

VIPROM – NEWSLETTER

Dear readers,

as we reach the end of the [EU project VIPROM](#), it is time to reflect on what has been achieved with great pride. Over the past three years, **VIPROM has grown from an ambitious European initiative into a collaborative success story** shaped by medical professionals, researchers, students, policy-makers, and partners from different countries. **Together, we have raised awareness of domestic violence** in healthcare settings, improved training structures, developed practical tools, and emphasised the importance of interdisciplinary cooperation. Today, we can say that VIPROM has **delivered meaningful and lasting outcomes**: from in-depth training sessions to the development of [new tools](#) and [guidelines](#) that empower daily clinical practice, as well as scientific publications that firmly place victim protection on the academic and political map.

None of this would have been possible without our VIPROM consortium, the openness of healthcare institutions willing to innovate, and the **commitment of everyone working tirelessly to protect victims of domestic violence every day**.

Although the VIPROM project has officially ended on 14th of February, **our mission continues**. The fight against domestic violence never stops, nor does the training of stakeholders within the healthcare sector will end, **because every trained professional, every disclosure of DV victims, and every informed decision has the power to change lives**.

Thank you for being part of this journey.

Warm regards



Bettina Pflöiderer
Coordinator of VIPROM

UPDATE ON VIPROM'S ACTIVITIES IN A NUTSHELL

Inspiring Meeting of the Consortium of the EU Project VIPROM in Athens, Greece



On 14 December 2025, the VIPROM consortium gathered in Athens, Greece. The meeting was hosted by the Hellenic Forensic Psychiatric Association (HFPA). Since VIPROM enters its last three months and it was therefore the last in-person meeting, the consortium focused on reviewing the project progress, plan the final phase of activities, and strengthen international cooperation.

VIPROM International Symposium – “Advancing Medical Training on Domestic Violence Across Europe”

In addition to the consortium meeting, partners participated in the VIPROM International Symposium on 13 December 2025 at the University of West Attica, Athens. The programme combined reflection, exchange, and practical engagement, including the VIPROM International Panel chaired by B. Pfleiderer and A. Douzenis.

One of the highlights was the plenary lecture by VIPROM coordinator **Bettina Pfleiderer**, entitled “*Seeing Beyond the Surface: How Reflection on Stereotypes and Biases Can Reshape Our Response to Domestic Violence*”, which encouraged new perspectives on addressing gender-based violence.

Moreover, the symposium featured the **Clothesline Project** presentation, coordinated by B. Pfleiderer and M.-L. Psarra, as well as a **female self-defence workshop**, offering hands-on, practice-oriented learning opportunities.

Cultural Experience and Closing

A cultural event and farewell lunch provided an excellent opportunity to strengthen partnerships in an informal setting. On 15 December 2025, partners also enjoyed a cultural visit to the Acropolis Museum, offering insight into Athens’ rich history and heritage.

The VIPROM consortium warmly thanks all partners for their active participation and the hosts from HFPA for their excellent organisation and warm hospitality, which made the meeting and symposium both highly successful and inspiring.



👉 Read more about the key highlights of the meeting [here](#).

OUR LATEST VIPROM BLOGS

“Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does.” — William James

In the last three months, VIPROM published three blogs:

November 2025: “Working Together as Changemaker! Your Key Role in Violence Intervention”

25 November marks International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. In this blog, we highlighted inspiring good practices and the opportunities that lie in interdisciplinary cooperation in the fight against domestic violence. Four best-practice examples showing how each of us can become a true Changemaker were presented. **Curious to find out what they are?**

👉 Read more about it here: <https://viprom-cerv.eu/2025/11/24/working-together-as-changemaker-your-key-role-in-violence-intervention/>

January 2026: “Stepstones towards a successful accreditation of a VIPROM curriculum in medical education in Germany – a best practice example”

- 💡 How to move from awareness about DV towards institutional change?
- 💡 How to integrate a training programme on the long-term?

