



European
Network

NATIONAL REPORT

Country: **Czech Republic**

Focal Point name, affiliation, contact data:

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Organisation/programme (max 3000 characters)

The League of Open Men (LOM, <http://www.ilom.cz>) is a non-governmental organisation, targeting the quality of life of modern men in the Czech Republic. Since its foundation in 2006, LOM promotes issues such as active fatherhood, men in education system, men's solidarity and health, gender sensitivity and prevention of gender-based violence. LOM propagates society-wide discussion and awareness rising about social pathologies in relationships and families.

- **Do you conduct any programme(s) for the domestic violence perpetrators at the moment? If yes, please describe it/them briefly. If not, please explain why**

Recently, LOM has implemented two projects: Violence-Free Family and White Ribbon Campaign Czech Republic (www.muziprotnasili.cz, in Czech, as a part of world-wide WRC movement). LOM is active especially in the field of primary and secondary prevention of violence in families. In primary prevention, LOM addresses larger public – potential and actual aggressors among men – through media awareness campaign (social and traditional media, internet), offering to those who use violence in relationships internet and direct counselling, seminars preventing aggression in family (domestic violence and violence used in upbringing of children) and events for the general public (e.g. panel discussion on “Men's aggression”).

In most of the cases, the counselling is organised on anonymous and short-term basis, unique contacts predominate. For a considerable part of the target group, such approach is important in order to keep the service's low-threshold and thus better motivate men to seek

for advice voluntarily. LOM benefits from its image of men's organisation and successfully addresses men unable to manage their aggression. The internet counselling reaches app. 20 clients per year – both men and women. For a longer-term therapy, clients are referred to other organisations/therapists.

- **What type of (other) activities regarding preventing domestic violence have you conducted within last four years?**

LOM works in the field of domestic violence prevention and work with perpetrators in two areas:

1) Direct care: individual internet and face-to-face counselling services for aggressive persons, seminars for parents (targeting aggression in upbringing of children, children's aggression and prevention of interpersonal and domestic violence in families).

2) Work with the general public and experts: White Ribbon Campaign Czech Republic, public events, media campaign, workshop for experts. LOM also actively promotes the domestic violence prevention in the political structures in the Czech Republic (Government Council for Gender Equality).

- **What would you define as your most significant success regarding violence prevention within the last four years?**

- Addressing app. 30 000 persons/year through the White Ribbon Campaign in the Czech Republic (since 2012);
- Counselling in cases of violence provided to 30 persons (since 2012);
- Seminars and workshops for potential aggressors reached 100 persons (in 2013);
- Workshop for Czech experts about best practices in prevention of violence in families – 25 participants (in 2013).

- **What would you define as the biggest obstacles/challenges regarding violence prevention in your organisation within the last four years?**

1) Lack of systematic support, attention and financial resources for the work with perpetrators of domestic violence from the Czech authorities; 2) lack of standardized approach; 3) lack of expert training available to professionals working with violent persons.

Country

- **The overview of general situation in your country regarding work with perpetrators (e.g. What has change in your country legislation within the last 4 years? Most important legal and policy measures implementation; In which way they helped?)**

Legal measures:

The National action plan (see below for details) suggests as one of the tasks an analysis of legal conditions for voluntary or mandatory participation in perpetrator programmes, in the frames of civil law, criminal law and proceedings for administrative transgressions; the respective legal measures are nevertheless not yet adopted.

Other broadly related legal measures:

- Act 135/2006 Coll., on protection against domestic violence, in force from January 2007 – complex approach to domestic violence, introduces the institute of police banishment of perpetrator from the household (separation from the victim) for 10 days, with a strongly preventive impact.
- Act 273/2008 Coll., on Police, in force since January 2009 – simplification of the banishment procedure and introduction of the interdiction of contact of the aggressor with the victim(s).
- Act 40/2009 Coll., Penal Code, novel in force since January 2010 – definition of domestic violence from the criminal law perspective (§ 199).

Policy measures:

The Czech Republic currently implements the National Action Plan of Domestic Violence Prevention for the period of 2011-2014 (hereby referred to as NAP DV). The NAP DV presents a complex tool embracing the main goals and respective measures to prevent domestic violence, from the perspectives of prevention, education and awareness raising, research, coordinated assistance for victims of domestic violence, establishment of perpetrators programmes and legislation measures. The fulfilment of its targets is ensured by the Czech Government Council for Gender Equality (Committee for Domestic Violence Prevention). The Committee exists since 2008 and reports annually to the Government on the state of fulfilment of the planned tasks. The NAP DV was prepared by various experts and national stakeholders, representatives of ministries, NGOs and other bodies active in preventing domestic violence and law enforcement. Among the main tasks, the current NAP DV lists the “work with violent persons”. More specifically, the action plan aims at systematisation and long-term sustainability of perpetrators programs as one the most important elements of domestic violence prevention. The pilot activities in this field should be thus evaluated and the most effective methods should expand country-wide in form of a network of counselling services for perpetrators of domestic violence. The NAP DN is an

important tool for enforcement of preventive measures and victim protection, it also enabled responsible ministries to support few pilot programmes preventing domestic violence through the work with aggressors.

