



The current newsletter is the second official report that presents the overall prevention and response to Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Multiple Discrimination against Women, from the National Network of Structures (Counselling Centres, Safe Shelters)¹, during the time that the Greek authorities gradually lifted the movement restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The situation described in the newsletter is based on the Gender-Based Violence (GBV) database maintained by E.E.T.A.A.² and on the 24/7 SOS Hotline 15900 and it covers a two-month period – May 2020 and June 2020ⁱ.

Even though the medical reports around the world reveal that the new coronavirus COVID-19 is linked to higher mortality rates for men compared to women, and in all age groups³⁴, women seem to suffer more than men in the long term from the health, economic and social consequences of the pandemic⁵. The impact of the pandemic is unprecedented in women and girls who experience multiple forms of discrimination based on their gender, combined with other factors such as race or ethnicity, beliefs, disability, age, financial status, their residence status etc. The G.S.F.P.G.E recognises that women disproportionately lead the provision of care and support in all areas to protect everyone in our society in these difficult times.



The response to violence against women and domestic violence from the Network of Structures of the G.S.F.P.G.E, the cooperation with specialised in GBV civil society organizations, as well as the coordination with local government is vital for the protection and support of vulnerable women and their children. The primary goal of the G.S.F.P.G.E. is to ensure ongoing information and communication to all women about their safe access to all response services, such as police, health, justice, psychosocial / legal support-representation through the development of cross-sectoral partnerships. Moreover, at international level, the G.S.F.P.G.E. is looking forward to effectively cooperate with EU Member States and the European

Commission on policies and actions and protect all women from the unequal consequences of the pandemic.

The current newsletter is covering the period when the Greek authorities gradually lifted the movement restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, this report cannot be used for further generalization and / or analysis of the situation of Gender-Based Violence in Greece.

Initiatives and Actions of the G.S.F.P.G.E during the Reporting Period (May 2020 and June 2020):

- **Ensuring the funding extension of the Network of Structures (Counselling Centres, Safe Shelters and the 24/7 SOS Helpline 15900) through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for the years 2021-2023**, aiming to smooth continuation of specialised services for women survivors and their children in need and strengthen the broader networking with local institutions and civil society organisations for the prevention and response to GBV in Greece.

¹ WEBSITE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: <http://womensos.gr/en/about-us/>

² The Hellenic Agency for Local Development and Local Government (E.E.T.A.A.) S.A, has been the institutionalized operational partner of the G.S.F.P.G.E. that supports the creation and maintenance of a Database of the Network (counseling centers and safe shelters)

³ Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Men and COVID-19: A Biopsychosocial Approach to Understanding Sex Differences in Mortality and Recommendations for Practice and Policy Interventions: https://www.cdc.gov/pccd/issues/2020/20_0247.htm

⁴ Global Health 50/50, Sex, gender and COVID-19: Overview and Resources: <https://globalhealth5050.org/covid19/>

⁵ Publications Office of the EU, The impact of sex and gender in the COVID-19 pandemic: https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/impact-sex-and-gender-covid-19-pandemic_en



- **Signing of a Cooperation Agreement with the organization "Smile of the Child" on combating domestic violence against women and their children (28th of May 2020).**
- **Intervention of the Secretary General for Family Policy and Gender Equality at the online meeting organized by the Smile of the Child on the occasion of the International Day of Missing Children (25th of May 2020).** The Secretary General emphasised the importance of partnership and cooperation of the two national bodies in the response against

domestic violence during the pandemic of Covid-19.

- **Intervention of the Secretary General for Family Policy and Gender Equality at an online discussion organised by the Centre for Social Action and Innovation (KMOP)⁶ in the framework of the European project BASE "Migrant and refugee child-friendly support services in cases of sexual and gender-based violence"⁷, with the aim of raising public awareness related to incidents of GBV against refugees and migrant women and girls in Greece (10th of June 2020).**
- **Intervention of the Secretary General for Family Policy and Gender Equality at an online conference organised by the department of Social Protection and Counselling Services of the region of Thessaly, in the framework of the SURVIVOR project⁸ : Rescue of women refugee and migrants survivors of GBV (28th of May 2020).**
- **Participation of the Secretary General for Family Policy and Gender Equality at the Parliamentary Special Permanent Committee on Equality, Youth and Human Rights, aiming to present the results of the national campaign against domestic violence⁹, covering the period when the Greek Government introduced the movement restriction due to the Covid-19 pandemic (8th of May 2020).**
- **Participation of the Secretary General for Family Policy and Gender Equality at the Parliamentary Special Permanent Committee on Equality, Youth and Human Rights, where civil society organisations and women's organisations presented outcomes, challenges and solutions in preventing and responding to GBV during the Covid-19 pandemic (22nd of May 2020).**

Initiatives and Actions of the National Network of Structures of the G.S.F.P.G.E. During the Reporting Period (May 2020 and June 2020). During the reporting period, the staff of the Counselling Centres and Safe Shelters throughout Greece carried out activities such as public awareness, networking, capacity building trainings and informing the local community on the available specialised services for women survivors and their children.

