

# IPV-DACOVID

## Intimate Partner Violence- During and After Covid

DURATION  
15/12/2020-15/03/2023

BUDGET  
718 142 €

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The rapid spread of the coronavirus is forcing countries to respond to this pandemic with strong preventive measures, such as social isolation. Isolation and social distancing (have) expose(d) personal and collective vulnerabilities while limiting accessible and familiar support options. A particular risk during a pandemic is the potential increase in intimate partner violence (IPV). In parallel with this risk, emergency containment measures have significantly altered the practices and processes of cooperation between actors working in the field of IPV. While exacerbating the risks of violence, this time of crisis is revealing and could encourage resilience by making the general population and politicians aware of the prevalence of intimate partner violence and of the needs of victims and perpetrators;

The global objective of this project will be twofold. First, it aims to assess changes and development in public policies and actions involving multiple fields and actors: police, justice, health and associations during and after the Covid-19 crisis. Second, the project aims to assess the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on the dynamics of violence (emergence, exacerbation of existing violence, forms of violence - bidirectional, intimate terrorism... -, and exits from violence). It will consider what (new) kinds of violence victims experienced during confinement and de-confinement; how the conditions of confinement and deconfinement affected the perpetrators, the victims, and the children exposed to the violence; how the new conditions may have affected different groups; and to what extent intersectional vulnerabilities have surfaced.

This project is a continuation of the IPV-PRO&POL project that collected data and analyzed the trajectories and types of intimate partner violence, and public policies and interventions prior to the Covid-19 crisis. This project will specifically identify changes in public and media discourse regarding intimate partner violence, changes in judicial interventions, front-line interventions and associations, as well as innovations and new developments brought about by the awareness of the risk of violence and confinement in the home during and after the crisis. It will assess their relevance in meeting the needs of victims and their continued integration into post-lockdown policies. The global objective of this project is to analyze the impact of the measures taken "hic et nunc" and to draw lessons for more structural and integrated policies that will prepare us for future crises and help us to respond better to the needs of the most vulnerable groups in society (more globally, for the politic IPV).

To achieve its objectives, the project will be based on a multidisciplinary approach (a network including psychologists, criminologists, gender studies experts, political scientists) and various research methods (mapping, analysis of public discourses, analysis of statistical data, in depth interviews, cases studies, focus groups) which will enable the team to trace the changes and developments in IPV before, during and after the crisis.

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## Results and impact of the project

We expect that our results will primarily shed light on dynamics of violence in times of crisis, including on the conditions of the emergence and evolution of violence between intimate partners, particularly in contexts of multiple vulnerabilities, and how this violence affects victims, perpetrators and exposed children. The results are aimed improving our knowledge related to the initiatives taken in the different policy fields (taking into account the institutional complexity specific to Belgium) and changes in professional practices in the main sectors concerned (health, police and justice, welfare and the NGO sectors) in the particular context of a major crisis. The crisis may have also triggered and revealed certain deficiencies in public policies and professional practices, including inadequacies in resource allocation and the existence of perverse or unexpected effects, and the limits of modes of coordination between different sectors. The need to update knowledge in light of this major crisis and its effects therefore is therefore clear and pressing. Indeed, the relevant post-crisis reconfiguration of policies and practices depends on this knowledge. The potential impact of this research project is therefore not only scientific, but will also have, in terms of public policies and public services, collateral consequences for civil society, the economy, health and quality of life.

The knowledge needs in this field have been expressed "in ordinary times" (i.e. in non-crisis periods) by various actors, notably in the current IPV-PRO&POL research project. The crisis has brought about a major upheaval in this area. Updating knowledge will have a significant impact on the adequacy of policies and practices. Additionally, the expected contribution of this research in terms of knowledge sharing and dialogue between sectors (objective of the last integration WP in particular) will have an a potentially important impact) on practices and political decision-making processes.

After the first year, the first results can be disseminated in the scientific sector (national and international conferences and publications), at the level of professionals in the police, health (front line) and associations (conferences, seminars and publications). The results of the research will be disseminated through publications, conferences and workshops.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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