

## VIPROM – NEWSLETTER

Dear readers,

We are excited to share with you the fifth edition of the VIPROM newsletter, as the EU-funded project *Victim Protection in Medicine* enters its final phase. Among our current highlights, you will find in this newsletter a report on the **European Webinar Series on Domestic Violence in Healthcare**, which officially launched on 4 March 2025. Aimed at medical professionals across Europe, the webinars offer in-depth knowledge and practical guidance on recognising, responding to, and documenting domestic violence within medical settings.

In addition to the webinars, we are excited to host a **Changemaker Event on 28 October 2025** taking place online. This event offers an opportunity for motivated healthcare professionals to connect, share experiences, and join our growing [Changemaker Community](#), which plays a vital role in sustaining VIPROM's impact beyond the project's duration.

In our section on the **latest news in European politics**, we report on the recent steps taken by Austria and Sweden to implement the Istanbul Convention. I am also excited to announce the publication of the **new VIPROM Handbook: Intercultural Competence & Victim Protection in Medicine**. It is a fantastic new resource, so make sure you read it!

We hope this newsletter informs and inspires your work—and encourages you to stay connected with VIPROM as we continue to advocate for better protection and support for victims of domestic violence through healthcare systems.

Warm regards,



Bettina Pfeleiderer  
Coordinator of VIPROM

## UPDATE ON VIPROM'S ACTIVITIES IN A NUTSHELL

### VIPROM trained 425 stakeholders in the medical sector



On 28 April 2025, the German VIPROM team conducted the last pilot training. It was a full-day training session on Domestic Violence for **nursing students at the Dörte-Krause-Institute**, part of the Community Hospital in Herdecke – a rural area in western Germany.

Led by experienced trainers from **VIPROM partner [GESINE Intervention](#)**, the session focused on key questions such as: How can healthcare professionals recognise signs of domestic violence in patients? How can suspicions be addressed in a sensitive and appropriate way? What are the next steps once violence is disclosed?

The training was attended by eight nursing students in their third year of education, who

demonstrated a high level of engagement, openness, and professionalism. Through discussions, exercises, and reflections, the group explored the critical role of nursing professionals in detecting and responding to domestic violence.

The session not only strengthened participants' awareness and competencies, but also highlighted the importance of integrating this topic into health education. It was a strong signal that the next generation of healthcare providers is ready to advocate for safety, dignity, and change in clinical settings.

Altogether, our stakeholder trainings are a success story. The national implementation of the courses in the five VIPROM countries (Austria, Greece, Germany, Italy, Sweden), was highly successful and the project was able to train the VIPROM curriculum to 492 trainees, using VIPROM materials and the European training platform on domestic violence. VIPROM exceeded the number of trainees to be trained ( $n=425$ ) by 67 trainees (approx. 11.5% more).

Did you miss our last Newsletter? Read more about the **national trainings in Austria, Sweden, Greece, Germany and Italy [here](#)**! 😊

### VIPROM Final Conference

This year in December, the VIPROM consortium will have the opportunity to present the highlights of the project on an international panel in Athens, Greece. The panel will be hosted by VIPROM Partner HFPA ([Hellenic Forensic Psychiatric Association](#)). One highlight of the panel is the [clothesline exhibition](#), an interactive campaign that invites individuals to share their stories and experiences related to Domestic Violence and has already been traveling cities like Bilbao in Spain and Münster in Germany.

As the EU-project will come to an end in spring 2026, the VIPROM partners will also meet for the last time in person to discuss the process, final upcoming deliverables and success stories. In our **last Newsletter in January 2026**, we will give you all insights you want to know – stay tuned!