Indicatively, the following actions were undertaken during the reporting period:

- **Two-days capacity building training for police officers on the legal framework for responding to domestic violence and protecting survivors and their children.** Training was organized by the Thessaly general police directorate in

⁶ KMOP: <https://www.kmop.gr/el/>

⁷ BASE Project: <https://www.kmop.gr/el/projects-vf/base/>

⁸ SURVIVOR Project Webpage: <https://www.gbvsurvivor.gr/?lang=en>

⁹ Government TV spot on Domestic Violence: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oCGFDpoyfn4>



collaboration with group of experts from the department of Social Inclusion, Employment, and Gender Equality of Larisa Municipality, the Public Prosecutor, Lawyers Bar Association and Larissa's Forensic Service. The two days training were attended by the police officers of the newly established domestic violence response services of the General Regional Police Directorate of Thessaly and the Police Directorates of Larissa, Magnesia, Karditsa and

Trikala.

- **Local information and awareness raising interview from the counsellor of the Katerini Counselling Centre at the "DION TV Radio"¹⁰** where the Network of Support Structures of the G.S.G.P.G.E was presented, together with the available support services and the phenomenon of increased incidents of violence against women due to the general lockdown.
- **Local information and awareness raising interview from the psychologist of the Mytilene Counselling Centre at "Ikaria Radio 92.8 fm"¹¹** where the Network of Support Structures of the G.S.G.P.G.E was presented, together with the available support services and the phenomenon of increased incidents of violence against women due to the general lockdown.
- **Awareness raising article published at Kozani local newspaper and at social media by the psychologist of Kozani Safe Shelter** with the title "Even if you are limited at home, you can still ask for help"¹².
- **Publication of article at the newspaper "Gnomi" by the counsellor of the Patra Counselling Centre where the Network of Support Structures of the G.S.G.P.G.E was presented**, together with the available support services and the phenomenon of increased incidents of violence against women due to the general lockdown.
- **Participation of the staff of the Arta Counselling Centre at the Municipality photography exhibition with the title "The faces of violence"¹³.**
- **The staff of the Kefalonia Counselling Centre created information and communication flyers about domestic violence** and available specialised services and distributed them at the local pharmacies, police stations and supermarkets.
- **The staff of the Veria Counselling Centre organised an information session for the police officers of Alexandria and Imathia Police Department** regarding the legal framework and the response to incidents of domestic violence.

¹⁰ Interview of Mytilene Counseling Center against Domestic Violence on "Ikaria Radio 92.8 fm": <https://www.diontv.gr/%ce%9a%ce%91%ce%98%ce%97%ce%9c%ce%95%ce%a1%ce%99%ce%9d%ce%91-%ce%91-%ce%9c%ce%95%ce%a1%ce%9f%ce%a3-%ce%a7%ce%91%ce%a1%ce%9f%ce%a5%ce%9b%ce%91-%ce%a0%ce%99%ce%a0%ce%95%ce%a1%ce%9f%ce%a0%ce%9f%ce%a5/>

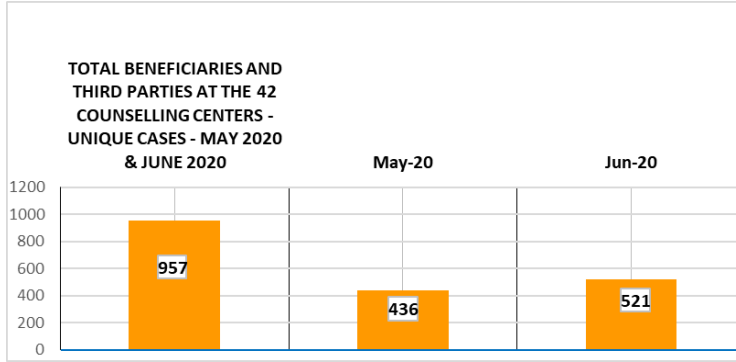
¹¹ Awareness / information interview of the Counseling Center of Katerini on "DION" Television: <https://www.ikariaki.gr/akouste-symvouleftiko-kentro-mytilinis-enantia-stin-oikogeneiaki-via/>

