



# Eurostat task force on the development of a survey on Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

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*Minutes*

*7-8 March*

*Eurostat-Luxembourg*

*BECH Building, Room B2/404*



## 1. Introduction, approval of the agenda and of the minutes of previous meeting

The draft agenda was presented and issues which should be covered during the meeting were described by the Chair (Didier DUPRE, EUROSTAT). It was clarified that the main working document during the meeting will be "*Proposals for development of the questionnaire and discussion*". Working documents and presentations for the TF meeting are accessible in CIRCABC ([link here](#)).

The draft minutes on the Task Force (TF) meeting of 27-28 June 2017 were circulated after the meeting for comments. No additional comments were provided on minutes during the meeting.

## 2. Nature of the meeting

The mandate of the TF is to support development of the European Gender Based violence survey that will be tested and piloted in the Member States over 2017 and 2018 with view of implementation of a full scale surveys from 2020 onwards possibly co-financed by the EU resources (subject of sufficient budget availability). Task Force was established in 2016 and eleven Member States (Austria, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden) showed interest to participate in the TF work in that time. However, some changes have been taking place in the list of participants for now. Two countries (Austria and Sweden) cancelled their participation in TF work due to huge workload or other reasons, while few additional members (Croatia, Estonia, Slovenia) agreed to participate in TF in order to share their experiences based on pre-testing and piloting the survey.

Eleven Member States (Germany, Estonia, Spain, Croatia, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Hungary, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia) attended this meeting.

In addition, representatives from DG JUST, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), DG SANTE and Status of Women Canada / Government of Canada were present.

Finally, three private experts (from the French Institute for Demographic Studies, University of Lancaster and TU Dortmund) also attended the meeting.

The work of the TF is lead by Eurostat and supported by ISTAT (The Italian National Institute of Statistics).

The meeting was chaired by Didier DUPRE, Head of Eurostat Unit F4 (Income and living conditions; Quality of life). The chair reminded that traditionally the Task Forces organised by Eurostat work as a group with different opinions expressed but their final decisions or proposal shall be a compromise that in some cases will not be in line with the individual opinion.



### 3. List of points discussed

#### Items 3

How each violent event can be recorded in detail (act and harm) so that the frequency at different levels of severity of violence can be identified – Ms Sylvia Walby

**Presentation:** The expert presented the results of the study showing that trends of gender-based violence are different according to whether the victim or event is the unit of measurement and advocated for counting the events following the Crime Survey of England and Wales methodology. Moreover, substantial changes to the structure of the questionnaire were proposed by the expert following the change of focus from the victim to event. Moreover, harm as a main element of event characteristics was underlined.

**Discussion:** In general, the idea of collecting the data on each single event or series of events was supported by other private experts. The difficulty in implementation of the proposed approach that complicates potentially the interview was underlined as an element that can heavily influence the countries decision in participating in the survey. This is in particular the case in countries not well experienced with this type of survey or struggling with public acceptance of the topic for the official statistics. Additionally, the representatives from the countries commented that a preparation of the pilot survey has already started. Therefore, radical changes in the structure of the questionnaire might cause several serious problems in the implementation of the pilot survey at national level.

**Conclusion:** The TF members took note of this proposal.

#### Item 4

GBV survey in France-Ms Christelle Hamel

**Presentation:** The expert presented some of the results of the VIRAGE survey (GBV, France, 2015) focusing on comparing the victims by sexual orientation and discussing about a way that would allow establishing a link between having undergone family violence in childhood and/or adolescence and the impact of such violence on mental health in adulthood.

**Conclusion:** The TF members took note of this presentation.

#### Item 5

GBV survey in Canada-Ms Tamy Superle

**Presentation:** The representative from Canada, Status of Women in Canada, presented the national survey on GBV: the questionnaire and challenges/difficulties met during the preparation of the implementation of the survey. The survey was planned to start in April 2018 and will be organised as an on-line questionnaire with letter and followed up by phone or personal interview. The reference periods are to be one year and lifetime. Intimate partner violence part covers around 15 questions. The episodes are clustered by behaviour type and detailed questions on most severe event are planned to be asked. The survey will cover also questions on fear and stalking. Serious injuries and loss of consciousness is perceived as important characteristics of the violence consequences. Counting of the events proved to be difficult by the previous experiences, however indeed the prevalence rates for women and men are similar.

