

## A.S.A.P.

# A Systemic Approach for Perpetrators

### WP2 - Research and Identification of the Experimental Operative Protocol

- Research on working models and national legislations (Italy, Croatia, Bulgaria)
- Research on working models implemented in other Member States of the EU

WP2 Lead beneficiary: BGRF (Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation)

Implementing partners:

NAIA Association

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WWP EN

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## 1. Introduction

Project title: A Systemic Approach for Perpetrators - A.S.A.P

Duration: 01/10/2018 - 30/09/2020

The objective of AS.A.P. project is to define and implement a model to integrate intervention methods applied to victims and to perpetrators of gender-based violence, in order to foster an efficient network of prevention and contrast.

Activities: research on working models and legislation in 3 Countries (Bulgaria, Croatia, Italy) on services for victims and for perpetrators and their integration; desk research on working models implemented in other EU Member States on the same issue; definition of an experimental operational protocol; testing of the protocol; design and application of an evaluation system to measure the impact of the protocol; design of definitive operational protocol and policy guidelines; dissemination of project activities and results to spread its models.

Beneficiaries. Direct: services operators (about 120 in Centres and shelters for victims of violence and about 60 in Centres for treatment of perpetrators). Indirect: victims and perpetrators of gender-based violence, benefitting the integrated network resulting from the new operational protocol; welfare Institutions (national, regional, local) adopting this approach.

Expected results: a systemic approach to gender-based violence; strengthened multidisciplinary cooperation of services for victims and perpetrators, unified in an integrated network; proposals to improve legislation on gender-based violence; increased exchange of information and tools among European/national/regional/local levels on gender-based violence.

The following reports are part of the deliverables of WORK PACKAGE 2, **Research and Identification of the Experimental Operative Protocol**: D2.2 and D2.3, produced in 2019.



## 2. RESEARCH ON WORKING MODELS IN ITALY, CROATIA AND BULGARIA

### 2.1 National questionnaires comparative results

#### Implementing partner: BGRF

**This report presents the processing of results by questions and by countries and the percentage given is indication for the prevalence of responses in view of further comparison and drawing conclusions**

#### 1. Profile of the respondents, position in the organization, age, gender and profession

In total 59 organisations from Italy (25 respondents), Croatia (24 respondents) and Bulgaria (11 respondents) participated in the study. The methodology is based on a standardized questionnaire, filled by the respondents and sent to the national partner of project A.S.A.P in the three countries. The research is not representative and the current analysis reveals trends regarding the type and the methods of work with perpetrators and victims of violence. At the majority of questions the respondents were able to choose multiple replies.

62,5% of the **Italian respondents** are Coordinators/facilitators of the perpetrators program in the organizations/agencies. 16% are Coordinators/facilitators of the victims program in the organizations/agencies and 12% are Managers/Directors of the organizations/agencies. One psychologist of a violence service also participated in the survey. 50% of the respondents are between 40-54 years, followed by the age group 25-39 years – 9 people (37,5%), and only 12,5% respondents are between 55–64 years old. 62% of the respondents are women.

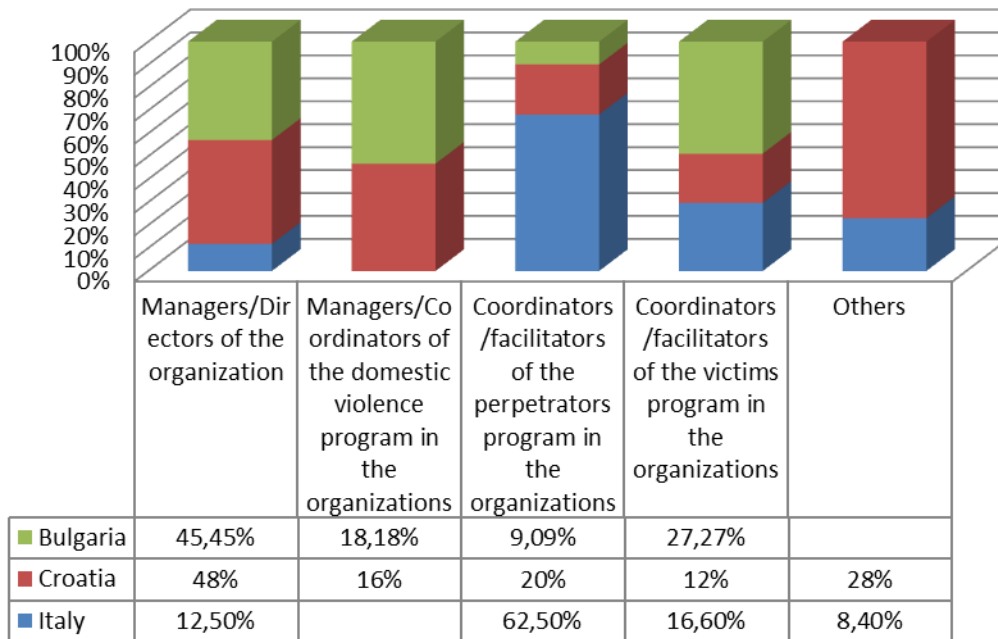
More than a half of the respondents – 62,5% are Psychologists/psychotherapists, 12,5% or 3 people are social workers, 8% are pedagogues. Among the respondents there are also one expert in the following fields: lawyer, criminologist (counsellor in training) - 1, expert professional counsellor with a degree in psychological sciences and techniques.

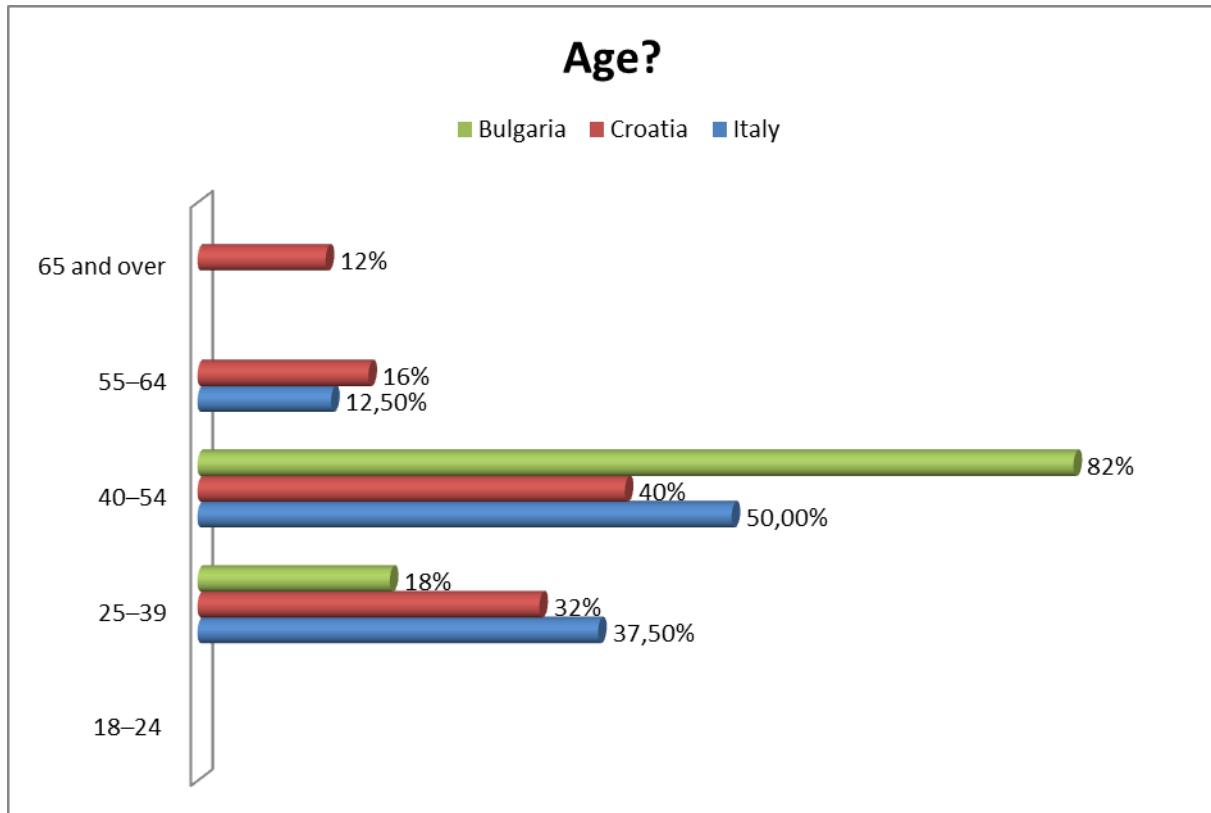
Almost the half of the **Croatian respondents** are Managers/Directors of the organizations/agencies, one fifth are Coordinators/facilitators of the perpetrators program in the organizations/agencies and respectively 4 people are Managers/Coordinators of the domestic violence program in the organizations/agencies and 3 are Coordinators/facilitators of the victims program in the organizations/agencies. Two psychologists also participated in the survey. The majority of the respondents – ten people are between 40-54 years, followed by the age group 25-39 years – 8 people, and only 3 respondents are over 65 years. Almost all of the respondents are women (22) and only 3 are men. More than a half of the respondents are Psychologists/psychotherapists.

45% of the **Bulgarian respondents** are Managers/Directors of the organizations. 27 % are Coordinators/facilitators of the victims program in the organizations. One respondent is Coordinator of the domestic violence program and another one is Coordinator/facilitator of the victims program in the organization. 82% of the respondents are between 40–54 years old and two persons – 18% are 25-39 years old. All respondents are women. 73% of the respondents are psychologists/psychotherapists, 18% are social workers and one respondent is a counsellor.

