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Focusing on the perpetrators to prevent violence against women

Report¹

Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination

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Summary

No Council of Europe member State is immune to violence against women, a phenomenon deeply rooted in the inequality between women and men. Despite the increasing attention paid to this issue, the adoption of legal instruments on the protection of victims and the development of assistance programmes, the number of victims remains too high.

A lasting solution to violence against women can only be found with the involvement and participation of men, by ensuring that they take part in awareness-raising programmes aimed at the general public and in specific treatment and intervention programmes when this proves necessary. The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) lays down in Article 16 the obligation for authorities to support and to set up preventive measures and treatment programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence and for sex offenders. These programmes should, however, not be set up at the expense of assistance and support programmes for victims of violence. Programmes for perpetrators of violence do not represent a solution on their own and are only truly effective if they are part of an overall campaign to combat violence against women and domestic violence.

The Parliamentary Assembly should call on member States to design and set up, if they have not yet done so, preventive intervention and treatment programmes with appropriate financial resources for perpetrators of domestic violence and for sex offenders throughout their territory in close co-operation with support services for victims of violence, health and social services and law-enforcement and judicial authorities. They should ensure that the programmes that are set up emphasise the responsibility of perpetrators and provide long-term support as well as follow-up for at least two years in order to minimise the risks of their reoffending.

1. Reference to committee: [Doc. 13153](#), Reference 3953 of 26 April 2013.

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A. Draft resolution²

1. Violence against women is a problem from which no Council of Europe member State is immune. Despite the increasing attention paid to this issue, the adoption of legal instruments on the protection of victims and the growing number of assistance programmes, the number of individuals who become victims of domestic, physical, sexual or psychological violence remains very high.
2. Violence against women has its roots in inequality between women and men and is perpetuated by a culture of tolerance and denial. It is important to combat gender-based discrimination in order to bring about greater equality between women and men, a necessary condition for the success of efforts to combat violence against women and domestic violence.
3. It is also essential to emphasise prevention and the direct involvement of men, without which there can be no lasting change. The establishment of specific programmes for perpetrators of violence is having a fairly positive impact as far as victim safety and the prevention of reoffending are concerned. However, these programmes should not be set up at the expense of assistance and support programmes for victims of violence.
4. The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (CETS No. 210, Istanbul Convention) stresses in Article 16 the importance of specific programmes for perpetrators of violence and lays down the obligation for authorities to support and to set up measures and treatment programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence and for sex offenders designed to help them change their attitudes, adopt non-violent behaviour and to prevent them from reoffending.
5. In this connection, the Parliamentary Assembly welcomes the ratification of the Istanbul Convention by 14 member States and hopes they will be followed by others as soon as possible. It also welcomes the setting up of programmes for perpetrators in 38 member States. The Assembly stresses the importance of the accessibility of these programmes throughout the territory of a State.
6. In the light of these considerations, the Assembly calls on member States to:
 - 6.1. design and set up, with appropriate financial resources, preventive intervention and treatment programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence and for sex offenders throughout their territory, in close co-operation with support services for victims of violence, health and social services and law-enforcement and judicial authorities, if they have not yet done so;
 - 6.2. ensure that the programmes that are set up emphasise the responsibility of perpetrators, stress the impact of their actions on their partner and child/children, make them recognise that violence against women is unacceptable and provide long-term support for perpetrators as well as follow-up for at least two years in order to minimise the risks of their reoffending;
 - 6.3. put the safety of victims and respect for their human rights at the centre of programmes for perpetrators of violence;
 - 6.4. provide training programmes for those in charge of programmes to treat perpetrators of violence, in accordance with internationally recognised good practices;
 - 6.5. share and use best practices regarding programmes for perpetrators of violence, whether they are on a voluntary basis or mandated by the court;
 - 6.6. carry out regular assessments of the effectiveness of preventive intervention and treatment programmes for perpetrators.
7. The Assembly calls on the parliaments of member States to:
 - 7.1. engage without delay in the process of signature and ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, if they have not yet done so, and to ensure its implementation;
 - 7.2. make preventive intervention and treatment programmes for perpetrators better known by organising awareness-raising events;
 - 7.3. call for the devising and setting up of programmes for perpetrators where they do not yet exist.

2. Draft resolution adopted unanimously by the committee on 8 September 2014.

8. Finally, the Assembly calls on non-governmental organisations active in this sector to:
 - 8.1. promote and encourage the setting up of preventive intervention and treatment programmes for perpetrators of violence;
 - 8.2. continue their work on promoting the ratification and implementation of the Istanbul Convention;
 - 8.3. step up their activities and campaigns aimed specifically at perpetrators of violence in order to raise awareness of the need to combat violence against women;
 - 8.4. stress the importance of the role of men in combating violence against women and domestic violence and to encourage their participation in awareness-raising activities.

