



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

GENERAL SECRETARIAT

Brussels, 15 May 2014

CM 2860/14

ENFOPOL

COMMUNICATION

REQUEST FOR CONTRIBUTION

From:	IT delegation
To:	Law Enforcement Working Party
No. prev. doc.:	9044/11
Subject:	Italian initiative in the framework of EMPEN on preparing the guidelines for police officers dealing with minors who are victims of violence

INTRODUCTION

When dealing with minors who are victims of violence police officers run the risk of becoming emotionally involved in a child's problems, thus personally experiencing a form of stress.

For this reason, it is necessary to improve police officers' capacities for coping, decision making and problem solving, to encourage their freedom of emotional expression and to strengthen their social support network. The aim is to increase law enforcement officers' resilience by adopting effective preventive actions.

Italy, which will chair the European medical and psychological experts' network for law enforcement (EMPEN) during the second half of 2014, therefore intends to propose an initiative aiming to contribute to preventing emotional stress entitled "Emotions and stress – Guidelines for police officers dealing with minors who are victims of violence".

The initiative will assess the possibility of defining guidelines or best practices which could be a reference point for those providing support to police officers who are constantly faced with situations of high emotional impact, such as those involving minors who are victims of violence.

To this end the questionnaire set out in annex aims to explore the EMPEN experts' interest in producing, on the basis of a thorough discussion, a best practice document on preventive and supportive actions for police operators dealing with minors who are victims of violence, which could be shared with other relevant experts.

BACKGROUND

In line with the content of the previous CEPOL EMPEN Workshop "Prepared Mind – Successful Operations", held in Tampere (Finland) on 3-5 September 2013, the role that mental preparedness can play in stress management and allowing police officers to maintain a state of well-being was analysed. Starting from the essential consideration of unity between the soma and psyche, based on the mutual influence between human beings' physical and psychological well-being, the relevant literature now agrees that the signs of discomfort shown by a person exposed to stress should be placed somewhere along a health-illness continuum, as described by Antonovsky's Salutogenic Model.

Hence the importance of promoting the development of coping, decision-making and problem-solving capacities in police officers, to facilitate their freedom of emotional expression, and to improve their social support network, in order to promote resilience in police personnel by adopting effective preventive actions.

It is also important to consider establishing reference guidelines or best practices to assist those provide support to police officers constantly dealing with situations with a profound emotional impact, such as those involving minors who are victims of violence.

QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire set out in annex aims to assess the interest of the EMPEN professionals' group in producing, through a common debate, a best practice document on preventive and supportive interventions for police officers dealing with minors who are victims of violence, to be shared with other relevant experts.

Please send the replies to this questionnaire by **29 June 2014** to the following contact point:

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QUESTIONNAIRE

1. General Information

Member State: _____

Office: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Concerning your experience

2. Do you think that your organisation devotes sufficient attention to the issue of minors who are victims of violence?
- ☐ YES ☐ NO
3. Based on your experience, what proportion of police officers will deal with minors who are victims of violence?
- ☐ an insignificant proportion
- ☐ less than one third of all police officers on duty
- ☐ between one third and half of all police officers on duty
- ☐ more than half of all police officers on duty
4. Do you think that police officers believe that the fact they have chosen this type of job exempts them from feeling emotionally stressed?
- ☐ YES ☐ NO

5. Do you think that at the end of a working day which had a strong emotional impact police officers think over the situations they experienced?

☐ YES ☐ NO

a. If yes, what do they say they have thought on such occasions?

6. Have police officers in your organisation ever told you they felt emotionally involved when dealing with minors who are victims of violence?

☐ YES ☐ NO

7. In your experience, what methods do police officers use to cope with emotional involvement?

☐ talking to somebody about it (colleague, family member, friend)

☐ writing down how they are feeling

☐ doing sport or exercise

☐ avoiding thinking about it

☐ other

☐ none

a. If the answer above is "none", what is the reason for this, in your opinion?

8. Do you think that your organisation devotes sufficient attention to police officers dealing with minors who are victims of violence?

☐ YES ☐ NO

a. If no, are there areas of intervention that could be developed, in your opinion?

☐ Training

☐ Psychological support

☐ Both

9. Have you ever delivered training to prepare police officers for managing emotional stress?

☐ YES ☐ NO

a. If yes, can you specify the methods and content used?

10. In the past, have you ever provided support in emotional stress management?

☐ YES ☐ NO

a. If yes, can you specify the method used?

11. Do you think that this issue could be of interest to the law enforcement agency you work for?

☐ YES ☐ NO

12. Do you think a discussion with the other European law enforcement agencies could be useful?

☐ YES because

☐ NO because
