and a single and uniform model of coordinated response by the criminal justice system to domestic violence will be promoted.

The evaluation was prepared by the Women's Law Centre as part of 'Strengthening Efficiency and Access to Justice in Moldova' Project, implemented by the UNDP Moldova, with the financial support of Sweden.



THE FORENSIC REGULATION WAS ADJUSTED AND SUPPLEMENTED



The forensic regulation assessing the severity of bodily injury or health of the person is subject to adjustments and supplements. In this regard, WLC held several consultation meetings with subject matter specialists.

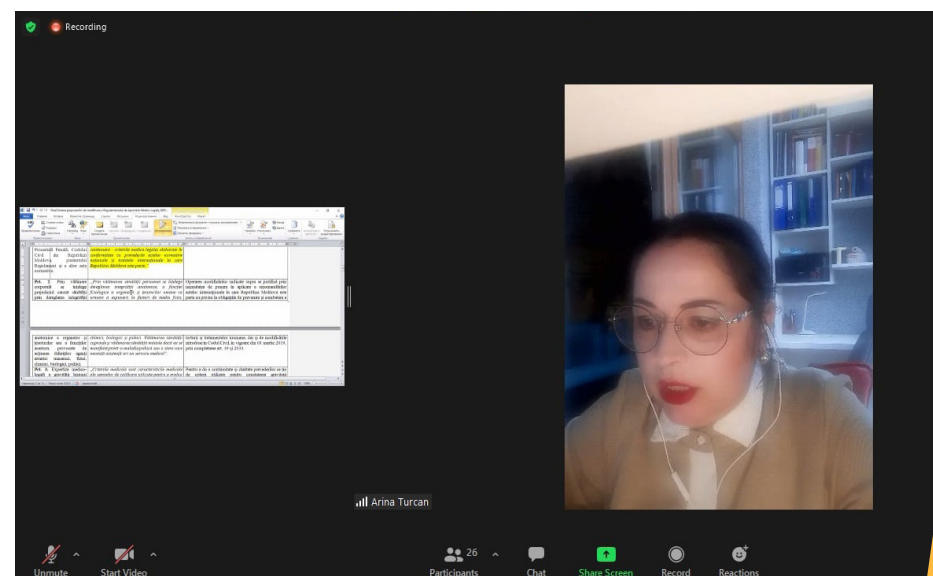
During the meetings, the director of the Centre for Forensic Medicine, Vasile Șarpe, expressed his commitment to start the process of adjustment of the regulation and to involve all forensic doctors in the consultations. This is a first step that will improve the coordinated response of the authorities to cases of domestic violence.

At the same time, the WLC director, Mariana Buruiană and the project manager from UNDP Moldova, Victoria Muntean, stressed the importance of involving all stakeholders who have an important role in protecting the rights of domestic violence victims in the process of adjusting the regulation.

The group of experts that drew up a series of proposals to amend and supplement the Regulation took into account, first and foremost, the needs of domestic violence victims, the difficulties faced by subject matter specialists and the relevant international standards.

The Regulation of forensic assessment of the severity of bodily injury was drawn up in 2003 and was amended only once, in 2011.

This process of adjusting and supplementing the regulation is organised by WLC, as part of 'Strengthening Efficiency and Access to Justice in Moldova' Project, implemented by the UNDP Moldova, with the financial support of Sweden.



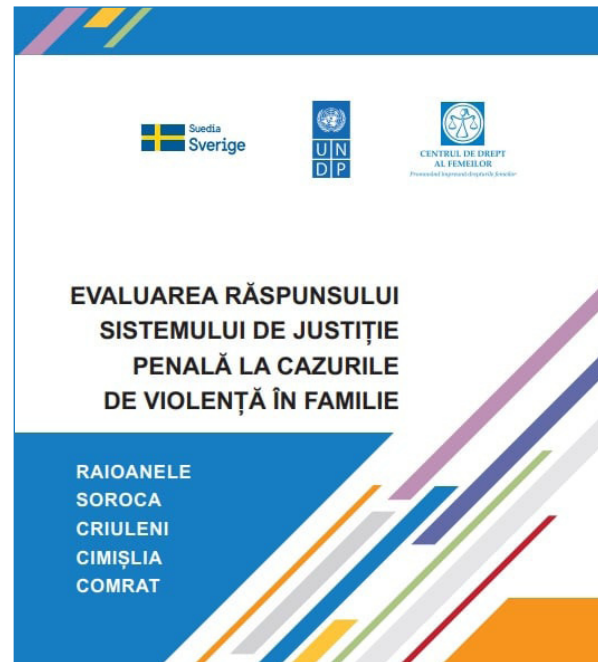
RESULTS OF THE 'EVALUATION OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM'S RESPONSE TO CASES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE' STUDY, DISCUSSED AT THE INTER-MINISTERIAL LEVEL

The 'Evaluation of the criminal justice system's response to cases of domestic violence in Soro-ca, Criuleni, Cimișlia and Comrat districts' study was presented at the Meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Coordination Council in preventing and combating domestic violence.

