

NATIONAL REPORT POLAND 2016

DETAILS REPORT WRITING ORGANISATION

Country: Poland

Organisations writing report:

- 1) Institute of Violence Prevention (Instytut Prewencji Przemocy)
- 2) Wroclaw Health Centre (Wrocławskie Centrum Zdrowia)
- 3) Crisis Intervention Society (Towarzystwo Interwencji Kryzysowej)

Contact Names and Details:

- 1) Michał Trojnar, [kontakt@duluth.pl](mailto:kontakt@duluth.pl), [www.duluth.pl](http://www.duluth.pl)
- 2) Dorota Dyjakon, [dorotadyjakon@wp.pl](mailto:dorotadyjakon@wp.pl)
- 3) Marcin Dziurok, [marcin\\_fil@tlen.pl](mailto:marcin_fil@tlen.pl)

Representing any other organisations?

- 1) Yes 2) Yes 3) No

Names of these organisations:

- 1) Foundation Dialogue Without Violence (Fundacja Dialog Bez Przemocy)

2) University of Lower Silesia (Dolnośląska Szkoła Wyższa)

## 1. ORGANISATIONS/PROGRAMMES

WHAT TYPE OF ACTIVITIES RELATED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION HAS YOUR ORGANISATION CARRIED OUT DURING THE LAST THREE YEARS?

- Programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence
- Psychotherapy for victims of domestic violence
- Psychotherapy for perpetrators of domestic violence
- Training courses and workshops for professionals working in the field of domestic violence (social workers, probation officers, police officers, psychologists, psychotherapists, addiction therapist, facilitators etc.)
- Systematic cooperation based on the creation of a system for working with police, curators, crisis intervention centres, centres that help victims, social workers, health care institutions, and other professions that deal with domestic violence, or are likely to meet with victims and perpetrators of domestic violence
- Scientific conferences
- Radio programmes
- Articles in magazines about domestic violence
- Trainings and workshops, particularly for young boys and men
- Lectures for students

In addition, the “Protection and Change” programme designed for perpetrators of domestic violence has been conducted in the Wrocław Health Centre since 2007. This

programme is based on the assumptions of integrative psychotherapy and can be undertaken by anyone who has committed acts of domestic violence against their partners, children or other family members. The programme includes: individual meetings to motivate changes to aggressive behaviour, diagnostic meetings, group educational meetings, individual and group psychotherapy and workshops focused on developing skills to deal with violent behaviour. The programme consists of between 60 and 150 meetings. The programme also includes meetings between perpetrators and victims of domestic violence as an integral part of its therapeutic interventions. In addition, therapists participate in supervisory meetings for both individuals and groups, and contribute to training courses organised at least once a year.

---

WHAT WOULD YOU DEFINE AS THE BIGGEST OBSTACLES/CHALLENGES REGARDING VIOLENCE PREVENTION TO YOUR ORGANISATION/S? PLEASE FOCUS ON THE LAST THREE YEARS.

- The biggest challenge for our organisations is financing corrective and educational programs (see the description of national conditions below).
- A further challenge is presented by the violent attitudes and beliefs of many professionals, exemplified in the blaming of victims for the violence they face, a disproportionate focus on victims, the sexist beliefs of many men involved in the system to combat violence, and the justification of perpetrators' actions.
- There is a lack of appropriate programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence. People who have left prison cannot benefit from therapeutic assistance at home. In Wrocław, for example, there is no post-sentence accommodation service offering treatment for perpetrators of domestic violence.
- More staff are needed to monitor the use of violence by participants in therapeutic programmes, and to conduct evaluations of the therapeutic programmes' effectiveness. There is also a lack of research tools to conduct these evaluations.

- There are difficulties in creating new institutions for the treatment of perpetrators in smaller towns.

## 2. COUNTRY

PLEASE GIVE AN OVERVIEW OF GENERAL SITUATION IN YOUR COUNTRY REGARDING WORK WITH PERPETRATORS.

Programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence can be financed from public funds through the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy. However, the amount currently allocated is insufficient. Depending on the region, the amount allocated ranges from 500 to 1000 PLN (125-250 Euro) per participant of the programme. Participation in these programmes should involve at least 60 hours. If the programme runs weekly, in three hour sessions, these 60 hours are completed within six months. This means that a programme with 10 participants has a budget of 5000-10000 PLN for 6 months, and a monthly budget of 833,3-1666,6 PLN (193 - 387 Euro). This amount must cover all expenses associated with the program, including the costs of facilitators, renting seminar rooms, materials, promotion of the programmes etc. An additional difficulty is the lack of knowledge of the substantive objectives of the programme by officials representing the voivodeships, who are tasked with accounting for, and controlling, programs.

A further problem is the administrative pressure, and sometimes direct requirement, that the programme maintains closed, rather than open groups. Closed groups start with a certain number of participants, and do not allow additional participants to join during the course of the programme. Open groups, by contrast, are conducted in continuous form, and additional participants can join during the process, or finish when outcomes are achieved. Enforcing closed groups creates a vicious circle. The anti-violence centre must wait until it has a full group before it can apply for funding, but by the time the programme

can begin, the list of participants has become stale, and recruitment has to start again from the beginning.

Under the closed group model, participants are unable to learn from men who have been in the programme longer. Often groups break down because participants drop out of the programme.

According to a report by the Supreme Chamber of Control, a weakness of the system is the lack of obligation for perpetrators of violence to participate in the "Blue Card" procedure. The "Blue Card" procedure is the procedure initiated by public institutions after they are notified of an incident of domestic violence. Further, it is not mandatory for perpetrators to participate in an assistance plan. The fact that the perpetrator does not have to cooperate with institutions involved in combatting domestic violence, demonstrates how the system helps perpetrators, rather than victims, feel safe and secure. Only around 23% of perpetrators (identified in examined entities) participate in corrective and educational programmes. Further, not all districts develop and implement corrective and educational programs. Very few cases result in the courts adjudicating probation against the perpetrators of violence (5% were convicted in 2014). With no obligation to participate in the "Blue Card" procedure, most perpetrators face no consequences for their actions. Indeed, 73% of judgments issued against perpetrators are suspended.

Further, interdisciplinary teams do not have effective methods of enforcement to ensure perpetrators appear at meetings and provide explanations. This makes programme recruitment difficult. The judicial obligation to participate in such programmes is applied to only 5% of those convicted of the crime of family abuse (this number does not include those convicted of other crimes, such as injury).

Due to the above conditions (particularly in relation to financing) it is virtually impossible for NGOs to carry out their programmes within the framework of public funding. However, the relevant public institutions possess budgets for other purposes, with full-time employees, infrastructure, and resources. Financing for this programme would be only a small addition to the budget.

Statistics provided by the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy concerning the numbers of programmes in Poland, and the number of participants, must be treated critically.

The work that is being done often does not follow basic standards demanded in the work with perpetrators. Facilitators often do not have adequate training in the specific approach in work with perpetrators. According to the survey, the vast majority (about 90%) of programmes conducted in Poland do not use a gender theory framework. Groups involving both men and women are often mistaken for perpetrator groups.

---

PLEASE GIVE AN OVERVIEW OF YOUR COUNTRY'S CRIMINAL AND CIVIL RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, ESPECIALLY ANY CHANGES WITHIN THE LAST 3 YEARS? (I.E. WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT LEGAL AND POLICY MEASURES AND HOW HAVE THEY BEEN IMPLEMENTED?)

The "Act on the Prevention of Domestic Violence" (29 July, 2005) covers corrective and educational programs for those who have committed acts of violence. According to this act, the national government is responsible for the creation and development of specialist support centres for victims of domestic violence, and for the development and implementation of corrective and educational programmes for perpetrators. The provincial government is responsible for the development and implementation of the provincial programme to combat violence in the family, inspiring and promoting new solutions for combating domestic violence, developing frameworks that protect victims of domestic

violence and instituting corrective and educational programs for perpetrators of domestic violence.

