



LITHUANIA NATIONAL REPORT

1.1 Scope of gender based violence in Lithuania

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a phenomenon, which, in most cases, affects girls or women from all around the world and does not discriminate between upbringing, culture, sets of value or age (Leach, Dunne & Salvi, 2014). The definition of gender based violence can be separated into two categories. In most frequent definition, gender based violence is made synonymous with “violence against women” (European institute for gender equality). However, other definitions do not make such distinction that only women can be victims of gender-based violence. In these definitions, women’s sex is not identified, so they encompass both sexes - the victims of gender-based violence can be both, female and male (WHO, 2005). In Lithuania, as in the rest of the world, there is no clear definition of gender-based violence. European institute for gender equality (EIGE), as one of its goals has set to lower GBV in Europe. EIGE provides a list of legal definitions and terms of GBV in each European country. Based on the data, provided by EIGE, laws in Lithuania regulate such forms of GBV: violence from an intimate partner (the term “domestic violence” is used in Lithuania to describe such type of GBV), rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking. EIGE suggests international and commonly used definition of GBV: gender based violence is based on a disproportionate relationship between women and men, which asserts the dominance of men in regards to women (European institute for gender equality, 2016). Gender-based violence definition should include violence against the person because of sexual identity as well as sexual orientation (LGBT+ persons), but the term of gender-based violence is not used in Lithuania.

In 2012-2013, institute of hygiene questioned 89 women who experienced violence from intimate partner (Higienos institutas, 2013). The results showed that 98.5% of respondents suffered psychological violence at least once in their lifetime, and 95.5% of respondents – at least once in the past year. 83.1% of women experienced moderate physical violence (slap to the face, throwing an item, pushing, pulling hair), 78.7% of respondents experienced severe physical violence (hitting with a fist, kicking, strangling, use of a weapon), 56.2% of women experienced sexual violence, and 64% of respondents experienced economical violence at least once in their lifetime. 82% of women claimed experiencing more than one type of violence in the past year. 8 out of questioned 89 women had even experienced a miscarriage as a result of their partner’s violence. Most common feelings that women were feeling after experiencing violence from an intimate partner were helplessness (42.7%), anger (41.6%), fear (37.1), and humiliation (33.7%). However, the results also showed that most of the women did not seek help right away after the first violent act. The most common reasons for that were shame (43.9%), uncertainty where to look for help (39%) and disbelief in a possible help (36.6%).

It is worth mentioning that some acts of violence against women are committed due to the people’s assumption that it is not actually violence. RAIT (2017) carried out a survey in which they aimed to investigate Lithuania’s citizens’ attitude on equality of men and women. Results showed that even though 93% of all respondents think that hitting a woman with a purpose to silence her is a form of violence, but 45-54 year old men statistically significantly more often do not think that it counts as violence. 82% of respondents agree that having sex by force is a form of violence, however, 45-54 year old men statistically significantly more often do not. 60% of all respondents think that belittling a woman in front of the friends is a form of abuse, but men statistically significantly more often than women think that such act is not abuse. Furthermore, men statistically significantly more often than women do not think that forbidding a woman to work, because she has to stay at home with children, is a form of abuse. 42% of all respondents partially agree that women often





provoke the abuse themselves and 39% of respondents partially agree that women tend to “sharpen” the situation when blaming men. Men statistically significantly more often than women agree with the latter two statements. Furthermore, when asked about the types of violence, 72% of respondents first think about physical violence, while only 25% of respondents mention psychological abuse (people with higher education and higher income mention the latter more often). It is also worth noticing that only 8% of respondents mention verbal abuse and only 6% mention sexual violence.

Official statistics portal provides the information regarding registered cases of domestic violence in 2017, sorted by sex and age groups (Oficialiosios statistikos portalas, 2018). Based on this information, big difference between men and women suffering from domestic violence in 2017 emerged already at the age of 18 – three times more women than men in the age group of 18-24 experienced domestic violence. The biggest number of cases of such violence was reported between the age of 30 and 59 – in the age group of 30-39 women experienced domestic violence six times more often than men; in the age group of 40-49 women experienced such violence more than five times more often than men; almost four times more women than men experienced domestic violence in the age group of 50-59. In general, the mere number of women suffering from domestic violence in 2017 was bigger in all age groups, except in the group of 0-3 years old (in this group the number of boys and girls experiencing violence was equal) and between age of 4 and 9 years old (bigger number of boys than girls experienced domestic violence). In total, over 8000 cases of domestic violence were registered in Lithuania in 2017. In these cases, 91% of perpetrators were men and almost 80% of victims were women – in other words, 8 out of 10 victims of domestic violence in Lithuania in 2017 were women and girls. 45 percent believe that partner violence against women is her own provocation.