The German **VIPROM train-the-trainer programme** represents a successful and sustainable implementation pathway: it is on track for accreditation at federal level and has been integrated into existing medical education structures at the University of Münster. In this blog, we demonstrate how a structured, accredited DV training can be embedded into medical education systems and scaled within institutional frameworks by sharing useful insights from a best practice example.

👉 Read here: <https://viprom-cerv.eu/2026/01/08/stepstones-towards-a-successful-accreditation-of-a-viprom-curriculum-in-medical-education-in-germany-a-best-practice-example/>

📅 February 2026: From Ambition to Impact: How VIPROM Became a European Success Story

Three years, many countries, one shared goal: making Domestic Violence visible and improving support for victims. VIPROM has grown from an ambitious EU initiative into a true European success story – with a multilingual training platform, practical tools for the medical sector, and a strong network of changemakers across Europe. 🌍

What remains? Sustainable structures, empowered healthcare professionals, and clear evidence that medical practice can make a real difference. ❤️

In our last blog, VIPROM coordinator @Bettina Pfleiderer and @Madeleine Stöhr take a look back on this inspiring journey.

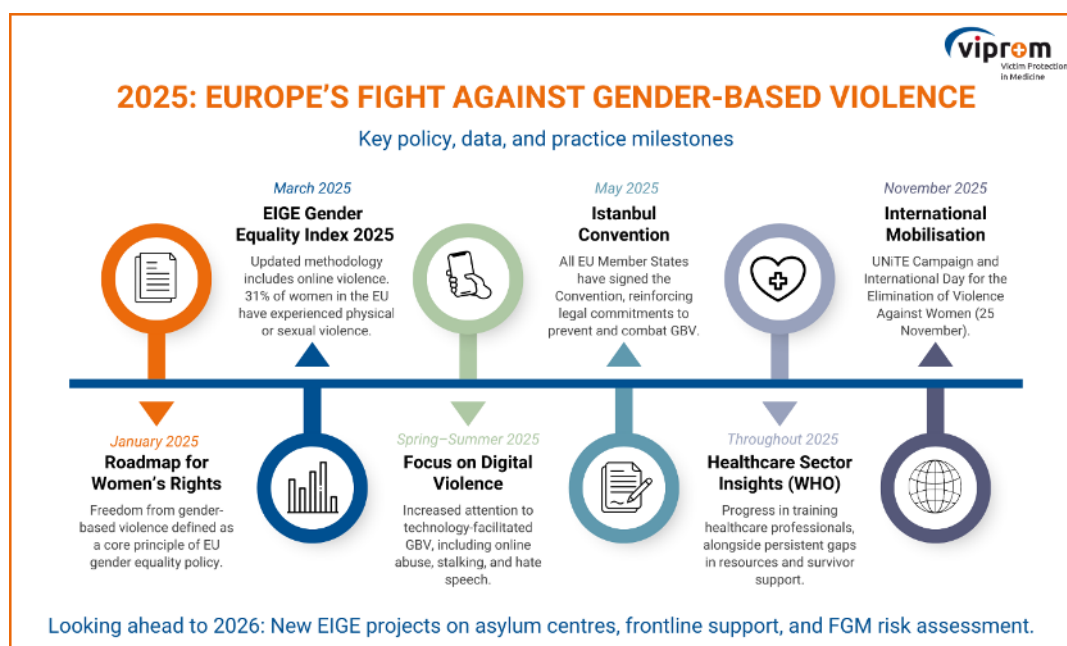
👉 Read here: <https://viprom-cerv.eu/2026/02/03/from-ambition-to-impact-how-viprom-became-a-european-success-story/>

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE - WHAT'S NEW IN EUROPEAN POLITICS?

Turning Commitments into Action: Europe's GBV Agenda – 2025 Review and 2026 Priorities

In 2025, Europe focused heavily on combating gender-based violence (GBV) through new policy frameworks, like the [Roadmap for Women's Rights](#) prioritising freedom from GBV, the release of the updated [EIGE Gender Equality Index 2025](#) highlighting persistent violence (31% of women experiencing physical/sexual violence).