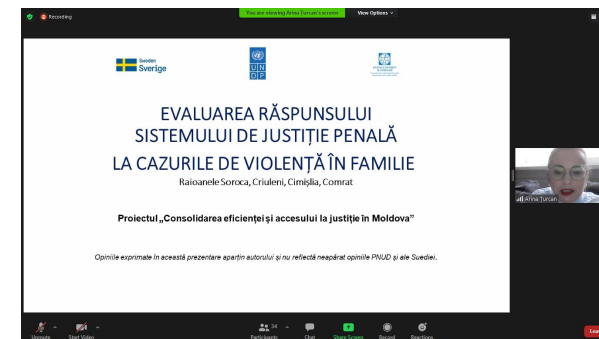
The study maps the barriers faced by domestic violence victims in order to obtain a coordinated response from the criminal justice system. At the same time, this study aimed to identify positive practices that can be piloted at the national level, as well as the information and training needs of criminal justice professionals.

The main findings mentioned by the authors of the study refer to the fact that:

- in the last 3 years there has been an increase in the number of cases of domestic violence reported and registered by the authorities in the four districts. Nonetheless, the number of criminal cases brought against domestic perpetrators is decreasing. This decrease is due to the legislative changes introduced in 2016, that decriminalised some forms of violence;



- victims of domestic violence who come from a socially disadvantaged background are not sufficiently aware that there is a law protecting them or how they can access services intended for them;
- even though the relevant national law obliges all professionals responsible for preventing and combating domestic violence to assess the risks of committing or repeating domestic violence acts, currently such an assessment is carried out mainly by police employees;
- too mild sanctions for violation of emergency restriction orders encourage perpetrators to violate them;
- in most cases it is the police officers who inform the victim about their rights, because in crisis situations the police is called;
- the victims do not have the necessary legal knowledge to defend their rights, which prevents them from going to court;
- the way court trials are organised does not protect victims of domestic violence from intimidations by other participants in the trial, in particular when the victim should wait in the hall for the beginning of court trial or deliberation.



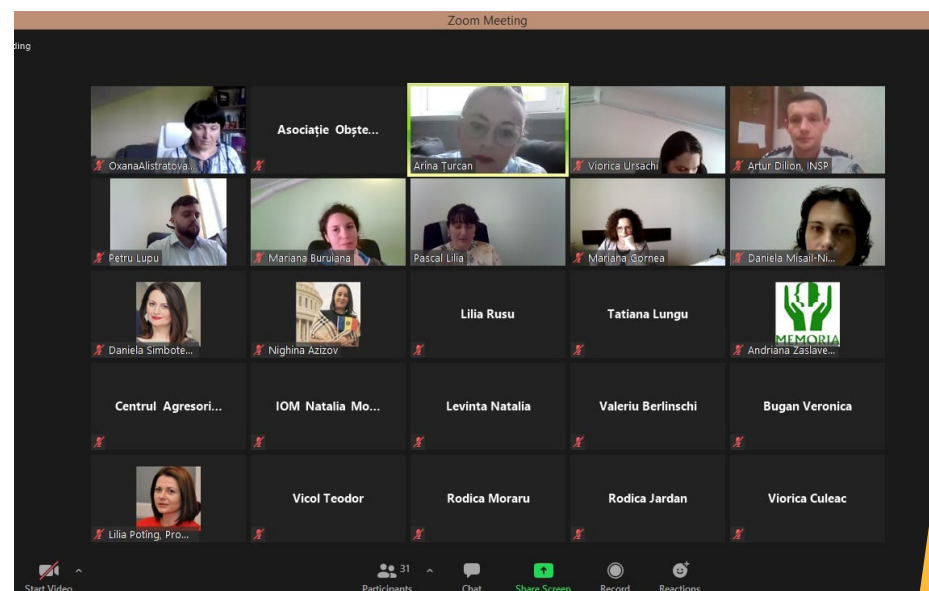
A series of actions are prioritised in the recommendations chapter, including:

- conduct campaigns on informing victims of domestic violence about their rights and how to access protection and legal, psychological, social and medical assistance services;
- develop and disseminate a standard package of information materials for different groups of victims, including materials adapted for victims with multiple vulnerabilities (e.g. people with mental and sensory disabilities, illiterate people, etc.);
- consider the possibility to establish a network of lawyers that would provide state-guaranteed legal aid, according to an agreed timetable, to victims from the rural area, both offline and online or by phone;
- develop information materials on how victims of domestic violence can access state-guaranteed legal aid, either offline or online, so that they are accessible to people with a basic level education;
- train family doctors how to examine and describe injuries of domestic violence victims;
- create separate entries into the court building for victims and perpetrators, as well as separate waiting rooms in the court premises for victims of domestic violence.

