

Annex 3 Question 7 – Measures, Support Facilities and Protection/Support Services

Nationwide measures

- Research project ‘Analysing homicides in partnerships and families for indications of risk – innovative approaches’ by the German Police University (DHPol), Berlin School of Psychology and Ravensburg Police Headquarters, approved with funding of around 1 million euros (project duration: March 2022-June 2024). The aim of the project is to strengthen police expertise in risk analysis and early detection of potential intimicides – i.e. homicides of (ex-)partners – by identifying warning signs (so-called leaking behaviour) and developing criteria for the assessment thereof. Part of the project is to develop a training programme for police officers, thereby ensuring that the insights gained are implemented in practice.

Baden-Württemberg

- Since 2021: Implementation of the police’s domestic violence risk management strategy, including the establishment of Domestic Violence Coordination Units at all thirteen police headquarters for the purpose of harmonising internal and inter-departmental processes, ensuring the proper flow of information – including with external agencies – and for quality assurance purposes. In addition, a Central Office for Domestic Violence Risk Management was set up at the Baden-Württemberg *Land* Criminal Police Office, providing the Coordination Units with support in the form of additional risk assessments and advice on operational issues.
- 2020: Telephone advice service on the topic of domestic violence, provided by the Baden-Württemberg *Land* Criminal Police Office in conjunction with the association *WEISSER RING*, the association *Frauen helfen Frauen* and the Stuttgart Child Protection Centre.

Bavaria

- Regular updating of the ‘Police framework for combating domestic violence and related stalking cases’, which aims to improve the police’s networking with other authorities and institutions, while providing police officers with both legal and practical guidance on interventions at the scene of the offence and on the potential application of police measures to protect victims of domestic violence.
- Each police headquarters in the Bavarian police force has an official ‘Police Representative for Victims of Crime’ who is responsible for providing support and information to persons who are exposed to violence in their immediate social environment and to victims of crimes against sexual self-determination, regardless of whether the persons concerned are being threatened or have already been assaulted.
- The Bavarian *Land* Coordination Unit to Combat Violence has been set up at the State Ministry for Family, Labour and Social Affairs to ensure implementation of the Istanbul Convention. The Unit’s main task involves monitoring and coordinating measures to prevent and combat the forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention, in close cooperation with the relevant departments. Particular emphasis is placed on the support

system for women affected by violence, which is why the Bavarian Coordination Unit for tackling domestic and sexual violence is embedded within the welfare organisation *Freie Wohlfahrtspflege*. In particular, the Unit promotes interdisciplinary cooperation within the field and supports the effort to further develop the support system for women affected by domestic and/or sexual violence.

Berlin

- October 2023: The Berlin Senate adopted the *Land* action plan for implementing the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention). The *Land* action plan comprises over 130 measures in different fields such as prevention, victim protection and support, criminal prosecution, migration and asylum, data and research. Using scientific monitoring as well as evaluations on selected topics, the aim is to monitor the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in Berlin over the long term and to review the effectiveness of the measures set out in the *Land* action plan.
- For women severely affected by domestic violence, Berlin has eight women's shelters, the Berlin Clearing Centre and a network of safe apartments with an overall capacity of 507 places. In addition, several organisations run refuge apartments with around 170 places and second-stage apartments with around 160 places for women and their children. There are five specialist advice centres and intervention services that women experiencing domestic violence can turn to. The Berlin Initiative Against Violence Towards Women (*BIG*) runs a telephone advice service for women affected by domestic violence. Available every day, the service comprises professional telephone counselling, online counselling and a mobile counselling team. The housing agency *asap* provides women affected by violence with support in renting their own accommodation. The Berlin police take a proactive approach in domestic violence cases, working in collaboration with organisations such as *BIG*.
- Alongside the specialist counselling services that focus on specific forms of violence, there are also general advice services in Berlin (e.g. in women's community centres and in projects for female migrants and refugees) which can refer women to specialist counselling services or other organisations depending on their needs. Further important options for all women affected by violence include public services such as the 'Welcome Centre' (the advice centre run by the Berlin Senate's Integration Commissioner) and the district officers for women and equal opportunities.