Furthermore, the situation of violence against children is getting worse every year. According to the data, provided by official statistics portal (2018), 1541 cases of physical violence against children were registered in Lithuania in 2017 (while 897 cases in 2016 and 586 cases in 2015 of such violence were registered). Boys become victims of physical violence more often than girls – in 2017, 59% of victims were boys, 64% of victims were boys in 2016 and 60% of victims were boys in 2015. However, psychological violence is the most common type of violence against children – in 2017, 2719 cases altogether were registered in Lithuania. In 2016, 1710 such cases and in 2015 – 980 psychological violence cases were registered. Comparing boys and girls suffering from such violence, the numbers do not differ much – boy were victims of psychological violence 51% of the times in 2017, 52% of the times in 2016 and 50% of the times in 2015. Sexual violence is not as common as physical and psychological violence, yet, it does exist. 141 cases of sexual violence were registered in 2017, meanwhile, 74 cases in 2016 and 103 cases in 2015 of such violence were registered. It is clear that the girls become the victims of sexual violence much more often – in 2017, 81% of victims were girls, in 2016 – 82% of victims were girls and in 2015 – 73% of sexual violence victims were girls. This statistic shows that violence against children is a rather big problem in Lithuania. In 2017, the number of violence against children cases was almost twice bigger than in 2016. Differently from adults, boys become victims of violence more often than girls (except for sexual violence) among minors.

Talking about LGBT+ persons, statistical data are sad. Lithuanian Gay League conducted a research in 2014: 79 percent of students are exposed to bullying because of their sexual orientation, every third LGBT+ student feels very unsafe at school because of negative attitudes, discrimination, physical and psychological abuse (Lozovska, 2016). Project Hombat on homophobic bullying, implemented together with the partners from Cyprus and Greece in 2017 and 2018, show, that homophobic bullying is widespread, but unrecognizable. 85 percent of schoolchildren, both heterosexual and other, are facing bullying because of gender or sexual orientation (Hombat, 2018).





1.2. Violence prevention policy

In 2017, the President of the Republic of Lithuania approved the *Law of fundamental protection of children's rights* (Lietuvos Respublikos vaiko teisių apsaugos pagrindų įstatymo Nr. I-1234 pakeitimo įstatymas, 2017). The purpose of the document is to assure the implementation, defense and protection of children's rights, to strengthen the responsibility of parents and other children's representatives, to assure the interests of children, to set the organizational fundamentals of aid to children and families, to define the mechanisms of confidence of children's rights and protection, the institutions of children's rights' protection's system, legal essentials of these institutions' practice, and the provisions of fundamental responsibilities of children's rights' violations. Violence against children is considered to be physical abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect. All people have to be guided by many principles, described in the law, including the priority for children's best interest, hearing the children's opinion, non-discrimination, individualization, assurance of healthy children's development, etc. The document also describes a variety of children's rights, including the right to live and develop healthy, the right to have parents, the right to study, the right to have an identity, the right to a private life, the right to be heard, the right to have proper living conditions, the right to social protection, the right to the freedom of self-expression, rest and leisure time, the rights of disabled children, etc. The list of children's rights includes a right to the protection from violence – it states that all forms of violence against children are banned. A child who is a violence victim has a right to help which best meets his/her needs and interests. The Republic of Lithuania takes all the possible means to protect children from violence and to provide a necessary help for those who have suffered from violence.

In 2014, Lithuania started implementing the *National domestic violence prevention and aid to victims during 2014-2020 program*, which was approved by the Government of Lithuanian Republic (2014 m. gegužės 28 d. Lietuvos Respublikos vyriausybės, Nr. 485). The main purpose of the program is to decrease the amount of domestic violence cases in Lithuania, which is aimed to achieve through two goals: first, program seeks to educate society about the various manifestations of violence, its consequences and the necessity to prevent it, as well as to foster intolerance for violent behavior. Second, program seeks to improve the complex mechanism of aid for people who experience domestic violence. The first goal is set to be achieved through 3 objectives: 1) educating society about domestic violence prevention, teaching how to recognize the manifestations of violence, and fostering the intolerance for violence; 2) improving the professional competence of specialists working in the areas of domestic violence prevention and aid; 3) creating and implementing the means of the change of domestic violence behavior. The second goal is set to be achieved through two objectives: 1) improving the system of aid services, their quality and accessibility for people who experience domestic violence and their family members; 2) strengthening the cooperation of country's institutions, municipalities and non-governmental organizations. The program also foresees to improve the efficiency of specialized help centers, which provide specialized aid (for example, psychological, legal, medical, etc.) for people who experience violence throughout the whole Lithuania. Such centers were established in 2012. During 2013, over 5,000 people were provided help, of who 90% were women.

