



**HASP – Honour Ambassadors against Shame Practices**

# Recommendations Paper on Honour Related Violence



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## Introduction

Honour based crimes fall within the wider field of violence of men against women, where cultural factors push. The reference to HRV helps during the prevention path for unveiling and preventing violent behaviours in cultural groups where traditionally violence against women is not legally prosecuted and often is socially justified. Hence the frame remains the violence against women intended as a violation of human rights<sup>1</sup> as they are recognised by the UN and confirmed by the Convention of Istanbul<sup>2</sup>. In particular, this Convention proposes to prevent violence, to favour the protection of victims and to prevent from impunity of the guilty.

The first instrument identified for widening the opportunities of protection of women is the harmonisation of legislations of the different Member States, so as to guarantee the same level of protection to all women, of all ages, religions and nationalities, even outside Europe.

Concerning the specific focus of HASP Project, priority is given to the protection of women having a status of migrant which aggravates the vulnerability. Living isolated from families which remain in the Country of origin, the life in refugee camps and hostility of the hosting communities is often for women of Roma, Sinti and similar (Caminanti in Italy) communities a worsening factor which makes them more exposed and less protected against violence.

The following recommendations are considered necessary for facing this specific type of violence and are already shared within the wider community of people and organizations operating in the field of violence against women.

The European Union has repeatedly expressed recommendations through different agencies and institutions. At national level, States organize specific plans, such as in Italy where there is an Extraordinary Plan Against Violence 2015 – 2017, expiring in July 2017 and to be followed by a new Plan Against Violence which is under preparation with the support of all organizations operating in the field; it will be soon published to promote its integrated approach to prevention and protection, linking the different levels of intervention: juridical, health and cultural.

### **General Recommendations:**

To contrast honor related violence and forced marriages certain structured and effective interventions appear necessary. The following recommendations propose two kinds of elements targeting those

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<sup>1</sup>Adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, resolution 48/104 of December 20<sup>th</sup> 1993.

<sup>2</sup> Convention of the Council of Europe with signature open to other Countries, May 2011

operators who intervene in the fight against HRV, such as the police forces and the social operators. First some objectives and contents; secondly instruments and policies.

## 1. Objectives

1. It is fundamental that the organizations that carry out services to support the victims of violence can have **access to adequate funding**, so they can continue their work.

2. A **mandatory training for all the operators that deal with gender based violence and HRV** needs to be guaranteed. Its organization has to take into consideration the different levels of seniority and involvement of the personnel. A specific training should also be carried out in schools, where students could learn more about gender based violence and its cultural implications.

3. It is important to work within the communities where the risk of this kind of violence occurring is particularly high. The aim is to impact the way of reasoning of the community, **preventing these cases of violence to happen**. Honor related violence should be perceived by the community itself as an unacceptable part of tradition. The **emancipation path of the second generation** on one side and the **informal justice structure** on the other, should be taken into consideration during the information campaigns and training activities.

4. It is important to **directly involve the women and men** of the communities considered more at risk, through structured interventions directed to the elimination of stereotypes and victim-shaming.

5. A **collective approach among Ngos** is ongoing and must be confirmed and supported. The collective approach ought to include both NGOs and institutions.

6. Since honor related violence can be a fluid phenomenon affecting girls, women, male members of the family, in different contexts such as the family itself, communities, workplaces, camps for refugees. It is necessary to monitor the eventual changes in the phenomenon.

7. The **mass media representation** of women victims of violence as passive and defenseless agents, should be modified. Media should be encouraged to highlight the negative image of the perpetrator of the violence.

8. In order to avoid the reinforcement of prejudices, stereotypes and cultural oriented discriminations **the misleading use of information** on HRV must be contrasted.

9. In all cases of full-blown violence or suspected violence, the recommendations of the European Guidelines must be reminded: approaching women and men in different moments; children need a particular protection; no family mediation has to be undertaken as it has revealed to be a risk increasing factor.

10. In all situations when foreign nationality women are involved, or in situations where a local minority is involved, a cultural mediation is necessary.

## 2. Policies and instruments

1. **Unanimous legislations and national policies between countries** must be implemented. These legislations must be clear and directed to answer efficiently the needs of the actors involved in the fight against gender based violence. (civil society organizations, Ngos etc.).

2. **The actions and strategies of intervention already in place** need to be reinforced. A specific action plan should target the geographic areas more at risk and those where the positive reactions to the previous interventions were minimal. The perspective to adopt at organizational level, in order to implement and reinforce the support services for women, should be a **medium and long run perspective**.

3. The episodes of honor related violence should be **registered and catalogued** as such.

4. The **data collection** must be more efficient and easier to access to. This will help in the scheduling of campaigns and programs on the topic.

5. It is necessary to disseminate information and awareness on the topic of **child marriage** and on the damages that provokes. An action of awareness promotion should also be done on the topic of **reproductive rights and sexuality**.

6. An Intervention on social and economic factors that determine a state of vulnerability, will impact on the occurring of VAW and HRV. The access of **young girls** to the various grades of education must be encourage, also through economic incentives<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> In Italy economic incentives for the period of obligatory school attendency are already set. It should be interesting to diffuse the model applied in Germany where the residency permit of the parents is directly tied to the school attendency of the children until their reach the adult age.