## VIPROM ON THE MOVE

Looking ahead, **VIPROM will hold a symposium at the European Conference on Domestic Violence (ECDV)**, which will be held from 3 to 5 September 2025 in Barcelona. As one of the key events in the field, the ECDV provides a unique opportunity for us to present project outcomes, engage with an international audience, and deepen our partnerships with both researchers and practitioners. The symposium will highlight our 3 years journey to advance medical training on domestic violence across Europe in a sustainable way:

## OUR LATEST VIPROM BLOGS

VIPROM published two blogs:

### March 2025: Implementing Sustainable Systems for Victim Support in the Medical Sector.

👉 The support of victims in the health sector is crucial, yet it presents significant challenges for medical professionals. In order to understand which organisational factors enable the sustainable implementation of victim protection in medical institution, case studies across three countries (Austria, Germany, Sweden) were researched:

- In **Austria**, the case studies focused on the implementation of Victim Protection Groups (OSG) in hospitals.
- In **Germany**, the case studies focused on implementing DV-training in curricula for medical students in different educational institutions.
- The **Swedish** case studies focused on the national implementation of an educational objective defined after an initiative at a high-ranking policy level.

Read [here](#).

👉 The second blog - on the **VIPROM European Webinar series** - has just been published! Read [here](#).

## VIPROM European Webinar Series – a success story!

With the last session on 8 July, the **VIPROM European Webinar Series** has come to an end. We are looking back on 10 successful webinar sessions over the past 4 months, interesting insights and inspiring exchanges.

### ➔ *What was it all about?* 🌍

The European Webinar Series was developed for **medical professionals all over Europe**. Each session tackled a crucial aspect of this multifaceted issue:



1. **Forms and dynamics of Domestic Violence** — providing a foundational understanding of abuse beyond the physical, the distinction between Domestic Violence (DV) and Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), the various forms in which these types of violence can manifest, the significance of sex and gender aspects in domestic violence for first-line responders and why there is no “typical victim”, as well as the complex dynamics of violence in relationships.
2. **Becoming culturally responsive and blocking bias in healthcare** — emphasizing equitable care for all survivors, recognising important cultural aspects in the context of health, and learning more about the “5Rs of Cultural Humility”.
3. **Indicators of domestic violence** — training clinicians to recognise subtle signs that can otherwise be missed.
4. **Communication in cases of domestic violence** — equipping providers with trauma-informed strategies for sensitive conversations, helping to recognise the specific challenges in disclosing DV, as well as exploring tailored screening questions that can help identify victims.
5. **Medical assessment and documentation** — underscoring the importance of accurate, compassionate, and legally sound records, learning about the most important risk factors for escalating violence and how to identify them, and examining practical assessment tools and questions that can help create a safety plan.
6. **Risk assessment and safety planning** — guiding practitioners in evaluating immediate danger and creating personalised safety strategies.
7. **Working together: Key institutions in cases of Domestic Violence** — illustrating the power of inter-agency collaboration, identifying the key institutional actors who are involved in cases of domestic violence and exploring best-practice approaches.
8. **Theory meets practice: Identifying and responding to domestic violence in Dentistry** — highlighting the unique role dental professionals play in early detection.
9. **Spotlight on Domestic Abuse and Sexual Health within sexual health settings** — equipping sexual health practitioners to identify and respond to abuse in intimate and reproductive contexts.
10. **Council of Europe legal framework: guidelines for medical professionals in accordance with the Istanbul Convention** — connecting international legal standards to everyday clinical practice.<sup>1</sup>

**A total of 1,900 professionals** participated in our webinar series. These included physicians, medical and dental students, dentists, midwives, nurses, psychologists and stakeholders from the social sector, among others. Around 80% of participants came from the health sector, primarily from Greece, Sweden, Malta and Italy.

This webinar series deepened participants' professional knowledge and sparked vital conversations. It also inspired cross-sector collaboration and emphasised the critical role of the healthcare sector in identifying and interrupting cycles of abuse. Participants left with practical tools, an expanded perspective and a renewed sense of responsibility to proactively support the fight against domestic violence<sup>2</sup>.

👉 Read more about it in our [latest blog](#).