Municipalities also prepare action plans or programs for domestic violence prevention and aid. For example, Vilnius district municipality approved the *Prevention against domestic violence and aid to its victims during 2018-2020 program* (2017 m. spalio 27 d. Vilniaus rajono savivaldybės taryba, Nr. T3-391). The aims of this program are similar to that of already described *National domestic violence prevention and aid to victims during 2014-2020 program*: first, the program aims to provide a broader understanding to the residents of Vilnius district about various manifestations of violence, its consequences and the necessity to prevent it, and foster intolerance for violent behavior. Second, the program aims to improve the complex mechanism of





aid for people who experienced domestic violence. Third, the program aims to improve the accessibility and quality of specialized help, psychological, juridical, social services for adult victims of domestic violence. This program also provides a clear set of steps to be used to achieve its objectives, for example, different projects, seminars, discussions, software, flyers, first aid training, violence prevention events, services of psychosocial help, etc. Gender-based violence is also included. This program states that “formal pre-school and school education systems should also include questions about equality of women and men, non-stereotypical gender roles, mutual respect, non-violence approach to conflict resolution, gender-based violence and the right to an individual's freedom. All of these aspects should be applied in non-formal educational institutions, including objects of sport, culture, leisure, and media. Violence prevention is not the responsibility of one specialist (social educator, social worker)”.

Violence, its prevention and aid is also mentioned in the *Law of education of the Republic of Lithuania* (1991 m. birželio 25 d. Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo įstatymas, Nr.). The law of education forbids any kind of violent acts (including violence in educational institution and violence in the Internet space), directed against students or educational institution's employees and committed by students, educational institution's employees, and teachers. The Law of education states that violent acts have to be reported (by any member of educational community who notices any kind of violence) to the leader of the educational institution. In case of violence against students in educational institution, the leader of the institution has to report such act to the parents/caregivers of the student and to the corresponding authorities. In case of violence against educational institution's employees, the head of the institution has to report the act to the corresponding authorities and recommend the psychological help to the abuser and the victim. The law of education also states that both the victim and the abuser have the right to a free psychological help, cooperating together with student's parents or caregivers and teachers, which is the responsibility of the head of the educational institution. In case of bullying in the Internet space using visual information, the parents (or caregivers) of the abuser and the victim has to (and other people have the right to) report it to corresponding authorities.

In 2017, the minister of education and science approved the *Recommendations for implementation of violence prevention at schools* (2017 m. kovo 22 d. Švietimo ir mokslo ministrės įsakymas, Nr. V-190). The recommendations describe the means of violence prevention and intervention in order to create a safe environment in schools, presented by schools', municipalities' and national levels, as well as the responsibilities and duties of schools, municipalities and governmental institutions in order to achieve this goal. The prevention aims to create a safe environment for students' growth, maturity and educational development at school, where students feel respected, accepted, safe, their opinions and suggestions are heard and appreciated. The document describes how the prevention of violence should be implemented at schools on the school level, municipality level and national level.

The minister of education and science also approved the *Recommendations for schools about the criteria of recognition of domestic violence and actions in case of possible domestic violence* (2017 m. rugpjūčio 3 d. Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo ir mokslo ministras, Nr. V-625). The main purpose of these recommendations is to recognize a student suffering from domestic violence as soon as possible and take actions against any possible recurrent violence of this kind. The recommendations also include the consequences of domestic violence (physical, psychological, sexual, neglect) for children's health and development, forms of violence and its recognition criteria, the actions of school employees, expected to take in case of possible domestic violence, the list of different age children's sexual behavior, which is considered normal and which raises concerns, and the particular sequence of actions of school employees in case of possible domestic violence.