The National Programme for the Prevention of Domestic Violence for 2014-2020 (p. 46) states that, during the implementation of the programme, evaluations will be carried out addressing the effectiveness of assistance to people affected by family violence (in 2019), of the effectiveness of corrective and educational programs for perpetrators (in 2019) and of the psychological and psychotherapeutic treatment for perpetrators of domestic violence (in 2020).

It should be stressed that the Ombudsman (RPO), Dr Adam Bodnar, has had an important role in advocating for victims of violence, and drawing attention to the legislative provisions of the Istanbul Convention. For example, the RPO asked the Minister of Family, Labour and Social Policy (10 December, 2015) whether the Ministry is preparing changes in legislation to allow relevant authorities to order a perpetrator of domestic violence to leave the residence of the victim, in accordance with the Convention. The Ministry answered (5 January, 2016) that legislative changes will focus on improving the functioning of the system, to counteract family violence at both a local and central level. They aim to increase system performance and enhance the protection of people experiencing domestic violence, as well as expand measures directed towards perpetrators.

However, there has been critical talk about the Convention among authorities, mostly regarding gender concept as controversial and threat to traditional values and the structure of the family.

In 2015 the number of entities implementing corrective and educational programs for perpetrators of domestic violence was 272. In 2016 they numbered 269. A list of these organisations is available on the Ministry of Justice website (<https://www.ms.gov.pl/pl/dzialalnosc/przeciwdzialanie-przemocy-w-rodzinie/ogolne/krajowy-program-przeciwdzialania-przemocy-w-rodzinie-na-lata-2014-2020/>). They include social welfare centres, crisis intervention centres and district family assistance centres.

Examples of programmes according to reports for 2015 (available online):

- MOPS Katowice: 9 people participated in the program (July 2015)
- MOPR Gdańsk: 326 people participated in corrective and educational programs
- MOPR Białystok: 13 people completed the program
- MOPR Toruń: 24 people participated in the program
- OPS Warszawa - Mokotów: 75 interviews conducted with people who have committed violence
- MOPR Szczecin: program completed by 18 people
- OPS Warszawa - Targówek: 76 interviews with perpetrators
- MOPS Kraków: 73 interviews with people who have committed violence

---

DO YOU KNOW ANY OTHER ORGANISATIONS/PROGRAMMES IN YOUR COUNTRY THAT CARRY OUR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PERPETRATOR WORK? IF YES, PLEASE, LIST THEM.

The Social Welfare Centres (OPS) in Rzeszów and Olsztyn are good examples of centres that implement corrective and educational programmes.

### 3. NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

---

WHAT HAS TO BE DONE TO PREVENT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN YOUR COUNTRY (REGARDING WORK WITH PERPETRATORS)?

- Increase the financing of programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence
- Established the national work with perpetrators based on the European Standards of Work with Perpetrators
- The creation of an organisation that sets the standard for work with perpetrators of domestic violence

- Training for people working with perpetrators of domestic violence
- Supervisory meetings for professionals
- Development of cooperation with local authorities
- Accommodation for perpetrators of domestic violence

---

WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT TASKS AND STEPS THAT YOU FEEL SHOULD BE FOCUSED ON IN YOUR COUNTRY IN ORDER TO TACKLE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON A GENERAL LEVEL?

Among specialists dealing with domestic violence, there is widespread agreement both that the Istanbul Convention provides an adequate approach to tackling domestic violence, and that its directions should be followed. This requires the engagement and cooperation of relevant authorities.

It is also important that awareness-raising efforts are developed in order to increase understanding of, and challenge, the social dynamics that support male perpetrators of domestic violence. This involves implementing large-scale educational projects and campaigns, both for specialists combatting domestic violence, and for society in general.

Written by Michał Trojnar, Institute of Violence Prevention (Instytut Prewencji Przemocy), Dorota Dyjakon, Wrocław Health Centre (Wrocławskie Centrum Zdrowia) and Marcin Dziurok, Crisis Intervention Society (Towarzystwo Interwencji Kryzysowej).

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the "Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme 2014-2020" of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the authors and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Funded by the "Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme 2014-2020" of the European Union



OAK  
FOUNDATION