

**Help impossible to ignore:** basic needs and barriers in access to health and social care services and shelters in case of violence for women using drugs in the EECA region

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# Types of human rights violations against people who use drugs

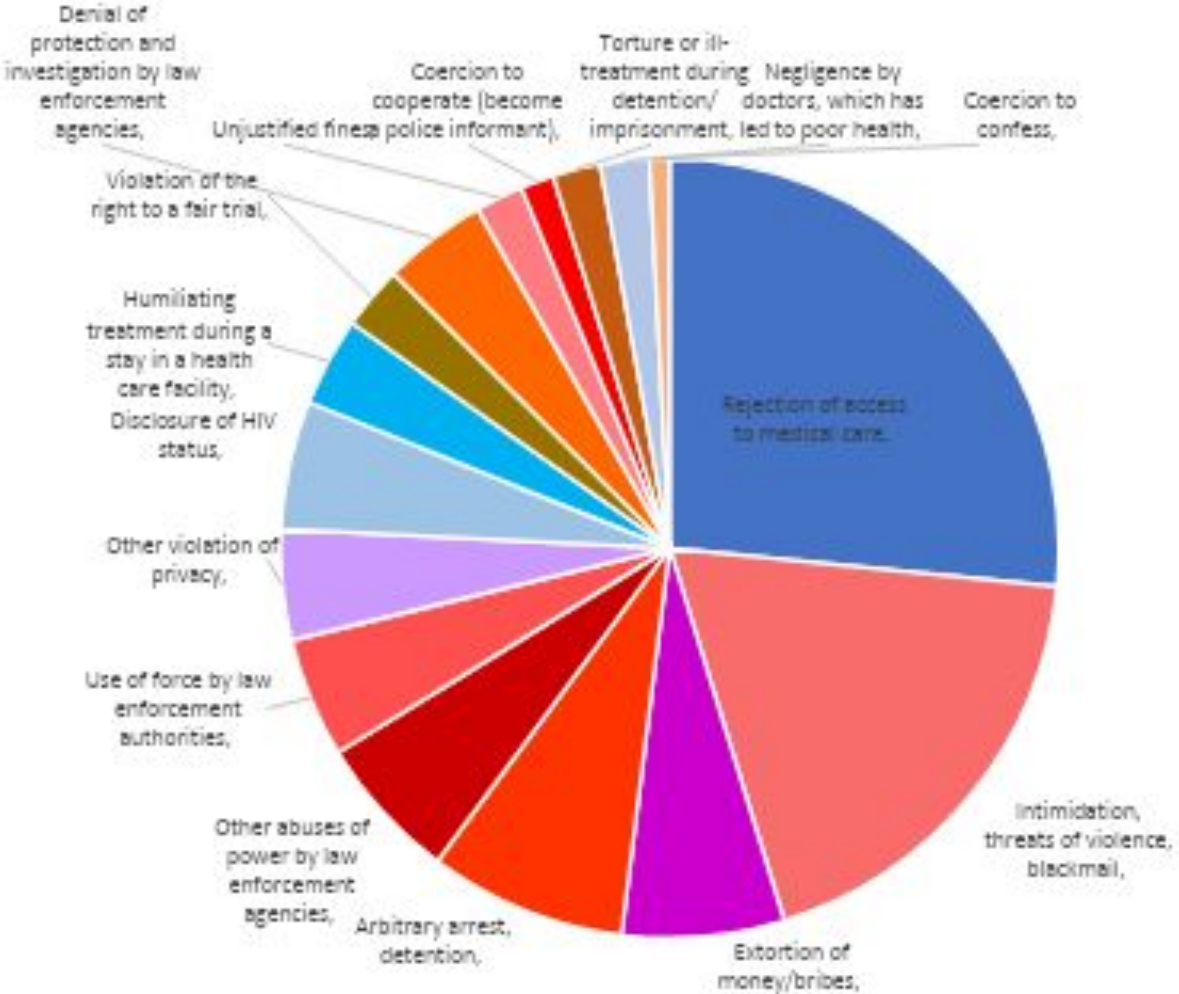
- Discrimination in health settings and barriers to access the services
- Lack of social support and problems with housing, employment
- Arbitrary detention, police violence
- Abuse of power by child protection services, removal of parental rights
- State's failure to protect from gender-based violence (access to shelters, prosecution of perpetrators)