1.3 Current GBV programs / good practices

There are few projects, dedicated to gender-based violence prevention in Lithuania. For example, project “Youth4Youth” is a conscientiousness promoting, educational program created for young people in official and non-official educational environments (Youth4Youth, 2012). The target group of this program is teenagers – “Youth4Youth” seeks to diminish harmful views on gender-based stereotypes and violence. The program aims to reduce the frequency and effect of GBV in 6 steps:

1. Improving the knowledge of young people about GBV, its reasons, social and cultural norms and inequalities;
2. Creating a safe environment for young people to explore the effect of GBV on themselves and their peers;
3. Giving the opportunity for young people to recognize their right to be appreciated and respected, as well as the obligation to appreciate and respect the others;
4. Empowering young people to promote changes, challenge and prevent GBV in their communities through knowledge and self-confidence;
5. Empowering schools and other non-official educational environments in order to prevent GBV and promote relationships based on tolerance, respect and equality;
6. Providing the information and the means to educators which are useful for work with young people in official and non-official educational environments, while trying to prevent GBV.

The project suggests conscientiousness promotion and educational activities. The activities are meant to fight harmful views, which directly contribute to gender-based violence. These activities are created to be carried out by young people themselves in groups, where they can learn from each other and their own experiences. Various methods are used in this program, such as discussions in groups, role playing, brainstorming, presentations, art assignments, etc. The purpose of all the activities is to give skills and values such as respect, communication, empathy and critical thinking. The main goal of “Youth4Youth” is to enable young people to get involved in change which they want to see in themselves and their environment.

“LOG IN - I like safety” was a 2013 - 2014 project, which goals were to fight gender-based violence, while promoting responsible use of social media and platforms and providing information on the role of modern technologies, regarding the spread and stimulation of gender based stereotypes (Log In, 2014). The target individuals of “Log In” program were young people (14-18 years old), parents and specialists working with youth (teachers, psychologists, and specialists, implementing the busyness of young people) in Lithuania (Log In, 2015). The project suggested 4 module seminars and creative activities for youth, which help recognize and analyze sexist stereotypes, as well as promote the models of different gender relationships based on mutual understanding. During the time of the program, over 400 adults (parents, teachers, educators, etc.) were trained in various seminars as well (Log In, 2014), which aimed to promote the understanding of GBV and the responsible use of social networks and modern media. This program, different from the “Youth4Youth”, was concentrated on the effect which social media and technology has on GBV. “Log In” program also stresses the importance of young people working together in ways, which promote empathy and non-violent conflict solutions. However, even though the parents were meant to be involved in the program, it was one of the difficulties experienced in this project.

Furthermore, not only GBV prevention programs, but also help lines exist in Lithuania. For example, a special webpage called “Woman's help for woman” is created to provide help for women in difficult life situations, including those who have suffered from violence (“Moters pagalba moteriai”). Women can use phone number, provided in the webpage, for emotional support from other women 24/7. It is also possible to





use the e-mail address. The help is provided by the volunteers, who are required to finish 100 hours of training, where they acquire active listening skills and learn to provide emotional support in difficult situations, such as emotional crisis, the risk of suicide, violence, etc. Working volunteers attend seminars in order to improve their qualification of providing emotional support, and participate in the groups of discussing cases, all of which help improve the quality of this service. In cases when it is needed, volunteers direct women to where they can get further help or information. “Woman’s help for woman” also offers other services, such as individual psychologist’s consultations, self-knowledge and development group, attorney consultations, seminars for different institutions (one of the seminars’ topics is domestic violence), and others. However, the latter services have their own fees.

Webpage “Stop stalking” is created to provide help and information for people who suffer from stalking (“STOP Persekiojimai”, 2017). The webpage gives information on what stalking is, its damage, how to react and what to do in case of stalking. It is stated that the goal of the website is “to increase the awareness of stalking behavior, related damage and ways, which assure the safety of ourselves and others. This initiative also seeks to promote professional discussions about stalking behavior and the solution to this problem”. The website includes a section “Realize what kind of help you need”, where different type of help is listed (legal, psychological, emotional, informational, and complex) with the further directions to get specific type of help.

Other helplines, created specifically for young people also exist in Lithuania. For example, “Child line” (Vaikų linija) provide free emotional help for children and youth with variety of problems (including those who experience violence) by phone and the Internet. Young people can call, write e-mails, and chat in the Internet with volunteers or peers. Most of the people who provide help are volunteers, who finish specific training. “Child line” cooperates with the specialists from national child rights’ protection and adoption service. The organization also provides consultations to adults who notice violated child rights or who want to know more about safe communication in the Internet. Other line, “Youth line”, provides very similar services – free emotional help for young people by phone and the Internet. Over 250 volunteers in 3 biggest cities of Lithuania work in this organization and try to help young people to deal with difficulties in their life.