¹² Publication of an awareness article of Kozani Safe Shelter: <http://www.prlogos.gr/%CE%BE%CE%B5%CE%BD%CF%8E%CE%BD%CE%B1%CF%82-%CF%86%CE%B9%CE%BB%CE%BF%CE%BE%CE%B5%CE%BD%CE%AF%CE%B1%CF%82-%CE%B3%CF%85%CE%BD%CE%B1%CE%B9%CE%BA%CF%8E%CE%BD-%CE%B4%CE%AE%CE%BC%CE%BF%CF%85-%CE%BA%CE%BF-2/>

¹³ Participation of the Photographic Team from the Counseling Center of the Municipality of Arta: <http://gnomiartas.gr/2020/07/01/%CE%B7%CE%BC%CE%AD%CF%81%CE%B5%CF%82-%CF%86%CF%89%CF%84%CE%BF%CE%B3%CF%81%CE%B1%CF%86%CE%AF%CE%B1%CF%82-%CE%B1%CF%80%CF%8C-%CF%84%CE%B7%CE%BD-artas-%CF%86-%CE%BF-%CE%B1/>

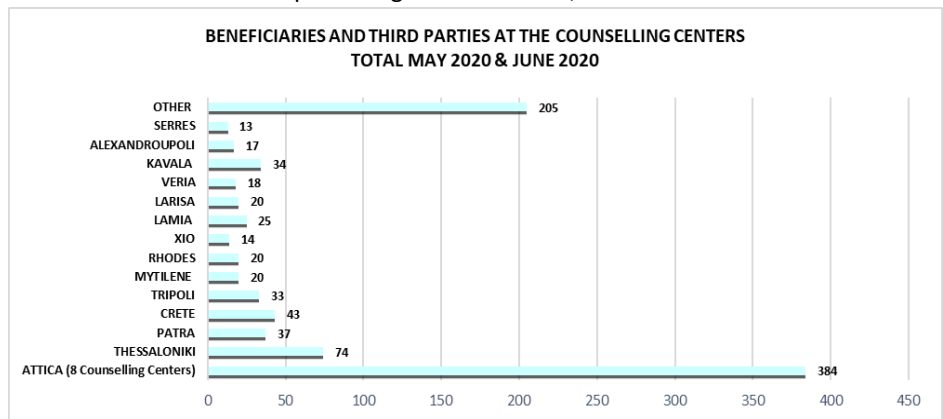


Counselling Centres of the Network (data covering two months period, May 2020, and June 2020)

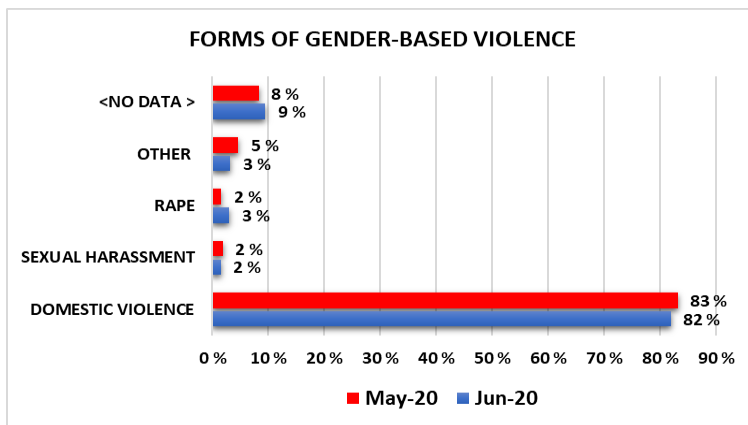


In May 2020, a total of 436 women survivors of GBV and Multiple Discrimination and third parties (e.g mother, adult daughter of the survivor, etc.), received specialised support from the Counselling Centres of the Network throughout Greece, with an increase of 19.5 % (521) in reported cases for June 2020 (totals for May & June 2020: **957 unique cases**). During the reporting period, the main source of women’s information regarding the Network of Structures seems to have been a third source with a percentage of **33%**, the **24/7 SOS Helpline 15900**

with a 23% , friendly network and internet with the same percentage of 10% each, 7% was informed from another beneficiary, while 17% of women did not disclose this information. Moreover, for both reporting months, **40,1% of total beneficiaries and third parties received specialised support services at the Counselling Centres in Attica** (8 counselling centres)¹⁴, 7,7 % in Thessaloniki, 4,5% in Crete and with almost the same percentage 4% in Kavala and Tripoli, while the remaining 43,7 % received support from the other Counselling Centres of the Network¹⁵. **Incidents of violence against women for both reporting months record the higher**



percentage of about 88% in comparison to cases of multiple discrimination against women with a percentage of 12%¹⁶¹⁷. Of all forms of violence against women, the main form recorded in both reporting months was **Domestic Violence with almost 82,5%**, followed by sexual harassment at only 2.5% and by incidents of rape at about 2.5%.