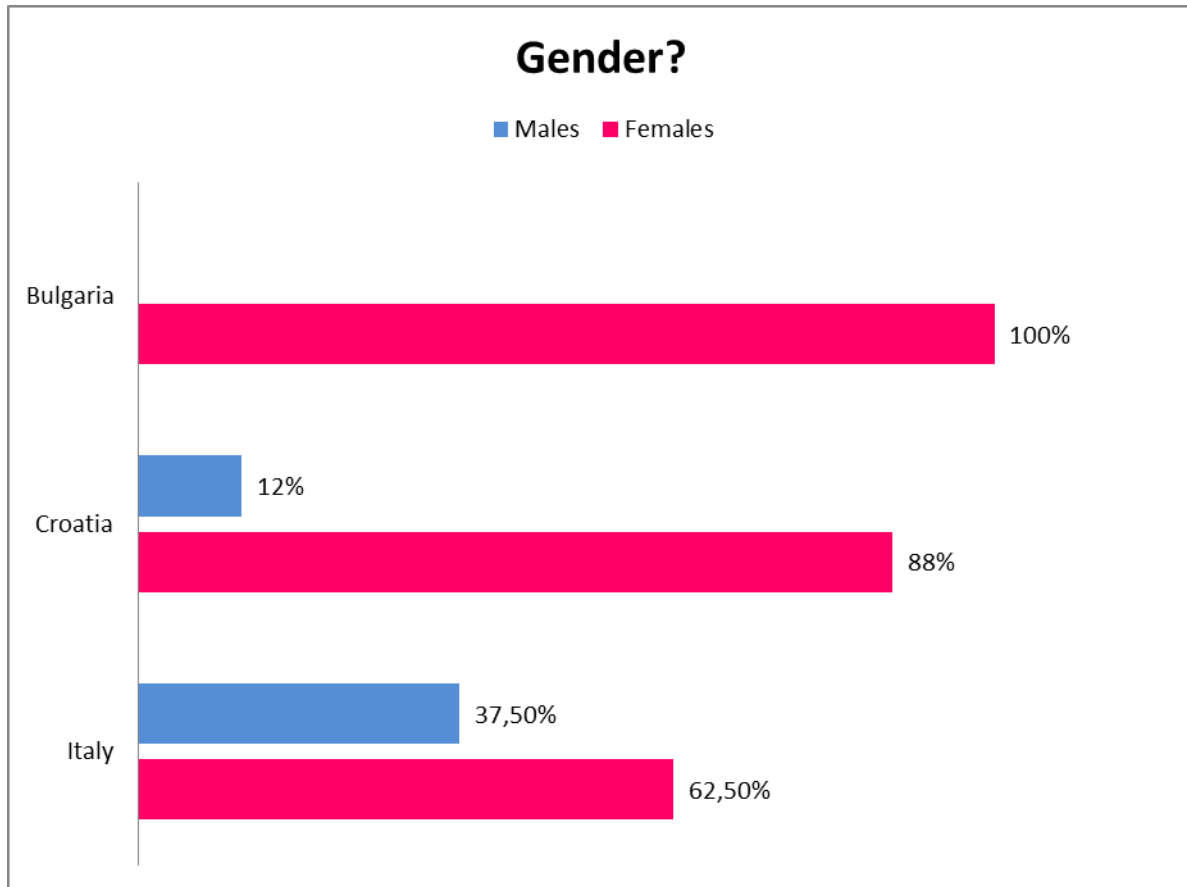


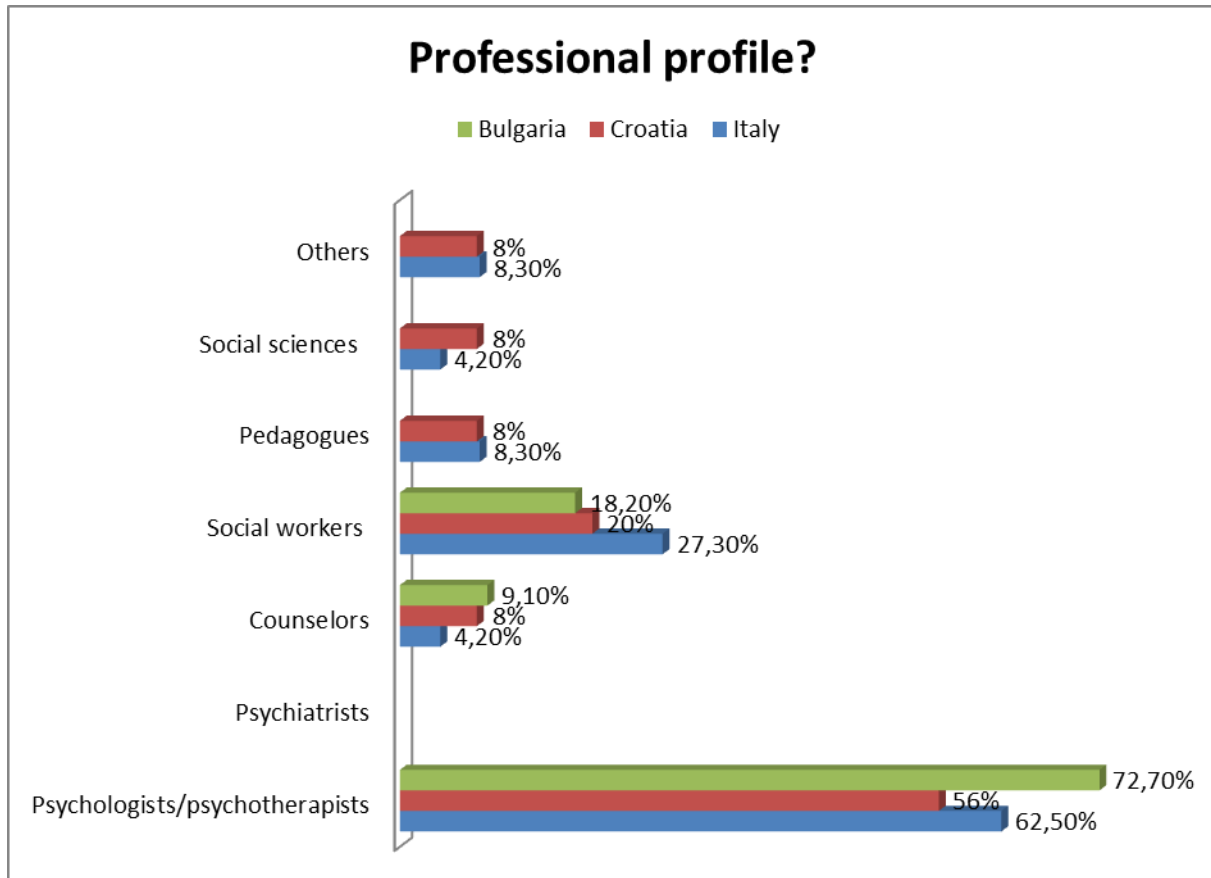
## Positions in the organizations?











## 2. Profile of the organizations/agencies

The **Italian organizations** are based in the cities of: Trento, Florence, Sassari, Castelleone, Montebelluna, Castelfranco Veneto, Verona, Ferrara, Torino, Pordenone Udine, Bassano del Grappa, Genova, Padova, Ravenna, Piacenza, Venezia, Biella, Foggia. The names of the programs are: Center for Listening to Maltreating Men North Sardinia: Service for the taking in charge of men perpetrators of violence, Cam section of Cremona, Male Change, Nilde Anti-violence Center, Petra Anti-violence Center, Stella Antares Anti-violence Center, Center for Listening of Men perpetrators in Ferrara, Center for Listening to the Male Discomfort and Prevention of Violence against Women, Center for listening to men, Women's Center Against Violence Catia Franci And Nicoletta Livi Bacci, Center for listening and rehabilitative treatment of men perpetrators of domestic and gender violence, Center for prevention of violence Onlus,

Group R, Dark Side, Move Never More Violent Men, Territorial Criminological Presidium, Consultancy Service for Men perpetrators of Violence and Stalking, Social Protection Service and Anti-violence Center, team of the Anti-violence Center, Spam (Adult Psychological Support for Abusers), Listening Space for Men Who are perpetrators of Violence: Towards ending violence – in search of a change, SUM - Service for Men perpetrators, Men beyond violence<sup>1</sup>.

The analysis of the available 11 dates, quoted for the start of the Italian programs, reveal that most of them – 5 are established between 2011-2016, two are founded in 2004, 2009, two are founded in 1991 and 1994 and two – in 1982 and 1983.

Most of the programs are focused on work with male perpetrators of violence.

The organizations from **Croatia** are from the cities of: Osijek, Rijeka, Split, Zadar, Dubrovnik, Šibenik, Bjelovar, Sisak, Slavonski Brod, Varaždin, Čakovec.<sup>2</sup>

7 of the programs are for work with perpetrators (Psychosocial treatment), 7 are counseling centers/services/support for victims of domestic violence and 6 shelters for women/and children. Among the organizations taking part in the survey there is one organization providing the service Center for Victims of Sexual Violence and another one providing Help line and counseling.

9 programs were created and started work between 2000 – 2010, two before 2000 and another two – in 2014 and 2019.

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<sup>1</sup>Associazione Ares, Paviol (Percorsi anti-violenza), cooperativa sociale Iside, Cam sezione di Cremona, Centro Ascolto uomini Maltrattanti di Ferrara, Centro di Ascolto Uomini Maltrattanti (CAM) Firenze, ASSOCIAZIONE ARTEMISIA, Impegno donna, White Dove, Centro per non subire violenza Onlus, Una casa per l'uomo - s.c.s. – 2, Gruppo R s.c.s – 2, CIPM EMILIA, L'Istrice Aps, Libra Società Cooperativa Sociale, Municipality of Sassari, CAM Nord Sardegna Onlus, Ass. Cerchio degli Uomini APS, A.L.F.I.D. Onlus, Municipality of Venezia, Municipality of Verona – 2.

<sup>2</sup> Caritas Home for women and children victims of domestic violence Sv. Ana u Rijeci, NGO BijelikrugHrvatske, Caritas of the city of Zadar Archdiocese, Udrugazazaštitoobitelji – Rijeka (U.Z.O.R.) – Family assistance association – Rijeka, Society for Psychological Assistance, The Home for children and adult – victims of domestic violence “Duga-Zagreb”, NGO Feniks, NGO "Svijetkvalitete", B.a.B.e. Be active. Be emancipated, "Iris" Bjelovar NGO, Womens center Adela, The Center for Professional Rehabilitation Osijek, Dom zadjecuiodraslezrtveobiteljskognasilja “Duga-Zagreb” (The Home for children and adult – victims of domestic violence “Duga-Zagreb), Blue phone, Clinic for the Protection of Children and Young People in Zagreb, UdrugaBrod, U.Z.O.R, Home for victims of domestic violence “Utičište Sv. Nikola”, Ženskapomoćsada, Ženska soba – the Center for sexual rights, Home for victims of domestic violence “Safe house”, SOS Rijeka – centarzanenasiljeljudskaprava/SOS Rijeka – centre for nonviolence and human rights.