The results of the evaluation will help develop a training concept, in mixed groups, which will include justice professionals, such as: forensic doctors,

prosecutors, judges, criminal investigation officers, sector police officers, lawyers providing state-guaranteed legal aid and probation officers. Under this project, information materials will also be developed, to cover the needs of domestic violence victims mentioned in this study.

The evaluation was prepared by the Women's Law Centre as part of 'Strengthening Efficiency and Access to Justice in Moldova' Project, implemented by the UNDP Moldova, with the financial support of Sweden.



WOMEN'S INITIATIVES IN A MENTORING VISIT AT WLC



WLC conducted this May several exchange-of-experience and mentoring meetings with our peers from Женские Инициативы (Women's Initiatives) NGO of Tiraspol.

Professionals from this organisation made a fact-finding meeting to WLC in order to understand how the Specialised Service for Support to Domestic Violence Victims is organised and operates. The discussions focused on the holistic response by lawyer, psychologist and social worker, describing



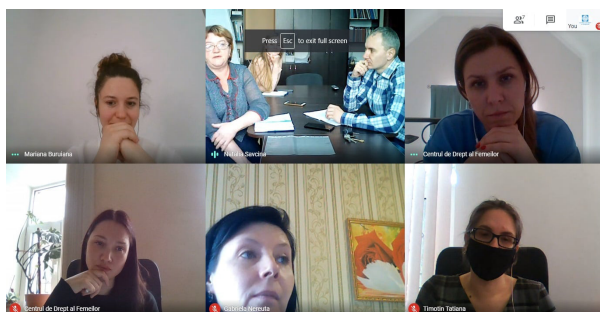
step by step the principles underpinning the WLC activity and ensuring cooperation among professionals.

The discussions also addressed how WLC documents the cases, how professionals should interact, how each stakeholder should respond at different stages of the case, as well as what are the most optimal procedures to overcome legal dilemmas.

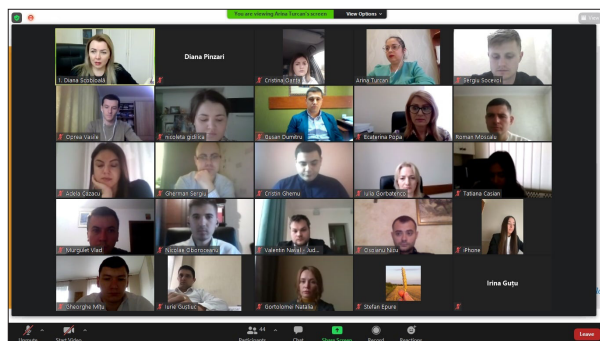


The accumulated information will help the organisation develop its own regulation. At the second stage, the NGO will conduct a series of activities in Grigoriopol district, which will improve the quality of the services provided to victims of gender-based violence and domestic violence.

The activity is part of 'Family Protected from Violence' Project, supported by UNDP Moldova.



