

NATIONAL REPORT PORTUGAL 2016

DETAILS REPORT WRITING ORGANISATION

Country: PORTUGAL

Organisation writing report: GEAV/FPCEUP (Centre for Research and Counselling of Victims and Perpetrators of Violence - Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences of University of Porto/Portugal)

Contact Name and Details: Margarida Matias, Psychologist and Forensic Expert of GEAV/FPCEUP ([mmatias@fpce.up.pt](mailto:mmatias@fpce.up.pt)) and Celina Manita, Associate Professor of FPCEUP, Director of GEAV, Psychologist and Forensic Expert of GEAV/FPCEUP ([celina@fpce.up.pt](mailto:celina@fpce.up.pt))

Representing any other organisations? No

1. ORGANISATIONS/PROGRAMMES

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

GEAV works regularly with victims and perpetrators of domestic violence (DV). Our programme for perpetrators of DV was described in our last national report (<http://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/index.php?id=28>). This programme currently consists of individual sessions only, as we have so far been unable to organise a group for group therapy. This is largely due to logistical issues, in particular the difficulty of coordinating perpetrator's work schedules. GEAV also provides individual support and therapy for victims, based on need.

Our centre is part of a community network. Victims and perpetrators of DV are referred to our service by other institutions, such as victim support NGOs, child protective services, probation officers and judicial institutions. Alternatively, victims or perpetrators approach us directly in order to access psychological or psychosocial support. Although several perpetrators have referred themselves to our service in this way, the majority of perpetrators we work with are not voluntary.

In recent years, GEAV has also offered training and education for professionals working in the field of DV, through the support of public funding. From 2009 to 2013, the Portuguese Government engaged GEAV to adapt and translate the DAIP programme to the Portuguese context. Between 2013 and 2014, GEAV organised education and training activities for professionals, which were broadly based on the DAIP/Duluth programme.

In 2013 and 2014, GEAV also provided training on DV for professionals involved in child protective services. This training aimed to enhance awareness of the dynamics of violence and its impact on victims and children, as well as emphasise the importance of coordinating work undertaken with both victims and perpetrators of violence.

GEAV professionals participate in scientific and awareness-raising events on the subject of DV, and supervise community projects working in the field of DV.

During recent years, child protective services have been able to refer parents of the children they work with to perpetrator programmes, with their consent. These perpetrators undertake our programme as a way to become better parents to their children. We believe this is a major opportunity for them. Because perpetrators start the programme before the judicial process is underway, they are supported during that process. Further, this provides opportunities to manage the risk of re-victimisation. In such situations, perpetrators are confronted with the necessity of changing their violent behaviours and attitudes, not simply because such violence is criminal, but also because they need to improve themselves as parents.

---

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

Our major obstacles are financial. We lack the funding necessary to develop our programmes. Further, we are unable to provide a free service, and thus require a payment from clients of the programme. Portugal has experienced a significant economic crisis, and the majority of perpetrators are unable afford the cost of the intervention programme (though it is very low).

There are further significant challenges in maintaining networks in the field of DV. Many community projects face intermittent public funding, which often makes it difficult to ensure the continuity of projects. Therefore, as projects begin and end, existing networks can be broken.

## 2. COUNTRY

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

Portugal's national programme for perpetrators of DV (PAVD) is available throughout the country, and delivered by the national probation service. This programme has resulted in substantial improvements in the field of work with perpetrators in Portugal. Many convicted perpetrators, or others subjected to judicial measures, are now mandated to participate in this programme. There are several criteria for inclusion in this programme. For example, the extent of the judicial punishment must be 18 months or more; there must be a low or medium risk of violence, as evaluated by SARA; and the perpetrator must be free of any mental illnesses or drug abuse problems. The programme is conducted in a group setting by two trained facilitators.

In addition, some universities offer programmes for perpetrators, such as GEAV in FPCEUP, and the University of Minho's Association of Psychology in Braga (northern Portugal). The latter has developed PPRIAC, a Portuguese programme for perpetrators of DV that has been implemented and evaluated. This programme is suspended at the current time.

Additional community programmes for perpetrators are also available, including Espaço Trevo, in Santa Maria da Feira; Projeto Fios e Desafios, in Porto; TAIPA - Gabinete de Apoio à Vítima e ao Agressor (GAVA) in Odemira; Serviço Violência Familiar do Hospital Sobral Cid, in Coimbra; Associação Chão dos Meninos in Évora; and Tribexpert in Vila Nova de Famalicão (as

outlined in the national guide for DV resources).<sup>1</sup> We do not have detailed information about the programmes offered in these community projects. The majority of them are free of cost, because they are supported by national funds. Many of them work with convicted perpetrators of DV who cannot participate in PAVD because they do not meet the inclusion criteria. They also work with perpetrators who have not been convicted of a crime, but who are nevertheless looking for help in changing their behaviour.

---

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?)

Under Portuguese law, the crime of DV involves situations in which someone, repeatedly or otherwise, inflicts physical or psychological harm on their partner or ex-partner. This includes violence within same-sex intimate relationships, and relationships with or without cohabitation. DV also encompasses violence directed towards the parent of the perpetrator's child, and violence directed towards people who live with the perpetrator, and are particularly vulnerable due to their age, disability, illness, pregnancy or economic dependence. The penalty of DV crimes is a prison sentence of one to five years.