Lithuania needs to have efficient programs on sexual education, tolerance of others and gender-based violence. Lessons from Lithuania may be as follow:

- Start the implementation of prevention program from adults, not children, e.g. from principal of school, teachers and parents.
- Include the whole school personnel, not only teachers and specialists (psychologists, social pedagogue, etc.), but also administration, kitchen workers, cleaners, etc.
- A political strategy would facilitate the implementation of preventive programs in schools.

1.4. Gender-based violence in the media

First case

Gender-based violence does not go unnoticed in the media. One of the most notorious and popular cases in Lithuania was violence by Gintaras Einikis against his wife. G. Einikis is a well-known individual and is recognized as one of the best basketball players in Lithuania. The first news of violence against his wife by G. Einikis was in 2011, when he threatened to kill, pour acid and burn the house together with his girlfriend at the time Jurgita in it (Delfi.lt, 2011). Regarding the threat, Jurgita reported the incident to the police. When the police arrived, it became clear that the famous basketball player was heavily intoxicated (the concentration of alcohol in G. Einikis body was 5.11%). He was arrested, questioned and let go. After the pre-trial he was arrested for 2 full days. After this incident, media report that such G. Einikis violence against his wife became





a yearly occurrence. In 2012, G. Einikis' wife Jurgita reported to the police that her husband was kicking her and injured her back and hand in front of their daughter (Faktai.lt,2012). Identical or very similar articles became common in media each year: "After beating his wife, G. Einikis has regained freedom and came back home" (Lrytas.lt, 2013), "G. Einikis raged in his house: he beat his wife again, she is in the hospital" (Lrytas, 2013), "Violence continues: A basketball player Gintaras Einikis has injured his wife Jurgita" (Alfa.lt, 2015), "G. Einikis wife after repeated violence occurrence: men drink, but the women are guilty" (Delfi.lt, 2016), "Gintaras Einikis has spent a night in custody" (Lrytas.lt, 2016), etc. In 2016, while living and working in Russia, G. Einikis still found a way to hurt his wife – in social network "Facebook" he called his wife a promiscuous women (Delfi.lt, 2016). Based on the information, provided by the media, it became clear that G. Einikis was intoxicated every time when he was using violence.

During many years of articles regarding the private life of G. Einikis and his wife, countless comments were appearing in the public. Humorous performances and caricatures with sarcastic remarks were emerging, regarding the violence of G. Einikis against his wife: "European championship is over, G. Einikis' wife has stumbled in defense again...", "The more you beat, the more you love", etc.

This story is an example of the attitudes of Lithuanian society and the attitude towards the violence victims. After many years of continuous domestic violence and threats of leaving the marriage, G. Einikis' wife continued to suffer the violent behavior of her husband. Society looked at this situation with no respect, kept on bullying her and making inappropriate comments.

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Second case

After #METOO became popular this year, a lot of women and girls were encouraged to speak about sexual harassment. This had a direct effect on many well-known men being exposed to the media. In the short amount of time, few stories with similar plots became famous, in which honorable professors, photographers and politicians were accused of sexual harassment against the opposite sex.

One of the cases gained society's attention after #METOO event – the case of Gintautas Trimakas, lecturer and photographer of Vilnius art academy. The academy got two official complaints from students about events that took place several years ago: the conversations, comments and touching, which is regarded as inappropriate (Delfi.lt, 2018). It was confirmed that the lecturer violated the code of ethics and his behavior towards the students was unprofessional (Delfi.lt, 2018). G. Trimakas claimed to the media that he was misunderstood and in his opinion, he was just acting in a too friendly manner with the students (Delfi.lt, 2018). Media provides detailed information about the complaints of the students, where the behaviour of the suspected lecturer is described: “he took me by my hips, pulled me too close”, “he stood very close and he just became brave and touched my breast”, “he said that looking at you, such muse, blood starts flowing to the specific man parts”, etc. (Delfi.lt, 2018) Students claimed that after such behavior they were trying to avoid the lecturer, but it was not always possible.