B. Explanatory memorandum by Ms Kyriakidou, rapporteur

1. Introduction

1. The Parliamentary Assembly's Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination has been working for years on issues related to preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. It has decided to draw up, for the first time, a specific report on the perpetrators of violence, with the aim of supplementing its work.

2. Prevention and assistance for victims of violence remain priorities. Women victims of violence are the focus of our efforts and attention but no real change can take place without involving men. A lasting solution to violence against women can be found only by ensuring that men, including those who commit violence, take part in awareness-raising programmes aimed at the general public and in specific treatment and intervention programmes when this proves necessary. This report will enable good practices in this area to be highlighted.

3. Violence against women is deeply rooted in the inequality between women and men and it is perpetuated by a culture of tolerance and denial. There is a clear link between the perception of women in society and violence against women. Effective action to combat violence against women is possible only if it is combined with activities to prevent and combat inequality from an early age. It is important to involve boys and men in combating stereotypes in the initial stages in order to achieve results.

2. Aim and scope of the report

4. My report stems from a motion for a resolution tabled by Ms Nursuna Memecan³ whom I would like to thank for her initiative. Its aim is to investigate the specific methods of preventing violence against women and domestic violence that focus on the perpetrators. It sets out to review the situation in the Council of Europe member States, provide information on the best existing practices and their outcome and promote their implementation in other countries.

5. This report is based on documentary research and on information collected at the hearing held by the Parliamentary Network "Women Free from Violence" and the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination in Strasbourg on 2 October 2013. During the hearing, the members of the Network and the committee heard statements by Frédéric Matwies, the author of the book "*Il y avait un monstre en moi*" ("There was a monster in me"), Thangam Debbonaire, Research Manager for Respect in the United Kingdom, and Rosa Logar, co-founder of Women against Violence Europe (WAVE).

6. This report focuses on programmes for perpetrators in the efforts to combat violence against women. Most programmes for perpetrators of violence are aimed directly at men, but some may accept women. This report will not deal with the participation of women in these programmes, even if men may also be victims of violence.

3. Preventive intervention and treatment programmes for perpetrators in the Istanbul Convention

7. The importance of prevention through specific action with perpetrators was recognised by the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (CETS No. 210, Istanbul Convention), Article 16 of which focuses on this question. The convention lays down the obligation for the authorities to support preventive interventions with perpetrators and treatment programmes designed to help perpetrators change their attitudes, adopt non-violent behaviour and refrain from reoffending. It calls on States Parties to support these types of programme if they exist already and to set them up if they have not yet done so. Support for and the safety and human rights of victims must be considered a priority. Article 16 addresses two separate types of programme:

- those targeting domestic violence perpetrators;
- those targeting sex offenders.

3. [Doc. 13153](#).

8. The explanatory report on the Istanbul Convention provides further clarification. States Parties decide on the content of programmes, but the Istanbul Convention encourages them to draw on existing good practices and to focus on the responsibility of perpetrators for their actions.

9. Persons participating in such programmes must be supervised by professionals who have had specific training in psychology and studied the causes of violence against women. They must also have the necessary cultural and linguistic skills to enable them to work with a wide diversity of perpetrators. These programmes should also “closely co-operate with women’s support services, law-enforcement agencies, the judiciary, probation services and child protection or child welfare offices”.⁴

10. I should mention that the Istanbul Convention is an instrument that aims to change mindsets and provides an overall framework for combating violence against women. It engages all State Parties in taking measures to eliminate prejudices, customs and traditions which are based on the idea of the inferiority of women or on stereotyped gender roles.

11. The Istanbul Convention entered into force on 1 August 2014 in 11 Council of Europe member States and will do so on 1 November 2014 in France, Malta and Sweden. The States Parties will be required to undertake, if they have not already done so, to set up preventive intervention and treatment programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence and for sexual offenders. They also undertake to allocate sufficient resources to set up treatment and intervention programmes where they do not yet exist.

12. Once it is set up, the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO), will examine the situation in the States Parties and report on the establishment, implementation and effectiveness of this type of programme in its reports assessing the implementation of the convention. GREVIO will be set up in the year following the entry into force of the convention.

4. Programmes implemented in some Council of Europe member States

13. A survey on violence against women in the European Union conducted on 42 000 women by the Fundamental Rights Agency of the European Union found that 13 million women in the European Union had been victims of physical violence in the 12 months preceding the survey, which amounts to 7% of the women between the ages of 18 and 74 in the European Union. It is claimed that one woman in 20 has been a victim of rape since the age of 15. In view of the extent and seriousness of the problem, no means of combating and preventing violence against women can be ignored or neglected.