Brandenburg

- 2024: Cabinet adopted the 'Land action plan to combat violence against women and their children – strategy for implementing the Istanbul Convention in the *Land* Brandenburg'.
- To protect women who are exposed to violence, Brandenburg has 17 women's shelters, four safe apartments and two counselling centres (Potsdam, Prenzlau) with a total of 295 places. This includes 125 rooms.

- 2021: Launch of the ‘Victim Protection Guide’, which provides extensive information and outlines preventive police measures on the key topics of stalking and domestic violence, including an info leaflet for victims of domestic violence. The content is updated by the Brandenburg Ministry of the Interior and for Municipal Affairs.
- The *Land* Brandenburg supports its urban and rural districts in fulfilling their municipal tasks in accordance with the provision of essential services under section 2 of the Municipal Government Constitution. 2,994,800 euros per year have been earmarked for this purpose in the 2023/24 budgets. This is an increase of almost 1 million euros in order to fund pay rises for employees in women’s shelters, to retain skilled staff and to remove user fees in order to improve access for all women affected by violence.

Bremen

- 2022: The Bremen government adopted the ‘Bremen *Land* action plan – protecting women and children from violence’, which contains a comprehensive interdepartmental strategy for implementing the Istanbul Convention and a corresponding catalogue of measures.
- An internal police directive entitled ‘Domestic violence and management of high-risk cases’ was drawn up in order to create a standardised procedure for the police’s handling of domestic violence cases and the associated police measures.
- Counselling on domestic violence, stalking and digital violence is available in person, by telephone or via e-mail, with the service being accessible during the opening hours of the Police Central Office for Prevention.

Hamburg

- Funding of an anonymous shelter for girls and young women who are at acute risk in intercultural conflicts, run by the organisation *basis & woge* with six accommodation places for girls and young women from migrant backgrounds. The shelter offers safety and protection from family violence, as well as specialist care and counselling to help the girls and women cope with their highly complex situation, taking into account their individual needs and wishes.

Hesse

- An intervention system for domestic violence cases has been established across the entire *Land* of Hesse, whereby the judicial social services are directly involved in any criminal proceedings that deal with domestic violence. The judicial social services proactively contact the victims and those accused of domestic violence. The aim is to refer victims to the local support network, while the accused are offered the possibility of starting a suitable programme, e.g. offender counselling. In addition, the social services report to the public prosecution office and make a recommendation for an appropriate final decision.

- Continual increase in the funding available for women's shelters (2019: 3.4 million euros; 2022: 5.4 million euros; 2023: 6.9 million euros; 2024: 7.5 million euros) and for counselling services, emergency hotlines and intervention services for women (2022: 2.4 million euros; 2023: 2.75 million euros; 2024: 2.9 million euros). Combined with the funding for measures and projects aimed at implementing the Istanbul Convention (2024: 2.14 million euros) and for preventing violence and sexual violence against minors (2024: 3.1 million euros), more than 15.6 million euros was made available for the support system in 2024.
- Funding of immediate medical assistance after rape – this service is already available at several hospitals in Hesse and is to be extended to other hospitals. The scheme enables women and men who have been sexually assaulted to receive specialised medical care, usually in hospital. During the medical examination and care, the incident can be documented and evidence can be secured in a manner that will stand up in court, without having to report the case to the police. In addition, the Gießen Forensic Consultation Service – in collaboration with participating hospitals – offers the swift, confidential and free documentation of injuries following an assault without the need to report a crime (www.fokogi.de).

Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania:

- Nine safe houses for women; five intervention services for tackling domestic violence and stalking; ten counselling services for tackling domestic violence; five specialist counselling services for tackling sexual violence; three counselling services for men and violence; one counselling service for persons affected by human trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation and forced marriage (*ZORA*).
- *Land* coordination unit for tackling domestic and sexual violence (*CORA*) with the main task of bringing together state-run and private institutions and promoting their cooperation; position of the Justice System's Commissioner for Victim Support.
- Revision of the regulations on the topic of domestic violence: In particular, inclusion of a current definition of domestic violence that takes account of the Istanbul Convention, incorporation of the legislative changes in sections 52 and 52a of the Security and Public Order Act of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania including modification of the procedure for data sharing with the intervention services and integration of the ODARA risk assessment.