After this event the lecturer resigned (Delfi.lt, 2018). The view of the public was ambiguous: one side thought that these accusations were a targeted slander campaign with a purpose to deal with the lecturer; the other side supported the students and condemns G. Trimakis' behavior (Delfi.lt, 2018). Lecturers' colleagues and other people who personally know him could not believe the accusations. A lot of doubt also arose from the fact that the girls did not immediately report the harassment, but chose to be quiet for 2 years.

This case generalizes the concept of discrimination against women and the fact that before #MeToo movement women could hardly expect any help after speaking up about sexual harassment (Delfi.lt, 2018). Lawyers agree that sexual harassment is a widespread phenomenon in Lithuania, but the laws which defend women against harassment do not work due to a hopeless provincial view of the society. Up until this day, stereotypes against women shape the attitude that sexual harassment is the consequence of woman's behavior, such as wearing short skirt, not defending herself enough, being known as temptress, etc. In other words, society in Lithuania still blames women for being the victims of sexual harassment. It is important to note that victims of sexual or physical abuse almost never report the crime or seek help themselves – only people in the close environment can change that status quo.

One more problem, which has an effect on the general silence of victims of sexual harassment, is the aspects of Lithuania's criminal codex (LCC) 151 article. The victim has a hard time proving sexual harassment or sexual assault fact because tangible evidence is required. Whilst in other countries the burden of proof falls on the accused individual. He or she must prove his or hers innocents, not the victim its harm.

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Third case

Third case involves different types of gender based violence, such as stalking, physical violence, threats, attempted murder. This violence was experienced by Lithuanian and European fitness champion Ilona Kokoš. She broke up with her ex-boyfriend Jurijus Solionovas, Lithuanian champion of bodybuilding, in 2015, on the grounds of alcoholism (Delfi.lt, 2018). After that J. Solionovas started threatening to kill I. Kokoš and her family, stalking and damaging her property (Delfi.lt, 2017). Based on the information from the media, J. Solionovas kept on sending threatening messages, constantly calling, waiting for I. Kokoš at her door, stalking, even sleeping in his car under I. Kokoš windows. Other people informed I. Kokoš that her ex-boyfriend was planning to pour chemical substances on her. The reason for that was, as described in the media, “if you are not mine, you will not be anyone else’s” (Delfi, 2017). J. Solionovas was imprisoned in correctional facility, but he managed to send threatening messages to I. Kokoš even from there and the police was not able to prove such actions (Delfi.lt, 2018). After finishing one-year sentence, J. Solionovas continued his threats, tried to communicate with I. Kokoš and take their child away from her, and blamed her for everything what happened to him (Delfi.lt, 2018). In the beginning of 2018, he attempted to murder I. Kokoš. When she was entering a taxi, J. Solionovas ran up, poured gasoline on her and was ready to light it up, but a quick reaction from the taxi driver saved the woman's life, when he knocked the lighter out of the hands of J. Solionovas (Delfi.lt, 2018). An ex-bodybuilder was imprisoned again after the incident based on the accusations of causing physical harm and attempted murder.

Fitness champion I. Kokoš unsuccessfully tried to get help from the police. After I. Kokoš went to the prosecutor’s office, she was promised a safety button, which calls for help immediately after pressing it (Delfi.lt, 2018). Every time the woman went to pick it up, the button was not functioning. The woman lost hope in institutional help. Once she called the police, because she was afraid to enter her own home (Delfi.lt, 2018). After that, the child services took interest in the children’s physical living conditions, but no one asked how the child was feeling and why he was not attending school at the time, when she was afraid to take him there. I. Kokoš also stated to the media that following these violent events, her child is traumatized and psychologically crushed, but they get no help from the corresponding authorities.

This case highlights many problems of various institutions, such as the police and the child services. It is clear that institutions in Lithuania do not have the knowledge and/or the means how to behave in such dangerous situations, how to isolate a man who is threatening to murder a woman and her child, and how to provide a needed help and safety for the victims of violence.