¹⁴ C.C of Athens (Nikis), C.C Athens (Polykentros), C.C Piraeus, C.C D. Keratsiniou-Drapetsonas, C.CD. Peristeriou, C.C D. Fili, C.C D. Chalandri, C.C Elefsina Station

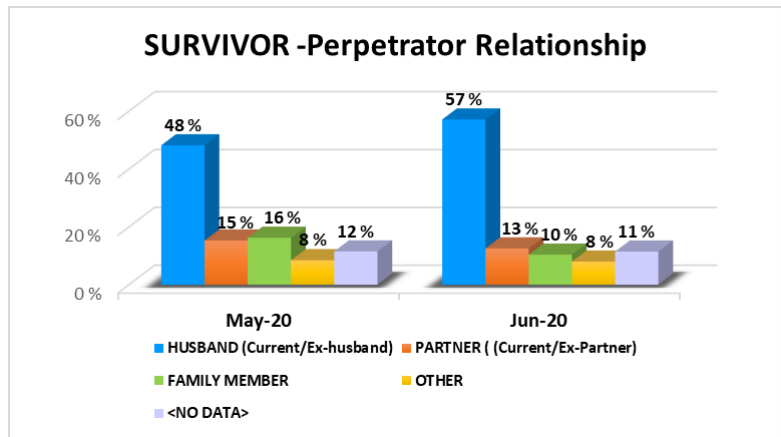
¹⁵**Note:** Multiple factors such as awareness-raising activities, in combination with higher needs of women, due to the concentration of population in these areas. Therefore, presented results should not be taken as an outcome from which specific conclusions can be drawn

¹⁶ Refugee & migrant women, women with disabilities, drug addicts’ women, the long-term unemployed women, single parents’ women, etc.

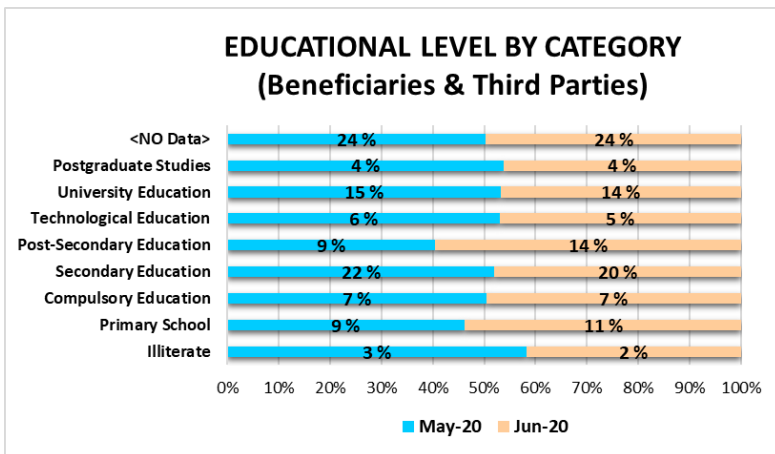
¹⁷ **Note:** unique beneficiaries supported at the Counselling Centres may report both an incident of GBV and an incident of discrimination (s)



Regarding survivor -perpetrator relationship, it is mostly a relationship between spouses (current and/or ex-husband), with 48% for May 2020 and 57% for June 2020, respectively. The relationship on the other hand is between partners (current and/or ex-partner) at a 14% for both months, while almost 13% of all perpetrator cases is a family member. Regarding the main age groups of women survivors and third parties who received specialised support services at the Counselling Centres in both reporting months, approximately 28,5% of women aged between 36-45 years old, 20% of women aged between 26-35 years old, 18% between 46-55 years old, 8,6% women aged above 60 years old, 8,3% of all cases are young girls aged up to 25 years old, while 16.6% did not disclose this information. The educational level of the women seeking support from