**Conclusion:** The TF members took note of the presentation.



**Discussion on items 3-5:** DG JUST clarified that data collected with the European GBV survey have to fulfil the requirements of Istanbul Convention and consequently the focus of the survey has to be victim and prevalence rate by different type of violence. The representative from FRA pointed out that other indicators agreed internationally, e.g. SDG indicators have to be taken into account as well. Private experts recommended that even if Istanbul Convention requires data on GBV against women, men should be included in the survey as well. In order to have data on GBV for women and men the sample size and design as well as the questionnaire have to be appropriate for covering both GBV against women as well as against men. As the sampling frames in the countries do not cover institutions it will be impossible to include in the sample also people in shelters or hospitals that in principle would be very much advisable for this type of the survey. The importance of collecting the information on nature of violent events was underlined (in particular the element of harm and injury).

**Conclusions on items 3-5:** Sharing research experience and recommendations was considered very important and useful for the implementation of a new survey. Equally important will also be taking into account diversity of countries: data collection systems are different as well as awareness of the topic and earlier national experiences in GBV data collection. Moreover, the methodology of the survey in particular the questionnaire proposed must be feasible to implement in all EU Member States.

## Item 6

### Summary of Grants 2017 and pretesting process at national level - ESTAT

**Presentation:** Eurostat presented the summary of grants awarded in 2017. The grants could cover work on the following topics:

Topic 1: translation of the questionnaire and pre-testing

Topic 2: conducting a pilot survey on GBV at national level

Topic 3: comparing the methodology to conduct GBV survey at national level with the proposal of common methodology of the EU-wide survey

Topic 4: analysing the impact of the methodological choices

In total, 11 countries (BG, EE, ES, HR, IS, LT, LV, MT, NL, PL, SI) sent their applications: 8 countries (EE, ES, HR, IS, MT, NL, PL, SI) to work on Topic 1 and all 11 to work on Topic 2. In addition, topic 3 was chosen by 3 countries (HR, NL, PL) and Topic 4 by 1 (IS).

Moreover, for the year 2018 another call for proposal for "conducting a pilot survey", was launched at the end of January, covering, topics 2-4 (including the possibility of translation and adaptation of the national questionnaire for piloting), with the deadline for replies 20 March 2018 and approximate budget of 1 million Euro coming from the European Parliament pilot project. The duration of action of 2018 grants is foreseen from June 2018 till September 2019.

**Discussion:** the representative from FRA informed that for some countries a complementary financing might be available from Norway.



### Item 7

### Sharing the national experiences on questionnaire pretesting exercise - EE, ES, HR, NL, SI

**Presentation:** Five countries who were represented in the TF and participated in the "pretesting" phase (of the GBV project), shared their experiences along with key findings during the process (Croatia, Estonia, the Netherlands, Slovenia and Spain).

**Discussion:** The most important experiences and observations from the test were:

- In ES and EE the data collection mode preferred by the respondents was face to face while in SI it was CAWI.
- The paper questionnaire was very difficult to administer due to many filters and skips.
- Face to face interview may result in socially desirable answers (experience of SI) so for the most sensitive elements self-administered questionnaire may be the best solution.
- From the experience of NL, the paper and web self-filled questionnaires could work similarly.
- On-line surveys may cause problems if confidentiality is not assured (the perpetrator may control the victim who is replying the questionnaire). Moreover, it is important that the person to whom the questionnaire is addressed those persons are really filling it in and not someone else from the household. In that respect the approach on using e.g. protected bank account access was proposed.
- The length of the questionnaire is not a great issue for the respondents who want to reply to the survey and consider the subject of it important. However, some questions were too long and respondents were confused to understand the topic of question.
- Interestingly the question on controlling behaviours was differently understood by Estonians and Russians in Estonia: Estonian respondents considered it as a regular question, while Russian-speaking respondents clearly state that the wish to know the whereabouts of your partner is not an indication of violence but a norm.