The **Bulgarian organizations** are based in the towns of Sofia, Targovishte, Varna, Doupnitsa, Pernik, Haskovo, Dimitrovgrad, Stara Zagora (and the Alliance for protection against GBV is a network of organizations based in Sofia, Varna, Burgas, Silistra, Russe, Pleven, Pernik, Targovishte, Haskovo, Dimitrovgrad and Haskovo)<sup>3</sup>. The programs run by them are called Center for social rehabilitation and integration, Specialised program for work with perpetrators of domestic violence, Consultative center for people who suffered from domestic violence and perpetrators of violence, Work with perpetrators of violence, programme for work with perpetrators. The programmes started in the years: 1999 –one program, in the period 2010 – 2015 – 6 programs.

The programmes in Bulgaria were established later than the other participating countries.

- **Type of organizations/agencies:**

According to the type the organizations the division/specialization of the **Italian organizations** is the following:

- 33% have exclusively treatment program for perpetrators of domestic violence
- 29% are part of a larger counseling or other social service Centre
- 20% are from an organization that has a counselling center for victims and has a program for work with perpetrators
- 12,5% have an program exclusively for victims of gender-based violence
- And only one respondent quoted the availability in the organization of a programme for perpetrators with awareness-raising and educational activities.

About 79% of the **Italian organizations** (19) are in the category NGO/foundation/charity and 16% are public institutions. There is only 1 Private organization/agency.

According to the type the organizations the division among the **Croatian organizations** is the following: 10 organizations have program exclusively for victims of gender-based violence and

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<sup>3</sup> Association Naya, Foundation “SOS – families in risk”, Knowledge, success, change Non-profit association, Pulse Foundation, Association Center Dinamika, Foundation “H&D Gender perspectives”, Foundation “Mission wings”, Anumus Association, Alliance for Protection from Gender- based violence

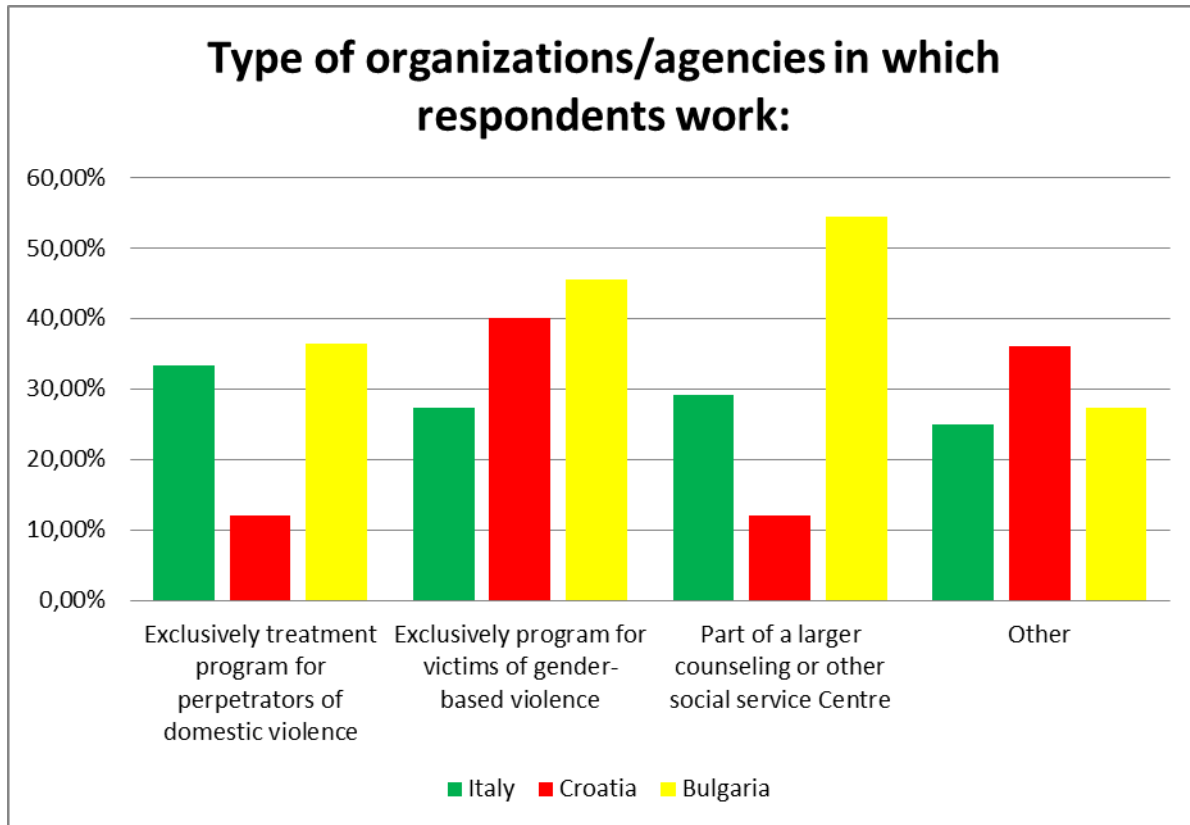


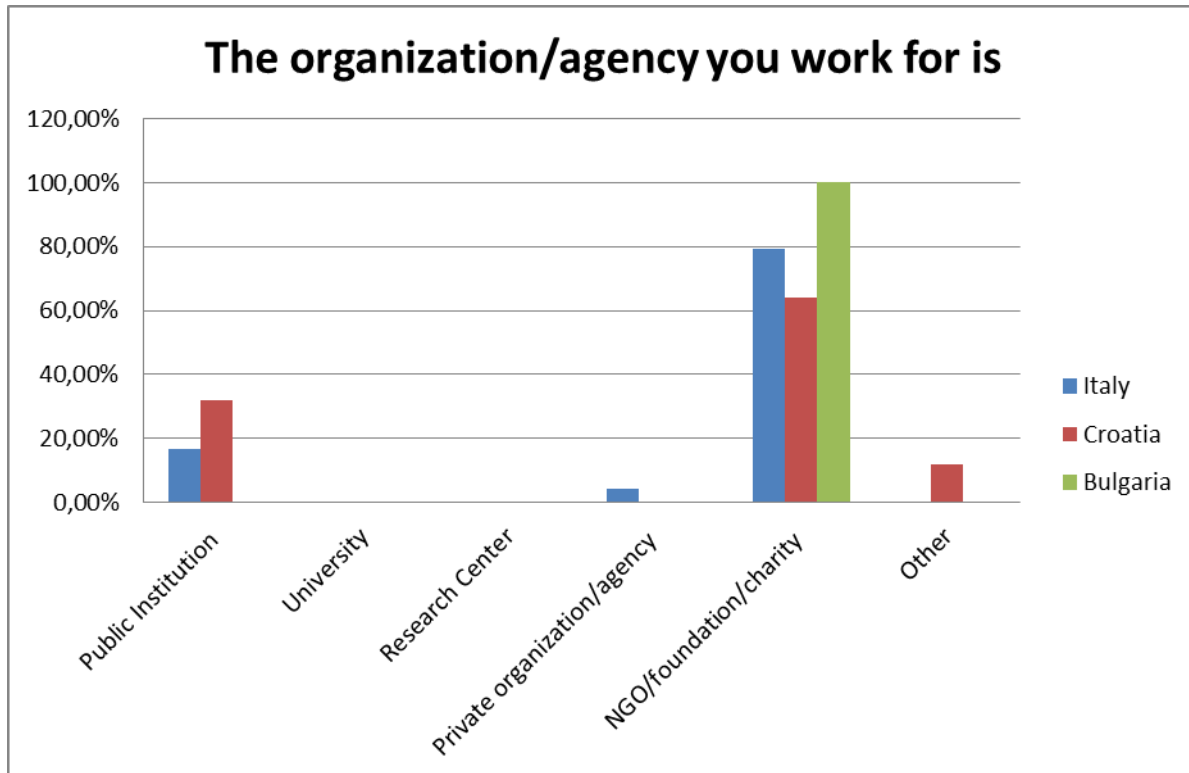
9 organisations consider themselves to provide “other” than the present in the questionnaire services as follows: one organization that has a counseling center for victims and has a program for work with perpetrators, other: a programme for perpetrators with awareness-raising and educational activities - NGO that provides preventative and advisory psychological assistance to citizens of all ages, an organization which provides programs for victims of domestic violence and which provides treatment for perpetrators of domestic violence, an organization that has a counseling center for victims and has a program for work with perpetrators; Family Counseling Caritas of the Archdiocese of Zadar; an organization which runs both perpetrators program and counseling & shelter for women victims, The Home for children and adult – victims of domestic violence “Duga-Zagreb”, a physical person who carries out the treatment for perpetrators, a health institution that deals with the diagnosis and treatment of psycho-traumatized children, and an organization conducting a program of treatment for perpetrators of violence and a program for victims of violence.

More than a half of the **Croatian organizations** (16) are in the category NGO/foundation/charity and almost one third (8) are public institutions. There is also a religious organization, a physical person (expert on her own) and a Help-line taking part in the survey.

54% of the **Bulgarian respondents** work in programmes which are part of a larger counseling or other social service Centre, 45% work in programmes exclusively for victims of gender-based violence and 36% work in exclusively treatment program for perpetrators of domestic violence. Other options quoted were: center for social rehabilitation and integration run by Association Naya, individual consulting of victims and perpetrators of domestic violence, organization delivering social services for victims of trafficking and violence. All the Bulgarian organizations taking part in the study are NGOs.







- **Main sources of funding for the programmes is as follows:**

More than 95% of the **Italian organizations** get main source of the funding for their program from the EU/national/regional/municipal government funds, 37,5% from Private Funds, only 8% from Social or health services funds. Only 1 organisation has main source of funding from Criminal justice system funds and from own resources (category other). 70% from the organizations have project based funding for their work, 25% have permanent funding and one organization has public contract renewed every 2 years.