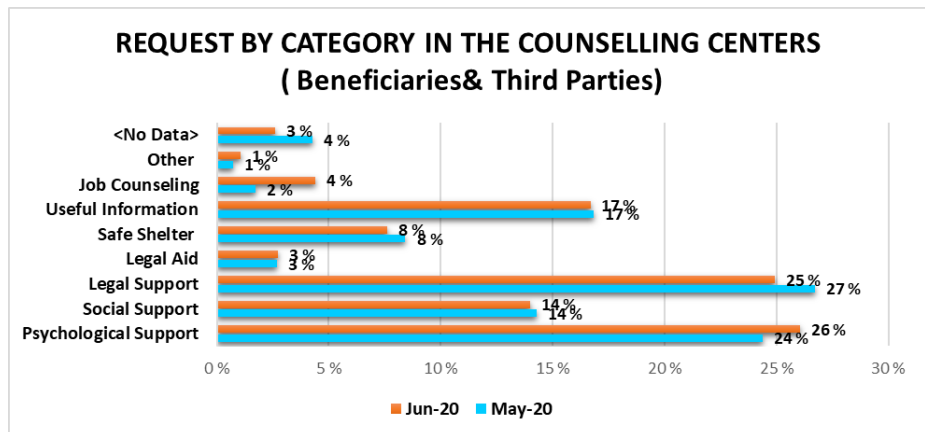


the Counselling Centres is also another characteristic taken into consideration. For both reporting months, 21% of these women seem to have completed secondary education, 14.4% had a university education, 12% post-secondary education, followed by 5,7% of technological education, while 4% have completed postgraduate studies, 7% were of compulsory education, 9,9% have completed primary school, and only 2% reported being illiterate. A percentage of 24% did not disclose this information. Regarding their employment status, about 45,5% of them are unemployed while 33% are working and 5,5% are retired, and



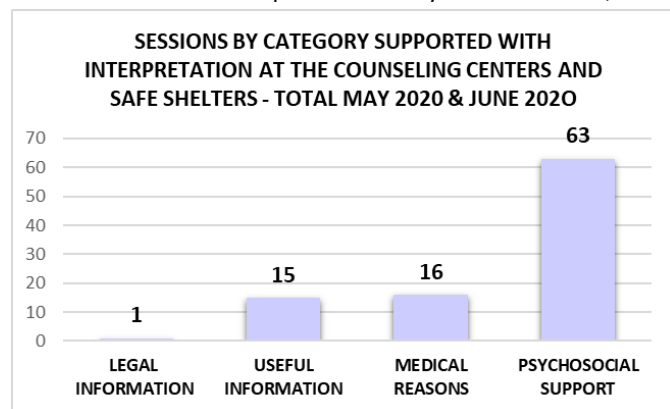
16% did not disclose this information. Regarding women’s nationality in both months, approximately 74% of them are Greek, 14% were non- European Union citizens and living in Greece, and 5 % women within the European Union, while almost 7% did not disclose these figures.

Among women survivors and third parties who sought specialized support from the Counselling Centres of the Network across the Country in both months, approximately 25% received mainly psychological support and 26% legal support, while other women were supported socially at a percentage of 14% from total request, 17% received useful information (such as networking, available services etc.) and 8% were in need of safe shelter for themselves and their children.





In addition, there are interpretation services which are provided by METAdrasi in collaboration with UNICEF and K.E.TH.I., in the framework of the priorities set by the G.S.F.P.G.E, aiming to increase the accessibility of women refugees and migrant

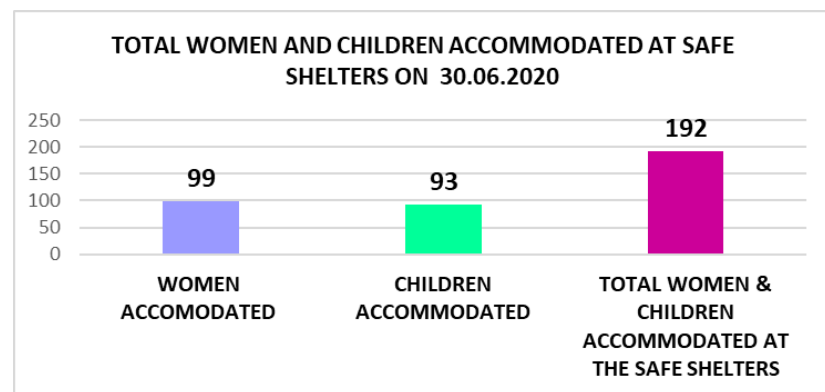


survivors of GBV at the National Network of Structures. Thus, during the reporting period, **45 refugee and migrant women in total were supported with interpretation at 7 Counselling Centres and 5 Safe Shelters** (Athens, Thessaloniki, Ioannina, Mytilene, and Patra). The main spoken languages were French, Arabic, Farsi, and Sorani. Indicatively, in both reporting months, 95 sessions were held with interpretation support (total session in Counselling Centres and Safe Shelters) mainly with physical presence (76 sessions) and less by phone / Skype (19 sessions). Most of sessions for both reporting months included psychosocial support of women in a percentage of

66%, while 17% concerned referrals for medical reasons, 16% for useful informational purposes and almost 1% concerned legal information.