Overall, 2025 in Europe was a year of strategic planning, data-driven insights, and reinforced commitments to tackle GBV through legal, policy, and practical measures, with a growing recognition of the evolving digital landscape.



Key Developments in 2025:

- **New Roadmaps & Strategies:** The European Commission adopted the [Roadmap for Women's Rights](#), setting the fight against GBV as a core principle for a gender-equal society, guiding future policies.
- **Updated Data & Measurement:** The [EIGE Gender Equality Index 2025](#), with a revamped methodology including online violence, revealed pervasive violence (31% of women) and significant gender pay gaps.
- **Focus on Digital Violence:** A strong emphasis was placed on technology-facilitated GBV (online abuse, stalking, hate speech) through research and campaigns.
- **Legal Frameworks & Commitments:** The EU reinforced its commitment to the **Istanbul Convention**, with all member states having signed it by May 2025, and continued implementing the first EU-wide law against GBV ([Directive 2024/1385](#)).
- **Healthcare Sector Improvements:** The WHO highlighted progress in training healthcare professionals but noted significant gaps in resources and survivor support, with many countries still failing to protect survivor confidentiality.

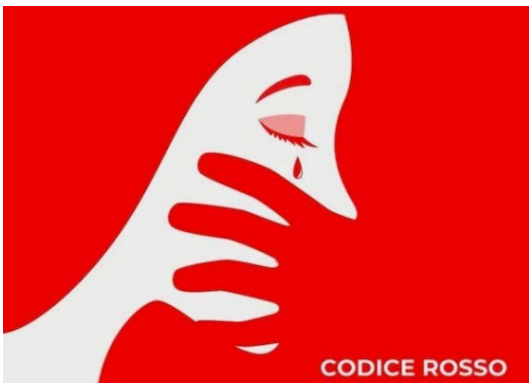
Plans for 2026:

- New EIGE projects are planned for 2026 to improve EU responses in asylum centers, front-line support, and female genital mutilation (GFM) risk assessment.
- **International Campaigns:** The [UN's UNiTE campaign](#) and other initiatives mobilised action around the November 25 International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

Violence Against Women: What Will Change in Italy Between 2023 and 2026

In recent years, Italy has made **significant strides in the fight against violence against women**, updating its regulatory framework between the end of 2023 and the beginning of 2026. The most significant change came with the introduction of a specific offense for gender-based murder.

The new Crime of Femicide



With Law No. 181/2025, which came into force on December 17, 2025, Article 577-bis of the Criminal Code was introduced into the legal system, establishing the autonomous crime of femicide. The law provides for life imprisonment for those who kill a woman in contexts of discrimination, oppression, possession, or control. In addition, the law strengthens the protection of minors, guaranteeing even underage victims' access to anti-violence centres.

Picture © ovieto-news.it

The 'strengthened' Red Code

Already in 2023, Law No. 168 introduced more effective measures to prevent and combat violence. Operational between 2024 and 2025, this legislation strengthened tools such as electronic tagging and made the application of deferred arrest in flagrante delicto more severe. It also established the obligation for the suspect to maintain a minimum distance of 500 meters from the victim, while the police commissioner's warning was extended to cases such as private violence, aggravated threats, and revenge porn.



The European contribution

At the EU level, Italy is transposing EU Directive 2024/1385, published in May 2024, the first dedicated exclusively to combating violence against women. The directive introduces minimum standards for crimes such as cyber-stalking and cyber-flashing and requires member states to improve coordination and assistance to victims.

Outlook for 2026

A fundamental bill introducing the principle of "free and current consent" as a central element in defining the crime of sexual violence was **unanimously approved by the Chamber of Deputies on November 19, 2025** and sent to the Senate for its legislative process. This amendment to Article 609-bis of the Criminal Code establishes that any sexual act performed without this consent

(explicit, free, informed, and current) constitutes the crime of sexual violence, **shifting the focus from coercion to the protection of individual sexual freedom, in line with the Istanbul Convention**. In 2026, this bill will continue its legislative process in the Senate for final approval. In addition, the 2026 Budget Law provides for an increase in funds allocated to anti-violence centres and the financing of the 2025-2027 National Strategic Plan.