**3546** cases or **50%** of all cases of human rights violations documented through REAct system are in way way or another connected to law enforcement agencies

# Documented by REAct human right violations (people living with HIV and key populations)



<b>Moldova</b> 615 cases/ 22 months
<b>Ukraine</b> 2175 cases /25 months
<b>Georgia</b> 680 cases/23 months
<b>Russia</b> 1487 cases /11 months
<b>Uzbekistan</b> 372 cases/ 11 months
<b>Tajikistan</b> 576 cases/22 months
<b>Kyrgyzstan</b> 1151cases/ 20 months



**7056 cases in 7 EECA countries**

According to the World Health Organization, **one-in-three women** experiences intimate partner violence.

**Women who use drugs are three-to-five times more likely** to experience gender-based violence than women in general.

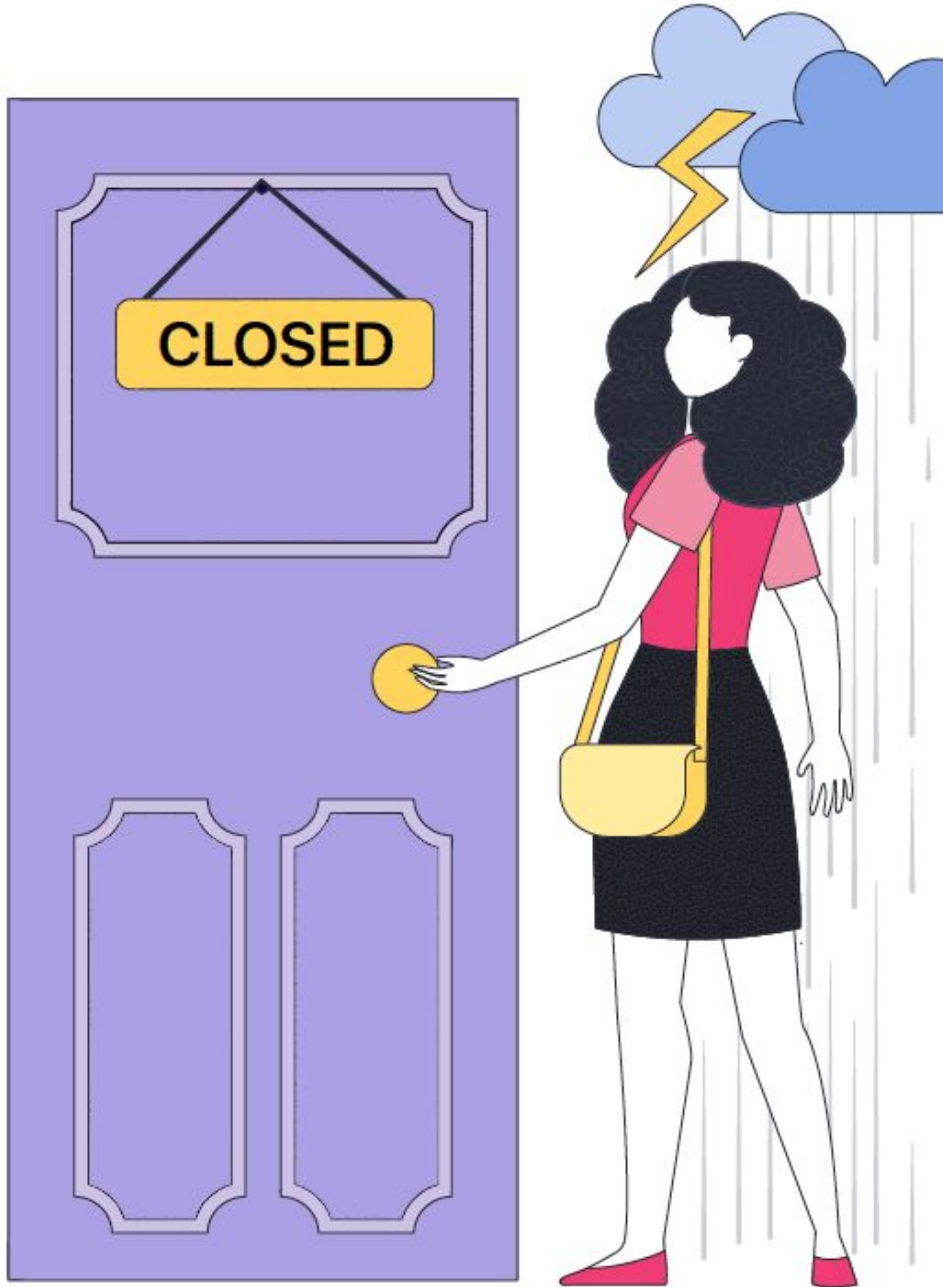


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A guide to ensure shelter, psychosocial and legal services for women who use drugs and experience violence







## Specific needs and barriers faced by women who use drugs in situations of gender-based violence

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1. Family, social services and society in general stigmatise the issue of female drug dependence
2. Difficulties in accessing safety and support services
3. Difficulties in processing documents and paperwork
4. Difficulties in accessing psychosocial help

Services usually supporting women in case of violence are not available for women who use drugs, even harm reduction services **often are inaccessible due to lack of gender-sensitiveness.**



### WOMEN ACTIVISTS AGAINST GBV

Stigma, victimization of women using drugs



### MEDICAL SERVICES

Refusal to provide medical help, discrimination



### POLICE

Criminalization of drug use and violence



### SOCIAL SERVICES

Deprivation of parental rights, neglect of social services



### SHELTER

Don't accept women who use drugs



### HARM REDUCTION PROGRAMS

Lack of gender-sensitive services



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# Project “Access to comprehensive care for women using drugs in case of violence”