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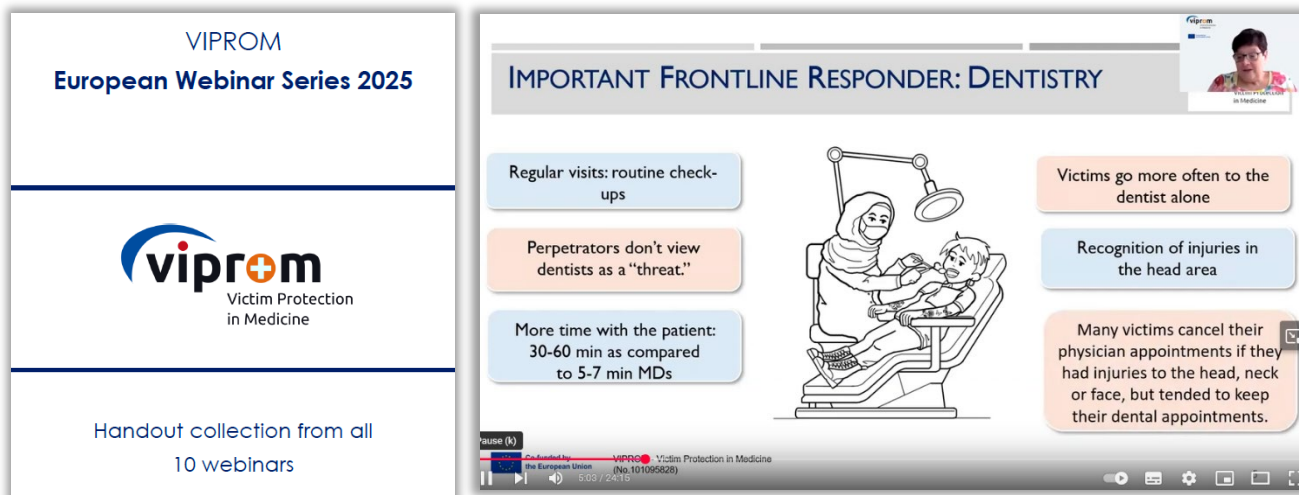
<sup>1</sup> © HFPa, see [here](#)

<sup>2</sup> © HFPa, see:



**Did you miss the webinar series? Then we have good news!**

**The recordings of the sessions are already available on our YouTube Channel.**



**You can also download all handouts here:** [https://viprom-cerv.eu/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/VIPROM\\_EWS\\_all\\_handouts.pdf](https://viprom-cerv.eu/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/VIPROM_EWS_all_handouts.pdf)

**+ + Exclusive Announcement + +**

## **VIPROM Changemaker Event on 28 October 2025**

We are not only proud of the engagement of our very professional participants during the webinar sessions, but also of their interest in engaging for the topic in a sustainable way. Already in the first webinar session, participants expressed the desire of a networking event.

**We don't need to be told twice – no sooner said than done!** 😊

The European Webinar Series offered a space where professionals could discuss, reflect and exchange. We want to follow up on this and offer them a possibility to network, build up cooperation and alliances all over Europe.

We therefore invite you to participate in our **VIPROM CHANGEMAKER EVENT on October 28!**

- ☒ Exchange knowledge and experiences
- ☒ Build strong networks and alliances
- ☒ Share your insights and help shape the conversation

Register [here](#) and become a VIPROM Changemaker!



Are you a medical professional passionate about making a difference in the fight against domestic violence?

JOIN THE

**VIPROM CHANGEMAKER EVENT**

October 28, 2025 at 6:00 PM (CEST), online

— CONNECT WITH PEERS AROUND THE WORLD —

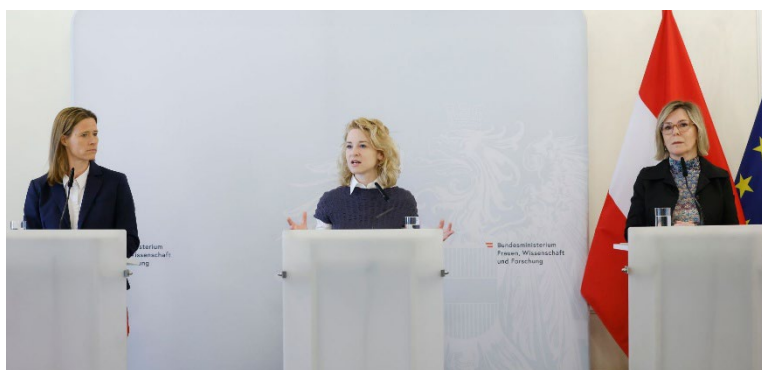
Exchange knowledge and experiences  
Build strong networks and alliances  
Share your insights and help shape the conversation

**REGISTER NOW**  
[www.viprom-cerv.eu/european-webinar-series/](http://www.viprom-cerv.eu/european-webinar-series/)



## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE - WHAT'S NEW IN EUROPEAN POLITICS?

