

## RESEARCH ARTICLE



# The Role of Economic Assistance in Overcoming the Consequences of Domestic Violence: an International Review

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**Abstract**

Understanding the factors affecting the participation of women in paid work is necessary to assess the effectiveness of government programs aimed at reducing the gender gap in employment and improving working conditions for women. The purpose of the study is to obtain reliable and reasonable conclusions about the best practices and strategies for economic support for victims of domestic violence. This literature review studies the historical dynamics of women's employment in paid work and analyzes the factors affecting this process. Methodologically, the study uses a systematic review of the literature, a comparative analysis, a qualitative analysis of the data, and the systematization of information. A comparative analysis of different countries' approaches reveals the most effective practices, taking into account legislative acts, social programs, and economic initiatives. Examples from the USA, Austria, Sweden, and other countries show that security orders, police intervention, crisis centers, and economic support programs are key components. In Kazakhstan, recent legislative measures and the creation of crisis centers have become a step forward, although there are problems in solving issues of psychological and economic violence. The study emphasizes the importance of a multifaceted approach to the fight against domestic violence, including legal, preventive, protective, and economic support measures.

**Keywords:** Gender, Domestic Violence, Economic Assistance, Financial Independence, Social Programs, Legal Measures

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The significance of women's participation in paid jobs cannot be overstated, as it is a crucial driver of economic and social progress. The historical dynamics of this employment have witnessed substantial changes in recent decades, mirroring the social, economic, and political transformations across various countries and regions. A comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing women's participation in paid jobs is instrumental in evaluating the efficacy of government programs and policies aimed at bridging the gender gap in employment and enhancing working conditions for women.

According to a UN report, 77 percent of women prefer a paid job, and 66 percent of men support their aspirations. However, most women still need to find their preferred job. This mainly happens due to the inability to combine family responsibilities and work. Also, because of stereotypes, young girls do not go to study for STEM professions, and women prefer to get into "female" professions, the pay for which is lower than for "male" ones. At work, women often encounter gender segregation: in the same position, pay for women and men is different. Women's employment in paid jobs has been an essential topic of study over the past decades [1,2,3].

This literature review will examine the historical dynamics of women's employment in paid jobs and analyze the factors influencing this share. To better understand the topic, a comparison of women's employment rates in different countries will be provided, as will an assessment of the impact of policies and support programs on increasing women's employment. Particular attention will be paid to employment trends among women, the impact of education and skills on their employment, and the role of cultural and social factors. It is essential to understand that as long as workers are underpaid due to gender, all government efforts aimed at reducing inequality become ineffective.

Inequality can reduce motivation and increase dissatisfaction among women. Low

economic activity leads to women's financial dependence on men.

This study aims to analyze and evaluate indicators related to women's employment and economic activity. It will also include a comprehensive review of the economic activity of working-age women, the gender wage gap, and the economic status of women in Kazakhstan. By examining these aspects, the review aims to shed light on women's complex problems in the labor market and propose potential solutions. The structure of this work is as follows: a literature review, methodology sections, an analysis of the results obtained, and a conclusion.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

A literature review is a methodologically rigorous and reproducible process for identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing all available research on a particular topic.

*Stages of research:*

- (1) Systematic literature review;
- (2) Comparative analysis;
- (3) Qualitative data analysis;
- (4) Systematization of information;
- (5) Interpretation and synthesis of data.

A systematic literature review provides a comprehensive and informed analysis of the problem, allowing reliable and valid conclusions to be drawn about best practices and strategies for economic support for victims of domestic violence.

A comparative analysis of the approaches and strategies of different countries to support victims of domestic violence highlighted the main trends and the most effective practices,

A qualitative analysis of data from various sources identified key methods and strategies of economic support: analysis of legislative acts, social programs, and economic initiatives.

All received data was systematized and organized in a table for visual presentation — critical trends in combating domestic violence in various countries.

Based on the analysis and systematization of information, general conclusions were drawn about the most effective methods of

economic assistance and their impact on reducing domestic violence and increasing women's financial independence.