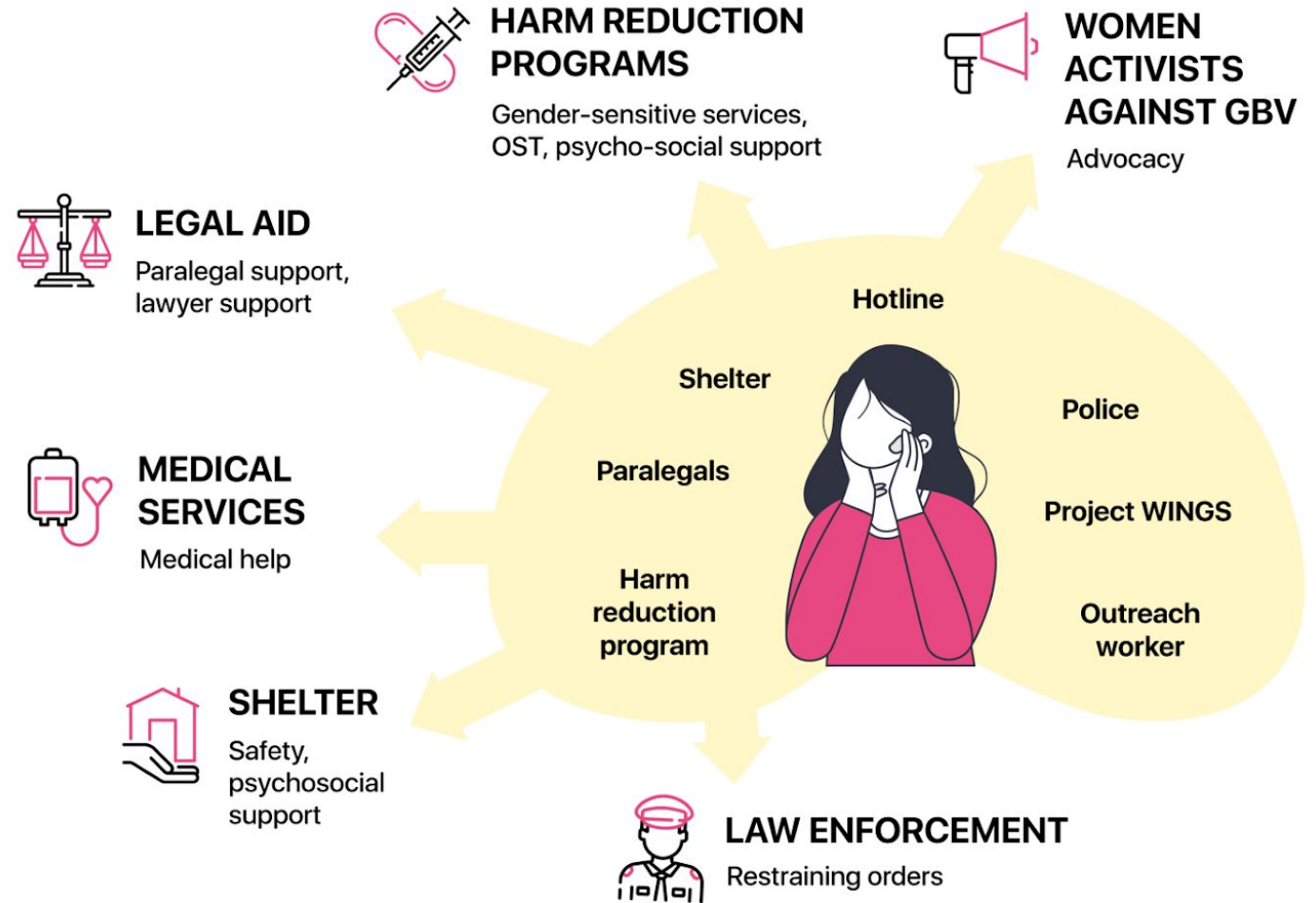
Project “Access to comprehensive care for women using drugs in case of violence”, which is, in turn, part of a wider regional project entitled, “Sustainability of Services for Key Populations in Eastern Europe and Central Asia”.

5 in-country partners – ReGeneration in Serbia, HOPS in Macedonia, Revansh in Kazakhstan, ARF in Russia and Convictus in Ukraine – work on improving access to services for women who use drugs in case of violence – directly via improving a service of partner organizations or building partnerships and providing capacity building for other service providers.

In 2021 EHRA in partnership with Eurasian Women’s Network on AIDS (EWNA) developed The Guide HELP IMPOSSIBLE TO IGNORE.



**Any woman** facing domestic or gender-based violence, regardless of whether she has a history of drug use or not, **is entitled to adequate help and support.**



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## Three key steps in addressing gender-based violence against women using drugs are:



**1.** Prevention of gender-based violence;



**2.** Provision of adequate support and protection for women, including a needs-based approach that takes into account the wishes of women



**3.** Advocacy for legislative changes and/or practical approaches for its implementation.



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# Key principles of comprehensive quality care for women who use drugs in situations of gender-based violence

- **AVAILABILITY.** Essential services must be guaranteed in sufficient quantity and must meet specific requirements of women who use drugs, including cross-group women, as well as access to comprehensive services
- **ACCESSIBILITY**
- **ADAPTABILITY.** Respects and considers the individual circumstances of women who use drugs
- **APPROPRIATENESS.** Centres employ professionals who are aware of the specific needs of women who use drugs and can help without re-victimising them
- **PRIORITISE SAFETY**
- **LINKING WITH OTHER SECTORS AND AGENCIES THROUGH COORDINATION**



**THANK YOU!**



Link to the guide

[https://harmreductioneurasia.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Help-Impossible-to-Ignore\\_ENG.pdf](https://harmreductioneurasia.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Help-Impossible-to-Ignore_ENG.pdf)