

## **EMPOWERING LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO COMBAT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN UKRAINE: A HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH**

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### **1. Introduction: Addressing the growing crisis of domestic violence in Ukraine**

Domestic violence has become an alarming crisis in Ukraine, exacerbated by the all-out war. In 2023 alone, 291,428 cases were officially reported, an increase of 19% compared to 2022 [1]. Research suggests that 60% of reported perpetrators were linked to military service, highlighting the profound societal impact of the war [2].

In the midst of these challenges, our NGO, *Étude Académique des Droits de l'Homme et du Constitutionnalisme (EADHC)*, has launched an initiative to strengthen the capacity of local authorities to combat domestic violence. Our project aims to align Ukraine's response mechanisms with European standards, in particular the Istanbul Convention, and to empower local and regional authorities to take a leading role in prevention and victim support.

This report provides an overview of our initiative, focusing on the legal framework, policy recommendations and a practical toolkit for local authorities.

### **2. The role of local government in combating domestic violence**

Local and regional authorities are often the first point of contact for victims of domestic violence. Their role goes beyond administrative functions and includes:

- prevention measures, such as awareness campaigns and territorial community engagement;
- coordination of victim support services, including shelters and psychological support;
- working with law enforcement agencies to ensure that protection mechanisms are effectively implemented.

However, Ukrainian local and regional authorities lack structured training and legal guidance on their role in responding to cases of domestic violence. Our project fills this gap by developing evidence-based recommendations and capacity-building materials.

We plan to research the French and Council of Europe models in order to propose a framework tailored to Ukraine's post-war reconstruction context.

### **3. Project deliverables: Policy and Awareness Toolkit for Local Authorities**

Our initiative focuses on the development of a comprehensive policy and awareness toolkit, which will include:

- legal and policy recommendations (analysis of French best practices and recommendations to improve Ukrainian legislation, as well as the guidelines for local and regional authorities on how to integrate relevant human rights standards into local policies);
- methodology to create training resources for local authorities (probably a structured training programme for local government officials, inspired by Council of Europe materials, case studies of effective local interventions to combat domestic violence etc.);
- strategies for awareness-raising campaigns (we target public information materials to engage communities in prevention efforts, as well as the recommendations for cooperation between civil society and local / regional authorities).

Our project so far is *pro bono*, and we invite international and national experts to contribute to the project and promote cross-sectoral knowledge exchange.

### **4. The importance of European standards: the Istanbul Convention as a roadmap**

The Istanbul Convention sets out binding legal obligations for States Parties and ensures a coordinated, multi-level approach to combating domestic violence. Although Ukraine ratified the Convention in 2022, implementation at the local level remains uneven.

Our project highlights the Council of Europe's role in setting international standards, while adapting them to the unique context of Ukraine. Key areas of adaptation include strengthening local legal frameworks to ensure compliance with human rights obligations, as well as strengthening inter-municipal cooperation in victim protection programmes.

By bridging the gap between legal obligations and municipal practices, our initiative contributes to sustainable systemic change.

### **5. Conclusion: Building a sustainable model for local action**

Domestic violence is not just a private issue – it is a human rights violation that requires a structured response at all of the levels – starting from the level of local self-government. Our initiative provides a scalable, policy-driven approach to ensure that Ukraine's local and regional authorities are equipped to effectively address this pressing challenge.

*The Étude Académique des Droits de l'Homme et du Constitutionnalisme* continues to work with international stakeholders to implement best practices and advocate for stronger legal protections. We invite partners, researchers and policymakers to support and contribute to our efforts. Follow our updates and engagement opportunities:

*Website:* <https://eadhc.fr/>

*LinkedIn:* <https://www.linkedin.com/company/eadh/>

Together, we can make a lasting impact to ensure safety and justice for victims of domestic violence in Ukraine.

### **Literature:**

1. Increase in Domestic Violence Cases in Ukraine in 2024. Fewer Cases of Domestic Violence Reach Court. 19 June 2024. URL: <https://opendatabot.ua/analytics/domestic-violence-2024-5>

2. Домашнє насильство. Новини Укрінформ за темою. URL: <https://www.ukrinform.ua/tag-domasne-nasilstvo>

DOI <https://doi.org/10.36059/978-966-397-487-3-31>

## **ЕМОЦІЙНИЙ ІНТЕЛЕКТ ЯК ФАКТОР ПСИХОЛОГІЧНОЇ СТІЙКОСТІ ЖІНОК, ЯКІ ЗАЗНАЛИ ДОМАШНЬОГО НАСИЛЬСТВА**

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Домашнє насильство є значною соціальною проблемою в Україні, що проявляється у систематичному застосуванні фізичного, психологічного, економічного або сексуального насильства в сім'ї чи близьких стосунках. Це явище має суттєві негативні наслідки для постраждалих, серед яких особливо вразливими є жінки [1]. За статистикою саме жінки складають переважну більшість постраждалих від домашнього насильства [2; 3], що призводить до значних емоційних, фізичних та психологічних травм, зокрема хронічного стресу, тривожності, депресії, зниження самооцінки, почуття провини та сорому, а також страху перед майбутнім, соціальної ізоляції й труднощів у встановленні нових стосунків.