67% of the **Croatian organizations** (16) get main source of the funding for their program from the EU/national/regional/municipal government funds, about 37% (9 organisations) - Criminal justice system funds, followed by one sixth (4 organisations) – by Private Funds (donations, etc.)





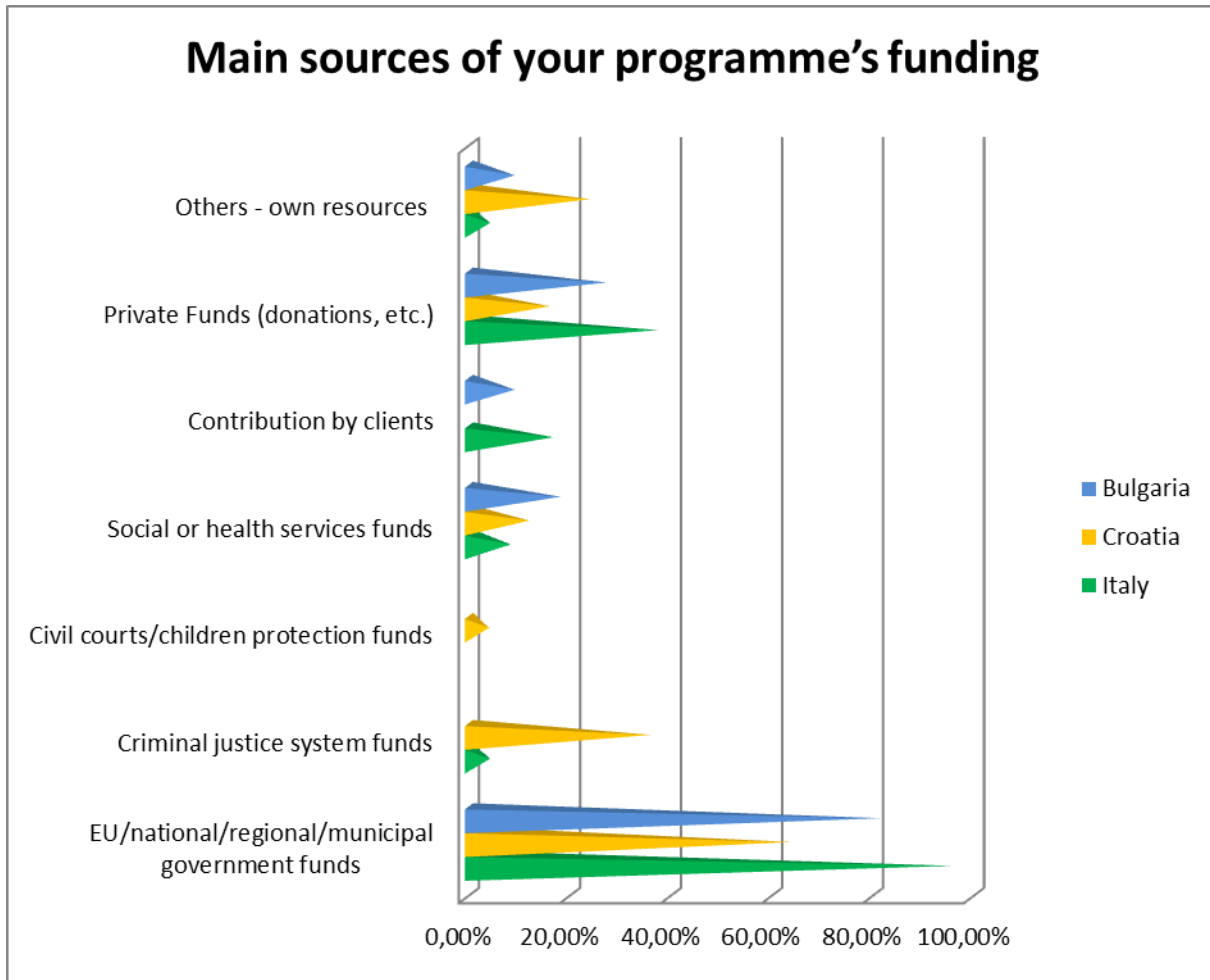
and only 3 organisations—from social or health services funds. There are several responses outside of the proposed options for replies and namely about the program funding coming from state budget, the city county and local authorities, contract with the competent ministry. 11 organisations or 45% have permanent funding for their work, one third (8 organisations) have project based funding, and almost the same share – 29% (7 organisations) have case-based such.

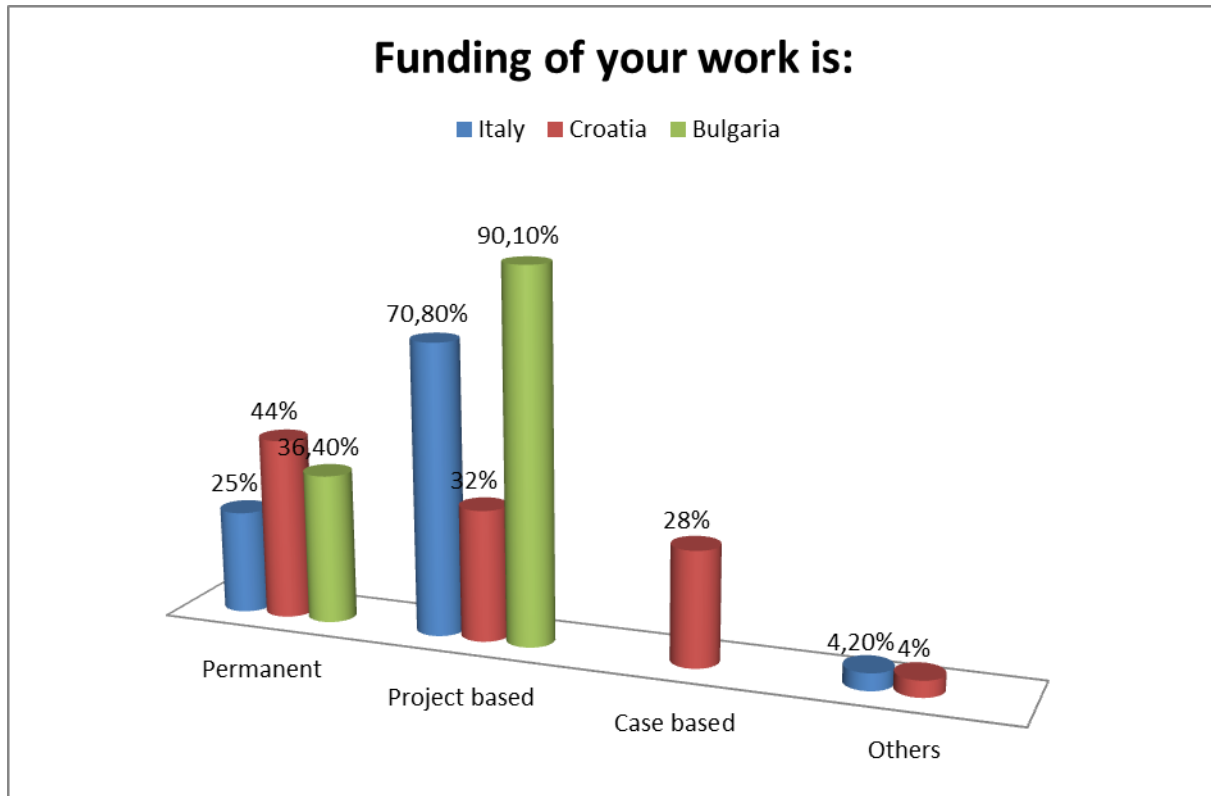
82% of the **Bulgarian organizations** use national/regional/municipal government funds, 27% - private funds, and 18% - social or health services funds or contribution by clients. One organization states that uses its own resources.

For 91% of the **Bulgarian organizations** the funding is project-based. 36% have permanent funding for other services (for ex. delegated budget for the activity Center for social rehabilitation and integration and for other activities).









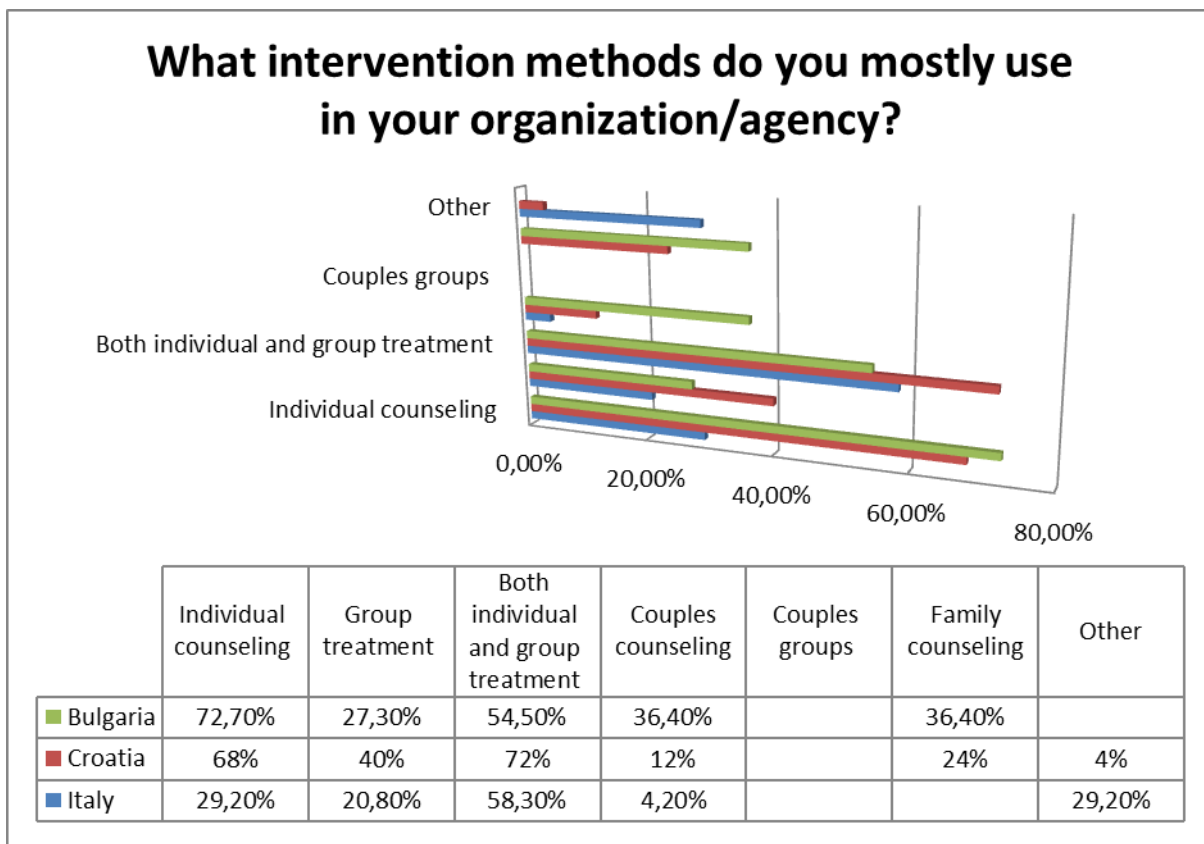
- **Intervention methods:**

58% of the **Italian organizations** practice mostly both individual and group treatment as a service, followed by 29 % providing individual counseling, followed by 21% of the organizations that state that they have group treatment and individual treatment. There is only one organization stating that has program in each of the categories: couples counselling, legal counseling, self-help groups.