Lower Saxony

- Since 2001: The Domestic Violence Coordination Unit was set up at the Lower Saxony Justice Ministry to implement the *Land* Action Plan for Tackling Violence in Couples.
- For the budget years 2022-2026, the *Land* Prevention Council in the Lower Saxony Ministry of Justice has been allocated funds to promote measures and projects aimed at preventing the sexual abuse of minors. Gender-sensitive approaches are to be included and the relevant professional standards must be applied. In particular, the funding is designed to promote cooperation between the local/regional organisations and services

whose task is to implement individual prevention measures, establish or improve protection schemes, and embed protection schemes within integrated violence prevention strategies.

North Rhine-Westphalia:

- 2023: A coordination unit for implementing the Istanbul Convention at *Land* level was set up at the Ministry for Children, Youth, Family, Equality, Refugees and Integration.
- 69 women's shelters, 62 general advice centres for women, 56 specialist counselling services for tackling sexual violence, 8 specialised counselling services for female victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation, 2 nationally operational counselling services for tackling forced marriage, 2 nationally operational counselling services dealing with female genital mutilation, 1 specialist service for protecting girls and young women with disabilities/chronic illnesses against violence; approx. 50 trauma outpatient clinics, regional counselling services, helplines, various victim protection facilities and safe apartments for women and men.
- The 5 counselling services for girls (<https://www.fachstelle-interkulturelle-maedchenarbeit.de/node/7>) received funding to provide measures/services for young women and girls who have experienced sexual violence while fleeing, at home, in their country of origin and/or in institutional settings. The funding goes into empowerment and prevention workshops, other group-based offerings and individual consultations on important topics e.g. in the field of violence prevention.
- Since 2020: A victim protection portal (www.opferschutzportal.nrw) has been set up as a first point of contact for all victims of violence and their relatives in North Rhine-Westphalia. The portal lists all the *Land*-funded offerings and helps affected persons find the appropriate support.
- 2022: The North Rhine-Westphalian state parliament (*Landtag*) adopted a resolution establishing the North Rhine-Westphalian Foundation for Victim Protection in 2022. The foundation offers financial assistance to victims of violence.

Rhineland-Palatinate

- 18 women's shelters (rising to 19 by the end of 2024), 15 women's advice centres, four second-stage shelters, 18 intervention services (with four child intervention services) with integrated projects for managing acute risk, 12 emergency helplines for women dealing with sexual violence, two facilities in Mainz and Westerburg to support girls who experience violence, four advice centres run by the organisation *SOLWODI* in Mainz, Ludwigshafen, Koblenz and Boppard for foreign women and girls affected by forced marriage and human trafficking.
- The internal police working group 'Violence in close social relationships' is involved in constantly exchanging information, reviewing fundamental issues, evaluating/developing proactive and preventive measures, and such like.
- 2021: Revision of the guidelines published in 2004 on 'Violence in close social relationships and stalking', which provide all operationally active police officers with information about phenomenology, the framework conditions of police intervention, and

the Act on Protection against Violence. The guidelines also examine the intervention powers under criminal procedural law and for preventive police purposes, and provide tactical instructions for operational situations.

- Since 2000: Intervention project to tackle violence in close social relationships – an intervention, prevention and networking alliance of numerous governmental and non-governmental experts who meet at a round table for the whole of Rhineland-Palatinate, at 23 local round tables and in specialist groups, and who are constantly working on new strategies for effective and coordinated action to tackle domestic violence.

