



Policy Recommendations

CYPRUS



Recommendations.

1. National

1.1. Strengthening the Recognition and Protection of Child Victims of Domestic Violence

Children exposed to domestic violence should be explicitly recognised as victims in their own right and provided with the same protection, support, and participation rights afforded to other victims of crime. National legislation and procedures should ensure that children affected by domestic violence are systematically identified, informed of their rights in an age-appropriate manner, and referred to specialised support services without delay.

1.2. Enhancing Child-Friendly and Trauma-Informed Justice

Justice procedures involving child victims should consistently apply child-friendly and trauma-informed principles. Children should receive clear and age-appropriate information throughout proceedings, be adequately prepared for interviews and court processes, and be protected from unnecessary repetition of testimony and secondary victimisation. Particular attention should be given to reducing delays in criminal proceedings involving child victims.

1.3. Strengthening Multidisciplinary Cooperation

Formal multidisciplinary coordination mechanisms should be established and strengthened between law enforcement agencies, social welfare services, mental health services, education professionals, victim support organisations, and judicial authorities. Regular case coordination meetings and clear information-sharing protocols should be promoted to ensure a coherent and child-centred response.

1.4. Professional Standards, Training and Accreditation

Mandatory specialised training should be introduced for professionals working with child victims of violence, including police officers, judges, prosecutors, psychologists, social workers, healthcare professionals, and victim support practitioners. Training should cover child-friendly justice, trauma-informed practice, forensic interviewing, risk assessment, domestic violence dynamics, and prevention of secondary victimisation. Consideration

should also be given to the development of accreditation systems and professional competency standards for specialists working with child victims.

2. Regional

Cyprus does not have regional governments in the way that larger EU countries do (e.g., Spain, Italy, Belgium).

2.1. Strengthening Interagency Coordination Structures

District-level coordination mechanisms should be established or strengthened to facilitate cooperation between social welfare services, mental health services, educational professionals, police, victim support organisations, and justice actors. Regular multidisciplinary case discussions should be encouraged for complex and high-risk cases. These mechanisms should support timely information sharing, coordinated safety planning, and joint decision-making in complex cases involving child victims and victims of domestic violence.

2.2. Improving Access to Specialised Services

Regional authorities should ensure equitable access to specialised psychological, social, legal, and child protection services across all districts. Particular attention should be given to reducing service disparities and ensuring timely referrals to appropriate support services. Referral pathways between services should be clearly defined and consistently applied.

2.3. Building Professional Networks

Regional stakeholders should promote cross-sector collaboration, joint training opportunities, and knowledge-sharing initiatives to strengthen professional relationships and improve coordinated responses to violence against children and domestic violence.

2.4. Promoting Local Multidisciplinary Capacity Building

District-level professionals should have access to regular joint training opportunities focusing on child-friendly justice, trauma-informed practice, risk assessment, domestic violence, and interagency cooperation. Shared training can strengthen common understanding and improve collaboration between services.

3. Local

3.1. Child-Friendly Service Delivery

Frontline services should ensure that children receive clear, age-appropriate information regarding their rights, available support services, and the progress of proceedings. Children should be supported to participate meaningfully in decisions affecting them, in accordance with their age and maturity.

3.2. Early Identification and Referral

Schools, healthcare services, community organisations, and local support services should strengthen procedures for identifying children affected by violence and making timely referrals to specialised services. Professionals working in schools, healthcare settings, and community services should receive support and training to identify signs of violence at an early stage and make timely referrals to specialised services.

3.3. Professional Support and Supervision

Local service providers should establish regular supervision and support mechanisms for professionals working with child victims and victims of domestic violence. This would help address burnout, compassion fatigue, and staff turnover, while improving service quality.

3.4. Strengthening Local Case Management

Local agencies should adopt structured multidisciplinary case management practices, including clear referral pathways, coordinated safety planning, and agreed information-sharing procedures.

3.5. Community Awareness and Prevention

Local stakeholders should promote awareness-raising activities aimed at increasing understanding of domestic violence, children's rights, available support services, and the importance of early intervention and reporting.

4. General

4.1. Strengthening the Directive's Recognition of Vulnerable Victims

The revised Directive should explicitly recognise victims of domestic violence, intimate partner violence, and children exposed to domestic violence as groups requiring specialised protection and support measures.

4.2. Promoting Child-Friendly and Trauma-Informed Justice

The Directive should strengthen obligations regarding child participation, access to information, trauma-informed procedures, and protection from secondary victimisation throughout criminal proceedings.

4.3. Establishing Common Professional Standards

EU institutions should support the development of common competency frameworks, ethical standards, accreditation mechanisms, and specialised training requirements for professionals working with child victims and victims of domestic violence.

4.4. Supporting Integrated Service Models

The European Union should continue promoting multidisciplinary and integrated service models, including Barnahus-type approaches, to improve cooperation between child protection services, justice systems, healthcare providers, and victim support organisations.

4.5. Investing in Professional Capacity Building

The EU should continue supporting training, peer learning, and cross-border knowledge exchange initiatives to strengthen professional capacity and promote consistent implementation of victims' rights across Member States.

CHILD highlight 1.

Children exposed to domestic violence should be recognised as victims in their own right and guaranteed specialised protection, support, and participation rights.

CHILD highlight.

Effective victim protection requires specialised professionals, multidisciplinary cooperation, and consistent implementation of child-friendly and trauma-informed practices across all levels of the system.