### Recent steps taken by Austria and Sweden to put the Istanbul Convention into practice



The new **Austrian** three-party government (in office since March 2025) held the kick-off of the development of a *National Action Plan (NAP) on Violence against Women*.

On 20 May, experts and representatives from NGOs as well as several ministries met at the *Federal Ministry for Women, Science and Research* in Vienna, Austria. Participants worked in eight thematic groups on issues ranging

from education, to digital spaces and the engagement of volunteers in prevention. One working group had a special focus on the relevance of the health sector, especially its role in early detection of Domestic Violence (DV).

The NAP is the latest step in the process of implementing the Istanbul Convention in Austria. Concepts that are now in development should start to come into effect later in 2025. It is a promising sign that the medical field is explicitly targeted in the new NAP as it shows that policy-makers understand the importance of medical professionals in supporting victims of Domestic Violence.

Looking north on the EU map, we find **Sweden**, which also recently took national steps in line with the Istanbul Convention by launching a support tool on Domestic Violence for the health and dental care.

On May 7 2025, the Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare released a national resource to support healthcare staff in identifying and assisting patients exposed to DV, and to help managers establish the necessary framework. It offers guidance on developing local procedures for identifying DV exposure, the initial response, trauma-informed care, and staff training and support. This was the first major update in over ten years and is considered to be more concrete, evidence-based with regard to the responsibilities of managers.

Active involvement in addressing DV within the healthcare sector reflects a key recognition of the link between violence and adverse health effects. Following this, a recent Swedish government inquiry (SOU 2025:63) has proposed that all healthcare providers should be required to offer regular training which should be mandatory for licensed healthcare staff. It remains uncertain whether the training will explicitly address DV or whether the proposal will ultimately be approved.



Nevertheless, the steps currently being taken by states parties to the Convention, such as Sweden and Austria, are a significant step forward to improving the identification of and support for individuals affected by violence.

## Sources:

<https://www.bmfwf.gv.at/ministerium/presse/20250423.html>

<https://www.moment.at/story/was-steht-in-einem-guten-nationalen-aktionsplan-gegen-gewalt-an-frauen/>

1. Link to the Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare released the national support tool:  
<https://www.socialstyrelsen.se/globalassets/sharepoint-dokument/artikelkatalog/kunskapsstod/2025-5-9569.pdf>

Link to the SOU 2025:63:

<https://www.regeringen.se/rattsliga-dokument/statens-offentliga-utredningar/2025/06/sou-202563/>

## GOOD TO KNOW: VIPROM ICC Handbook on Intercultural Competence for Domestic Violence Trainer

### New VIPROM Handbook Release: Intercultural Competence & Victim Protection in Medicine

■ Created for medical professionals, inspired by real needs

VIPROM is proud to announce the release of the ICC VIPROM Handbook: *Intercultural Competence for Domestic Violence Trainers*, a transformative resource for anyone working in healthcare.

## ★ Why This Handbook Is a Game-Changer



In hospitals, clinics, and exam rooms across Europe, medical professionals are on the frontlines of identifying and supporting victims of Domestic Violence. But what happens when trauma intersects with cultural differences, language barriers, and systemic gaps?

**This is where the ICC VIPROM Handbook comes in:** a hands-on, research-based, and culturally sensitive training tool designed to empower healthcare workers to respond effectively and humanely. But it's more than just a handbook. Our mission is to ensure that no victim falls through the cracks

of system due to misunderstandings, miscommunication or a lack of training.

## 📚 Inside the Handbook: What You'll Discover

### ☒ Foundational Knowledge on Intercultural Competence

Understand how personal values, cultural norms, and communication styles can affect a victim's willingness to disclose abuse and how you, as a medical professional, can navigate those moments with sensitivity and respect.

### ☒ Trainer's Toolkit

This is not just theory. The handbook includes ready to use tools for educators and trainers, such as:

- Role playing scenarios based on real world medical settings
- Group exercises that challenge unconscious bias
- Reflection prompts and checklists for self assessment

### ☒ Case-Based Learning

Learn from composite case studies and true to life vignettes that reflect the lived experiences of migrant women, LGBTQ+ patients, and other vulnerable groups in healthcare systems.