Safe Shelters of the Network (data covering two months period, May 2020 and June 2020)

The Network of Structures of the G.S.F.P.G.E. includes 20 Safe Shelters throughout Greece, with a capacity of approximately 420 beds for women survivors or at risk of violence / multiple discrimination or heads of single-parent families and their children (up to the age of eighteen if they are girls, and for boys up to the age of 12 years old). The purpose is their safe accommodation and feeding, their empowerment, their psychosocial / legal and employment support. Women’s residency at Safe Shelters has a temporary and transitional purpose and is addressed to women of all ages, religions, nationalities who have survived any form of GBV such as: physical, psychological, sexual, and financial violence etc. Legal advice/aid are provided through the social services of the Municipalities, the Counselling Centres of the G.S.F.P.G.E. or other actors

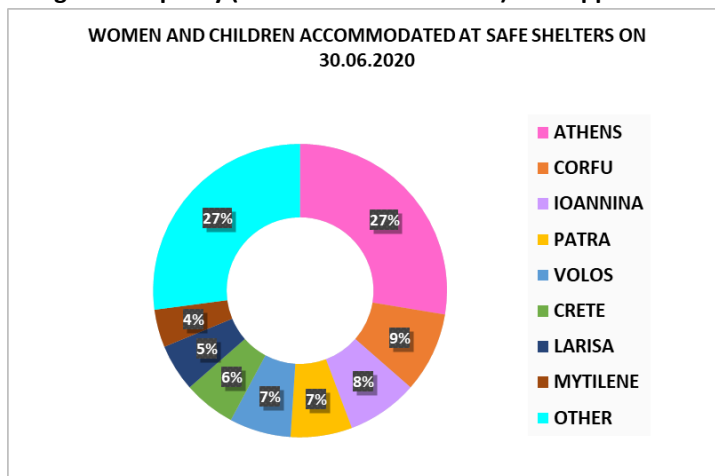


facilitating access to employment, education, health, and welfare services. **On June 30th, 2020 Safe Shelters throughout Greece were accommodating in total 99 women, and 93 children, covering about 45.7% of their total capacity. Out of the total number of women accommodated, 44 were new cases, mainly placed in Athens, Agrinio, Larissa, Ioannina, Mytilene, and Rhodes, 41 are refugee women, and 42 of the 93 children are refugee children.**



For both reporting months, **Safe Shelters in Athens had the higher occupancy (for women and children) with approximately**

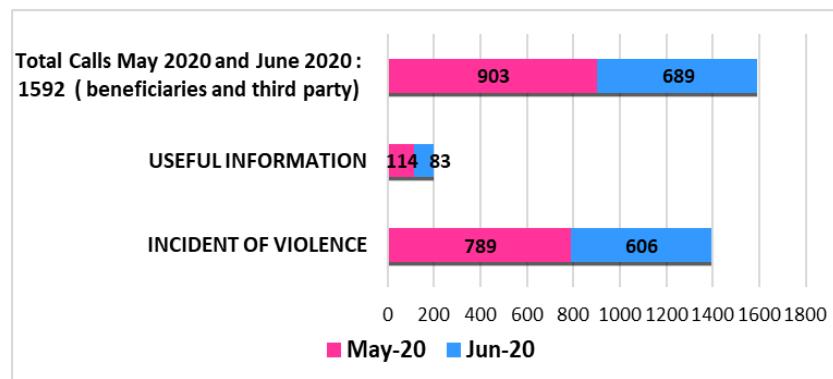
27% from the total, Corfu with 9%, Ioannina with 8%, Patras and Volos with the same percentage of 7%, Crete with 6%, Larissa with 5%, Mytilene with 4%, while 27% of the total are accommodated at the rest of the Shelters across country¹⁸. In addition, it is worth mentioning that many women preferred to be accommodated by friends or relatives, while maintaining direct contact with the staff of the Counselling Centres for their ongoing specialised support. **Regarding the Temporary Accommodation Facilities across the country that the G.S.F.P.G.E initiated in April 2020 throughout Greece, until all the necessary medical exams are completed and women and their children can be placed at the Safe Shelters**



of the Network, in the month of May in total 9 women were accommodated out of which 5 had children. Out of the total number of women that were successfully removed from their abusive environment, 2 are refugee and 1 migrant, and 3 women and their children were placed at the Safe Shelters of the Network, while the other 5 women left for their own safe destination on their informed consent, while continuing their communication and support with the staff of the Counselling Centres. The program related to Temporary Accommodation Facilities was completed with the lifting of the restrictive measures.