#### *Select countries*

Countries were selected that have extensive experience and proven practices in combating domestic violence and supporting victims. For example, Sweden and Austria are known for their innovative legislative initiatives and social programs.

Including countries with different levels of economic development, such as the United States and Sweden, as well as developing countries, allows us to compare approaches and identify effective methods applicable to different economic conditions.

Analysis of countries with different cultural and social contexts, such as Indonesia and Kazakhstan, helps to understand how cultural characteristics influence the design and implementation of interventions to support victims of violence.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **3.1 International experience and strategies to combat domestic violence**

The total number of OSCE-participating countries that do not have laws on marital rape is 28. In this situation, “underdeveloped” countries should rely on the experience of “developed” ones. Among such countries are Austria, Germany, Sweden, and the USA. Most European countries adhere to international norms and legal acts in the field of protecting women from violence.

To study the experience of combating domestic violence in Europe, it is advisable to turn to countries with rich experience and current practices. Their practice shows that an effective way to combat domestic violence is to create the institution of protective orders. A review of international practices and strategies to prevent domestic violence (Table 1) shows that each country uses a combination of legislative, preventive, and economic measures to support victims of violence.

**TABLE 1.** Critical trends in combating domestic violence against women in different countries

<b>Country</b>	<b>Authors</b>	<b>Prevention programs and strategies</b>	<b>Protection measures</b>	<b>Economic support programs</b>
USA	[4, 5, 6, 7]	Civil protection orders	Social services for children and families, Reducing repeat violence	Financial support for families, Economic independence programs
Austria	[8, 9]	Police intervention	Police can evict violators	Financial benefits
Sweden	[9]	Prohibition of corporal punishment of minors, Law on the inviolability of the person of a woman, a child who witnesses domestic violence is recognized as a victim	more than 200 crisis centers, psychological assistance is also provided to men who have realized their tendencies towards violence and abuse.	Funds are allocated for providing consultations, both by telephone and in person, for the maintenance of crisis centers, and for programs to work with aggressors.
Bulgaria	[8]	Public condemnation	Public condemnation	
Great Britain	[10, 11, 12]	Protection orders, notices of violence	Information about previous partner violence	Grants for support
Germany	[9, 13]	Interdepartmental cooperation	Joint actions of police and medical institutions	Financial grants for victims

Indonesia	[14, 15, 16, 17]	Legal and preventive measures	Ratification of the Anti-Domestic Violence Law	Economic support for victims
Poland	[9, 18]	Public condemnation	Public condemnation	Economic consulting
Romania	[19]	Criminal procedural measures	Supporting victims in legal proceedings	Financial assistance programs
Serbia	[20]	Urgent protection measures	Temporary eviction and no contact order	Entrepreneurship support for victims
Belgium	[21]	Restrictive measures	Offender Program	Employment support
Bosnia and Herzegovina	[22]	Family legislation, special laws on the prevention of violence	State support	Grants for victims
Russia	[23, 24, 25]	Legal remedies	Temporary eviction of the offender	Governmental support
Ukraine	[21, 26, 27, 28]	Restrictive measures, Support for victims, criminal liability for perpetrators	Offender Program, Right to Protection from Domestic Violence	Financial assistance and training
Kazakhstan	[29, 30]	Crisis centers	Law aimed at respecting women's rights and ensuring the safety of children	Financial support for victims of violence
<i>Note: compiled by authors</i>				

Table 1 includes experiences from countries that have adapted responses to domestic violence to suit their local context and culture. The critical aspect remains the coordination of the efforts of various government and non-government organizations to create an effective system to support victims of violence and prevent its recurrence.

### 3.2 Measures to combat domestic violence in the world

The US government devotes enormous amounts of money to researching domestic violence and developing new approaches to combating it. For example, from 1994 to 2000, the US government allocated \$435.75 million to combat intimate partner violence (IPV) and \$1.5 billion to combat violence against elderly family members. Specific programs in this area are carried out by nine US ministries, including the ministries of health, education, justice, defense, etc.

