

MEDIA REPORTING ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA

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ABSTRACT

Domestic violence against women is a global infestation that transcends boundaries and occurs in all cultures and societies around the world. Albanian society has had a long history of male domination, a reflection of the strong patriarchal traditions of the Balkans. The roots of maltreatment of Albanian women by men date back to the 15th century and are connected with the traditional code of customary law known as the Canon of Lek Dukagjini. Forty years of communist rule in Albania (1946 – 1991) did not completely eradicate the deep-seated patriarchal attitudes, including those related to the Canon of Lek Dukagjini. During the communist period, ideological doctrine formally promoted women's equality. However there was a gap between the promoted equality and the reality of everyday life. Since 1991, the Government of the Republic of Albania has ratified numerous important conventions in this field. Albania developed a national strategy for gender equality and the reduction of gender-based and domestic violence for 2011-2015. Nevertheless domestic violence against women remains a widespread issue for the Albanian society. Violence against women is often in the news, whether it's in the papers, on the radio or on TV. It is vitally important that the media get their reporting about violence against women right. The media has a vital role to play in increasing public understanding of violence against women and challenging its place in our society. However, stories about violence in the home are often trivialized as domestic matters and misogynist violence and honor killings are dismissed as cultural norms. Most disturbing is the disproportionate coverage of sensationalized violence. The paper aims to analyze the media reporting and narrative of coverage of domestic violence cases. The media reporting of domestic violence remains problematic, even though there has been improvement since the Law on Audiovisual Media in the Republic of Albania entered into force in 2013.

Keywords: Domestic violence against women, customary law, media reporting.