24/7 Helpline 15900 (data covering two months period, May 2020 and June 2020)

The 24/7 Helpline 15900 is staffed by two Social Anthropologists, four Sociologists, five Psychologists and two interpreters one Farsi and one Arabic speaking. According to data, most of the callers are women, with an increased volume of calls



during the day, but also calls recorded in the evening / morning hours are also an important reference. **In May 2020, 903 calls were recorded in total, 789 of which were "incidents of violence" and 114 calls were recorded as "seeking useful information", while in May 2020 there is a decrease of 23,2% in calls related to "incidents of violence" and respectively 27,2% decrease in calls related to "seeking useful information"**¹⁹. The decrease of calls between the reporting months could be

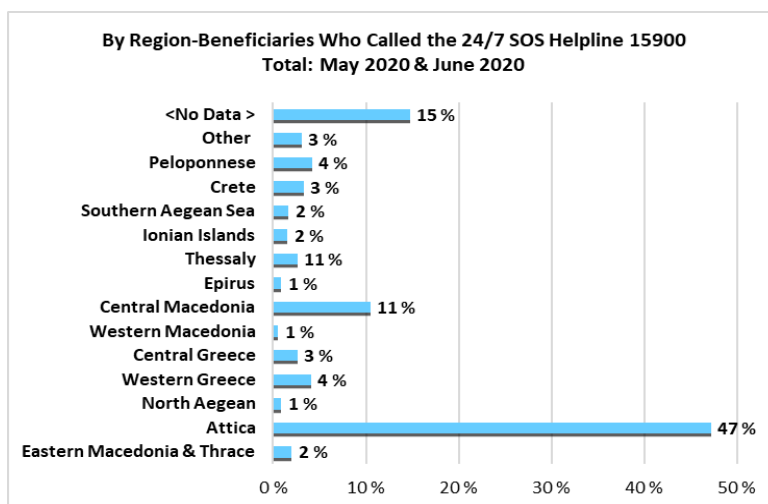
attributed to the fact that women strengthened their support network with the gradual lifting of restrictive measures due to the pandemic. **From the total number of calls recorded in May 2020 which include incidents of violence and useful information, 68% are beneficiaries and 32% third parties, while in June 2020, 65% from total calls were made by**

¹⁸ The occupancy percentage of the Shelters is a result of multiple factors, such as the capacity of Shelters per Municipality, in combination with the higher needs, due to the geographic concentration of the population in certain areas. Therefore, it should not be taken as a result from which specific conclusions can be drawn.

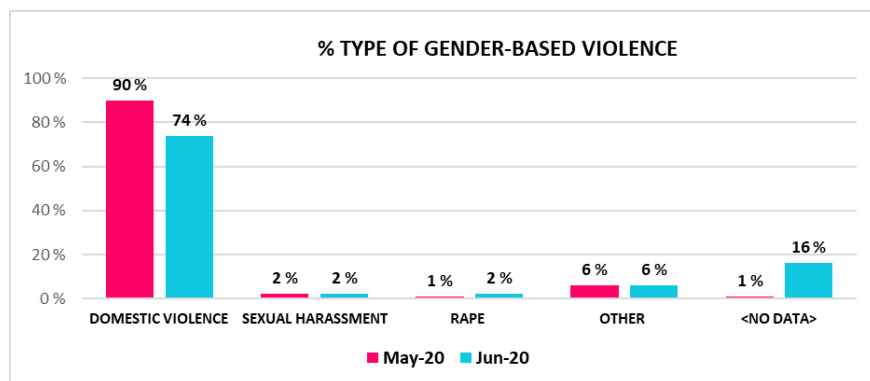
¹⁹ **Note: Irrelevant calls, such as pranks, etc. are not reported in this newsletter**



beneficiaries and 35% by third parties. Third parties calling the SOS Helpline 15900 are mainly persons from the family / friendly environment of the survivors (friend, sister, parent, survivor's child or other relative). An important reference are the neighbours who call the SOS Hotline 15900 to receive useful information, mainly concerning information on the ex-officio prosecution of the incident of violence by the competent authorities²⁰. **From total calls recorded in both reporting months and that includes incidents of violence and useful information, 68% called the 24/7 SOS Helpline 15900 for the first time, 9% from total calls were for the 2nd time, while 23% called for the 3rd and/or 4th time. First time callers for both reporting months were informed about the Helpline mainly from TV (20%),** at a 10% from the internet, while a large percentage of 59% did not disclose this information during the calls. **The Regions with the higher number of calls in total and for both reporting months were Attica with 47%,** the Region of Central Macedonia with approximately 11%, while the remaining calls are distributed with almost the same percentage in the other regions of Greece. In addition, 15% did not reveal the area from which they are calling. **Regarding the nationality of beneficiaries that called the 24/7 SOS Helpline 15900 for both reporting months, about 75% of them are Greeks,** 7% migrant women, 1% refugee women, while 17% did not disclose this kind of information.