72% of the **Croatian organizations** practice both individual and group treatment as a service, followed by 68 % providing Individual counseling, and followed by 24% - family counseling. Couples' counseling is provided by 3 and one organisation provides the service daily hospital.

For 72% of the **Bulgarian organizations** the most used method is individual counseling, followed by both individual and group treatment, used by 55% of the NGOs, family counseling and couples counseling are done by 36% and 27% provide group treatment.

In all participating countries combining individual and group treatment as a service is predominantly practiced (in Bulgaria this is at second place). Couples' counseling is less practiced in all countries.



- **Main goals of the work organizations:**

**Italy**

62,5% or 15 of the Italian organisations have as goals the protection of women, treatment, support and services in case of domestic violence against women and children.

33% (8 organisations) aim at fostering change, raising awareness and promotion of new culture of non-violence.

8 organisations – 33% aim at the interruption of violence.

16% or 5 have as a goal prevention activities, ranging from prevention of recidivism, to programs in schools.

12,5% of the organisations aim at creating an adequate environment for a proper assessment of the risk related to the particular situation, also with the goal to provide safety measures for the victims.

12% of the organization aim at training activities (including consulting service for the local network of educational social and health services, and to police forces)

4 organisations have as main goal the accountability of the perpetrator.

One organisation aim at parenting support and family mediation.

### **Croatia**

92% of Croatian organisations (23 organisations) provide support, safety for the victim, including accommodation, followed by other majority of 19 organisations(76%) that provide work with perpetrator. 36% have the services psychosocial assistance – 9organisations.

Another 28% develop activities related to raising community and public awareness and 24% have also prevention activities.

In total 5 organisations or 20% of all develop other activities related to human rights, research or promotion of the activities of the organization.

Providing legal assistance is an aim for only 4 organisations and only 3 organisations or 12% aim at the identification of disorders, the development of mental health in an environment oriented towards sustainable development, diagnosis and treatment of children and adolescents. And finally, cooperation with institutions and lobbying are a goal for 2 organisations.

### **Bulgaria**

91% of the organisations have as goals the protection and support for victims of gender-based violence (including activities focused on rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of domestic violence, crisis intervention, rehabilitation of the trauma etc.). 45% of organisations aim also at for work with perpetrators, and two others aim at avoiding recurrence of violence. The activities

of 27% of the organizations are focused on prevention (including in schools). Among the other aims quoted are increasing sensitivity and intolerance to gender-based violence and development of training programs.

### **3. Collaboration between centers supporting victims and services that work with perpetrators**

100% of the **Italian organizations** cooperate with Social services, followed by 83% with the police. 80% cooperate with Women's shelters/refuges and Women's counseling services, 70% cooperate with Criminal Court and Child protection services, 58% cooperate with Alcohol or substance abuse treatment units, 50% with Civil/Family Court, 45% with the prosecutor, 42% with the emergency units, 29% with general practice doctors, 25% with hospitals. One NGO cooperates as well with schools, and another one with the entities and institutions in the region.

58% of the **Italian organizations/agencies** that participated in the survey provide always for a specific collaboration between Centers supporting victims and Services that work with perpetrators, 37% do so only in some cases.

The most used tool/procedure/pattern used by more than 83% of the **Italian** respondents is telephone/email contacts between professionals of the two organizations, followed by team meetings between professionals of the two organizations (used by more than 62%). The joint risk assessment for victim's life is a procedure, applied by 41% of the organizations and the operational protocol is used by 16 %, or by 4 organisations.

Five organizations quoted other tools/procedures/patterns used in their practice such as: working jointly on the interviews with the partners of the perpetrators, joint awareness-raising projects in schools, sharing of opinions on general topics and specific contacts with each anti-violence center.



92% of the **Croatian organisations** cooperate with police and social services, 72% with the courts, women's shelters/refuges and child protection services. 68% cooperate with the general practitioners, 64% with family services, 60% with women's counseling services and 52% with the prosecutor, with alcohol or substance abuse treatment programs– 36%. The emergency units are approached by 48% of the organisations and the hospitals by 25% of them. Other possible institutions can be sought if necessary such as the Probation service, schools, kindergartens, educational institutions, state administration offices, civil society organizations, CES, HZMO, HZZO, NZZJZ, commissions, committees, social welfare homes, policy makers, ministries, and others, other NGOs that promote human rights.

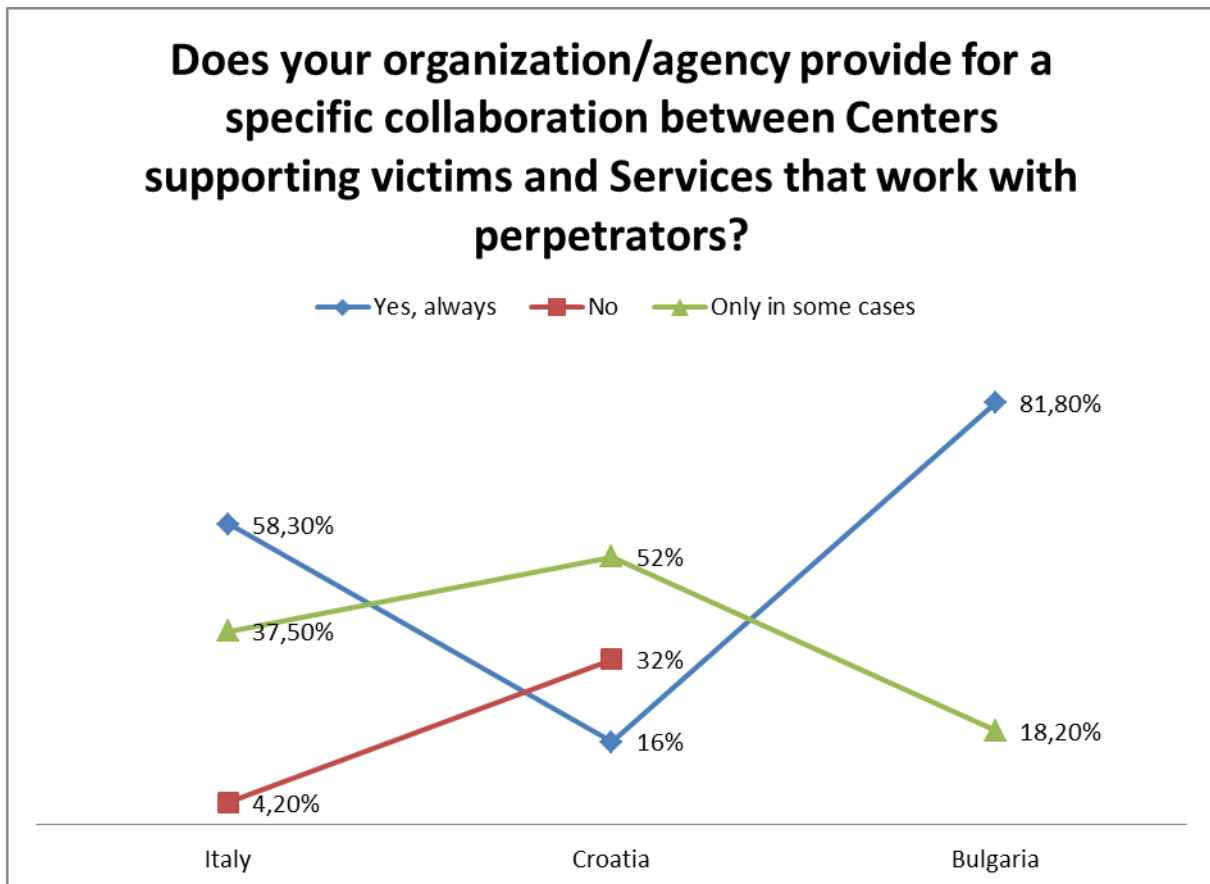
52% of the **Croatian** organizations/agencies that participated in the survey provide for a specific collaboration between Centers supporting victims and Services that work with perpetrators only in some cases. 32% do not provide for such specific collaboration and only 16% of the organisations regularly provide for such cooperation.

The most used tool/procedure/pattern used by 64% of the **Croatian** respondents is telephone/email contacts between professionals of the two organizations, followed by team meetings between professionals of the two organizations (used by 20%). Operational protocol is used by 8%, or only 2 organisations. At last place, practiced only by one organization, is the joint risk assessment for victim's life.

All **Bulgarian organizations** cooperate with the police, 90% of them – as well as with courts, social services and women's shelters. 80% have good cooperation with women's counseling services and child protection services. At next place -60% is the cooperation with general practitioners and prosecutor, 50% - with the hospitals. 40% cooperate with alcohol or substance abuse treatment and with criminal court. Emergency units are used for interaction by 3 organisations and family services – by 2.



91% of them – as well as with courts, social services and women’s shelters. 82% have good cooperation with women’s counseling services and child protection services. At next place - 63% is the cooperation with general practitioners and prosecutor, 55% - with the hospitals. 36% cooperate with alcohol or substance abuse treatment and with criminal court. Emergency units and family services are used for interaction by 27% of the organisations.