Saarland

- 4 women's shelters with a total of 33 places for women affected by violence and up to 27 places for children. The opening of a new women's shelter led to the creation of two additional places. State funding for 8 counselling services, including the Saarland emergency helpline for women and a specialist unit for working with offenders.
- In accordance with the *Land* parliament's resolution of 13 January 2022, the *Land* government expanded the Coordination Unit for Tackling Domestic Violence, transforming it into the Coordination Unit for Implementing the Istanbul Convention. Under the Unit's auspices, an interdepartmental working group is currently developing a *Land* action plan to implement the Istanbul Convention.
- The 3rd revised edition of the 'Guidelines for police work in cases of domestic violence' from 2014 is currently being updated as part of an interdisciplinary working group under the auspices of the Coordination Unit for Implementing the Istanbul Convention. This serves as a legal and practical guide for the police to further improve their management of high-risk cases and to prevent homicides.
- Since 2007, there has been a cooperation agreement between the *Land* Police Headquarters and the Counselling and Intervention Service for Victims of Domestic Violence: The contact details of persons affected by violence are forwarded (with their consent) by the police to the Counselling and Intervention Service so that the latter can contact the victims at an early stage and offer them expert advice and explain the possible options.

Saxony

- The following projects to combat sexual and other gender-specific violence and domestic violence receive state funding under the 'Directive on the promotion of equal opportunities and on combating gender-based violence' in accordance with the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence: 17 shelters for women and children with a total of 161 places for victims and family members (including a special shelter for refugee women and an emergency shelter with 24/7 care), 13 intervention and coordination services, three counselling services for perpetrators of violence, one counselling service for victims of human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, for victims of forced prostitution and for victims of forced marriage (which has been allocated four places at two locations)

as well as the ‘Saxony Working Group for Non-violent Domestic Life’ – a specialist organisation whose remit covers the whole of Saxony.

- Since 2019: The position of a full-time Victim Protection Officer – with a focus on domestic violence, among other things – has been created at the level of police headquarters.
- The intervention services for tackling domestic violence and stalking were expanded, with additional cooperation agreements being concluded between the responsible police headquarters and the intervention services, with the aim of providing victims of domestic violence and stalking with the best possible help.

Saxony-Anhalt

- Behavioural and safety counselling for victims is provided by police victim protection officers at police stations; referrals to appropriate specialist counselling services or other victim support facilities.
- New *Land* strategy entitled ‘Situationally appropriate action in cases of domestic violence, stalking and endangerment of a child’s best interests (classified – for official use only)’ has been in force by decree since 2 August 2023.

Schleswig-Holstein

- In 2024, 8.6 million euros of state funding was made available through the Financial Equalisation Act to fund 386 places in women’s shelters, 26.5 counselling services and 15 intervention services. The funding is set to increase by 2.5% each year. The counselling services include *Land*-wide services for women threatened or affected by human trafficking and forced prostitution (*Contra*) and for women and girls with disabilities (*Mixed Pickles*). In addition, the *Land* budget funds a counselling service for migrant women affected by violence (*MYRIAM*).
- Under the *IMPULS* programme, the *Land* government made 0.3 million euros available for constructing, renovating and replacing women’s shelters (with additional funding coming from the federal investment programme).
- Since 2020: Establishment of the Central Contact Point for Victims of Crime and their Relatives. Appointment of Schleswig-Holstein Victim Protection Officers to act as the main contact persons for victims of criminal offences. Both of these were integrated into the Victim Protection Unit created in 2022.
- Regular updating of the police decree on intervening in cases of domestic violence. The decree sets out the framework of responsibilities and defines the procedures for police intervention in cases of domestic violence.

Thuringia

- ‘Guidelines on domestic violence’ have been issued as part of the framework decree on police measures to combat domestic violence, to raise awareness among officers and to help them deepen their existing knowledge. The guidelines are constantly reviewed and modified to ensure they remain up to date.

- 2019: Test phase in developing a strategy for the Thuringian police to manage high-risk situations in cases of domestic violence and stalking, with the aim of enabling officers to recognise the early signs of potential serious violence within relationships, to assess the indicators using a systematic procedure and to take specific preventive police measures. An interdepartmental framework strategy for the management of high-risk situations is currently being drawn up.