Action IS1206 *Femicide across Europe*
Guidelines for the use of policy-makers
Template

1. Identify the **main aims** of the WG

2. Identify the **main achievements** of the WG: what do we know now on femicide?
   - **WG1**: identify the most important definitions of femicide. Why are they relevant? Do different definitions imply different notions of femicide?

   - **WG2**: Identify the most important ways to collect data and measure femicide across Europe? Do different methodologies provide us with different notions? Are data comparable across Europe

   - **WG3**: Is there an impact of culture and femicide? Can we speak of culture, or should we rather say cultures?

   - **WG4**: What are the most important ways to prevent femicide? What is working, what is not working and why?

3. What **recommendations** can we make to policy-makers? Consider the 3 basic policy-making levels: **local authorities** (city councils), **national authorities** (central or federal governments), the **EU**.
   - Can we recommend: special legislation, best practices, improved methodologies for treating cases, improved coordination among services, new services, etc.?

4. Summarize the **activities** that the WG carried out in 2013-2016

5. **List names** of MC members, MC substitutes and other people who helped drafting this report

1. Identify the main aims of the WG3

- Provide knowledge and gather data on cultural perspectives on the phenomenon of femicide and how they influence femicide, including "honour killing" and intimate partner violence
- Prevent femicide, based on the aforesaid
- Support and enrich the establishment of a European Observatory

2. Identify the main achievements of the WG: what do we know now on femicide?

o ### WG3: Is there an impact of culture and femicide? Can we speak of culture, or should we rather say cultures?

Our working group definition of femicide includes the killing of females by males merely because they are females. Different forms of killing women are recognised, for example intimate partner-related killings (Vives-Cases, Goicolea, Hernández, Sanz-Barbero, Gill, Baldry, Schröttle and Stoeckl, 2016), honour crimes, dowry-related murders, forced suicide, female infanticide, gender-based sex-selective foeticide and the targeted killing of women during wars and in the context of organised crime. A broader definition of this term also implicates states that perpetuate misogynous attitudes and/or socially discriminatory practices against women. This broader definition includes, for example, cases of deaths caused by/associated with a lack of accessibility to healthcare for women and girls, gender-based selective malnutrition and the trafficking of women as prostitutes and drug mules. As it is often difficult to decide in the case of the killing of women and girls whether or not they have been killed because of their gender, researchers often include all killings of females in the first stage of analysis and then differentiate between cases that are more or less influenced by gendered contexts and motives (Vives-Cases, Goicolea, Hernández, Sanz-Barbero, Gill, Baldry, Schröttle and Stoeckl, 2016).

In order to understand femicide in specific cultural contexts, therefore, both the emic (insider's) perspective (for each specific target group, including their perceptions, views, accepted social and cultural norms, etc.), as well as the etic (outsider's/professional's) perspective, must be considered in intercultural situations and transnational contexts.

Contemporary Europe is ethnic and culturally complex. Extensive political and economic transformations accentuate the constant flow of migrants across borders and regions. This has made Europe into a place as well as a space in which culturally related femicide with its many sub-categories takes place (Cirami, 2014, Jonas, 2013). This is the field of WG 3 focused on the ethnic/cultural of femicide including critical contributions both within and across the many diasporas and the majority populations.

It seems there is a relation of culture and femicide; tradition, gender roles, cultural practices and other factors have an influence on 'honor killings' and femicide acts (Šimonović, 2015, WHO, 2012). By analyzing country case studies data- similarities, differences- of country members of the Action, considerable similarities in cultural issues emerged. In particular, the comparison showed that femicide is a corollary of domestic violence. The weakness and the lack of trust in the legal system as a result of patriarchal basis of the institutions and of the dominant discourse have an adverse effect on domestic violence at high levels and the victimization of women (Chiongson et al., 2011). Most of the countries (e.g. Malta, Cyprus, Iceland, Romania) have mentioned that the society and therefore, the cultural insights are motivated by patriarchy/masculinity/male domination ideas. This is also reflected among minorities, immigrants and displaced populations, and will probably only increase considering the migration crisis in the continent. Consequently, institutions and the protection entities must be trained to be sensitive to different cultural backgrounds and migration patterns which increase the risk of femicide.

Violence against women and specifically gender-based violence that disproportionately affects women, is an extensive human rights abuse. Violence against women exists in every society, and encompasses different forms of physical, sexual and psychological abuse. However, despite its scale and social impact, it remains largely under-reported and relatively under-researched in key areas such as femicide.

In Cypriot culture, "honour" is a complex and important term (Gill, 2014, Gouws and Stasiulis, 2014). Reputation and good standing in the community are of fundamental importance. Although 'honour' is the pretext for much of the violence perpetrated in Cypriot society, it is not named as such, particularly within the family. Honour is invoked in the case of 'socially unacceptable' behavior, primarily of the women and girls in the family, and often involving sexual or romantic relationships (Gill, 2014). In FYR Macedonia, often killings within the family are due to disrupted relations and/or mental disorder. In Malta, the issue of family "honour" exists, unstated, as a part of the dominant culture. It is something that is considered desirable, and things that may damage this good repute tend to be hidden and not proclaimed. With the increase of individualism generally, this is also changing in Malta as it is elsewhere in the Western world.