ISTANBUL CONVENTION – SUBJECT OF A PUBLIC LECTURE FOR NIJ GRADUATES

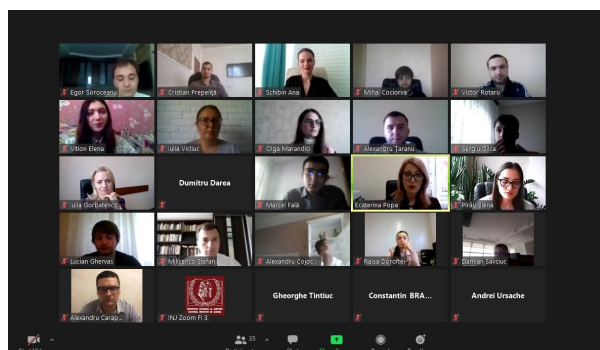
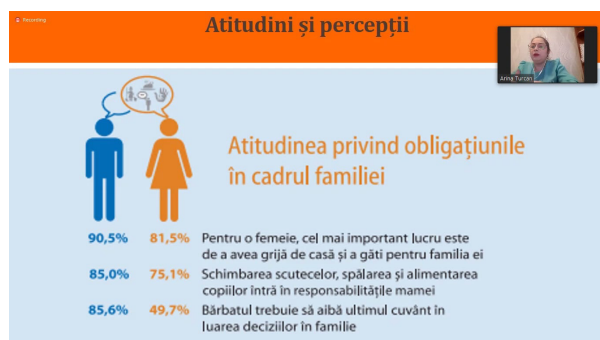
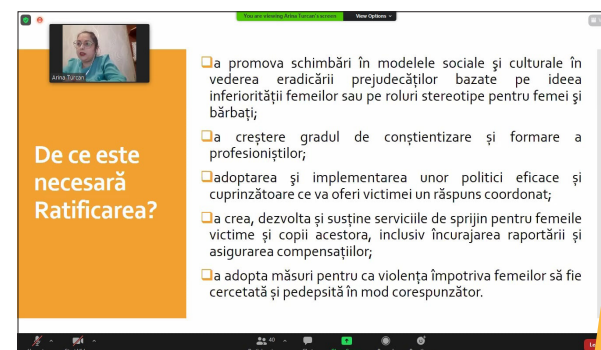
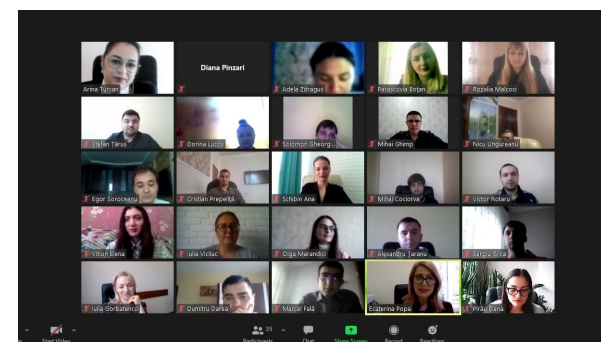
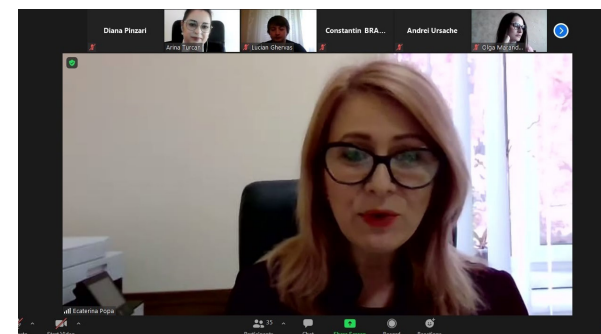


A new generation of future prosecutors and judges, graduates of the National Institute of Justice, participated in the public lecture – **'Women's Access to Justice. The Istanbul Convention'** – focused on the importance of ratifying the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

WLC expert, Turcan Arina, explained the benefits for domestic violence victims and for the whole society, if the Republic of Moldova ratifies this international treaty.

The State will have to adopt and implement efficient and comprehensive policies that will provide a holistic and coordinated support to victims; will establish, develop and maintain support services for female victims and their children, including encouraging them to report and providing compensations; will take measures to properly investigate and sanction violence against women.

The information sessions were carried out by WLC with the support of UN Women Moldova and are part of the series of activities dedicated to the 10th Anniversary of the Istanbul Convention.



PATROL OFFICERS TRAINED IN BEST PRACTICES OF RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



Patrol officers from all districts of the country participated in a series of trainings on best practices of police response to cases of domestic violence. This category of professionals participates for the first time in a training aimed at improving their knowledge in domestic violence.

Given that patrol officers are the first to intervene when cases of domestic violence are reported to the police, it is crucially important for them to be aware of the peculiarities of this phenomenon and the relevant law.

Besides the theoretical aspects, participants analysed real-life cases, learned how to communicate with the victim and with the perpetrator, how to cooperate with other relevant professionals, and how to prevent repeated cases of domestic violence.





Brett Rose, the new Director of Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement Section of the US Embassy to the Republic of Moldova, joined us at the final stage. He underlined the importance of authorities and the civil society to join their efforts and prioritise domestic violence prevention, especially during this difficult period.'

