

RAPE CRISES CENTER TUKINAINEN, FINLAND**STATEMENT 18 June 2020****To:****UN Human Rights, Special procedures, Special Rapporteur on Violence against women, its Causes and Consequences Dubrovka Simonovic****PCOTMWMA-25, 5.6.2020****Impacts of the COVID-19 on women's rights to a life free from violence****RAPE CRISES CENTER TUKINAINEN, FINLAND****STATEMENT 18 June 2020****The questionnaire****The questions 1-2:**

The answer:

Helplines in Finland have been open. All phone services of authorities have not been free of charge. NGO helplines like Rape Crises Centre Tukinainen's phone lines (Free Crises help line and free Legal help line) have been open. Legal help line in Rape Crises Centre has lengthened service time during Corona pandemic.

The contacts of authorities to Rape Crises Centre have increased in sexual crime cases during past three months but we do not have exact statistics of calls yet. The final analysis of phone calls will be made later this year.

The questions 6-7:

The answer:

Courts have been open in Finland. Courts have had postpone hearings and cancelled some hearings because of Coronavirus. It can mean lengthen durations of considerations also in criminal proceedings concerning family violence and sexual offences. The victims of these crimes mostly are women and children. It means that more support and therapy services for vulnerable victims are needed in next months to prevent secondary and repeat victimization. More families have this time more financial problems, too. It is important for victims of violence to get and know of services and of special services which are free of charge for them.

The primary way of contacting the judicial authorities and the offices of legal aid and public guardianship have been the telephone, email and electronic services. Also possible changes in the opening hours have been announced on the office's own service pages. Difficulties to get contact with authorities have been in case you have not a telephone or a computer. All phone services of authorities have not been free of charge either.

Necessary and critical cases have been given priority but the vulnerable victims need support before contacting authorities. For example support person services face to face (Victim Support Finland) unfortunately have been closed during coronavirus situation.

The questions 9-11

The answer:

Rape Crises Centre Tukinainen has used remote connections (Teams and Zoom platforms) in facing with clients in difficult situations if they have had possibilities to use computer or phone. Callbacks have been achieved flexible and according to client needs in crises work. Legal help line in Rape Crises Center has lengthened service time during Corona pandemic to make easier to victims and authorities to take contact with the lawyer.

Helsinki, 18 June 2020

Sincerely,



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Rape Crises Center Tukinainen

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On behalf of Management Team

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0800-97899 Free Crises Line

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