3. **What recommendations can we make to policy-makers? Consider the 3 basic policy-making levels: local authorities (city councils), national authorities (central or federal governments), the EU.**
   o **Can we recommend: special legislation, best practices, improved methodologies for treating cases, improved coordination among services, new services, etc.?**

Recommendations
- Acknowledge the need for specialised culture and gender-specific services to support the complex range of immediate and long-term needs of women survivors of violence and their children,
- Guarantee sustainable funding for specialised services, such as women's shelters, help lines and counselling services, NGOs delivering support services for women victims of violence,
- Public services should be proactive for reinforcing and supporting victims as this applies to international conventions for prevention
- Establish a systematic way of data collection – based on certain definition/criteria – in order to have correct/comparable data, that will accessible by the researchers
- Mandate systematic and continuous training of professionals on violence against women and to secure funding for it, actively involving members of the different communities to which women belong to (ethnic groups, immigrants, religions etc)
- Ensure that services are accessible to women facing multiple discrimination, including migrant, young, older, ethnic, women, and women from diverse communities (e.g. LGBT)
- Monitor and evaluate regularly the coordination of the public support system for victims (women and girls) of all forms of violence, develop national definitions and classifications to be used for surveys, research and administrative statistics; to ensure their consistent use at the national, regional, European and international levels and guarantee regular data collection
- Develop family policies that will promote women independence/rights (e.g. improve/promote family friendly policies such as: Child allowance, child support, housing allowance, health care, maternity leave etc.) Each country should look into other countries' policies/good practices and come up with their own that "fits" their country/culture
- State/government must establish legal aspects to protect women, either in a legal or illegal status. Each woman should be able to have access and apply for help (e.g. develop a specific housing policy for battered women in order to ensure them and their children if they have children, an a decent apartment without having to wait for it too long)

- The continued need for pro-active policies on violence against women and girls across Europe (including ones that require the arrest of perpetrators of violence regardless of the wishes of victims), improved culture and gender sensitive investigations and risk assessmenst, and the spreading of existing good practice more consistently through the criminal justice system.
- Dissemination of the word "femicide" through media interventions and try to change the "current picture" , which is the "objectiation" of the women in media

4. <u>Summarize the activities that the WG carried out in 2013-2016</u>

- WG 3 meetings held: Malta 2014, Cyprus 2015, Israel 2015
  The main areas of discussion were:
  - *Intimate Partner Femicide, 'Honour Killings/crimes', Femicide,* **foeticide,** *Honor based violence, Dowry*
  - *Intersectionality, gender and culture*
  - *Country specific perspectives in Europe (e.g. Cyprus, Iceland, Malta, UK) and worldwide* (e.g. Georgia, India, Israel, Turkey, Uganda)
  - *Femicide survivors*
  - *Cultural sensitive research*
- Preparation and dissemination of a combined report analysis and discussion for the meetings of Malta and Cyprus for COST.
- Preparation of a position paper on the role of service providers, policy makers and jounalist in addressing femicide
- Preparation of a draft of a scientific article on WG3 work based on culture/femicide/HK. The article analyses case studies based on evidence and also the country- Action members' perspective as discussed in the meetings
- Participation in international conferences, discussion panels, invited speakers
  Carmen Vives-Cases, Isabel Goicolea, Alison Hernández, Belen Sanz-Barbero, Aisha K. Gill**,** Anna Costanza Baldry, Monika Schröttle, Heidi Stoeckl (2016) "Expert Opinions on Improving Femicide Data Collection across Europe: A Concept Mapping Study", *PLoS One*, 11(4): e0154060.
  Gill, Aisha K. (2015) "Combatting Femicide in multiple ways: The Cost Action IS1206 on Femicide across Europe" *In Femicide: Targeting of women in conflict a global issue that demands action*, Vol. 4. Vienna: ACUNS; 2015: 71-74
  Gill, Aisha K. (2015) Invited Keynote: *Addressing and preventing the abuse of perpetrators of gender-based violence*. Presented to Commission on Domestic Violence, Malta, 22 October 2015.
  Gill, Aisha K. (2015) Invited Keynote: *Femicide and 'honour' crimes.* Presented to WG3 conference, Malta, May 2014.

Kouta, C. (1); Meshkova, K. (2); Ryen, A. (3). *Cultural Issues: a critical assessment of qualitative data on patterns of intimate partner murders and other forms of femicide.* 1: Cyprus University of Technology, Cyprus; 2: Humboldt University Berlin, Germany; 3: University of Agder, Norway, 12th European Sociological Association Conference, Prague, Czech Republic, August 2015

Nudelman A. and Boira S., *Using qualitative research to explore femicide among migrants and culture minorities.* Presented at the session on Qualitative Research and Femicide 12th European Sociological Association Conference, Prague, Czech Republic, August 2015

Ryen A. and Weil S., *Qualitative Enquiries into Femicide*, 12th European Sociological Association Conference, Prague, Czech Republic, August 2015 (round table discussion)

Weil, S. *Failed Femicides: Migrant Survivor Narratives,* Hebrew University, Israel

- Contribution in final conference 2017 as WG3

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The above document was also discussed in the WG3 session at the meeting in Slovenia, 2016.

This report is in conjunction with the Briefing paper on the role of service providers, policy makers and journalists in addressing Femicide, prepared by WG3.

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