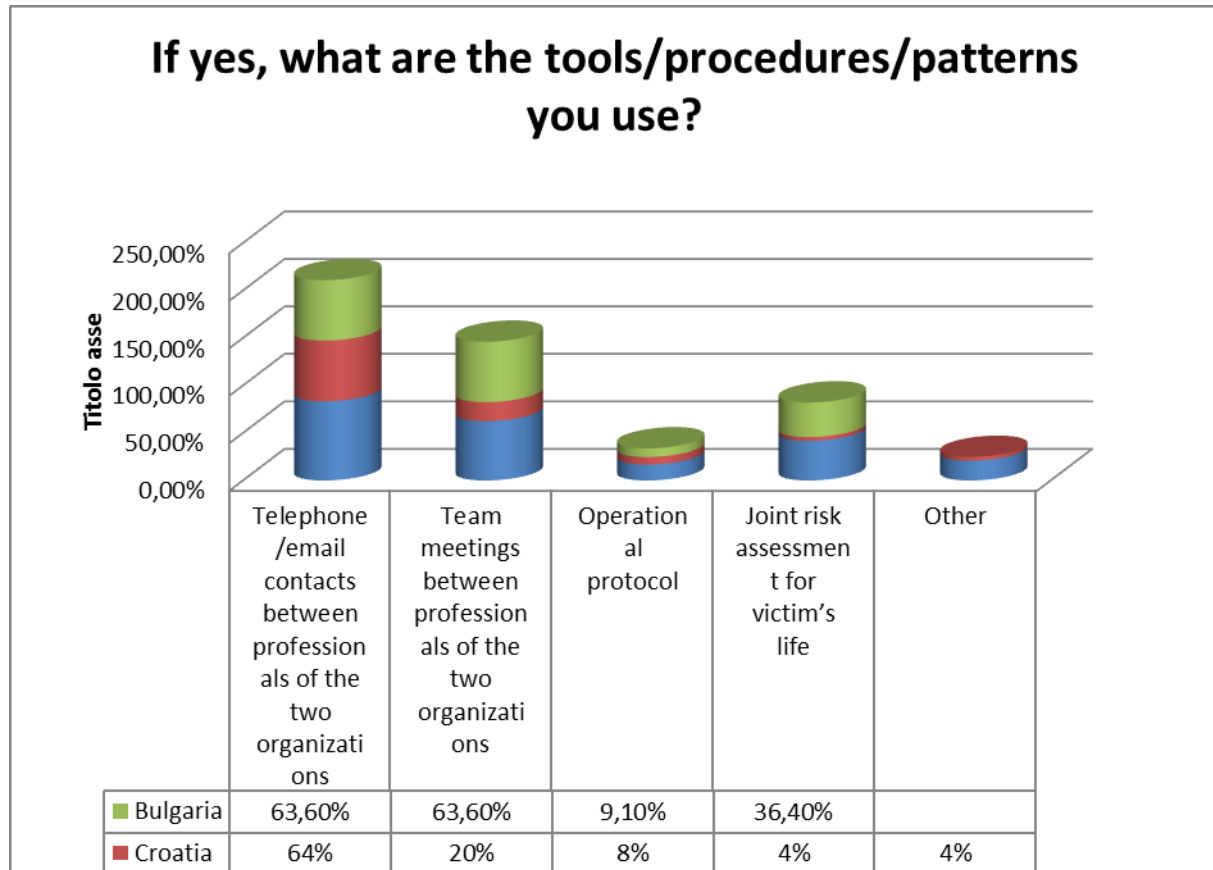


82% of **Bulgarian** NGOs provide for a *specific* collaboration between Centers supporting victims and Services that work with perpetrators and 18% provide for a specific cooperation in some cases.

From those organizations who provide for cooperation the tools/procedures/patterns used are:

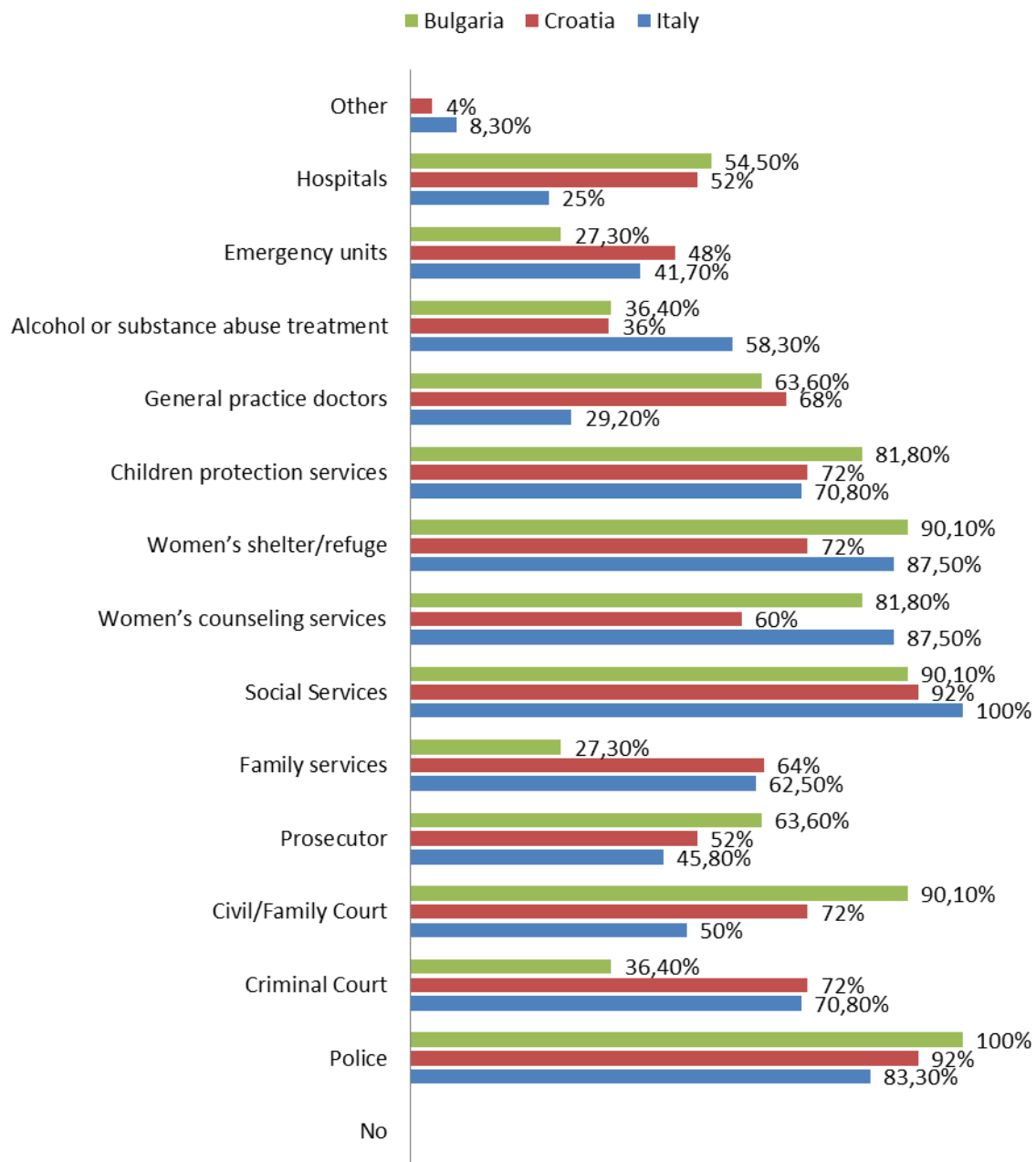


64% of the **Bulgarian organizations** use telephone/email contacts between professionals of the two organizations and team meetings between professionals of the two organizations. Joint risk assessment is used in 36% of cases and operational protocol only by 1 organisation (9)%.





## Do you collaborate with other institutions / projects?

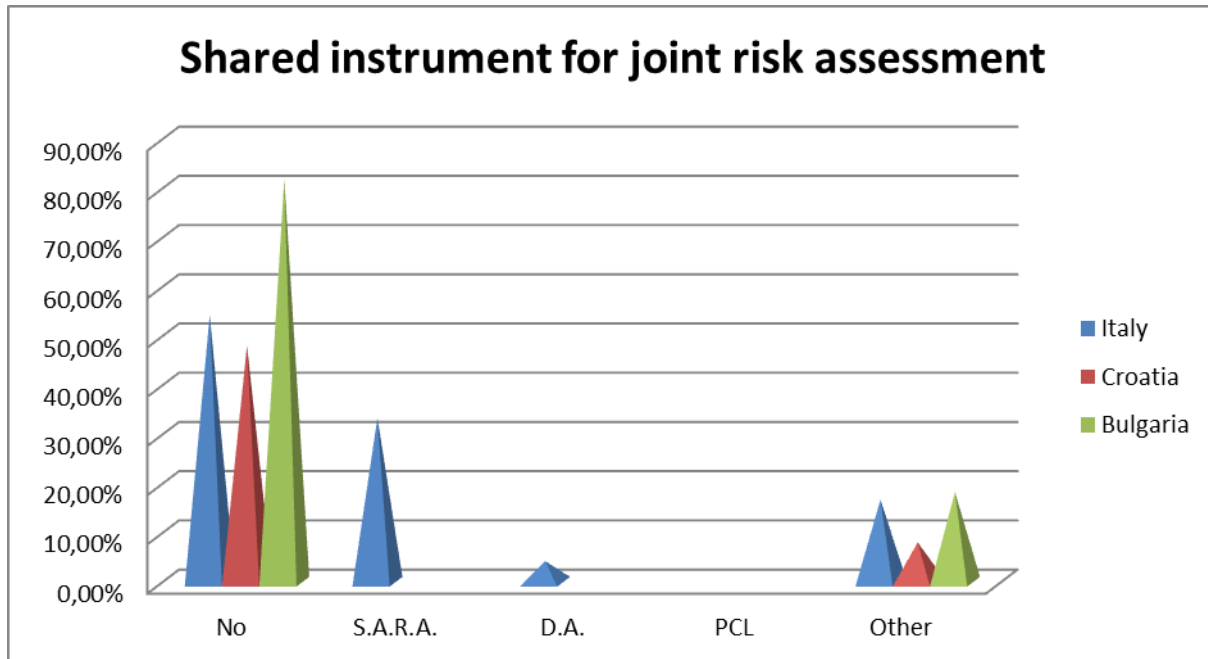


- **Use of shared instruments in case if collaboration includes a joint risk assessment for victim's life**

If the collaboration includes a joint risk assessment for victim's life, 54% of the **Italian organizations** use a shared instrument for this aim, 33% use S.A.R.A. and only one organization (or 4% of all) uses the instrument D.A. Four organizations have other instruments: a checklist "risk indicators in mistreatment situations", used by 2 organisations, clinical assessment – by one organisation, and so called ODARA (specific training is expected), used by another organization.