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1.5. Conclusions

The stereotypes, such as the one that the woman is the one to blame for the violent acts, committed by her life partner, still exist in Lithuania. The website “Everyone’s concern” (“Visų reikalas, 2018) provides a list of stereotypes which are still prevalent, for example: “women like to live with the abusers. If they didn’t, they would not live with them”, “there is no point of helping such woman, she will come back to the man who beats her”, “she was asking for that and was provoking a man”, “if she wanted, she could leave the abuser any time”, “it is her own fault that she started the relationship”, “she wanted this relationship”, etc. In addition, even nowadays there are still people in Lithuania who think that violence is woman’s fault, because of wearing provoking clothes (such as short skirt or dress, open blouse, showing off too much open skin, etc.) Furthermore, media in Lithuania forms a big part of people’s attitudes and opinions, including the attitudes and stereotypes towards violence. Office of equal opportunities mentioned the most common mistakes journalists make about violence and suggested how to correct them (Lygių galimybių kontrolieriaus tarnyba, 2018). For example, journalists often use the word “supposedly” (*lit. tariamai*) when talking about the incident which is not yet proven in the court. This word in Lithuanian language means “non-existent”, thus, it is misleading. It is suggested to avoid it and instead, for instance, change the structure of the sentence and say “woman states that...” The journalists also often make the assumption that violent acts are committed under the influence of alcohol, drugs or other substances, which in a way justify the abuser, thus, it is recommended to avoid such assumptions. It is also recommended that the users of media would get the information where to seek for help in case of domestic violence – it is suggested to provide the contacts of various help centers and phone lines. These and other recommendations are given for the purpose to combat the old society’s attitudes and stereotypes about domestic violence.

The center of information for women carried out a survey about pupils’ stereotypes on gender-based violence and the results showed that young people justify violent acts against their peers (Alfa.lt, 2014). According to the results, most of the justified violent behavior is committed amongst young couples by both, boys and girls. The survey showed that 51% of questioned pupils think it is normal for a girl to beat her boyfriend if he is not showing respect for her. 27% of respondents justify the physical violence once in a while of girl against her boyfriend if he irritates her, however, 8% of pupils think such violence is justified if committed by boy against his girlfriend. Moreover, 53% of girls and 47% of boys think that it is normal for a boy to prompt a girl to have a sexual encounter, if they are in a relationship. 60% of respondents think it is acceptable to check the phone of their partner and more than a third justify threatening to leave the relationship when seeking for their own personal objectives. Even 39% of boys think it is normal to threaten their girlfriend to beat her, even though they do not intend on doing that. This survey shows that pupils justify the violence against their partners in order to control them or to achieve their own objectives. It is also clear that among pupils, gender-based violence is also commonly justified when committed by girls. It is possible that young people do not understand the effect which such acts have on other people (in the case of this study – their partners) and use violence as a joke or the mean to control their partner, for instance, in the quarrel, instead of talking it out and trying to reach the mutual understanding of the situation. The survey showed that the scope of gender-based violence at schools is raising concerns and there is a need of educating young people about this unacceptable behavior.

The research about gender-based violence is mostly supported by statistics of domestic violence. Even though it is the most common form of GBV in Lithuania, there is a lack of research on other kind of violence, for instance, stalking or bullying. In the age of Internet, stalking in the web can become a powerful weapon. There is a need of safe Internet usage research at schools, especially among younger children – almost every kid nowadays has a smart phone with unlimited opportunities to search the web. This can become a problem





as young children might publish too much personal information or visit unsafe websites, which in turn might lead to bigger problems, such as becoming a target of people with inappropriate intentions or joining a bad crowd. Research on the aspects of using the Internet among scholars is necessary in Lithuania.

Other aspect, which is not researched enough, is the effect of bullying on young people. Even though the bullying prevention nowadays is common in Lithuanian schools, there is a lack of research on the emotional and physical aspect of the victims and the results of the existing research are not presented in a way which would make young people think twice before bullying someone. A social action called “A week without bullying” takes place in Lithuanian schools every year. Most commonly there is a variety of posters against bullying at schools, which does not draw much attention of scholars. Social institutions could take the initiative on researching the effect of bullying at schools and the results could be presented for scholars in, for instance, a yearly class, which would take place at “A week without bullying”. It could be presented in a visual form (for example, in a short movie), as the numbers and statistics do not affect children much. Thus, a research of the effect of bullying could be turned into a national social program.

Furthermore, children should be taught about the healthy family dynamics from the young age. Teachers lack the knowledge of the situation of gender-based violence (and violence in general), its prevention and aid in Lithuania, thus, they never talk about it with their students. It seems, that they are not able to identify gender-based violence, it is so unusual term in Lithuania. It should be mandatory for teachers to finish training about GBV, so that they could give classes about it as a form of prevention. For example, there could be classes for middle school students about the appropriate behavior in cases of family conflicts and the ways how to solve it.

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