In cases of DV, perpetrators may be subject to restraining orders, judicial prohibitions on the possession and use of guns, and/or be obligated to enter a programme for perpetrators of DV. Depending on the gravity of the

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.igualdade.gov.pt/guiaderecursosvd/>

situation, perpetrators may be deprived of their parental role.

Domestic violence has been a public crime in Portugal since 2000. In 2007, the definition of a victim of domestic violence was expanded to include ex-partners and partners with whom the perpetrator has not shared a home. The legal system has also started to apply more restraining orders, electronic surveillance measures and mandatory programmes, all important steps in the field of work with perpetrators. In 2013 the law was changed again to make it more explicit that violence in any intimate relationship is considered DV, regardless of the gender or sexual orientation of the victim and perpetrator, and regardless of the type of intimate relationship they shared. Until this legislative change, victims were often told that if they did not share a home with the perpetrator, violent acts would not be considered DV. Since 2013 there has been no further changes to Portuguese DV law.

Portugal has instituted a national entity responsible for the coordination of measures to prevent DV (CIG – Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality). This entity is responsible for the implementation of national plans in the area of DV and gender violence (described above) through which many community projects are funded. Within Portugal, there are NGOs, community programmes and state institutions in many cities that provide support to victims of DV.

PLEASE TELL US ABOUT THE PROGRESS YOUR COUNTRY HAS MADE IN RELATION TO ISTANBUL CONVENTION.

Portugal was the first European Union country to ratify the Istanbul Convention (on 5 February, 2013). The V National Plan to Prevent and Combat Domestic and Gender-based Violence (2014-2017) (V PNPCVDG) is in line with these commitments and specifically based on the assumptions of the Istanbul Convention. The plan expands the scope of its implementation beyond DV to encompass other forms of gender-based violence, such as female genital mutilation and sexual assault. Following this understanding, the III Programme of Action for the Prevention and Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation (2014- 2017) is an integral part of the V PNPCVDG. This document seeks to foster a culture of equality and non-violence, and is committed to making Portugal a country free of gender-based violence, and further, a country where women and men, regardless of ethnicity, age, socioeconomic status, disability, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity may equally aspire to live in a society free of violence and discrimination. Such a society requires a strong pattern of respect for fundamental human rights. (See the full V PNPCVDG at: [https://www.cig.gov.pt/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/CIG-VPNPCVDG\\_2014-2017\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.cig.gov.pt/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/CIG-VPNPCVDG_2014-2017_ENG.pdf).)

Among the 55 measures of the V PNPCVDG, there are five strategic areas specifically focused on DV: 1) prevention, awareness-raising and education; 2) protection of victims and promotion of their social integration; 3) interventions with perpetrators; 4) training and qualifications for professionals; 5) investigation and monitoring.

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

The PAVD (Portuguese Programme for Perpetrators of DV) is an 18-month rehabilitation programme designed for heterosexual male perpetrators of intimate partner violence, provided by probation services. It includes two kinds of intervention, firstly, individual counselling and supervision and, secondly, a psychoeducational group intervention. This programme follows a motivational approach to change. The psychoeducational group has 20 weekly sessions and is based on a cognitive interpersonal conceptualisation of intimate partner violence. It includes seven modules: stereotypes and gender violence (two sessions); strategies to manage risk (two sessions); impact on victims, empathy and responsibility (two sessions); communication and interpersonal relationships (three sessions); meaning and function of emotions (four sessions); dysfunctional beliefs about the self (four sessions); and intimacy, insecurity and jealousy (three sessions). This programme aims to promote attitudinal and behavioural change within intimate relationships, and encourage perpetrators to take responsibility for abusive behaviour.<sup>2</sup>

PPRIAC (Programme for Promotion and Intervention with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence), developed by the University of Minho, is no longer

---

<sup>2</sup> Rijo, D. & Capinha, M. (2012). A reabilitação dos agressores conjugais: dos modelos tradicionais de realibitação ao PAVD. *Ousar Integrar – Revista de reinserção social e prova*, 11 (pp. 83-97).

implemented.<sup>3</sup>

### 3. BEST PRACTICES

---

TELL US ABOUT BEST PRACTICES IN WORK WITH PERPETRATORS IN YOUR COUNTRY.

GEAV's best practices, applied in our programme for perpetrators, were detailed in our last national report (<http://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/index.php?id=28>). We continue to present on, and discuss, national best practices in seminars, trainings, and any other situation in which we are in contact with professionals in this field. However, at the present time, national recommendations of best practices in this field do not yet exist.

### 4. NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

---

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

The number and quality of programmes for perpetrators in Portugal has increased in the last five years. As described above, the current national plan regarding DV explicitly includes measures to improve work with perpetrators. Further, changes to national legislation have resulted in the

---

<sup>3</sup> Cruz, O. & Abrunhosa Gonçalves, R. (2011). Tratamento de Agressores Domésticos: O Programmea de Promoção e Intervenção com Agressores Conjugais (PPRIAC). *Revista do Ministério Público*, 127 (pp. 179-204).

judicial system referring more perpetrators to intervention programmes. However, there remains a need more community programmes for perpetrators; more funding to support these programmes; more funding to develop scientific research and to assess existing programmes; and more resources and funding to train professionals working in this field. In addition, those who work with perpetrators need to be aware of the importance of maintaining solid networks between professionals and programmes in order to ensure the flow of information and guarantee the protection of victims.

Written by Margarida Matias and Celina Manita, GEAV/FPCEUP

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

