



Summary of the UPCARE Comparative Study on Gender Equality Perceptions in Greece and Spain

The UPCARE project, part of an Erasmus+ initiative, aimed to explore and address perceptions of gender equality and gender-based violence (GBV) in Greece and Spain. The project involved training social care professionals and parents to improve their understanding and ability to tackle GBV in their communities. By comparing perceptions before and after the training, the study sought to identify cultural differences, stereotypes and barriers to effective prevention and intervention. This summary highlights the key findings and conclusions of the project, emphasising the importance of education, awareness raising and ongoing support in combating GBV in both countries.

1. Training Effectiveness

- **Improved Understanding Of GBV:** The training programme significantly broadened participants' understanding of gender-based violence. Initially, many participants viewed GBV primarily as physical or sexual violence. After the training, however, participants recognised that GBV also includes emotional, psychological and economic abuse. This shift demonstrates the effectiveness of the training in broadening participants' perspectives on the multifaceted nature of GBV.
- **Increased Confidence:** The training significantly improved participants' confidence in recognising and responding to GBV incidents. Before the training, many professionals lacked confidence in handling GBV cases, but post-training assessments showed a significant increase in confidence, particularly among Spanish participants. This suggests that the training successfully equipped them with the necessary skills and knowledge.

2. Perceptions Of GBV

- **GBV As A Significant Problem:** Both Greek and Spanish participants acknowledged that GBV is a significant problem in their communities. However, under-reporting remains a challenge, particularly in schools. While both countries recognise the importance of addressing GBV, Spanish participants were more aware



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of reporting mechanisms and services, reflecting better infrastructure or awareness campaigns.

- **Primary Causes Of GBV:** Cultural norms and beliefs that lead to gender inequality were identified as the primary causes of GBV in both Greece and Spain. Lack of education and awareness was also identified as a contributing factor, particularly in Spain.

3. Stereotypes and prejudices

- **Traditional Gender Roles:** In both countries, traditional gender roles were identified as an important factor contributing to GBV. Greek participants particularly emphasised the influence of deeply rooted cultural stereotypes that perpetuate the idea of women as primary victims. This narrow view hinders the recognition of other forms of GBV and the inclusion of diverse victim profiles.
- **Stereotypes As Barriers:** Stereotypes, particularly regarding the responsibility of victims, were identified as significant barriers to effectively addressing GBV. The training helped to correct some of these misconceptions, particularly the idea that victims are partly responsible for the violence they experience.

4. Differences between Greece and Spain

- **Direct engagement** with GBV victims Spanish professionals reported more frequent direct contact with GBV victims than their Greek counterparts. This difference suggests that Spanish professionals may have more experience in dealing with GBV cases.
- **Approach To Gender Roles:** While professionals in both countries address gender roles in their work, Greek professionals rely more on education and structured interventions. In contrast, Spanish professionals emphasise open dialogue and discussion to challenge stereotypes.
- **Confidence And Reporting:** Spanish participants were more confident in dealing with GBV cases and demonstrated a broader understanding of the issue. In contrast, Greek professionals were less confident and identified lack of resources and training as barriers to effective intervention.



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5. Challenges and recommendations

- **Need For Ongoing Training:** Both countries highlighted the need for ongoing training and resources to better equip professionals and parents to address GBV. The study highlighted the importance of consistent and accessible training programmes, particularly in Greece, where professionals reported less access to resources.
- **Addressing Underreporting:** Improving reporting mechanisms and raising awareness of available services were recommended as critical steps in both countries to address underreporting of GBV, particularly in educational settings.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** The study concluded that training programmes need to be culturally sensitive and adaptable to the specific social contexts of each country. This would increase the effectiveness of GBV prevention strategies.

6. Parental Involvement

- **Importance Of Early Education:** Participants in both countries recognised the need for early education to prevent GBV. They stressed the importance of teaching children about gender equality and respect from an early age in order to counteract harmful stereotypes.
- **Role Of Parents:** The study identified a critical role for parents in GBV prevention. However, parents also expressed the need for guidance and training in order to effectively contribute to the prevention of GBV within their families and communities.

7. Key Findings On Perceptions Of Gender Equality

- **Focus On Women:** In both Greece and Spain, GBV is predominantly seen as an issue that affects women. This narrow focus on women as victims may limit the recognition of other forms of GBV, such as those affecting men and members of the LGBTQ+ community.
- **Broader Definition After Training:** After the training, participants in both countries showed an improved understanding of GBV, recognising the importance of addressing emotional, psychological and economic violence and recognising a broader range of victims beyond women.



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8. Recommendations For Future Initiatives

- **Targeted Awareness Campaigns:** The need for ongoing awareness campaigns to challenge stereotypes and raise awareness of GBV was emphasised. These campaigns should target both professionals and the general public to promote a deeper understanding of the different forms of GBV.
- **Support For Professionals:** Providing better resources, training and support to professionals working with GBV victims was highlighted as essential. This includes ensuring that professionals in both countries have the tools and knowledge to prevent and respond effectively to GBV.

Conclusion

The UPCARE project has made a significant contribution to the understanding of GBV in both Greece and Spain. It highlighted key cultural differences and similarities, emphasised the importance of training and resources, and called for targeted interventions to improve the effectiveness of GBV prevention efforts. The project also highlighted the need for a more comprehensive and culturally adapted approach to addressing GBV, with a focus on broadening the understanding of GBV to include diverse victim profiles and forms of violence.



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