💡 For those in need of immediate help, the **toll-free, multilingual 1522 hotline dedicated to anti-violence and stalking remains active**.

Assessment

Unfortunately, the **assessment is not entirely positive**, as the Red Code and electronic tagging have not **yet been fully implemented** and incorporated into daily practice, and in some cases, there have been malfunctions or a lack of availability of the tools due to an underestimation of the problem and of the number of possible cases.

Sources:

Department of Equal Opportunities in Italy: <https://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/it/>

GOOD TO KNOW: Practical tools for your daily practice!

VIPROM Med.DocCard® and Dent.Doc Card®

Imagine you have a patient who experiences Domestic Violence and all relevant information available within one handgrip.

We proudly present the **VIPROM Med.DocCard®** and **Dent.Doc Card®**:



Measuring just 99 x 204 mm, the cards combine all you need to know about...

- how to get the conversation started
- what to include in the basic documentation
- how to ask for details of the event
- how to make court-proof photo documentation
- what kind of further measures have to be taken.

What else to expect?

- The cards are available in eight [languages/adaptations](#): English, German, Austrian context, Italian, Finnish, Swedish, Portuguese, and Greek.
- They support documenting the size of injuries (e.g. by using the scale on this card)

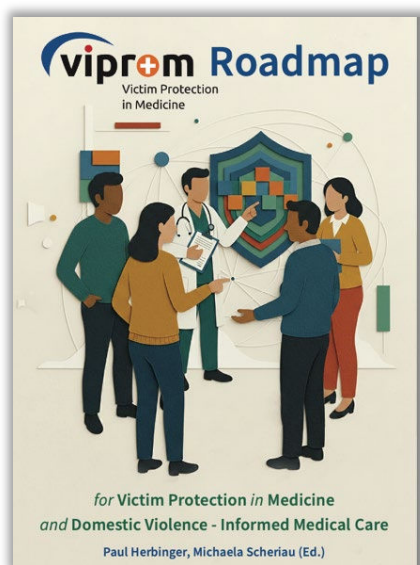
- They can be downloaded, printed out at a **size of 99 x 204 mm** and laminated before use.

👉 **Download your VIPROM Med.DocCard® and Dent.Doc Card® [here](#).**

+ + Brand New Tool Release + +

Roadmap for Victim Protection in Medicine and Domestic Violence - Informed Medical Care

Strengthening Healthcare Responses with Practical Tools, Expert Insights, and a Sustainable Training Concept – watch out for the VIPROM Roadmap and Training platform!



We are proud to announce the **official release** of the **VIPROM Roadmap for Victim Protection in Medicine and Domestic Violence – Informed Medical Care**, which is a comprehensive, practice-oriented resource designed to empower healthcare professionals with gender-sensitive, trauma-informed approaches to domestic violence (DV) prevention in medical care. Domestic violence often remains unrecognized within medical institutions and settings. Many healthcare professionals encounter warning signs in daily practice, yet they still feel uncertain about how to respond effectively and responsibly - this handbook wants to change that. Developed over the past three project years by medical experts, frontline practitioners, social scientists and DV specialists within the **VIPROM Consortium**, it offers clear guidance, practical tools, and a structured pathway toward stronger, more confident DV intervention in the healthcare sector.



What's Inside the Handbook?

The VIPROM Training Platform – Your Digital Entry Point

An overview of the developed online platform featuring interactive learning modules, practical case scenarios, and tailored tools that support hands-on DV training across medical disciplines.

The Train-the-Trainer Concept & Didactical Methods

A ready-to-implement framework enabling hospitals, universities, and training centres to build internal expertise and ensure long-term sustainability of DV education in medical institutions.

Organisational Guidance for Sustainable Implementation

Strategies for institutional change, interdisciplinary collaboration, and integration of DV procedures into routine clinical practice.



