

Information for the in-depth study on all forms of violence against women
of the Secretary-General

Submission of the Government of Hungary

I. Domestic violence

The Parliamentary Resolution No. 115/2003. (X. 28.) OGY on the government tasks in the field of the implementation of the short, medium and long term goals of the national strategy for social crime prevention instructed the Government to prepare the detailed action plan for the implementation of the national strategy for social crime prevention in respect of domestic violence. In this context, the Government must create the necessary legislative, professional and organisational arrangements and define the responsibilities of the entities under its control, as well as the potential contributors, and the persons responsible for implementation and the deadlines.

The Government, in order to implement the short, medium and long term objectives of the national strategy for social crime prevention, adopted the Government Resolution No. 1009/2004. (II. 26.) Korm. to promote the improvement of the institutional system for victims of domestic violence, the crime prevention strategy imposes responsibilities primarily on social policy and child protection.

1. Crisis intervention centre

The Government Office for Equal Opportunities launched a pilot Crisis Intervention Centre service in January 2004. The purpose of the service was to provide assistance to victims of violence in the framework of help-line and personal services.

The crisis centre primarily sets out to help battered women who fell victim to domestic violence or feel threatened by a relative.

Experience indicated that a parallel system of institutions must be established so that the members of the affected families may receive appropriate help either together or separately. It has become evident that 24-hour assistance was needed, because violence generally occurs after working hours, in the evenings.

In the framework of the 24-hour telephone help line (working since April 2005) , the staff take calls round the clock, and they may initiate immediate action by contacting members of the networks, or, in cases not requiring immediate action, notify organisations that are located closest to the clients. Linked to the crisis intervention telephone network, the task force providing methodological assistance to the crisis network is also be housed in the property.

2. Temporary homes for families

In order to provide personal services for the victims of domestic violence the Ministry of Youth Family Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities has opened a tender to extend the capacities of temporary homes for families. As a result of the tender eight temporary homes for families – one in each region – established new places especially for the victims of domestic violence including mothers with children and single women. The staff working with the victims has got a special topic related training.

3. Closed shelter

Furthermore, a public procurement procedure is on the way to use the funds available for purchasing property for the purpose of a closed shelter. The shelter is proposed to open its gates during the summer of 2005.

4. System of institutions of child protection

As of 1 July 2005, the Act on Child Protection compels towns with over 40 thousand inhabitants and cities of county rank to operate so-called "street-kid" programmes by providing social work in streets and housing estates, and to provide social work in the paediatric wards of hospitals (neglected, battered children), and the maternity wards (mothers in social crisis). Stand-by service (availability by telephone) must also be arranged in these child welfare centres. There is also a week-end contact service to promote contacts between children of divorced parents with their parent living separately, and between children living with foster parents with their biological parents.

Among basic child welfare services, as part of the temporary care of children, the Child Protection Act regulates the operation of institutions where battered mothers and children running away from their homes can be placed together in the temporary shelter of families. The child welfare service must also be notified of temporary care or the placement of the child and parent together; the service and the temporary family shelter co-operate during the time of residence in managing the family crisis and in eliminating causes and situations leading to battering and domestic violence.

Some form of child welfare service operates in 98% of the communities in the country. There are 1588 organisational units, and some 3050 communities are covered by the service.

In addition to comprehensive care, the institution must also provide psychological, legal, social and mental hygiene help to parents and children seeking protection as a result of a domestic crisis. The maximum duration of stay is 12 months, which may be prolonged by another 6 months, but not extending beyond the end of the school year, with special regard to the time requirement of court measures relating to battered mothers.

The amendment of the Child Protection Act requiring every community with over 30 thousand inhabitants to operate temporary family shelters as of 1 July 2005 serves to reinforce the network.

II. Human trafficking

The first Hungarian shelter dedicated especially to the victims of human trafficking was opened in April 2005 in association of the Ministry of Interior, the Hungarian Baptist Aid and the IOM. The Ministry of Youth Family Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities provides professional assistance for the shelter which is operated by the Baptist Aid. The location of the shelter is strictly confidential which is giving help for both Hungarian and foreign trafficked persons.

April 2005.