

**The following information was provided by the General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality to the Council of Europe's "Women's Rights and the COVID-19 pandemic" webpage in an effort to promote the Protection Women's Rights at a national level.**

### **General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality**

The General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality (GSFPGE), organisational unit of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, supervises and co-ordinates the integrated network of structures operating across the country to tackle gender-based violence and protect and support women victims.

The network consists of:

- the **SOS 15900** helpline, a nationwide telephone line that provides immediate assistance in emergency cases on a 24-hour basis, all year long; at the same time, it is possible for women to communicate electronically through the e-mail address: [sos15900@isotita.gr](mailto:sos15900@isotita.gr)
- 42 counseling centers that provide social, psychological, legal and employment support services, as well as,
- 20 shelters that offer safe accommodation to women victims of violence and their children.

- As part of the emergency measures to address and prevent the further spread of the COVID-19, the GSFPGE has sent instructions to all structures on their operational procedures in the current situation in order to protect the health of both employees and women victims addressed there.
- At the same time, the GSFPGE has also informed the local government bodies, in the framework of which the counseling centers and the shelters are operating. All structures continue to offer their services adapted to the emergency restrictive measures in force due to the coronavirus, while tele-working and telephone support sessions have already been ensured and are being implemented.
- In emergency cases that needed accommodation during the lockdown, the General Secretariat, in collaboration with the Hellenic Society of Forensic Medicine, offered special accommodation, with free housing and meals throughout Greece. In these cases of women victims of violence, free medical tests were provided by the Hellenic Society of Forensic Medicine. In addition, free of charge medical tests for their children were offered by the Organization "The Smile of the Child".
- With the care of the General Secretariat for Civil Protection, the observance of the institutional framework for the movement of victims to shelters was ensured.
- Moreover, with continuous posts on the social media of our governmental organization and in the media (press and electronic press, television news broadcasts), the possibility of increasing incidents of domestic violence is stressed in order to inform and raise public awareness.
- A video spot is published as part of the central campaign of the Greek Government "We Stay at Home", with the message "We Stay at Home but We Don't Stay Silent".

- In addition, a weekly statistical processing of data deriving from the common database of the network was launched, in order to have a complete and accurate assessment of the effects of the restrictive measures on the increase of domestic violence rates.
- Furthermore, the GSFPGE informs civil society organizations about its actions in order to address any emergencies of domestic violence that may have been directed towards other agencies.
- Also, the General Secretariat informed the Gender Equality and Violence Against Women sector in the Council of Europe and the Committee on Parties to the Istanbul Convention on its Action and the the proper functioning of the support structures for victims of violence.
- Finally, the Secretary General for Family Policy and Gender Equality has already sent a letter to Antonio Guterres, Secretary General of the United Nations, on the Greek actions concerning gender-based violence and the consequences of the pandemic COVID-19, while at the same time, with this letter, she has accepted his appeal on confronting domestic violence in the framework of this dreadful pandemic.

#### **Research Centre for Gender Equality (KETHI)**

Similar actions have been taken by the Research Centre for Gender Equality (KETHI), which is the legal entity of private law under the auspices of the GSFPGE, responsible for the scientific supervision of the Network of Structures.

- KETHI has conducted a sponsored information campaign on support structures for victims of violence on social media with a short video (Gif).
- The Region of Attica, in collaboration with the Secretariat General for Family Policy and Gender Equality, is staffing the 1110 Open Telephone Support Line with specialist scientists, with the aim of addressing the domestic violence issue in a holistic way.

With the collaboration memorandum signed between the Region of Attica and the Secretariat General for Family Policy and Gender Equality, the two parties are committed to co-operating on the issue of domestic violence during the period of the pandemic and lock-down.

The 1110 psychologists will guide women victims of domestic violence to call the SOS 15900 Helpline for psychological support and guidance.

- The Secretariat General for Family Policy and Gender Equality is in direct contact with non-governmental organisations, other non-profit organisations and the civil society in general, collaborating with them to better address the phenomenon of domestic violence during COVID-19.
- The video spot that was published as part of the central campaign of the Greek Government "We Stay at Home", with the message "We Stay at Home but We Don't Stay Silent", has been widely broadcast on all national television channels.
- The Pan-Hellenic Pharmaceutical Association participates in the Pan-European campaign entitled "Mask-19", against domestic violence. Pharmacists across the country are urging and directing victims of violence to report the incident to the relevant authorities and authorities, giving them the contact details (Help Line SOS 15900, e-mail: sos15900@isotita.gr, Police 100, or a local police department), or by giving the victims a special form with the code Mask-19, in which they enter their full details (name, home address, telephone numbers or other contact details), sign it and deliver it to the pharmacist, who will forward it

directly to the relevant authorities. The Secretariat General for Family Policy and Gender Equality supports the participation of the Pan-Hellenic Pharmaceutical Association in this campaign.

- The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) features the SOS 15900 helpline on its "Helplines for victims of violence" section, while emphasizing the valuable support and aid provided by the helplines in combating domestic violence during COVID-19.
- In addition, via the SURVIVOR project (Enhancing services for refugee and migrant GBV survivors), migrant women requiring assistance for domestic violence issues, can receive information regarding the transportation during COVID-19 translated in Farsi and Arabic while the Research Centre for Gender Equality (KETHI) conducted the translation of information leaflets regarding the COVID-19 restriction measures in various languages.
- A three-party collaboration among KETHI and NGOs providing translation services to women victims of domestic violence, when required, and the relevant training took place.