14. The Council of Europe member States have taken a series of measures with this goal in mind including the establishment of programmes aimed at the perpetrators of violence. According to an analytical study of the results of the fourth monitoring round on the implementation of Recommendation Rec(2002)5 of the Committee of Ministers on the protection of women against violence, 37 Council of Europe member States of the 46 which took part in this monitoring round have set up intervention programmes for the perpetrators of violence against women.⁵ Twenty-nine States have programmes which are aimed specifically at perpetrators of sexual assault.

15. Programmes tend to be similar and based on the Duluth Model for the treatment of perpetrators of domestic violence.⁶ Participation in them may be court-ordered or voluntary. However, in Europe, participation in them is mainly on a voluntary basis. In some countries, such as Latvia, participation is exclusively on a voluntary basis. In countries such as Ireland and Norway, where both models co-exist, the “voluntary” model is far more prominent (for example, 98% of programmes undertaken in Norway).⁷

4. Explanatory Report, Istanbul Convention, <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/EN/Reports/Html/210.htm>.

5. Since the release of this report, the Russian Federation has sent its answers to the questionnaire on the implementation of Recommendation Rec(2002)5 of the Committee of Ministers on protection of women against violence and reported on the setting-up of programmes for perpetrators of violence. This brings the number of Council of Europe member States with such programmes to 38: www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/convention-violence/Docs/Analytical%20Study%20ENG.pdf.

6. The Duluth Model, which was developed in 1980, focuses on co-ordinating the various victim support services and on holding perpetrators accountable, www.theduluthmodel.org/.

7. Therapeutic treatment of men perpetrators of violence within the family, seminar held by the Council of Europe in Strasbourg on 18 and 19 November 2004. The proceedings are available on line: [www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/equality/03themes/violence-against-women/EG-SEM-MV\(2004\)Proceedings_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/equality/03themes/violence-against-women/EG-SEM-MV(2004)Proceedings_en.pdf).

16. So-called community programmes are intended for people who were arrested but were not found guilty by the courts, often because of a lack of evidence. Such programmes can provide for specific work with victims and joint sessions involving both perpetrators and victims.

17. Programmes may combine individual therapy and group therapy. Individual supervision helps perpetrators to understand their past behaviour and think about the root causes. Combining the two types of therapy enables perpetrators to use different ways of conveying emotions such as verbalisation. Therapy of this type provides keys to avoiding the rising tension which can result in violence. It is essential to learn to stand back from events and keep one's emotions in check in order to control potential outbursts of violence.

4.1. Spain

18. In Spain, the Institutional Act of 28 December 2004⁸ provides for prevention measures, whether educational (Sections 1 to 7 relating to gender-equality awareness programmes geared to a specific education level – from nursery school to higher education) or in the form of programmes for perpetrators established by the prison authorities in exchange for sentence adjustments (Section 42).⁹ A monitoring system has been set up and consists of a single database containing information relevant for the security of victims of gender-based violence and accessible to all agencies involved (police, courts, prison services, etc.).¹⁰

19. There is no national federation of organisations that provide such programmes, but informal networks that enable professionals to meet and exchange experiences have been set up. In the absence of any harmonisation of their content, there are three types of programme: those established in prisons; those that constitute an alternative to a prison sentence; and those based on voluntary participation.

20. Access to programmes established in prisons (Section 42 of the 2004 Act) is on a voluntary basis but in exchange for a sentence adjustment. Fifty out of Spain's 68 prisons provide such programmes and more than 2 000 inmates took part between 2001 and 2010.¹¹

21. Programmes that constitute an alternative to imprisonment are provided for in Article 83 of the Criminal Code and consist of re-education and psychology treatment for perpetrators of violence. With the exception of Catalonia, prisons are responsible for their implementation and have accordingly entered into partnerships with non-governmental organisations (NGOs), university faculties of psychology and the autonomous communities.

22. Finally, programmes based on voluntary participation are provided by NGOs, autonomous communities and health services. The main obstacle to working with perpetrators of violence in Spain is the lack of programme co-ordination, especially those based on voluntary participation, which have also suffered from a lack of funding since the beginning of the economic crisis.¹²

23. In 2006, around 2 100 men participated in programmes for perpetrators, which are free of charge.¹³ 70% of programmes are based on group work (86% in the prison context and 46% involving voluntary participation), 93% involve individual work and 27% couple therapy. According to a survey of wives, the reoffending rate is 33% in the year following the programme and 75% among those who have not taken part in a programme.¹⁴

8. www.wave-network.org/sites/default/files/05%20SPAIN%20END%20VERSION.pdf; www.boe.es/boe/dias/2004/12/29/pdfs/A42166-42197.pdf.

