



Enhancing the capacity of civil  
society organisations to support  
victims of anti-LGBTQI hate crimes

## PRESS RELEASE

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# ENACT Delivers Training Modules and Policy Blueprint to Transform Response to Anti-LGBTIQ+ Hate Crimes and Enhance Victim Support

**The two-year initiative successfully trained 300+ professionals across six countries, and releases comprehensive recommendations aligned with strategic EU and CoE policy measures.**

The ENACT (Enhancing the capacity of civil society organisations to support victims of anti-LGBTIQ hate crimes) project released comprehensive policy recommendations and validated training methodologies addressing a critical systemic failure: the majority of anti-LGBTIQ+ hate crimes across the European Union go unreported due to lack of trust in authorities, fear of revictimization, and severe gaps in professional training.

The two-year EU-funded project, conducted across six Member States (Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Slovenia, and Spain), delivers both immediate solutions through proven training modules and long-term transformation through evidence-based policy recommendations.

## Why Victims Stay Silent

ENACT's research, which included 79 in-depth interviews with hate crime victims, 71 interviews with criminal justice professionals, and six cross-sectoral focus groups, revealed troubling patterns:

**Underreporting normalized as inevitable:** As one Lithuanian professional observed, "The LGBTQ+ community has greatly normalised experiencing hate crimes and hate speech... it seems that if you're a queer person, you'll just naturally encounter some hatred."

**Multiple barriers compound vulnerability:** Victims face lack of trust in authorities, fear of revictimization, language barriers for migrants, and fear of exposure. As one Italian victim described: "I always suffered from this double stigmatization as an Albanian immigrant and even a f\_\_\_\_t."

**Implementation gap persists:** While legal frameworks exist, hate crimes are frequently prosecuted as ordinary offences, failing to recognize specific harm and bias motivation. Inadequate coordination

between law enforcement, criminal justice agencies, and civil society organizations leaves victims without support.

**Service fragmentation creates geographic inequality:** Victim support is predominantly provided by often under-resourced civil society organizations concentrated in capitals and major cities.

## **Transforming Professional Practice**

ENACT developed comprehensive training modules designed to address critical gaps identified through research: massive underreporting, widespread under-qualification of crimes, lack of professional training, and revictimization of survivors by authorities.

### **Comprehensive training combines:**

1. **Legal Education:** Hate crime definitions, bias indicators, special protection measures, and procedural responsibilities. Proper investigation requires exploring bias motivation rather than treating incidents as ordinary crimes.
2. **LGBTIQ+ Awareness:** Terminology, minority stress theory, intersectionality, and community experiences with systemic discrimination. The training emphasizes understanding that legal institutions are often viewed as hostile rather than protective by LGBTIQ+ communities.
3. **Practical Skills:** Trauma-informed communication, avoiding assumptions about sexual orientation or gender identity, using correct names and pronouns for transgender people, and implementing victim-centered approaches that build trust.

**Core transformative concept:** Hate crimes attack victims' core identity, causing deep psychological harm beyond physical injury. This understanding fundamentally changes how professionals approach investigation and support.

## **Interactive, Experiential, Culturally Adapted Training**

The 4-8-hour interactive training uses exercises from four competency groups: introductory activities using the scale method or a quiz build awareness of biases and attitudes; legal framework modules including institutional mapping and data analysis develop an understanding of hate crime legislation and statistical patterns; terminology and sensitivity exercises such as an LGBTIQ 'vocabulary' and a reflection on safe spaces teach proper language use and trust-building; and specialized professional skills through evaluation sheets and sectorial problem-solving provide case-based learning with real scenarios, group discussions, and an emphasis on a victim-centered approach. Training was successfully delivered in both in-person and online formats and was effectively adapted to diverse national contexts and professional cultures across all six countries.

What professionals valued most was the practical approach, legal framework clarity, case studies, interactive discussions, and opportunities for sharing experiences across sectors. Specific strengths identified included terminology training, a victim-centered approach, real-life examples, restorative justice methods, and bias indicator training. These elements demonstrate that the modules successfully bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical professional application.