Over the past decade, the United States has seen a consistent trend toward a significant drop in the rate of all forms of violent crime, including murder. Domestic violence rates have also been declining nationwide since 1994.

US legislators quickly responded to the "discovery" of the problem of domestic violence: first against children, then against women, men, and elderly relatives, which resulted in the adoption of several special laws. At present, practically nothing is known about the effectiveness of most of them. However, some experts are already discussing the haste to use specific legitimate measures [7].

For example, laws requiring healthcare personnel to report suspected domestic violence to the police or other authorities (depending on state law) may have a negative effect. Violation of the principle of confidentiality undermines patients' trust in medical personnel, which can prevent both victims of violence and perpetrators from seeking medical help [8]. The likelihood of

retaliation against victims of violence and medical personnel increases. Finally, the efficiency of the work of doctors decreases as they try not to ask unnecessary questions in order to avoid subsequent mandatory interaction with exceptional services.

The system of social protection of women from domestic violence is based on a wide variety of programs and practices (about 1800). Shelters for women, which emerged in the 1970s, are especially common (1200) [9]. Today, there is a network of various social services providing medical and legal services, 24-hour hotlines, advice on finding housing and work, and treatment for alcohol and drug addiction.

Although the United States allocates vast amounts of funds for various programs to prevent and combat domestic violence, the money is still not enough. Because of their limited nature, funds are often spent on "doing something" rather than "learning something." In addition, according to some American scientists, practitioners want to avoid evaluating the results of their work [10]. Part of the reason is the concern that representative scientific studies will not confirm the hypothesis about the effectiveness of a particular program. The presence of data confirming the program's ineffectiveness threatens to limit the financial resources for its implementation. Therefore, sociological statistics are widely used to "make demands" in the struggle to distribute financial resources.

### **3.3 Measures to combat domestic violence in Kazakhstan**

In Kazakhstan, crisis centers and shelters for victims of domestic violence also provide tremendous support to women who find themselves in difficult life situations [29]. These include government organizations, such as the Zhansaya crisis center, and non-governmental, non-profit organizations working with the support of interested parties (for example, the well-known "Mother's House" by Bulat Utemuratov). Every year, several hundred victims of domestic violence

are admitted to such centers [30, 31].

The adoption in April 2024 in Kazakhstan of a law aimed at respecting women's rights and ensuring the safety of children, as well as amendments to the Code of Administrative Offenses, became a good help in the fight against domestic violence in the country. These measures will help improve the legal, social, institutional, and other foundations of the state's family policy, as well as strengthen the protection of women's rights and the safety of children, tighten administrative and criminal liability for violations of their safety, and also contribute to the prevention of violence in family and household relationships. Today, women and their children in Kazakhstan receive a wide range of services aimed at recovery in crisis centers. One of the most critical areas is social and psychological rehabilitation. This is done to ensure that all applicants receive high-quality psychological support under conditions of equal access.

Considering that the consequences of domestic violence affect many aspects of the victim's life - physical and psychological health, social functioning, and legal status, crisis centers should have specialists from medicine, psychology, victimology, pedagogy, law, and the social sphere.

However, despite the fact that the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan mentions domestic violence of all four types (physical, psychological, sexual, and economic), the primary fight is mainly with physical violence. Statistics on psychological and economic types of violence are not collected. This kind of data can only be obtained when victims of domestic violence enter crisis centers and fill out questionnaires. But, based on these collected data, no statistics are generated at the state level. There are no mechanisms and procedures to document and record statistics on psychological and economic violence.

Legislation on the prevention of domestic violence defines a "victim" as a person harmed by such actions but does not include a definition of "aggressor" [32]. This gap in the law has an impact on the overall situation in the

fight against domestic violence since the primary attention of government agencies is focused on protecting and helping victims. However, there are no effective measures to deal with abusers. The analysis shows that the primary efforts in the fight against domestic violence are focused on legal measures and the provision of specialized social services for victims [33].