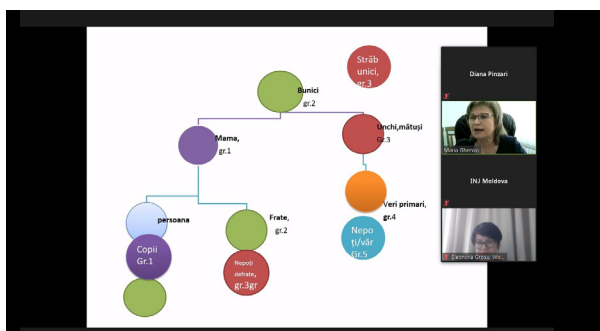
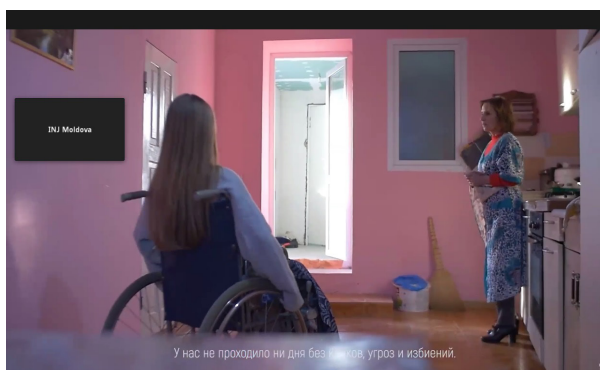
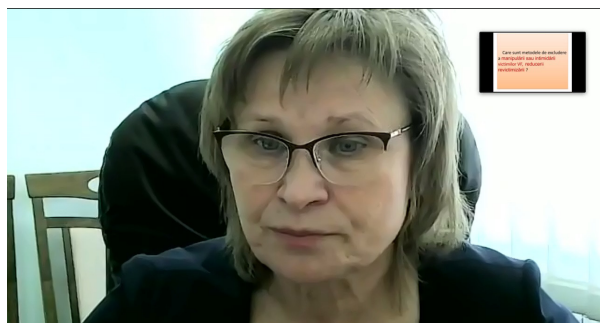
The organisers — WLC Executive Director, Mariana Buruiană and Deputy Director of the National Public Security Inspectorate, Alexei Grosu thanked the Embassy for the assistance provided over the years and for their openness to support projects that are so needed for our society.



The trainings are organised by the Women's Law Centre, in partnership with the General Police Inspectorate and the financial support of the Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement Section of the US Embassy to the Republic of Moldova.



JUSTICE SECTOR PROFESSIONALS IMPROVED THEIR KNOWLEDGE ABOUT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PHENOMENON



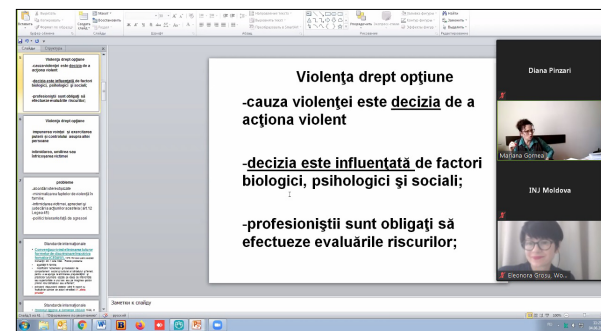
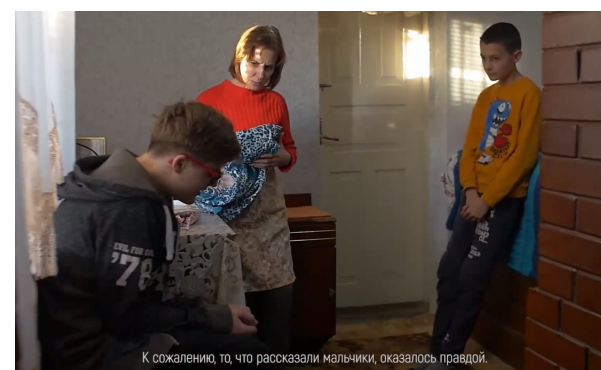
Judicial assistants, court reporter and prosecutors' consultants participated in a two-day workshop on the peculiarities of reviewing cases of domestic violence and violence against children.

Assisted by trainers Turcan Arina, Victoria Captari, Mariana Gornea, Maria Ghervas and Eleonora Grosu, the 90 participants analysed and discussed theoretical and practical issues related to:

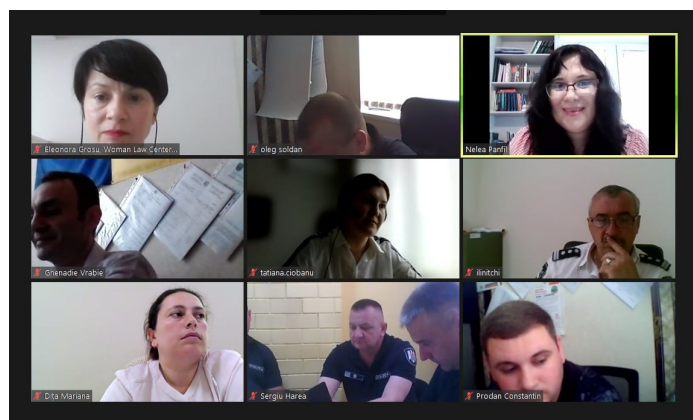
- protection of and assistance to domestic violence victims
- ECHR case-law on domestic violence
- psychological portrait of a victim and of a perpetrator
- trauma and needs of domestic violence victims
- problems during court trials of domestic violence crimes
- investigation of domestic violence cases