9. Section 42 of the Institutional Act: "1. The Prison Administration shall carry out specific programmes for inmates convicted of offences relating to gender-based violence. 2. The Prison Treatment Boards Juntas de Tratamiento shall when assessing the changes of prison regime, the granting of leave and the granting of conditional release, take account of the participation in and utilisation of the specific programmes by inmates referred to in the previous paragraph."

10. www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/fileadmin/WWP_Network/redakteure/Reports_2013/WWP_European_Network_Annual_Report_2013.pdf.

11. *Programas de intervención con hombres que ejercen violencia de género: panorámica de la situación en España y Europa*, Heinrich Geldschläger, 2013, www.lazoblanco.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08manual/bibliog/material_masculinidades_0148.pdf.

12. www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/fileadmin/WWP_Network/redakteure/Reports_2013/National_report_Spain.pdf.

13. Geldschläger H., Beckmann S., Jungnitz L., Puchert R., Stabingis A.J., Dully C., Kraus H., Logar R., Dotterud P.K., Lorentzen J. and Schweier S. (2010), *Programas europeos de intervención para hombres que ejercen violencia de género: panorámica y criterios de calidad. Intervención Psicosocial*, 19, 181-190.

14. Dobash R.E., Dobash R.P., Cavanagh K. and Lewis R. (1996), *Research Evaluation of Programmes for Violent Men*, Edinburgh, Scottish Office Central Research Unit.

4.2. France

24. In France, initiatives to set up treatment programmes are mainly developed at department level, run by the Prison Rehabilitation and Probation Services and associations.¹⁵

25. The report submitted to the Senate in 2006 by Dr Roland Coutanceau¹⁶ triggered a national discussion on this subject and led to the adoption of new legislation. The Act passed on 5 February 2008 requires socio-judicial supervision to be provided and a care order to be made in respect of convicted men considered likely to need treatment according to a medical report. The courts can also issue a treatment order for any higher sentence.¹⁷ The Prison Rehabilitation and Probation Services are responsible for the implementation of programmes at department level.

26. Section 15 of the Gender Equality Act (Loi pour l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes), which was passed on 23 July 2014, provides for the insertion of the sub-paragraph "undergo awareness training on preventing and combating gender-based violence at his own expense" into provisions relating to obligations that a court may impose as part of a criminal sentence (Article 41-1 of the Code of Criminal Procedure and Articles 132-45 and 222-44 of the Criminal Code). This addition is a direct consequence of the ratification of the Istanbul Convention by France.

27. Individual and group therapy is proposed. Group therapy is encouraged so that perpetrators can listen to others, learn to express their emotions and take advantage of group dynamics. Information on the law is provided in the process of making perpetrators fully aware of what they have done.¹⁸ Teams are made up of a woman and a man and often pair a sociologist with a psychiatrist or a psychologist. A programme of at least six sessions is held before a judgment is delivered. A longer programme may be set up after the judgment. A period of six months to one year is recommended.

28. Mr Frédéric Matwies, a former perpetrator of violence, has decided to share his experience in order to raise public awareness and encourage offenders to follow programmes that help them to admit their responsibility. "By undergoing group therapy and individual therapy, I learned how to manage conflicts better, avoid escalating tensions and express myself only through the use of words", he emphasised at our hearing in Strasbourg in October 2013.

29. Programmes for perpetrators of sexual assault and rape are specifically designed to treat convicted sex offenders in and outside prison with a view to minimising reoffending and successfully reintegrating perpetrators into society.

30. Programmes are supervised at national level by the National Federation of Associations and Centres for the Care of Perpetrators of Domestic and Family Violence (FNACAV).¹⁹ FNACAV has opened 22 regional centres and offers 14-day training courses over two years to train professionals in leading support groups. There are a total of 30 associations belonging to the federation that provide and lead the groups in question and they are evenly spread across the country.²⁰

31. As part of the European STARR programme (Strengthening Transnational Approaches to Reducing Re-offending), the aim of which is to reduce reoffending in general, a pilot project was set up in 2009 under the responsibility of the Mulhouse Regional Court and the results of the work of support groups were published. 50% of perpetrators of domestic violence who participated applied themselves well and made good progress, 20% developed positively, 10% made less good progress or were involved in a few incidents and 20% committed new offences.²¹

32. Awareness-raising campaigns aimed at men can also be effective. A campaign held in Seine-Saint-Denis (France) focusing on the slogan "You're not a man if you beat her" had a very strong impact and may have helped to change attitudes.