It should be nevertheless noted that to date (fall 2013), only few programmes have been implemented and their impact and effectiveness has not yet been evaluated. The Czech organisations do not work according to any common minimal standards and lack financial support necessary for systematic work with perpetrators.

- **Do you know any other organisations/programmes in your country which deal with domestic violence prevention mostly by work with perpetrators? If yes please point them out**

Several Czech organization work with perpetrators of domestic violence and violent persons. Among them, the following organization provide these services on a long-term and systematic basis:

1. SOS Centre, Diaconia of the Czech Evangelic Church, Prague, www.soscentrum.cz/stop-nasili-ve-vztazich
2. Kerit – program for violence management, Silesian Diaconia of the Czech Evangelic Church, Havířov, <http://www.slezskadiakonie.cz/potrebuji-sluzbu/kerit-havirov-odborne-socialni-poradenstvi>
3. Information and counselling center Viola, Center for social services, Prague, www.csspraha.cz/poradna-viola
4. Program for aggression management, Adra, Hradec Králové, www.adrahradeckralove.cz, in cooperation with
5. Program for social inclusion of violent persons, Gaudia, Prague, <http://www.gaudia.cz/ag-resocializacni-program>
6. Violence-Free Family Programme and White Ribbon Campaign, League of Open Men, Prague, <http://www.ilom.cz> and <http://www.muziprotinasili.cz>
7. Project Safely Together – counselling for violent persons, Persefona, Brno, <http://www.persefona.cz>
8. Assisted contact of violent persons with their children, Pro Dialog, Prague, <http://www.prodialogforum.cz> (several)

Three organisations (SOS Centre in Prague, Kerit in Havířov and Adra in Hradec Králové) offer group therapy to violent persons, men and women. All the organisations work with perpetrators of domestic violence or violent persons within individual counselling sessions,

some of them also use the method of relationship counselling (couples therapeutic sessions), and some provide phone and internet counselling services.

Best practices (max 1800 characters)

- **Point out the best practices in work with perpetrators existing in your organisation/country**

1. Group therapy for violent persons: as organised by three Czech NGOs (SOS Centre, Kerit and Adra), such method proved as highly efficient
2. Primary prevention: White Ribbon Campaign Czech Republic – campaign targeting men and potential aggressors
3. Networking: working group for work with perpetrators of domestic violence, formed by NGOs and Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs within the Czech Government Council for Gender Equality, preparing minimum standards for the work with perpetrators
4. Methods to increase aggressors' motivation to participate: a) mandatory participation in therapy as part of probation, cooperation with probation services and judiciary system (Kerit, Adra); b) voluntary participation in counselling due to low-threshold profile of the service (anger management courses)
5. Community planning: NGO Persefona achieved that the work with perpetrators was included into the Community plan of social services in Brno for the period of 2013-2015.

- **Can they be implemented in other organisations/countries? If yes – how? If no – why?**

The Czech Republic does not yet serve as a model country with regard to the work with perpetrators. Such activities are currently developed, mostly inspired by examples of good practices from other countries (such as group therapy of aggressors, expert trainings and awareness campaigns).

As an example, the White Ribbon Campaign may be pointed out. It is the largest men's anti-violence programs in the world, with various activities and methods used to address men and general public in order to prevent violence towards women. Any organisation may join the movement and become the national patron of the campaign.

Needs and recommendations (max 1800 characters)

- **What has to be done in regard to prevent domestic violence in your country (mostly regarding to work with perpetrators)?**

The Czech Republic currently implements the National action plan of domestic violence prevention for the years 2011-2014 (hereby referred to as NAP DV). The NAP DV was prepared by various experts and national stakeholders, representatives of ministries, NGOs and other bodies active in preventing domestic violence and law enforcement. The Committee for Domestic Violence Prevention within the Czech Government Council for Gender Equality worked out an annual report for 2012 including the evaluation of the NAP DV implementation. One of the most underlined report's recommendations is to prioritize the programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence within the complex measures aimed at domestic violence prevention.

More specifically, the action plan identifies the following needs with regard to the work with perpetrators of domestic violence; the related tasks are still pending:

1. systematic and country-wide services available to violent persons, a network of counselling centres;
2. setting up minimal standards of work with perpetrators of domestic violence;
3. evaluation of the pilot programmes and their incorporation in the prevention system;
4. analysis of legal conditions for voluntary and mandatory participation in perpetrator programmes, in the frames of civil law, criminal law and proceedings for administrative transgressions;

- **Point out the most urgent, most important and most promising tasks and steps that should be focused on**

From the practical perspective, evaluation of the current methods and recommendations towards standardization of work with violent persons is crucial. Allotment of sufficient and systematic funding for therapeutic work with perpetrators and for primary prevention (education, awareness raising, anger management courses etc.) is necessary as well. The primary prevention facilitates the interruption of the trans-generational cycle of violence.

Better cooperation and networking will be beneficial to the prevention of domestic violence, including setting up minimal standards and networking of organizations working with victims of domestic violence and programs for violent persons, with the primary aim to maximize the victims' safety and well-being. The standardization of methods of work with perpetrators not only guarantees their quality, but it are also important for lobbying, political acknowledgement and improvement of funding opportunities.