The workshop participants included employees of courts from Bălți, Chișinău, Cahul, Comrat, Orhei, Cimișlia, Hîncești, Edineț, Ungheni, Drochia, Soroca, Anenii Noi, Strășeni and Criuleni, who are dealing on a daily basis with cases of domestic violence.

The training was provided by Women's Law Center in partnership with the National Institute of Justice and financial support of Sweden.



TRAINING FOR A COORDINATED RESPONSE

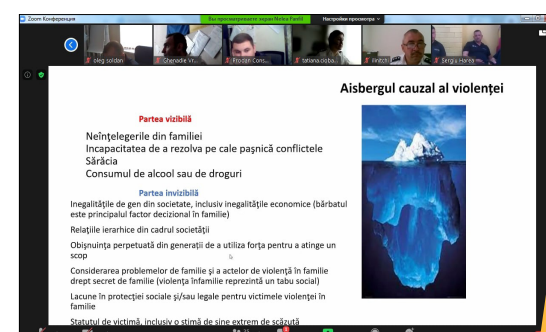
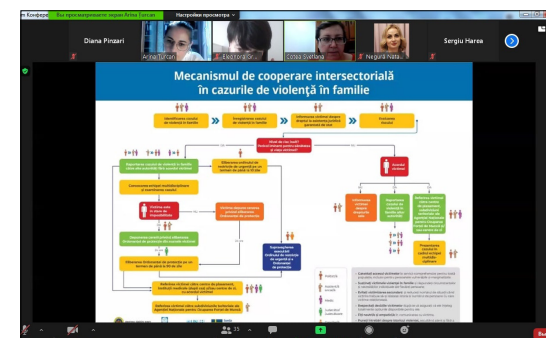
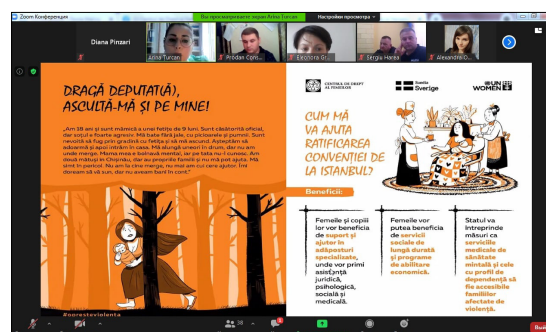


The main stakeholders, that have roles and responsibilities of responding to cases of domestic violence, participated in the training entitled **‘Ensuring an efficient inter-sector cooperation for a better settlement of cases of domestic violence’**.

Professionals from Făleşti district were trained first, and then those from Telenești and Basarabeasca will follow suit.

Doctors, police officers, social workers, representatives of NCFLA and Probation Office reviewed real cases and identified common components of a coordinated response, their individual duties and ways of joining their efforts to provide the needed support to victims. Guided by trainers, the participants identified gaps in the system and formulated solutions for various situations.

The training is organised under ‘Bringing Moldova closer to ratifying the Istanbul Convention’ Project, implemented by Women’s Law Centre with the support of UN Women Moldova and financial support of Sweden.



IMPULS PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED SUCCESSFULLY



Social workers, professionals from the Social Assistance and Family Protection Directorate of Glodeni and representatives of the Police Inspectorate from the same district improved their capacities in order to become agents of change in their communities. Vadim Țărnă, beneficiary of Impuls Grant Program provided the training 'Prevention of and Response to Gender-Based Violence'.

The participants had the possibility to improve their practical skills of working in a team and learned how to use instruments when working with victims and perpetrators, the peculiarity of domestic violence and why it is important to promote gender equality. .

IMPULS Small Grant Program is implemented by Women's Law Centre and is funded by Sweden.