15. www.jidv.com/njidv/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=219:dispositif-socio-judiciaire-de-prevention-de-la-recidive-des-violence-conjugales&catid=120:jidv-14&Itemid=611.

16. http://femmes.gouv.fr/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/rapport_coutanceau-2006.pdf.

17. www.justice.gouv.fr/publication/guide_violence_conjugales.pdf.

18. *Auteurs de violences au sein du couple, prise en charge et prévention*, March 2006, http://femmes.gouv.fr/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/rapport_coutanceau-2006.pdf.

19. www.fnacav.fr/.

20. www.sosfemmes.com/ressources/contacts_hommes_violents.htm.

21. European STARR project, www.cepprobation.org/uploaded_files/Rep%20STARR%20DV%20F.pdf.

4.3. Georgia

33. The Georgian Government adopted a concept paper on the rehabilitation of perpetrators of domestic violence on 24 February 2011. It describes international experiences and principles and guidelines on the rehabilitation of perpetrators of domestic violence. It was signed by the Prime Minister and came into force on 1 June 2011.²²

4.4. Iceland

34. In Iceland, Act No. 85/2011 provides for the removal of the perpetrator of violence from the home, but does not require him to undergo treatment.

35. According to the 2013 national report for the Work With Perpetrators European Network,²³ a psychological treatment programme entitled Men Take Responsibility was set up in 1998 under a government initiative for perpetrators of domestic violence. The programme was stopped in 2003 owing to a lack of funding and then reopened in 2006 under the authority of the Ministry of Social Affairs as part of the 2006-2011 Action Plan to combat domestic and sexual violence. However, since the beginning of the economic crisis, there has been no publicity for the programme. A 2012 report highlighted the cost of the programmes and no new action plan has been submitted to the government.²⁴

36. The programme is based on voluntary participation, unless the child protection services make an express request. Led by two psychologists, it begins with holding individual meetings, and if the perpetrator of violence responds to them correctly he joins a support group, which is the main phase of the treatment and consists of making him aware of his full responsibility for the acts of violence he has committed. Two sessions take place in the presence of the wife, one at the beginning and one at the end of the treatment, and the wife is given the opportunity to describe the violence she has suffered. From 2006 to 2010, 122 individuals attended at least one session, and although no clear figures are quoted, the results are still considered very satisfactory.²⁵ The programme does not cover the entire country and is available only in Reykjavik. Perpetrators can undergo their treatment programme at the Centre for Gender Equality.

37. A civil society initiative by a group of men belonging to the Icelandic Feminist Association (Femínistafélag Íslands) has also been set up and consists of distributing brochures and tee-shirts at festivals to raise men's awareness of their responsibility, as well as of organising discussions on rape and domestic violence.

4.5. Norway

38. Since 1983, a large number of action plans to combat domestic violence have been set up and are generally based on surveys carried out by the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies (NKVTS).²⁶

39. Programmes for perpetrators of violence are based on two main models: the Brøset model, which focuses on individual characteristics in order to propose anger management therapies, and the Alternatives to Violence model.²⁷ The Brøset model offers several types of treatment, one of which is a general therapy aimed at both male and female perpetrators of violence and based on voluntary participation. This therapy extends over 34 sessions with groups of four to six participants, supervised by two therapists. It has been set up with the help of the health authorities. Another programme has been adapted to prisons and accredited by the prison services. Another therapy is based on the voluntary participation of men who have been violent towards

22. <http://inthenews.unfpa.org/?m=20110224>.

23. www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/fileadmin/WWP_Network/redakteure/Reports_2013/National_report_Iceland.pdf.

24. www.unwomen.org/~media/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/59/National_reviews/Iceland_review_Beijing20.pdf.

25. Male Violence against Women in Intimate Relationships in Iceland – Report of the Minister of Welfare, 2012, http://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/media/rit-og-skyrslur2012/Ofbeldi_gegn_konum_enska_feb_2012.pdf.

26. http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/exchange_of_good_practice_es/no_comments_paper_en.pdf.

27. Violence prevention in Norway, Activities and measures to prevent violence in close relationships, NKVTS, www.nkvts.no/biblioteket/Publikasjoner/Violence-prevention-in-Norway-Activities-and-measures-to-prevent-violence-in-close-relationships.pdf.

their family and consists of two group meetings of six to eight men held twice a year. Another therapy is based on the voluntary participation of male and female perpetrators of violence against their spouse/family and consists of three individual meetings followed by 30 hours of group work.