Regarding the age group of beneficiaries that called the 24/7 SOS Helpline 15900 during the reporting period, it is observed that **women between 40-54 years old constitute the largest percentage of 27% of total calls that are related to incident of violence,** followed with 21% by the age group between 25-39 years old,

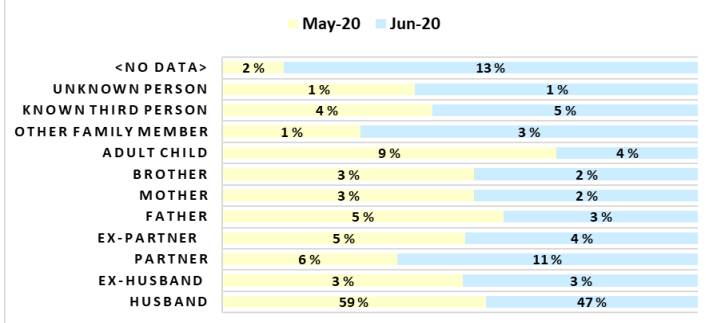


while 9.5% concerns women between 55-64 years, 7% are women above 65 years old, and 6% concerns young girls up to 24 years. Finally, 29% of the total beneficiaries did not disclose this information. Moreover, in both reporting months, **Domestic Violence was reported with the highest percentage of all forms of violence against women, with 74% of incidents in May 2020, and 90% in June 2020, respectively.**

²⁰ Domestic violence is a crime prosecuted ex officio and punishable under the provisions of Law. 3500/2006:



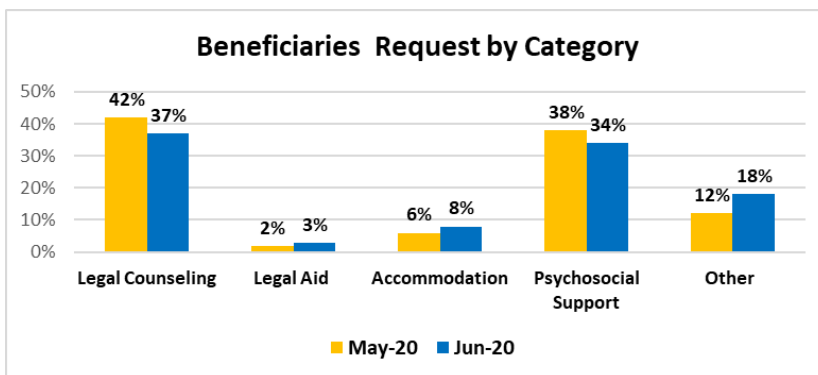
SURVIVOR -PERPETRATOR RELATIONSHIP



The main forms of violence within domestic violence in both reporting months were psychological violence at about 41%, verbal violence at 31% and physical violence at about 28%²¹. Regarding Survivor-Perpetrator relationship, in May 2020 the husband was reported with a percentage of 59% of total cases and 47% of all cases in June 2020, respectively. For both reporting months, the main requests of beneficiaries who called the 24/7 SOS Helpline and reported incidents of violence were legal counselling at 42% for May 2020 and 37% for June 2020, respectively. In addition, psychosocial support was provided for both

reporting months at a percentage of 36,5% from total beneficiary calls, and a slight percentage from the total (May 2020 and June 2020) corresponds to the requests for free legal aid and safe accommodation.

Beneficiaries Request by Category



Below we quote an electronic message (e-mail) from a woman beneficiary that received specialised support during the reporting period from the Psychologist of the SOS Helpline 15900

“Thank you very much, you helped me a lot, at the beginning it was very difficult for me to pick up the phone and call the helpline, but only when we talked I felt more calm, you provided me with useful information and comforted me. Congratulations on your work”

Priorities of the G.S.F.P.G.E.

A Strategic goal of the General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality (G.S.F.P.G.E) is the implementation of the requirements set by the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention)²². In this context, emphasis is put on cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination of co-responsible state bodies, civil society organizations and local government, coordinated efforts in order to respond to the phenomenon of violence against women comprehensively and in a holistic manner. GBV Data collection, research, and study on new forms of violence such as stalking, cyber-bullying, etc. are a priority area for the G.S.F.P.G.E. Moreover, raising awareness among the general population to break stereotypes based on gender, informing about the ways to complaint and

²¹<http://womensos.gr/morfes-vias/>

²² Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence: <https://rm.coe.int/168008482e>



report gender and domestic violence and seek support, as well preventing activities thought capacity building training on issues around GBV for all professionals who provide general and specialized services to women and their children, are included among the areas of the G.S.F.P.G.E intervention.

Bimonthly Report Newsletter #2: Policies and Actions of the G.S.F.P.G.E for the Prevention and Response to Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, During the Lifting of Movement Restriction Due to the Pandemic of the Covid-19 in Greece. Analysis of Gender-Based Violence Data from the Network of Structures and the SOS Hotline 15900 (May 2020 -June 2020)



MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

**GENERAL SECRETARIAT
FOR FAMILY POLICY AND
GENDER EQUALITY**

ⁱ *The current newsletter was supported by UNICEF, which received funding from the US Government.*