Recommendations for National Accreditation & Curricular Anchoring

Clear advice for embedding DV topics into medical and other healthcare curricula and aligning training with national accreditation standards for long-lasting institutional anchorage.

Actionable Tools for Daily Practice

Checklists, decision-support tools, communication guidelines, and clinical workflows that help practitioners identify, assess, and respond to DV safely and sensitively.

Special Highlight: Expert Interview with two leading figures with extensive experience in DV trainings in medicine

This edition features an in-depth interview with two leading professionals in DV care:

- **The Project Coordinator**, Prof. Dr. Dr. Bettina Pfleiderer: a medical specialist at the clinic of radiology at the medical faculty of the University of Münster (Germany) with extensive experience in coordinating cross-sector domestic violence prevention initiatives
- **One of VIPROM Lead Trainers**, Dr. Eva Schönefeld: a clinician and DV expert involved in designing and piloting the training modules at the University of Münster (Germany)

Together, they discuss the future of DV training in medicine, the challenges encountered during the project, and the practical steps needed to create safer clinical environments for patients experiencing violence and sustainable institutionalisation of DV trainings with an extra eye on the importance of accreditation.

A Collective Achievement

Practical Implications for Program Development:

- Pursue **accreditation** early when designing training courses, especially for medical professionals.
- Recognize it as a **dual benefit**: external validation and internal refinement.
- Accreditation increases **institutional anchorage**, especially in formal university or hospital settings.
- Use the process as a moment to evaluate and strengthen your own training design.

The VIPROM Roadmap is the result of a dedicated teamwork and hard work done by the VIPROM consortium during the three-year project to strengthen the role of healthcare in preventing violence and supporting DV victims. Based on practical experience, clinical expertise, and interdisciplinary collaboration and research, it provides a roadmap toward greater awareness, trust, and compassion in the medical care of victims of domestic violence.

We invite all medical institutions, educators, and healthcare professionals to explore, apply, and share this resource. Let's continue building a medical sector where no sign of violence goes unnoticed and every patient is met with competence and care.

TOPIC OF INTEREST: Inspiring Insights from Experts

VIPROM Guidelines for Changemakers

If you are already following our journey for a while, you have probably heard of the [VIPROM Changemakers](#). During the project's runtime, we had the opportunity to meet dedicated individuals with different professions, who engage themselves in the fight against Domestic Violence.

Alongside cooperation partners on the local level, such as Advisory Board Member Dr. Andreas Leven, who already participated in interviews, case studies and [advocates the topic in his clinical setting](#), we also had the pleasure to meet motivated people all around the world in our [European Webinar Series](#) and VIPROM Changemaker Event – in which the idea of setting up guidelines was born.

VIPROM Guidelines for Changemakers in Domestic Violence – Prevention & Response

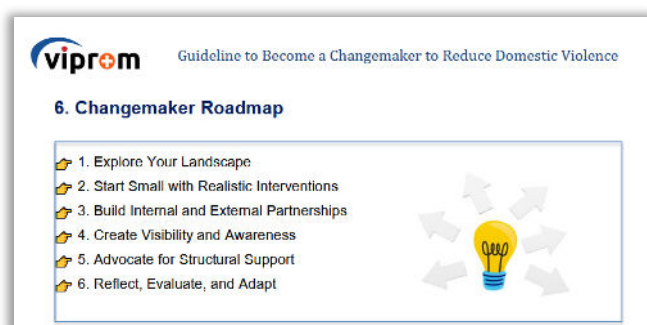
Did you ever consider yourself being a Changemaker? If no – do you think your impact is “too small”?

The VIPROM philosophy states the following: **every action counts!** Therefore, the guidelines position DV not as an individual, but as a shared societal responsibility. It emphasises that **change does not begin with policies but with everyday professional interactions**: with asking questions, a proper documentation, a well-placed referral, or with a moment of courageous advocacy inside one's institution.

The guidelines therefore serve as a multidisciplinary guideline for professionals in healthcare: they show chances, but also challenges and how to overcome them.