### ☒ Language Matters

Explore best practices for trauma-informed and culturally competent communication, including how to:

- Ask the right questions without re-traumatizing
- Work with interpreters
- Use body language and tone wisely across cultures

### ☒ Focus on Prevention & Protection



Develop an eye for the subtle signs of abuse, especially in patients who might not speak the local language or trust the system. The handbook emphasizes early detection and empathy led care.

### Developed with European Impact




The handbook has been developed by one of VIPROM's partners, a dedicated, culturally diverse team at Paris Lodron University of Salzburg. The source reflects insights from various partner countries and draws on European-wide best practices in victim protection and medical ethics.

Behind this project is a core belief:

 Healthcare professionals are powerful agents of change in the fight against domestic violence.

### What Makes This Different?

Most training skips the how. This handbook delivers:

-  **Clarity:** What to say and how to engage meaningfully.
-  **Practicality:** Trainer-ready modules and adaptable materials.
-  **Humanity:** A compassionate approach centered on dignity, respect, and safety.

Whether you are leading workshops, mentoring medical students, or updating your institution's protocols, this guide will help you move from "I don't know what to say" to "I'm ready to help."

### Who Should Read This?

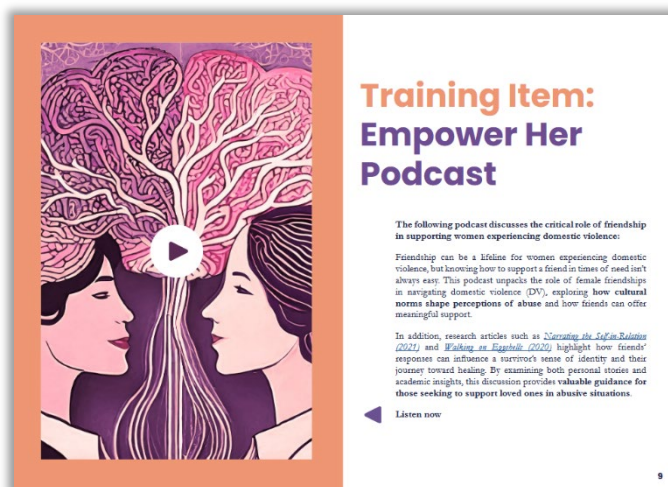
- University and clinical trainers
- Hospital and primary care staff
- Public health educators
- Medical students and interns
- Policymakers working in health and victim protection

If you work in medicine and want to be part of the solution, this is for you.

### Ready to Dive In?

 [Click here to read or download the ICC VIPROM Handbook](#)

(Available in English, with local adaptations to follow)



## IN THE MAKING: A Roadmap for Action Against Domestic Violence in the Medical Sector

### Empowering Healthcare Professionals with Practical Tools and Gender-Sensitive Guidance

Domestic Violence remains a hidden and neglected topic in medicine — too often undetected, too rarely addressed. Healthcare and medical professionals are on the front lines, yet many feel unprepared to identify or respond effectively to signs of abuse.

That's why we – the VIPROM Consortium – are developing a **practitioner-focused roadmap** — a handbook designed **by professionals, for professionals** — to support gender-sensitive, trauma-informed care. This resource is based on previous work we performed throughout the last 2,5 years in this valuable project, and it will offer concrete strategies for recognizing and addressing domestic violence in medical settings.



#### → What to expect:

- The VIPROM **Training Platform at a glance** and **how to use it**
- Actionable **tools and checklists** for everyday use
- **Practical guidelines** for organizational sustainability
- Targeted **training modules** and real-world scenarios
- A strong emphasis on “**interdisciplinary collaboration**” and patient trust
- Guidelines and **tips for national accreditation** or **how to anchor DV into medical curricula**

#### **Work in Progress — Stay Tuned!**

This project is built on lived experiences and clinical expertise. It's a collective effort to strengthen healthcare's role in **violence prevention and patient support** — with **compassion, clarity, and competence** at its core.

## VIPROM CONSORTIUM



## CONTACT US



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