

# Summary of FOMEN Transnational Report (TNR)

Needs and Resources Analysis for Gender Sensitization and Gender Based Violence Prevention Programmes with Male Migrants and Refugees



Project: FOMEN: FOCUS ON MEN: Gender Based Violence Prevention Work with Male Refugees and Migrants (REC-RDAP-GBV-AG-2018 – 856614, 2019-2021)

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This summary of the **Transnational Report** briefly presents the main results of an analysis of needs and resources for gender sensitization and prevention of gender-based violence with male refugees and migrants as part of the **FOMEN** project.

The project "Focus on Men: gender-based violence prevention work with male refugees and migrants" is a European project, funded by the European Union's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (project no REC-RDAP-GBV-AG-2018 – 856614, 2019-2021). It is run by partner organizations based in six European countries and it is coordinated by Verein für Männer- und Geschlechterthemen Steiermark (VMG) in Austria.

The purpose of this initial assessment of the FOMEN project was to analyze needs and resources as well as examples of good practices, regarding gender-sensitive and violence-preventive work with male migrants and refugees. Based on the analysis, the project team developed quality standards, a capacity building programme for professionals and a gender sensitization and violence prevention programme for male migrants and refugees with the aim to encourage their reflection on topics such as gender roles, violence prevention, self-care and caring masculinities.

Across the six partner countries the project's interdisciplinary team, together with national experts, conducted a needs assessment using qualitative and quantitative methods. These included a total of 10 experts' workshops and focus group discussions as well as 26 semi-structured interviews with professionals working with male migrants and refugees and/or in the fields of gender-awareness, masculinities, and violence prevention. An additional focus group with male refugees and migrants was held in Austria. Moreover, the same online survey was used in the six countries, translated into the different languages, to gather additional quantitative information from a wider sample, and was responded to by a total of 271 participants.

The needs and resources analysis shows that professionals from all countries, beyond the institutional differences and the different governmental policies, consider gender sensitive and violence prevention programmes with male migrants and refugees as very important. Special emphasis is put on the need for a deep understanding of a migrant's / refugee's current situation and the impact of the experiences during the flight or migration process, including their understanding of gender and family roles in relation to social norms and stereotypes, both in the past and within their current circumstances.

Regarding the needs of refugee and migrant men, satisfaction of their basic needs was deemed important, such as access to asylum and mental and physical health are priorities, as well as creating safe spaces for men, where they can talk about the migratory process and exchange thoughts and experiences.

With respect to the approaches that should be followed in gender sensitive and violence preventive work, professionals from all countries agree that work with men on violence prevention should follow a non-discriminatory approach and, apart from their own background, diversity and categories of affiliation, the trainers should always have in mind the participants' cultural background and their experiences as migrants and refugees.

The language barrier is also an issue that was discussed extensively in both parts of the research, especially in countries where there are not many migrants and refugees (e.g. Croatia). Where there is a lack of interpreters, this is an obstacle that should be overcome. All the participants in the research highlighted the importance of language in the implementation of the project.

In all parts of the needs analysis, the participants have expressed the need of further training and capacity building of professionals who work with migrant and refugee men. Few of the participants consider themselves adequately trained and prepared to work with men for a violence prevention programme, although they have expressed this need to their managers.

As it was apparent from the results of the research, a training programme for professionals ought to aim to increase their own awareness first in the fields of migration and in non-discrimination, feminism, patriarchy, and masculinities. Professionals do not consider they are well informed and familiar with concepts like these, and they wish to be further trained. An educational programme should use interactive tools such as role playing and case studies for this purpose.

Another need that a training programme should cover is providing information to professionals about the national and European policies regarding migration, the asylum process and gender-based violence. Material easily accessible and understandable should be available to professionals who wish to work on gender sensitivity and violence prevention projects with refugee men. This could be achieved with regular trainings

(online but also with physical presence) and with available links on the websites of the project<sup>1</sup>, yet also coming from other organizations.

Working with groups requires well-trained professionals who are prepared and in a position to understand the dynamics of the group and to make participants feel safe and protected. In the needs analysis most of the participants expressed their wish to be further trained on group facilitation and, again, that interactive activities should be included in training to achieve this.

During the focus group discussions some prominent projects were presented as examples of good practice, for instance **Men Talk**<sup>2</sup> in Austria, which offers space for dialogue-oriented exchange with male refugees targeted towards gender sensitivity and violence prevention. It is a modular dialogue series based on a concept by Alternatives To Violence (ATV, Norway). It is ongoing since 2019 in Graz/Styria, funded by the Integration Fund. A second example of good practice is the **Boys in Care**<sup>3</sup> manual, created within the framework of the European project “Boys in Care – Strengthening boys to pursue care occupations” (BiC), a project which took place in Italy. The objective of the manual is to offer information to male and female operators working with boys on how to support them in their choice of getting trained in caring professions. The aim is for operators to be able to provide professional counselling also based on gender awareness. Another example of good practice is the project **Heroes**<sup>4</sup>. Heroes is a German initiative that focuses on preventing honour killing and oppression by giving the lead to young men with a migration background who educate other young men and boys on breaking patriarchal structures and preventing gender-based violence in their community. The project is operating in several German cities and is financed by the World Childhood Foundation (HEROES, 2020). Heroes follows the concept of peer-education, in which young men and boys with a migration background will be trained to become “anti-violence” trainers themselves and train other male youngsters in intervention programmes, in which they follow the so-called role-model approach. Finally, the project **Men Speak Out**<sup>5</sup> was mentioned as a further good practice example. This project aimed to engage men in the process of ending FGM and, on a larger scale, to end violence against women and promote gender equality through a human rights’ approach. Taking into

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.focus-on-men.eu/resources>

<sup>2</sup> [https://vmg-steiermark.at/de/men\\_talk](https://vmg-steiermark.at/de/men_talk)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.boys-in-care.eu/en.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.heroes-net.de/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://menspeakout.eu/>

account these good practice examples that were mentioned it is obvious that professionals in all the six countries agree that the most successful projects are those which ensure safe conditions, where participants feel empowered to express themselves, and encourage an active participation, at all levels, of members of migrant and refugee communities as trainers, facilitators, interpreters, opinion leaders, as well as participants.