40. Since 1987, Alternatives to Violence has offered treatment programmes for men who have been violent towards their partner and/or children.²⁸ Treatments are individual or group-based and can last between 12 and 24 weeks. Another programme is designed for convicted men and women who have violence and drug problems (programme commissioned by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security), with 12 sessions of conversation and exercises.

41. In addition, various NGOs and public authorities offer a variety of programmes, ranging from support groups for women convicted of violent offences (Norwegian Correctional Services) and national mediation services, which provide a framework for dialogue between victims and perpetrators of violence, to individual therapies for teenagers who commit acts of violence against their family (Reform – resource centre for men, which also offers treatments for violent men based on voluntary participation).

4.6. Poland

42. Programmes for perpetrators of violence are regulated in Poland by two Acts of Parliament.²⁹ The first dates from 2005³⁰ and the second, passed in 2011,³¹ laid down basic standards for this service, with in particular the obligation to make prevention and protection programmes generally available at local level. As a consequence, each year no fewer than 200 centres nationwide cater for more than 3 500 perpetrators of violence.

43. In addition to these measures, there is broad co-ordination between the Polish programmes and the probation services and other local authorities.³² For example, the police and judges are accustomed (and sometimes are given training, as is the case at the Wrocław Health Centre) to redirecting perpetrators to programmes from the time they are questioned until when judgment is delivered if they consider this necessary. Moreover, it is usual for the police to be assisted by a psychologist during questioning in an effort to set in motion a dialogue with the perpetrator of violence.

44. The Wrocław Health Centre is one of the largest Polish organisations for intervention programmes for perpetrators of violence and has set up a “change and protection programme” which consists of several individual sessions as well as workshops and group therapy.

4.7. United Kingdom

45. In the United Kingdom, the Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme (IDAP), which is accredited by the Home Office, enables men convicted of domestic violence offences to have some influence over the sentence they are given by attending an educational programme lasting 27 sessions over two years. A court can also order the convicted offender to participate. If he misses two sessions, he will be considered in breach of his sentence, which will then be subject to review.

46. There is also a programme set up by the Prison Service and Probation Service entitled the Healthy Relationships Programme. This consists of offering, either in prison or community centres, courses adapted to the risk presented by the perpetrator of violence. One programme is designed for “moderate risk” offenders (28 group sessions and three individual sessions spread over two months) and another for “high risk” offenders (68 group sessions and 10 individual sessions spread over five months). This programme is also accredited by the government.³³

28. <http://atv-stiftelsen.no/engelsk>.

29. <http://eige.europa.eu/content/programs-of-influencing-on-perpetrators-of-domestic-violence>.

30. Act of 29 July 2005 on combating domestic violence, Section 4 of which states: “It is decided to use means that prevent contact between perpetrators of domestic violence and those they have injured and to ensure their participation in educational programmes.”

31. Regulation of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy of 22 February 2011 relating to the standard of basic services provided for domestic violence victims by Specialised Support Centres, to the qualifications of staff working in these centres, to detailed instructions for carrying out correctional and educational measures for perpetrators of domestic violence, and to the qualifications of persons carrying out correctional and educational measures.

32. www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/fileadmin/WWP_Network/redakteure/Reports_2013/National_report_Poland.pdf.

33. www.justice.gov.uk/offenders/before-after-release/obp.

47. Many private initiatives have been introduced since the end of the 1980s. The NGO Respect³⁴ runs programmes of 24 to 48 weeks' duration using a combination of techniques (cognitive behavioural therapy, discussion, therapeutic engagement). Its programmes are run by both male and female professionals, which means that perpetrators can see a woman in a position of equality with a man. This practice has been recognised to be a good one and is used in other countries and by other organisations. The discussions with those participating in the programme help them to understand what can trigger an outburst of violence and to learn how to control themselves. Participants learn about non-abusive communication techniques.

48. Participants remain in contact with their trainers throughout the programme and can also contact them afterwards. There is a follow-up programme including ongoing dialogue, home visits and consultations when necessary.

49. Respect supervises programmes of several organisations, such as the Hampton Trust³⁵ and the Make the Change Programme in Somerset.³⁶ Programmes for offenders supervised by Respect³⁷ make it clear that their aim is to explain violence and discover its underlying causes, as well as to teach the individual that he is in control of his own violent behaviour and can choose not to be violent, to make the offender aware that he is responsible for his actions, to make him understand the impact of his violence on his victims and to learn how to stop when his behaviour becomes abusive, and to teach him to listen and to engage in dialogue to deal with disputes.