**Conclusion:** The TF members took note of these presentations. The detailed discussion on the questionnaire and related specific comments and recommendations were discussed under the points 9-12 of the agenda.

### Item 8

### Summary of outcomes of the pretesting: general comments - ISTAT

**Presentation:** ISTAT, who is supporting the work on development of the methodology for the European survey on gender-based violence through a grant, presented the summary of the outcomes of the pretesting based on the general comments received from the Member States who were involved in the pretesting phase.

**Discussion:** The main topics discussed were: the length of the questionnaire and the routing complexity, proposals to shorten the questionnaire, safety measures for respondent, the sensitiveness of the questionnaire, the reference period, time frame and violence in childhood, sexual harassment at work, the sequence and sections order of the questionnaire and the difference between acts, incidents and episodes.



**Conclusion:** The experience shows that even if the GBV questionnaire is long the interruption rate is low. At the same time the routing and formulation of the questions needs to be simplified. Some of the detailed questions on the last event can be proposed as optional or to be deleted. At the same time few of them would need to be moved for all events in order to better catch the gender differences. On sexual harassment at work two types of law may apply at national level: employment law and criminal law, therefore the focus in the survey shall be on the EU legislation. The comments/suggestions will be addressed as much as possible in the new version of the questionnaire, which will be shared among the TF members.

#### Item 9-10-11-12

#### Proposals for development of the questionnaire and discussion

**Presentation:** The pre-testing of the common GBV survey questionnaire was done in seven countries: Croatia, Estonia, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia, Spain and the methodological reports were sent to Eurostat in January. All reports included challenges met, comments, and recommendations at question level. The document containing all commented questions and comments/recommendations provided in the national methodological reports was prepared and shared before the meeting. TF members were invited to share their comments, opinions and recommendations at question level during the meeting.

**Discussion:** Together with Eurostat, the TF members revised the document, question by question taking into account the elements that were commented as problematic. For each commented question the comments and recommendations based on pre-testing were presented as well as proposal for changes. Only most important issues are presented here:

- The volume and intensity of the violence is the key element for the gender differences as the prevalence rates in many cases are similar for women and men. Therefore, a recommendation to collect the exact number of violent episodes was discussed. For repeated and more frequent violence episodes, it would mean that the respondent has to provide the exact number of episodes he/she experienced during the last year. Instead of asking the precise number of episodes, in case they were more than 10 it was proposed to ask for the violence frequency. Moreover, the duration of violence will be asked.
- Change of the focus from the last episode to the most serious was proposed for the follow up on detailed description. At the same time, some of the episodes characteristics could be moved for all events to allow better capture of gender based violence. In that respect it was for instance pointed out that several questions, as injuries, reporting, use of services are very important to compare women and men while the last episode might not be serious and therefore might be different from other episodes. The last episode was proposed at the initial stage of survey preparation in order to "randomise" the description of violence. In addition, "the last episode" is seen more objective than "most serious" for which respondent has to make subjective assessment. Moreover, in-depth questions are separately asked about non-partner, current partner and former partner violence and some questions included under "last episode for partner" will cover actually all episodes. Several proposals were done during the meeting and it was agreed that this discussion will continue online where every participant can indicate their preferences, while several TF members pointed out that they want to discuss it at national level.
- The main concern based on pre-testing was length of the questionnaire. However, no proposals were made for shortening the questionnaire during the meeting.



**Conclusion:** The questionnaire will be updated following the conclusions during the discussions and a new version will be sent to the member of the TF. The initial deadline for sharing the questionnaire for the pilot survey based on Grant technical specifications is June 2018. However, already during several meetings e.g. DSS, the Member States expressed their need to receive the questionnaire earlier due to very tight timetable. Therefore, it was agreed that the questionnaire for the pilot survey will be shared with the Member States during April 2018.