37% of the Italian respondents state that collaboration is not assessed, 25% of the organizations quote that the collaboration is assessed through verification of the satisfaction of all operators involved and through noting the decrease in risk for victims. According to 20% of the organizations collaboration is assessed through verification of the decrease in recurrences of violent behavior. Other option noted is weekly meetings to assess the implementation and effectiveness of strategies.

Only 56% **Croatian** organizations (14 from total 25) answered the question about the use of shared instruments in case if collaboration includes a joint risk assessment for victim's life. 86% of the respondents who gave answers state that they do not use such instrument.



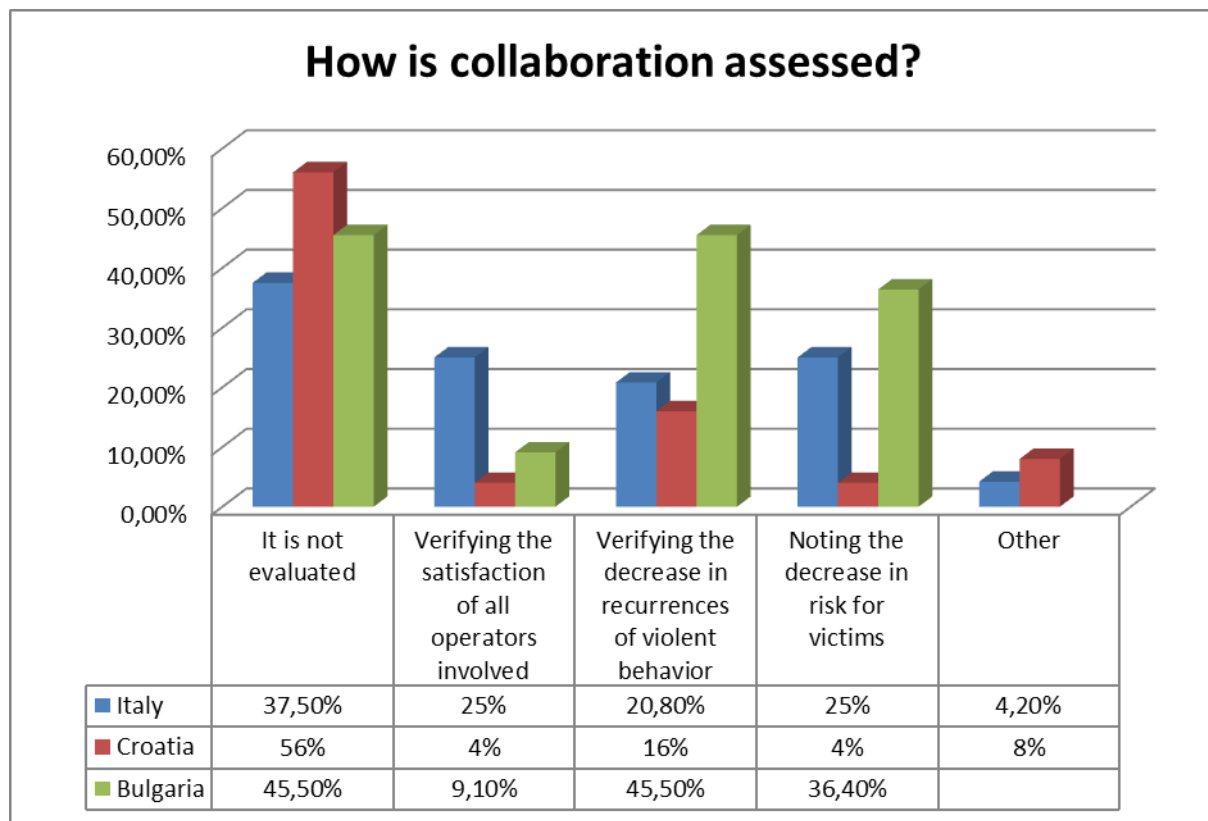
At the question “How is collaboration assessed” 56% of the **Croatian** respondents state that collaboration is not assessed and only 16% consider that when it is assessed, it is expressed in verification of the decrease in recurrence of violent behavior. For the options “Verifying the satisfaction of all operators involved” and “Noting the decrease in risk for victims” only one organization answered positively. Weekly meetings for assessment of the implementation and effectiveness of strategies is marked additionally.

92% of the **Bulgarian** respondents do not use shared instrument in case if collaboration includes a joint risk assessment for victim’s life.

45% of the respondents state that collaboration is not assessed and 45% consider that when it is assessed, it is expressed in verification of the decrease in recurrences of violent behavior. For the options “Verifying the satisfaction of all operators involved” only one organization answered positively and 36% organisations marked the answer “Noting the decrease in risk for victims”.

In this category regarding the use of shared instrument **Bulgarian** context reveals that such instrument is not used by the respondents, in comparison to almost half of the Croatian and 54% of Italian organizations who apply it successfully. This could be a favourable ground for

exchange of know how within the project about the practice, use and the challenges related to the shared instrument as a method.

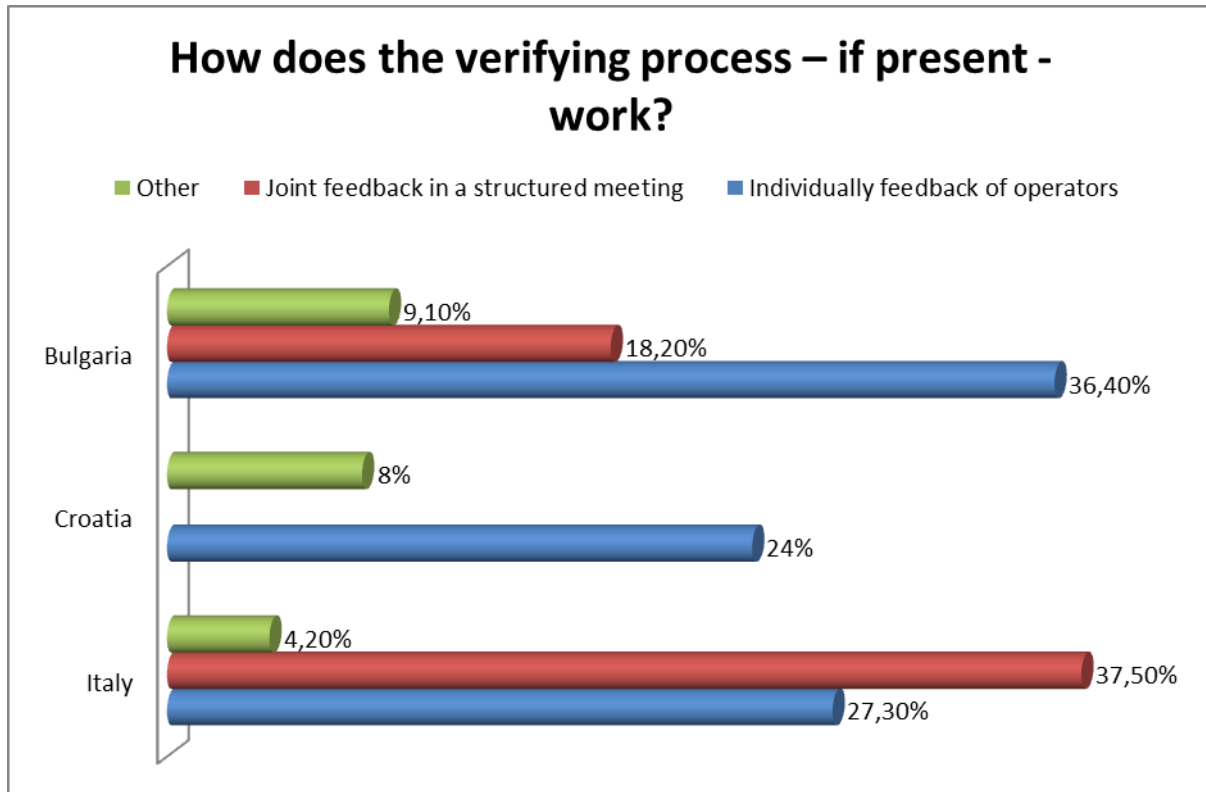


From 13 **Italian organizations** who gave answer (13 respondents of 24) to the question “How does the verifying process – if present – work” 69% say that the verifying process works thanks to joint feedback in a structured meeting. For 23% the verifying process works thanks to individual feedback of operators.

75% of the **Croatian respondents**(6 of 8) who gave answer (8 respondents of 25)to the question “How does the verifying process – if present – work” say that the verifying process works thanks to individual feedback of operators. A specific instrument is mentioned in one case - following the client for the next 6 months.

36% of the **Bulgarian** respondents do not give answer to the question “How does the verifying process – if present - work“. 57% of **Bulgarian organizations** that responded to the question

consider that the verifying process works thanks to the individual feedback of operators. 29% consider that the verifying process works thanks joint feedback in a structured meeting. 14% use other method - individual feed-back of the clients.



In summary - there is not so much practice for verification. In Croatia and in Bulgaria the NGOs consider that the verifying process works thanks to individual feedback of operators (between 40-75% of the organizations that provided answer to the question). In Italy the process works thanks to joint feedback in a structured meeting, which was not tangible result for the other two countries and could be another issue deserving exchange and cooperation with the project A.S.A.P.