50. Pat Craven's "Freedom Programme" provides educational weekends, trains professionals to manage a therapy, offers online courses and gives advice to women and to men.³⁸ It helps participants understand the psychological characteristics of perpetrators of violence and enables victims to realise the extent of the violence and its impact. I found the diagram showing the characteristics of a "dominator" particularly revealing.³⁹

5. Research work and European networks

51. The Council of Europe is conducting a study to help member States set up programmes for perpetrators of domestic and sexual violence with the aim of complying with the obligations imposed by the Istanbul Convention. It will be published in September 2014.⁴⁰

52. The Impact project, run by the NGO Dissens and financed by the European Union Daphne programme, is currently evaluating programmes for perpetrators across Europe. The results should be published in the coming months.

53. I would like to add a few words about the Work With Perpetrators European Network, which was set up in 2009 and is funded by the European Commission through its Daphne programme. Its members come from more than 20 European States and its Steering Committee is made up of seven organisations: Dissens – Institut für Bildung und Forschung e.V. (Germany) (co-ordination), Respect (United Kingdom), Men's Counselling Center (Austria), Conexus (Spain), AskovFonden (Denmark), FNACAV (France) and the WAVE Network (Austria).⁴¹

54. The network's aim is to promote substantive work with perpetrators of violence in accordance with international standards. Its members have drawn up guidelines for programmes for perpetrators of violence, available in 17 languages.⁴²

34. Presentation of the programmes of the NGO Respect by Ms Thangam Debbonaire, project manager, at a hearing of the Parliamentary Network on Women Free from Violence in Strasbourg on 2 October 2013.

35. www.hamptontrust.org.uk/.

36. www.bcha.org.uk/domestic-violence-and-abuse/make-the-change-programme.aspx.

37. www.respectphoneline.org.uk/pages/domestic-violence-prevention-programmes.html.

38. www.freedomprogramme.co.uk/.

39. www.freedomprogramme.co.uk/docs/dominator-mr-right.pdf.

40. Council of Europe Publishing, Programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence and sexual violence: Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention (prepared by M. Hester and S.-J. Lilley, United Kingdom).

41. Work With Perpetrators European Network, www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/index.php?id=67.

42. Guidelines to develop Standards, www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/index.php?id=86.

55. These guidelines emphasise co-operation with victim support services and intervention systems, and stress not only the need for perpetrators to take responsibility and be aware of what they have done but also the importance of discussing a definition of violence, inequalities and determining factors (socio-cultural, emotional, behavioural). They also stress the importance of voluntary contact between partners. Partners must be warned if the perpetrator of violence leaves the programme or if there is a risk of danger.

6. Are rehabilitation programmes effective?

56. The willingness of perpetrators to acknowledge their responsibility and their determination to take part are keys for the success of these programmes. Men must be closely associated in the design and implementation of programmes. The perpetrators of violence are not just part of the problem; they must also be recognised as a potential part of the solution. Programmes must enable them to work on their ideas about relationships between women and men so as to help them to make lasting changes to their behaviour and attitudes. It is of utmost importance to ensure that perpetrators complete the programmes so as to achieve some results.

57. It can be difficult to measure the impact of these programmes over the long term. According to the study by Mr Gondolf released in 2002, over 80% of men are still abstaining from violence four years later and the majority of women say they feel much safer as a result of the programme.⁴³

58. Thangam Debonnaire, from the NGO Respect,⁴⁴ confirmed that most men were still abstaining from violence four years after the end of programmes. She recommended a combination of measures to prevent violence and combat it effectively, including penalties for perpetrators, safety plans, risk assessment and implementation of programmes at local level. These programmes were a means of supervising perpetrators over an extended period during which they could be particularly vulnerable.

59. It is essential that these programmes are not set up in isolation but are closely co-ordinated with women's support services, law-enforcement agencies, the judiciary, probation services and child welfare offices. There is better risk management when working with both perpetrators and victims, especially concerning post-separation risks. Work with perpetrators could be organised as part of a network, which would co-ordinate the activities of various stakeholders, enabling them to work together on protocols for prevention, punishment and the supervision of victims and perpetrators of violence.

60. According to Rosa Logar, the director of WAVE, victim safety is the key to the success of programmes for perpetrators of violence. The priority therefore should be to help and protect victims by providing shelters, assistance and support. Europe currently lacks some 80 000 places in shelters for victims. Conviction rates are still relatively low and charges are frequently dropped.

7. Prevention of violence: a specific role for men

61. Men can play a key role in the prevention of violence by raising the awareness of family and friends and mobilising their networks. It may be easier for them to intervene with perpetrators of violence and engage in dialogue with them.

62. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia, the Young Men Initiative is a violence prevention programme for young men and boys. Local and international NGOs take part in this initiative. Its aim is to promote gender equality through campaigns on social networks and a programme in schools that enables participants to reflect on male–female relations and the question of masculinity.⁴⁵

43. Gondolf E.W. (2002), *Batterer Intervention Systems*, Sage, London. A seven-year study by Mr Gondolf on 842 men and their partners or ex-partners and children. All of the men who took part in this study had been convicted by the courts and committed a series of offences. Their social status, life stories and ages were extremely varied.

44. Hearing held by the Parliamentary Network on Women Free from Violence in Strasbourg on 2 October 2013.

45. Young Men Initiative, www.icrw.org/where-we-work/young-men-initiative-balkans; http://gender.care2share.wikispaces.net/file/view/YMI_CaseStudy_2012_EN_FINAL.pdf.

63. At the initiative of its Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, the United Nations set up in 2009 a Network of Men Leaders engaged in combating violence against women.⁴⁶ This includes current and former politicians, civil society activists, religious representatives and figures from the world of culture who agree to undertake specific actions to end violence against women, raise public awareness and meet young men and boys in order to combat violence.

64. The White Ribbon Campaign was launched by a group of men in the United Kingdom and appeals directly to men to undertake to combat violence against women.⁴⁷ The campaign website also mentions programmes for perpetrators and the work of Respect, together with its contact details.

65. In France, a “Charter of men against violence against women”, drawn up by the Ministry of Parity and Professional Equality, was signed by around thirty male well-known figures (artists, lawyers, doctors, etc) on 25 November 2003.⁴⁸ It states that “violence is incompatible with a democracy in tune with the times” and that “the fight for equality between men and women and for human dignity, the fight for zero violence in our society, is a fight for the modern world”.

66. I would like to add that Mr Mendes Bota, the Assembly’s general rapporteur on violence against women, has emphasised on many occasions the importance of the role of men in combating such violence and called on men to become involved in prevention activities, whether it be in their own countries or on the international stage. I also wish to mention Assembly [Resolution 1641 \(2008\)](#) and [Recommendation 1853 \(2008\)](#) on involving men in achieving gender equality.⁴⁹

8. Conclusions

67. There is a clear upward trend in the number of programmes for perpetrators of violence in the Council of Europe member States. They are having a rather positive impact on victim safety and most of those who participate in these programmes would not reoffend.

68. Preventive intervention programmes and perpetrator treatment programmes are part of a series of actions aimed at preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence and should consequently be co-ordinated with victim support services and the judicial authorities.

69. A combination of long-term group therapy and individual therapy, with follow-up over a period of at least two years, makes it possible to work in detail on the root causes of perpetrators’ outbursts of violence and for them to learn to control their emotions. The main aim is to prompt perpetrators to accept that they are responsible for their own violence and to prevent future violence. Making perpetrators aware of violence and of their responsibility should be the focus of any programme.

70. These programmes have been shown to be fairly successful in the short term⁵⁰ but it has not yet been possible to carry out a long-term assessment, for example 5 to 10 years after the violence occurred.

71. Programmes dealing with the perpetrators of violence can help to protect victims and bring lasting changes in behaviour. They cannot, however, replace criminal penalties commensurate with the seriousness of offences.

72. Nor can there be a substitute for prevention work, such as awareness campaigns and programmes to deal with gender inequalities, in which we must continue to invest our energies in order to combat violence against women effectively.

73. The current economic crisis has serious budgetary consequences and repercussions on funding for programmes for perpetrators and programmes to prevent violence against women and domestic violence. Many organisations that provide preventive intervention programmes and perpetrator treatment programmes have harshly criticised the lack of funding in the last few years, so I call on the Council of Europe member States to keep budget cuts affecting these programmes to a minimum and ensure that victim support is not adversely affected by decisions on programme funding.

46. <http://endviolence.un.org/network.shtml>.

47. www.whiteribboncampaign.co.uk/.

48. <http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/societe/20031125.OBS0266/trente-hommes-celebres-soutiennent-les-femmes.html>.

49. See also [Doc. 11760](#) (rapporteur: Mr Steingrímur J. Sigfússon).

50. Thangam Debbonaire, NGO Respect, Hearing held by the Parliamentary Network on Women Free from Violence in Strasbourg on 2 October 2013.

74. It has been proven that efficient action to combat and prevent such violence results in long-term savings for State budgets, as it is far less costly than assistance and support for victims.

75. Programmes for perpetrators of violence should not be a single solution run in isolation. They are only truly effective if they are part of an overall campaign to combat violence against women and domestic violence. The emphasis must be on preventing violence from a very young age. There will be no real change unless there is a change in attitudes towards women including measures to combat gender stereotyping. It is important to address the root causes of violence perpetrated by men by attempting to understand the nature of the status of men and women in society and working to bring about genuine equality between women and men at all levels.