

## Who we are

**The Trust Line for Women and Girls 0 8008 8008** has been launched by the International Center „La Strada” on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of November 2009. Currently, the hot line for victims of domestic violence and violence against women is free of charge on the territory of the Republic of Moldova from all fixed-line and mobile networks. The Trust Line supports three simultaneous calls, received by counselors with extensive experience.

## Our mission

Our mission is to help women and children, who are victims of domestic or sexual violence, have better access to adequate services that would allow them to build their lives back and get better physically, psychologically and socially; and to provide the anti-violence community and the society in general with informational support and useful tools to achieve these goals.

## Who can reach out to us

- Anyone affected by domestic violence or sexual abuse, regardless of when the abuse happened;
- Anyone who wants to help a victim or report a case of domestic violence or sexual abuse.

## Our services

- ✓ **Information** about your rights and guidance on available services;
- ✓ **Emotional support** – you are listened to, heard, and accepted unconditionally and without judgement;
- ✓ **Primary legal counseling** - you will learn about your rights and the current legal provisions relevant to the case;
- ✓ **Free legal assistance** - a lawyer will support you during the entire process, represent your interests in the court and will help you get financial compensation for the prejudice caused by the crime;
- ✓ **Individual psychological counseling** - a psychologist will help you overcome the situation you are in and the emotional and interpersonal problems caused by it. If necessary, the psychologist will write a psychological evaluation report.

## Contacts

Tel.: 0 8008 8008 – from any fixed-line or mobile network

Fb: @TelefonuldeIncrederepentruFemei080088008

E-mail: [trustline@lastrada.md](mailto:trustline@lastrada.md)

Web: [lastrada.md](http://lastrada.md)

Working hours: 24/7.

**All calls are anonymous, confidential and free of charge.**

## Dynamic of calls in the last 10 years

The main beneficiaries of the service are women and girls from all over the country – they are the most common victims of domestic and sexual violence. The proportion of male victims of domestic violence is constant – about 2-3% of the total number of calls.

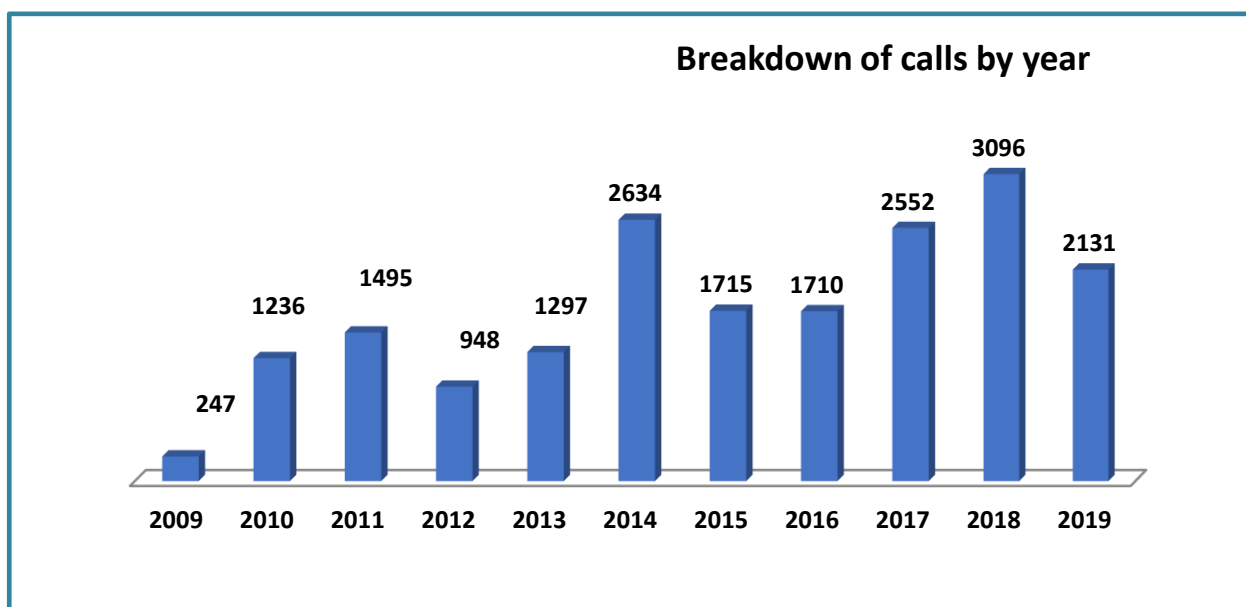
It is usually the **relatives of the victim** who report cases of domestic violence within their extended family, taking responsibility for the victim, acting on their behalf and trying to convince them to leave the violent environment.