## **Country-Specific Implementation Demonstrates Versatility**

The training proved adaptable across diverse national contexts and professional groups: Hungary trained 51 police officers from four counties and the Budapest Metropolitan Police in 8-hour sessions, with the national police hate crime network coordinator praising the development of not only legal and professional skills but also emotional skills; Italy reached 54+ lawyers through partnerships with Naples and Milan Bar Associations with strong demand for continuing legal education credits; Lithuania trained 117 participants and also organized additional joint training with OSCE-ODIHR with public authorities, civil society and police participants to further scale ENACT's results; Spain engaged 79 participants including 22 from Mossos d'Esquadra police; Slovenia trained 54 participants across mixed professional groups, with participants specifically requesting more such trainings; and Greece successfully delivered online training to 55 participants from public authorities and law enforcement, demonstrating effective adaptation to remote delivery formats. This cross-country implementation validates the methodology's flexibility while maintaining consistent outcomes across legal systems, professional cultures, and delivery formats.

### **Training reached 410+ participants across six countries, proving adaptable across legal systems, professional cultures, and delivery formats:**

- **Hungary** – 51 police officers from four counties + Budapest Metropolitan Police (8-hour sessions); praised for building legal, professional, and emotional skills
- **Italy** – 54+ lawyers via Naples and Milan Bar Associations; strong demand for continuing legal education credits
- **Lithuania** – 117 participants; additional joint training with OSCE-ODIHR (public authorities, civil society, police) to scale results
- **Spain** – 79 participants, including 22 Mossos d'Esquadra police officers
- **Slovenia** – 54 participants in mixed professional groups; participants requested more such trainings
- **Greece** – 55 participants (public authorities and law enforcement) trained online, demonstrating effective remote delivery

**The co-developed training modules were validated** as comprehensive, clear, well-structured, and easily adaptable, while materials were successfully tested across diverse professional groups and delivery formats. Professional associations, police academies, judicial training institutes, and victim support organizations can access ENACT materials to begin transforming professional practice across the European Union.

## **Call for Commitment**

ENACT's newly published Policy Recommendations provide a concrete roadmap across seven critical areas: (1) **Legislative and Policy Frameworks**: harmonizing hate crime legislation to include SOGIESC as protected grounds, prohibiting conversion practices, and requiring national LGBTIQ+ equality action plans by 2027; (2) **Criminal Justice System Response**: mandatory training for police, prosecutors, and judges co-developed with civil society, specialized hate crime units, and third-party reporting mechanisms; (3) **Victim Support Services**: stable core funding for LGBTIQ+ organizations, guaranteed

access to psychological counseling and legal assistance, and services in rural areas; (4) **Intersectional Approaches**: training on intersectional oppression patterns and enhanced protection for vulnerable LGBTIQ+ victims; (5) **Data Collection and Monitoring**: harmonized recording systems tracking cases from reporting to sentencing; (6) **Countering Online Hate**: Digital Services Act enforcement and cyberbullying action plans; and (7) **Prevention and Education** through public awareness campaigns. Implementation follows a phased timeline to achieve harmonized legislation, measurable increases in reporting and prosecutions, and non-discriminatory access to justice by 2030.

The ENACT team calls on EU institutions, Member States, regional and local authorities, equality bodies, and civil society organizations to commit to implementing these evidence-based recommendations.

“These recommendations represent a fundamental commitment to hate crime victims: to hear them, believe them, support them, seek justice for them, and work toward a society where all people can live free from fear, discrimination, and violence,” the project team stated.

**ENACT resources:**

Training Modules <https://zenodo.org/records/18241867>

Policy Recommendations

[https://www.kmop.gr/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/ENACT-Policy-Recommendations\\_FV.pdf](https://www.kmop.gr/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/ENACT-Policy-Recommendations_FV.pdf)

Portfolio of Services

[https://www.kmop.gr/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/ENACT\\_D3.2-Portfolio-of-Services-EN.pdf](https://www.kmop.gr/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/ENACT_D3.2-Portfolio-of-Services-EN.pdf)

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