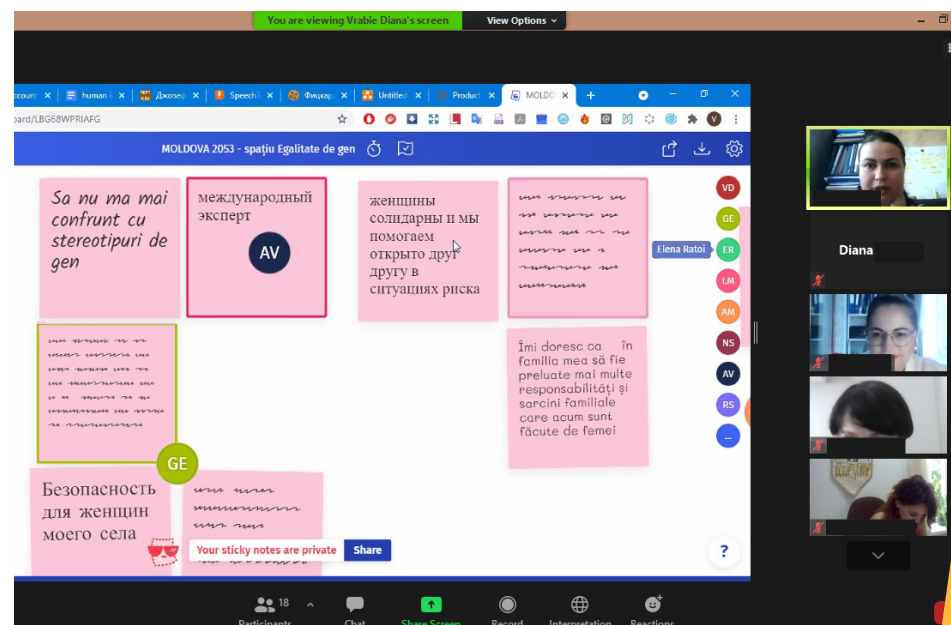
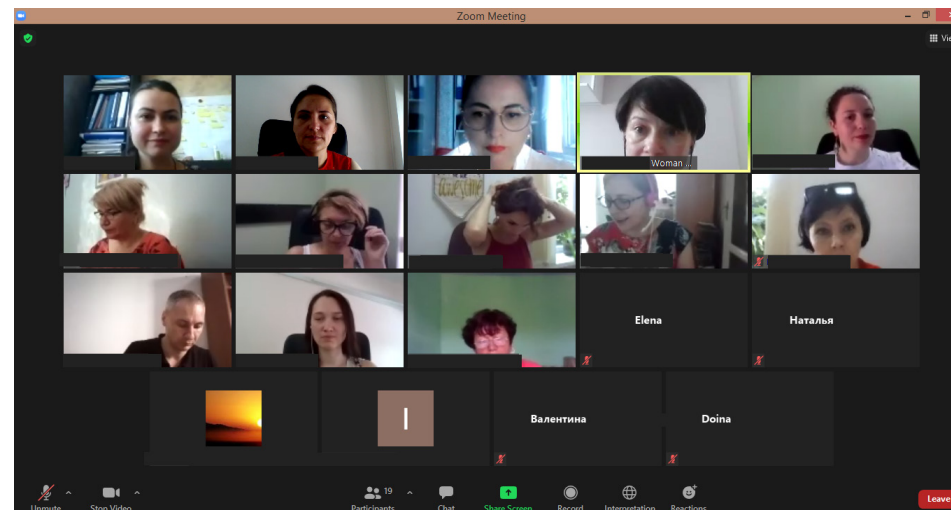
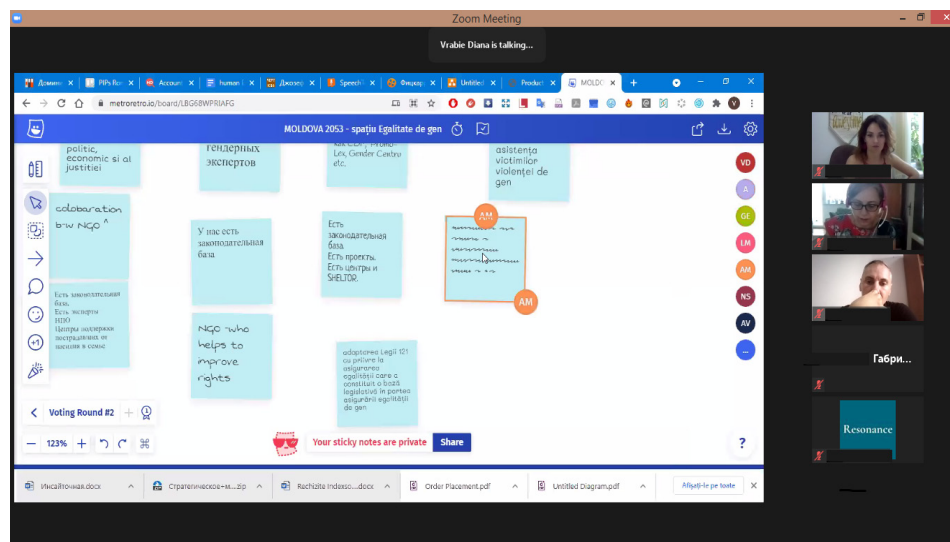
WE BREAK DOWN THE BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Representatives of NGOs defending women's rights participated in a new training session, entitled generically – **Moldova 2053 – space for gender equality**.