**Neighbors** call us to request a direct intervention when they hear shouting coming from their neighbor's house, or they ask for information on how to guide the victims. **Friends** usually find out about domestic violence after the victims confess to them, or when the victims ask for temporary shelter, financial support etc.

The level of legal knowledge of the victims is quite low. A violent husband forces his wife to stay with him by threatening her, saying **he would take the child, leave her homeless and without financial support** in case of a divorce, although in some cases the husband doesn't even have ownership rights over the property, because the woman inherited the property from her parents or it is a common good, acquired while they were married.

Regardless of age, geography or social status, **9 out of 10 women** mention that they endured combined forms of violence – physical and psychological, from their **current or former partners**.

Women and girls find sexual abuse the hardest to talk about, most often it is not even reported because of the feeling of shame and fear. The Trustline data shows that the rapist is either the **woman's husband/partner** or **someone in her circle of trust** (work colleague, classmate, boss, neighbor, family friend).



## First half of 2020: statistics, figures and trends

In the first half of 2020 we have registered a **total of 880 calls** (compared to 1205 calls this time last year). Because of the self-isolation measures imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the victims of domestic violence were always in the close proximity of their abuser, which drastically reduced their chances to communicate and ask for help.

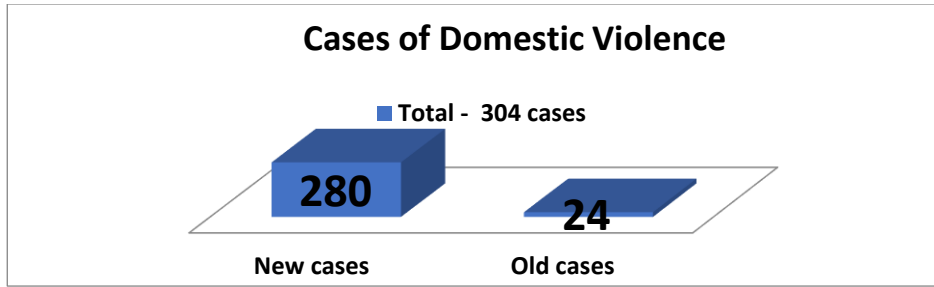
The anxiety associated with COVID-19 has caused a flaring up in domestic violence episodes in the families where the phenomenon was already present. During the first weeks since the pandemic state was declared, the number of calls continued to drop, but **as the lockdown period grew longer, the proportion of calls the Trustline received increased by 30%**. Towards the beginning of May, the duration of calls increased too, compared to the first 3 weeks of the isolation period.

Although in the period March-May there was a slight decrease registered in the number of calls, 51% of calls represented repeated cases of domestic violence (compared to 28% during the same period last year). This trend suggests that because of the pandemic, domestic violence episodes have become more aggressive. More women have needed psychological counselling and additional guidance when the authorities' response to the violence situation was delayed or inefficient.

**The pandemic has magnified the psychological violence** manifested by the aggressors. There have been women who complained about swearing and psychological pressure that would be constant, 23 hours a day, which they said was harder to endure than the beatings. The feeling of guilt has magnified as well, because the women felt that they couldn't even protect their children who didn't go to school or kindergarten because of the pandemic.

**The number of calls from community members** (relatives, friends, neighbors) **has decreased**. Because of the pandemic situation, even telephone communication with relatives has reduced. Women could not ring their relatives because their husband-aggressor was always around. Or, because of the travel restriction, they were avoiding to talk about the violence in an attempt to protect their children and elderly parents.

The saddest thing is that **the proportion of reports from local public authorities has decreased** as well (from 54% in the same period last year, to 13%). The team of Trustline counsellors has had to make **38 emergency interventions to facilitate the solutioning of 16 cases of domestic violence that presented imminent danger to the life or physical/psychological integrity of the victims**. In almost a third of these cases, the intervention referred to notifying local public authorities, community social workers. The number of calls from other NGOs has increased by 28%, together we have identified alternative solutions in order to get the beneficiaries out of the violent domestic environment.



The **280 new cases of domestic violence** refer to **326 victims**, 274 women, 14 men and 38 children.