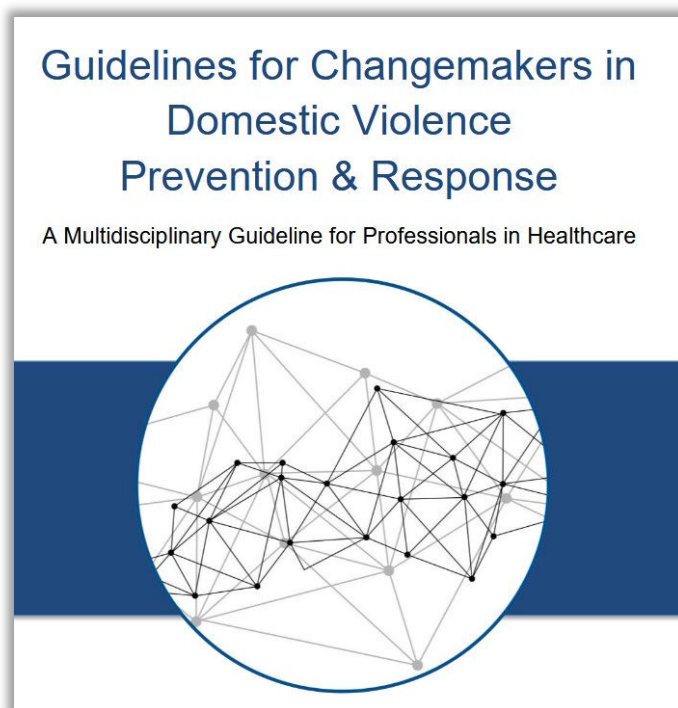
Changemaking begins small, but it has the power to inspire transformation far beyond the individual level.

👉 Inspired to learn more? Read and download the guidelines in English [here](#).



Is important to note that the guidelines are also available in national adaptations:

- [German](#)
- [Austrian context](#)
- [Swedish](#)
- [Italian](#)
- [Greek](#)



Strengthening the Medical Frontline: New Insights into Domestic Violence Training and Victim Protection

VIPROM Publications in the Making!

We are excited to announce the upcoming publication of two critical scientific articles stemming from the **VIPROM (Victim Protection in Medicine)** project. These papers will address the urgent need to equip the healthcare sector with the tools and systemic support required to identify and assist victims of **Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)**.

The Greek Experience: From Training to Systemic Change

The first article, "**Addressing Domestic Violence within the Greek Healthcare System**," evaluates the pilot implementation of the VIPROM curriculum in Greece. Coordinated by the **Hellenic Forensic Psychiatric Association (HFPA)**, the training involved 83 healthcare professionals and students in an intensive 12-hour interactive training program.

Key findings from the Greek context include:

- **Legal Vulnerabilities:** A significant disparity exists where non-physician staff, such as midwives and nurses, lack the same legal protection as doctors when reporting abuse.
- **Need for Standardisation:** There is a critical demand for a National Protocol and a centralised reporting register to eliminate procedural ambiguity.
- **Confidence Boost:** Interactive methods like role-playing and case studies significantly increased participants' confidence in initiating sensitive conversations with potential victims.

The Strategic Role of the Medical Sector

The second paper, "**The Role of the Medical Sector in Victim Protection and Early Intervention**," synthesizes international research with empirical data from the VIPROM project. It highlights that medical settings—from emergency departments to dental clinics – are often the first professional environments where the consequences of violence become visible.

Essential take-aways include:

- **Trauma-Informed Care:** Moving beyond physical treatment to foster safe disclosure environments through sensitivity and empowerment.
- **Institutional Integration:** Training is most effective when embedded within medical education and professional development rather than treated as an optional elective.
- **Inclusive Protection:** The research advocates for an intersectional approach that recognizes under-served victim groups, including men and individuals with disabilities.

These publications serve as a call to action for policy makers and healthcare leaders to move beyond individual awareness toward sustainable, institutionalized change.

 **Stay tuned for the full release of these articles in upcoming peer-reviewed journals!** 

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