



EU urged to step up its efforts to eradicate violence against women and the young

The EP is calling on the Commission and member states to do more to tackle violence against women and young people. Up to a quarter of women and young people in Europe are estimated to have experienced physical violence. Today the EP voted in favour of a report arguing for more action and for more support for the Daphne programme, the only EU programme seeking to combat violence against children, young people and women.

Rapporteur Regina Bastos said the costs of domestic violence to society are extremely high, with conjugal violence alone costing society €16 billion each year. The Portuguese Christian Democrat said there are also the psychological consequences to consider, which is why initiatives such as the Daphne programme are so important.

Tell us about the Daphne programme.

The Daphne programme was launched in 1997. It is a European programme aimed at tackling violence towards women, children and teenagers.

It has been really successful, both in terms of the number of people involved as the impact that projects financed through the programme have had.

Why is it so important?

The Daphne programme is the only European programme of its kind. The battle against violence continues to be a priority, especially when it comes to new types of violence such as the abuse of the elderly, violence in crèches, and the use of social media for harassment.

Will the programme continue? How can it be improved?

Over 2014-2020 the Daphne programme will be integrated in the new rights and citizenship programme.

It's true that we would have preferred the programme to continue under the same name, but as this is not possible, it is vital that the new rights and citizenship programme includes the goals of the Daphne programme, that it will continue to be financed at a comparable level and that its visibility will be enhanced.

It will also be important to improve the distribution of programmes between the different member states and to simplify administrative procedures and the application process for subsidies so that small NGOs, which are essential on the ground, can continue to remain involved in partnerships with other organisations.

In addition it will be vital to do more to raise awareness of the issue among schools, the media, the health sector, the police and the judicial system.