

Strengthening the protection of women from torture

“Interventions against Domestic Violence in the Canton of Zurich Switzerland”

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UNO Side-Event Geneva, 11.3.08



Change of Culture

- 1970ies: Violence against women becomes a social and international movement.
- The battered women's shelters - solely responsible and competent to assist women submitted to violence.
- The limits of effective action without networking were recognized.
- Need for a new approach.
- As a consequence: temporarily "ethical vacuum".

- 1990ies: domestic violence gets on the political agenda.
- Switzerland: First intervention projects against domestic violence.
- The aim: optimize the complementarities of measures and effective cooperation between different actors.
- 1994: WHO calls violence against women as “central risk to women’s health”.
- The inter-institutional exchange focused at that time on mutual demarcation.
- Recent developments emphasized synergies.
- This triggered the creation of cooperation alliances.

The cooperation alliances focused on:

- Improving the enforcement deficiencies of existing laws
- Extending the prosecution with other possibilities of intervention
- Protection and security not only as a matter for NGOs
- Extending the limits of institutional actions
- Networking and concerted action as a foundation
- Protection of victims and accountability of perpetrators are governmental tasks.
- Need for NGOs for heavy cases persists.

Gender-Specific Differences as a Starting Point for a New Legislation

- Women and men are frequently victims of violence.
- The persons using violence are in both cases mostly men.
- Women incur violence mostly in private, men mostly in the public area.
- The risk of injuries increases, if the violence is initiated by a current or former partner.
- Also in the case of perpetrators that are minor, the victims are mainly female.
- If the state intervenes only in the public area, the victims in the private area (mainly women) would be denied of their rights and of governmental protection.
- This gender-specific discrimination triggered the development of a new cantonal Law on protection against domestic violence.

Switzerland is a federal state

- Penal legislation is regulated nationwide.
- Police laws are cantonal.
- Decreeing of protection measures for victims is based on police law (cantonal).
- Legislation in the 29 cantons and half-cantons is varied.
- The canton of Zurich breaks new ground with its Law on protection against violence.

The New Cantonal Law (1. April 2007)

The Law on protection against violence of the canton of Zurich aims a:

- Protection for victims
- Security and de-escalation
- Support for victims and perpetrators
- Protection of affected children

Three Pillars of the Law on Protection Against Violence

1. Police protection measures
2. Collateral protection measures:
by means of proactive consultancy
3. Prevention

Three Prerequisites for Police Protection Measures

1. A violent relationship
2. An unlawful act
3. An endangerment or a violation of physical, sexual and/or mental integrity

1. Relationships According to the Law on Protection Against Violence

Existing or broken familiar or on partnership based relationship in the sense of ...

1. Violence between adults
2. Violence of parents against children
3. Violence of minors
 - against parents
 - against siblings
 - against partners

2. Unlawful Acts

- Exercise of violence
- Threat of violence
- Repeated molestation, ambushing or stalking

3. Forms of Violence

- Physical violence
- Verbal violence
- Sexual violence
- Economic violence
- Social violence

Intended Purpose of Protection Measures

- Protection of concerned persons
- De-escalation
- Prevention of future endangerment and danger
- Credibility of the act and risk of endangerment are sufficient for a protection measure ordered by the police

Police Protection Measures with possibility of judicial extension

1. Eviction order
2. Ban on trespassing
3. Ban on contacts

The protection measures have in any case a duration of 14 days and may be extended judicially by 3 months.

In order to ensure the enforcement, the perpetrator can be taken into custody.

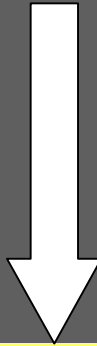
Police protection measures are ordered even *against the wishes of the victims.*

Obligation to inform and to register

- The police informs the child protection authority, if children are living in the household.
- The police transmits the acts of disposal to the consulting instances of the victim as well as to those of the perpetrator.

Accompanying Measures after the Police Intervention

The first contact with victims and perpetrators is initiated
– as soon as possible –
by the consulting instances.



**Help center
of the victim**



**Help center
of the Perpetrator**

Help Center of the Perpetrator

- A “violence consultant” or a “cultural broker” establishes contact with the perpetrator.
- The conversation is aimed at clarifying the situation.
- The perpetrator may be transferred to a program aimed at reducing violence.

Tasks of the IST Office for Intervention against Domestic Violence of the Canton of Zurich

The IST is managed in an interdisciplinary manner and is competent for:

1. Education
2. Advocacy
3. Networking
4. Evaluation
5. Prevention

Inter-institutional, Inter- and Transdisciplinary, Professional Cooperation and Networks

- A strategic cooperation committee of the canton of Zurich in which 18 experts from judiciary, police, health care, consultancy instances, migration office, etc. participates and studies regularly all aspects of the proceedings for a reduction of domestic violence and stands aside the IST Office for Intervention against Domestic Violence Canton of Zurich.



IST Office for Intervention against Domestic Violence Canton of Zurich

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