The purpose of the workshop is to improve the participants' understanding of gender equality in order to promote the needed changes at the level of individuals, organisations and the society.

The participants were involved in a series of exercises that helped identify gaps in this area and solutions to overcome barriers to gender equality. At the same time, we analysed how to foster changes in their companies/organisations.

The activity took place as part of „Reducing barriers to women's economic empowerment' Project of Women and Girls Empowered – WAGE Consortium, implemented by ABA ROLI Moldova and the Center for International Private Enterprise and local implementing partners Women's Law Center and Center for Entrepreneurship and Economic Policy.



HANDMADE WORKSHOPS FOR WLC BENEFICIARIES



The handmade workshops offer new experiences to our beneficiaries, as well as the possibility to network in a warm and caring environment, close to their children. We have recently organised a special activity that allows expressing the thoughts and emotions in an artistic way – ceramics and knitting workshops.

Together with their mentors, the participants learned sculpting and knitting techniques, as well as how to use correctly the tools, how to play with their imagination, and how to shape the clay and the thread into the desired form. You can see the final outcome in the pictures. Mothers and children spent together several captivating hours, developed their tactile and aesthetic feeling and, perhaps the most important, they were attentive and connected to each other.

Two of the beneficiaries were pregnant and confessed that the blankets would be useful to cover their babies.

The handmade workshops were organised by Women's Law Center in partnership with CONCORDIA Social Project Moldova and Center for Assistance and Protection NGOs, with the support of Sweden.



WLC ACTIVITY IN FIGURES

During 1 January – 30 June 2021, WLC provided support to 385 beneficiaries. Of the total number of beneficiaries who received primary legal aid, 172 victims were provided support in drafting documents – including applications and complaints addressed to law enforcement bodies or appealing against decisions of the official examiner. **77 protection orders** were issued, and in **13 cases the emergency restriction order was issued**. At the same time, 166 victims received legal counselling at the WLC's hotline.

Qualified legal aid: lawyers were appointed to represent victims' interests in court in 16 criminal cases and one contraven-tional case. Most of the cases refer to do-mestic violence, rape, sexual acts or incit-ing suicide and the failure to comply with the protection order.

Psychological assistance: a total of 55 women received individual psychological support, including long-term psychologi-cal support in 22 cases. A number of 62 psychological evaluation reports were drafted.

Social assistance: 52 victims were provid-ed social assistance – counselling and vo-cational guidance. In 8 cases, the transfer of the victim into a placement centre was facilitated, and 9 women received mate-rial aid. At the same time, 8 victims were involved in handmade workshops, and ac-cess to public or private services was faci-litated for 12 victims.

Type of violence committed: in most of the cases, the beneficiaries report to be vic-tims of several types of violence. Thus, of



the combined forms of domestic violence, physical and psychological violence is the most frequent (156 cases). Physical, psy-chological and economic violence is regis-tered in 23 cases.

BENEFICIARIES' SOCIAL PROFILE

Area of residence: most beneficiaries (56%) are from the urban area.

Age: most domestic violence victims are 25-44 years old (189 women), followed by 45-65+ years old beneficiaries (150 wom-en).

Education level: 344 victims have second-ary education, while 37 have higher educa-tion.

Occupational status: 119 women are un-employed, 28 have their work suspended due to the childcare leave. At the same time, 115 employed victims, including 6 working abroad, and 40 women who reached their retirement age were regis-tered.

Relationship of victim to perpetrator: 231 cases registered, where the victim is the (former) domestic partner/wife of the per-

petrator. In 25 cases the victim has the sta-tus of parent (mother/father), in 22 cases the victim has the status of son/daughter. In addition, 150 registered victims are mothers who take care of minor children. Victims contacted the WLC being advised by police officers, social workers, law-yers, psychologists. Maternity centres or other organisations working in the field referred 22 cases. In most of the cases, the victims were consulted by phone or online.



You have
the right to
live safely!

WHO ARE WE?

WOMEN'S LAW CENTRE (WLC) is a non-governmental organisation founded by a group of women-lawyers from Moldova. WLC advocates for equality between women and men in the public and family life and helps prevent and combat domestic violence and gender-based violence against women.

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