Meanwhile, only practical cooperation at all levels will allow the successful implementation of programs that provide emergency and long-term assistance to victims of domestic violence and their families. Non-governmental organizations manage to make a significant contribution to the fight against domestic violence since victims often trust specialized centers rather than government agencies [34]. However, in Kazakhstan, using the example of the Zhan-Saya crisis center, we see that the state system is trying to transform itself to the needs of people, in this case, victims of domestic violence and people who find themselves in difficult life situations. The adoption in April 2024 in Kazakhstan of a law aimed at respecting women’s rights and ensuring the safety of children, as well as amendments to the Code of Administrative Offenses, became a good help in the fight

against domestic violence in the country. These measures will help improve the legal, social, institutional, and other foundations of the state’s family policy, as well as strengthen the protection of women’s rights and the safety of children, tighten administrative and criminal liability for violations of their safety, and also contribute to the prevention of violence in family and household relationships [35].

### 3.4 Impact of domestic violence on work and support across countries

Frequent absences from work due to medical appointments, court dates, or physical and emotional exhaustion can decrease productivity. Chronic emotional stress, stress, and depression can reduce cognitive function, affecting the ability to make decisions, solve problems, and perform complex tasks. Addressing the concerns of women workers helps improve their productivity and contributes to a more inclusive and supportive workplace.

Table 2 helps identify general trends and best practices that can be applied in Kazakhstan to improve the situation with support for victims of domestic violence.

**TABLE 2.** Dynamics of the average monthly salary among women, in thousands of tenge

Impact on work	Target group	Countries	Sources
1. Loss of work and disability; 2. Reduced productivity and absenteeism; 3. Psychological and physical health problems.	Help is provided to all women	USA, Sweden, Bulgaria, UK, Indonesia, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine	[4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28]
	Help is provided to all low-income women	Austria, Germany,	[8, 9, 13, 23, 24, 25]
	Help is provided to all women and children	Russia	[29, 30]
<i>Note:</i> compiled by authors			

Economic assistance to women survivors of domestic violence includes various support measures aimed at increasing their financial independence and stabilization. Social

assistance and financial support are the leading measures. Research shows that financial assistance and employment opportunities reduce violence in families by increasing women's independence from abusive partners

[35]. Women who have experienced violence face financial difficulties such as debt and stolen money. Social workers can provide financial and emotional support, essential for recovery [36]. Educational programs and skills development can also significantly improve the financial well-being of women survivors of violence. Programs to teach financial literacy have proven effective in the short term [37].

Individual savings account (IDA) programs for victims of violence have shown that women can successfully accumulate savings and use them to purchase assets, which contributes to their economic stability [38].

Government Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs can provide the financial stability needed to leave an abusive relationship. However, some requirements, such as child support reporting, may increase the risk for victims of abuse. Thus, effective economic interventions for women survivors of domestic violence include social and financial support, educational programs, savings programs, and government support programs. These measures help women achieve financial independence and reduce the risk of returning to abusive relationships.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Financial independence and stability allow victims of violence not only to overcome current difficulties but also to avoid returning to an abusive partner. Policies and measures to support women economically must be comprehensive and consider different aspects of their lives. Practical economic assistance for women survivors of domestic violence must include a variety of measures aimed at financial stability and independence. Social and financial support, educational and savings programs, government programs, and protective orders play a crucial role in ensuring the safety and recovery of victims. The experience of various countries shows that an integrated approach and cooperation between government agencies, social services, and non-governmental organizations are necessary

conditions for successfully combating domestic violence and supporting its victims.

To effectively combat domestic violence and support victims in Kazakhstan, comprehensive measures are needed, including social, financial, and legal support.

Firstly, it is necessary to expand the network of crisis centers and shelters, such as the Zhansaya crisis center. These centers should provide victims of violence with temporary housing, medical, psychological, and legal assistance, as well as assistance in finding employment. Crisis centers must offer high-quality social and psychological rehabilitation programs for all applicants, ensuring equal access to services.

Secondly, developing and implementing training and advanced training programs for women will help them acquire skills in demand in the labor market and ensure their financial independence. Conducting financial literacy courses is also necessary, as it will help women effectively manage their finances and plan for the future.

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