



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL JUSTICE AND CONSUMERS

Directorate D: Equality and Union citizenship  
**Unit D.2: Gender equality**

Brussels,  
JUST/D2/

*Email: [lidia@lidialidia.com](mailto:lidia@lidialidia.com)*

Dear Madam,

Many thanks for your enquiry.

We can assure you that the European Commission remains strongly committed to eradicating violence against women and working towards gender equality. The Strategic Engagement on Gender Equality for 2016-2019 identifies combatting violence against women as a key priority within the Commission's work to promote gender equality in the EU.<sup>1</sup>

With the focused actions to combat violence against women, the Commission delivers on the commitments made in the Strategic Engagement and seeks to further draw attention to this issue at EU level. More than an awareness-raising campaign, the aim is to support and engage all stakeholders, including Member States, professionals, and NGOs, in combatting this problem, as well as give visibility to our commitment and to our activities in this area. This initiative will be of clear EU added value, by mobilizing and lending support to efforts at all levels.

The focused actions include both initiatives directed towards national campaigns and towards EU level action. On a national level, the Commission has allocated additional funding to this issue, by investing €4 million from the Gender Equality strand of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme to support Member States in developing and implementing national practical and targeted information, awareness-raising and education activities, aimed at preventing and combating violence against women. Funding for transnational grassroots projects run by NGOs, local authorities and other stakeholders is also available through the Daphne strand of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme, for a total of €6 million.

At EU level, the Commission will continue working to improve data on gender-based violence, building on the survey carried out by the Fundamental Rights Agency. The Maltese presidency organized a conference on violence against women in February 2017, co-funded by the Commission, which was an opportunity to launch the national campaigns, hear about Member States' experience in this area, and reflect on future action at EU level. There is also room for the exchange and dissemination of good

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<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/151203\\_strategic\\_engagement\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/151203_strategic_engagement_en.pdf)

practices in the area of violence against women, through the Mutual Learning Programme and a social media campaign.

In addition, the Commission has proposed the signing and conclusion of the Istanbul Convention by the EU. Following this, in June 2017, the EU signed the Istanbul Convention. Accession to this Convention will strengthen coordination of EU activities in this area and allow for monitoring by the EU, to be decided in the Code of Conduct that will accompany the conclusion of the Convention.

The abovementioned actions demonstrate the European Commission's commitment to eradicate violence against women. I would also like to draw your attention to the fact that 1999 was already declared as [European year of action to combat violence against women](#).

Following a positive vote from the European Parliament for the present Commission on the basis of the Political Guidelines for "a new start for Europe" presented by President Juncker, the communication of the European Commission has focused on the ten political priorities contributing to deliver quick and effective results in the most important policy areas. For this reason no European Years have been declared for 2016 and 2017.

Yours sincerely,

Karen VANDEKERCKHOVE  
Head of Unit