#### 4. Further exchange of opinions/recommendations

Important elements of the questionnaire, like contextualising the violent crime and structure of the questionnaire were discussed. The discussion continued question by question based on the document prepared for this discussion and shared with the TF members before the meeting.

During the round table TF members were requested to comment on what are the elements of the survey and the most important topics still to be discussed. It was asked to focus the further work and discussion on the methodology and following issues: training of the interviewers, including training manuals and rules, supporting documents for the respondents, guidelines for the interviewers, editing and imputation rules as well as how to analyse the results from gender perspective.

As eight chapters out of twelve were discussed during the meeting, for the rest it was agreed that the discussion will continue in the online tool, the GBV WIKI platform ([Link here](#)). The guidelines for using the online tool (WIKI) were presented to the TF members. Eurostat will prepare the online environment and will moderate the discussion. TF members will be informed by email.

#### 5. Next steps

Given, the intermediate level of finalisation of the work by the TF at the current meeting, the minutes of the meeting will constitute of most conclusive elements and further discussion will continue so as to finalise the questionnaire online, on the GBV WIKI platform ([Link here](#)).

#### 6. Next meeting

The next Task Force meeting will be organised in 15-16 May 2018 focusing on methodological guidelines for the pilot survey, and TF members will be informed by email.

#### 7. List of participants

<i>Country</i>	<i>Delegate name</i>	<i>Administration address Phone Mail</i>
<b>Germany</b>	Ms Nathalie LEITGÖB- GUZY	Federal Criminal Police Office



<i>Country</i>	<i>Delegate name</i>	<i>Administration address Phone Mail</i>
<b>Estonia</b>	Ms Jana BRUNS	Statistics Estonia
<b>Spain</b>	Ms Marta ADIEGO	Office of Government Against Gender Violence
<b>Croatia</b>	Mr Mario VLAJČEVIĆ	Croatian Bureau of Statistics
<b>Italy</b>	Ms Maria Giuseppina MURATORE	Istat
	Ms Roberta BARLETTA	Istat
<b>Latvia</b>	Mr Kalvis OKMANIS	The Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia
<b>Luxembourg</b>	Ms Clarissa DAHMEN	STATEC
<b>Hungary</b>	Mr Ádám Ferenc PINTÉR	Hungarian CSO
<b>Netherlands</b>	Mr Ger LINDEN	Statistics Netherlands
	Ms Rachel VIS-VISSCHERS	Statistics Netherlands
<b>Portugal</b>	Ms Susana NEVES	INE-Portugal
<b>Slovenia</b>	Ms Martina KONTELJ	Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia
<b>Private expert</b>	Ms Christelle HAMEL	INED
<b>Private expert</b>	Ms Monika SCHRÖTTLE	TU Dortmund
<b>Private expert</b>	Ms Sylvia WALBY	Lancaster University





<i>Country</i>	<i>Delegate name</i>	<i>Administration address Phone Mail</i>
<b>EIGE</b>	Ms Jurgita PEČIŪRIENĖ	EIGE
<b>FRA</b>	Mr Sami NEVALA	FRA
<b>Status of Women Canada</b>	Ms Tamy SUPERLE	Status of Women Canada
<b>DG JUST</b>	Ms Agnieszka BIELSKA DECUGNIERE	DG JUST.D.2
<b>SG SANTE</b>	Ms Fabienne LEFEBVRE	DG SANTE.DDG1.C.2
<b>EUROSTAT</b>	Mr DUPRE Didier	EUROSTAT
<b>EUROSTAT</b>	Ms LITWINSKA Agnieszka	EUROSTAT
<b>EUROSTAT</b>	Ms PAATS Merle	EUROSTAT
<b>EUROSTAT</b>	Mr VILLUND Ole	EUROSTAT
<b>EUROSTAT CONTRACTOR</b>	Mr RUSU Cristian	SOGETI