- **Collaboration between Centers supporting victims and Services that work with perpetrators is (or could be) mostly effective for:**

(results by countries)

### **Italy**

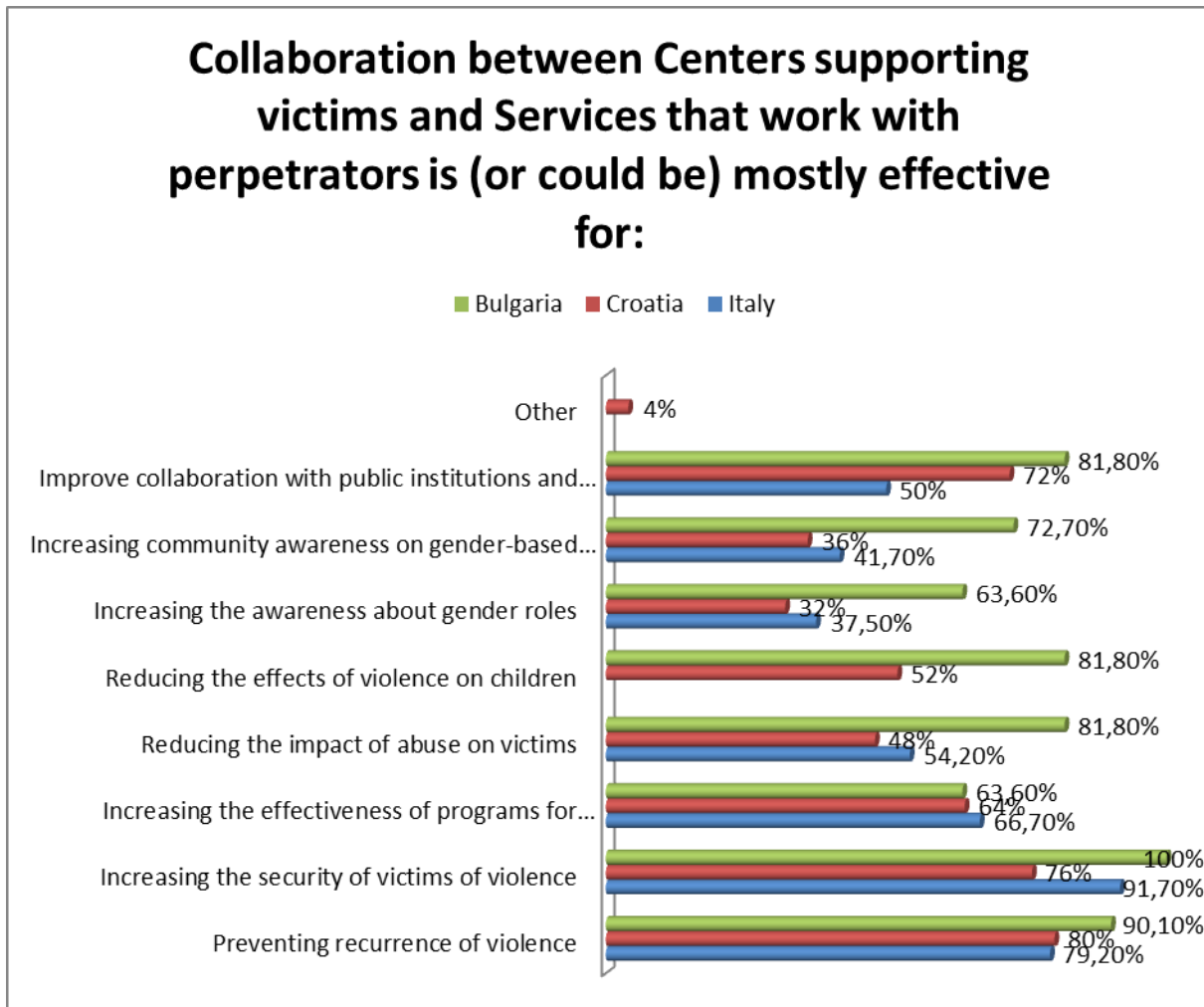
Increasing the security of victims of violence –92% of respondents, Preventing recurrence of violence –79% of respondents, Increasing the effectiveness of programs for perpetrators –67%, Reducing the impact of abuse on victims –54%, Improve collaboration with public institutions and law enforcement agencies –50%, Increasing community awareness on gender-based violence –42%, Increasing the awareness about gender roles –37%.

### **Croatia**

Preventing recurrence of violence – 80% of respondents, Increasing the security of victims of violence – 76% of respondents, Improve collaboration with public institutions and law enforcement agencies – 72%, Increasing the effectiveness of programs for perpetrators – 64%, Reducing the effects of violence on children – 52%, Reducing the impact of abuse on victims – 48%, Increasing community awareness on gender-based violence – 36%, Increasing the awareness about gender roles – 32%.

### **Bulgaria**

Increasing the security of victims of violence – 100% of respondents, Preventing recurrence of violence –91% of respondents, Improve collaboration with public institutions and law enforcement agencies – 82% of respondents, Reducing the impact of abuse on victims -82%, Reducing the effects of violence on children – 82%, Increasing community awareness on gender-based violence -73%, Increasing the effectiveness of programs for perpetrators – 64%, Increasing the awareness about gender roles – 64%.



- **Main difficulties about the collaboration between Centers supporting victims and Perpetrators programs**

(results by countries)

### Italy

The main difficulties about the collaboration between Centers supporting victims and Perpetrators programs are ranked as follows:



Lack of enough funding for an effective collaboration between the two types of services to support the collaboration – 54% of respondents, lack of national guidelines on such collaboration – 54%, lack of foreseen collaboration by the national law on gender-based violence – 25%, the existing law and Regulations about privacy (ex. EU GDPR) makes difficulties for collaborate – 25%, centers supporting victims are not willing to collaborate – 16%

Few organisations reveal about the existence of problems of communication and collaboration on cases.

## Croatia

Lack of enough funding for an effective collaboration between the two types of services to support the collaboration – 60% of respondents, lack of national guidelines on such collaboration – 36%, lack of foreseen collaboration by the national law on gender-based violence – 28%, the existing law and Regulations about privacy (ex. EU GDPR) makes difficulties for collaborate – 12%, centers supporting victims are not willing to collaborate – 4%. As other obstacles were quoted that they have difficulties in conducting psychosocial treatment for perpetrators of domestic violence due to lack of funds for the material costs of treatment, vocational literature, psychodiagnostic means. Lack of funds for supervision, education and participation in professional meetings (budget cuts by the Ministry of Justice and as a result the program of psychosocial treatment of domestic violence offenders was licensed by the Justice Ministry, is no longer participating in funding). Another organization reveals that the team does not have enough information on programs that work with perpetrators of violence in their area so cooperation is almost non-existent, because of lack of time and expertise.

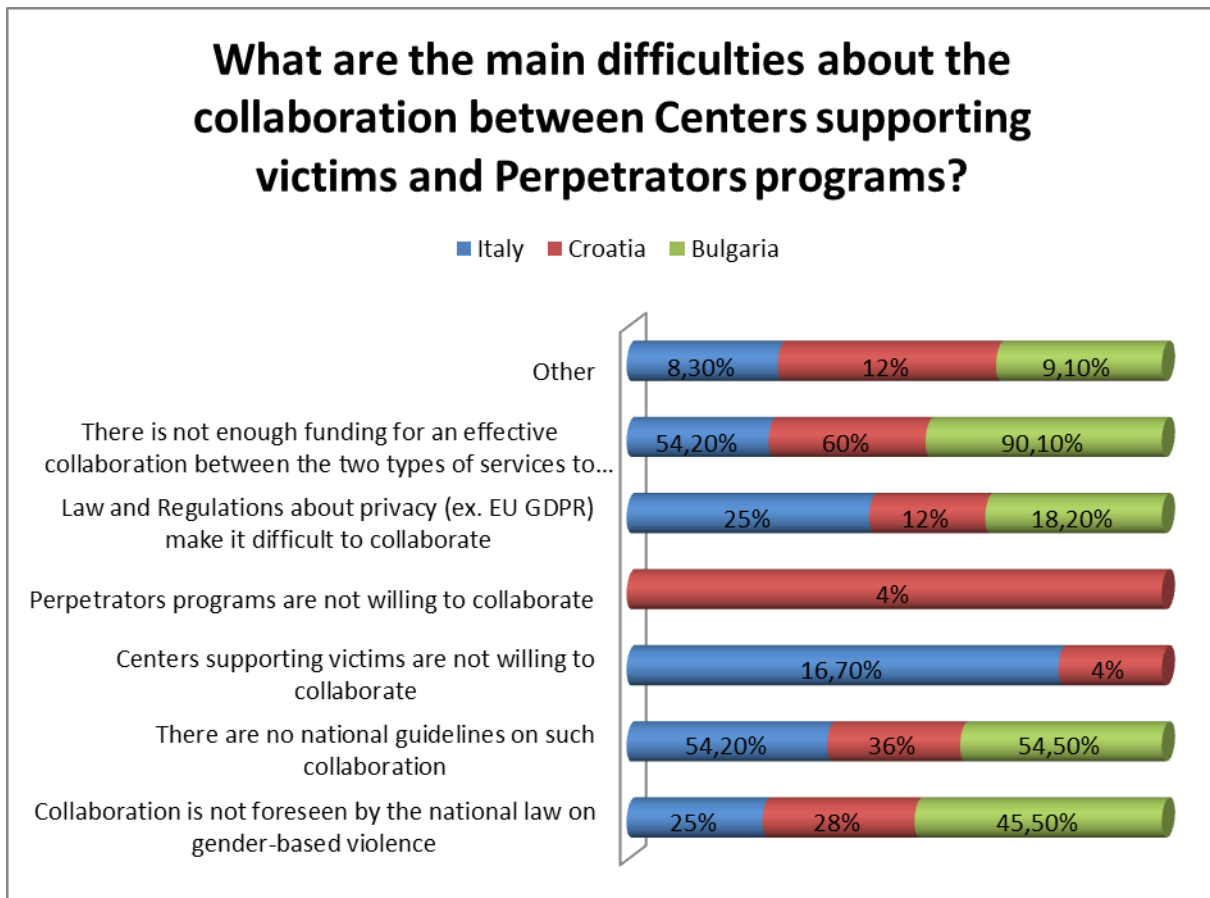
## Bulgaria

91% of the organisations state that there is not enough funding for an effective collaboration between the two types of services to support the collaboration, following by 45% of the statements that collaboration is not foreseen by the national law on gender-based violence and that there are no national guidelines on such collaboration -55%. At next place is the challenge





related to the existing law and regulations about privacy (ex. EU GDPR), which makes cooperation difficult (18% of the respondents).



In all studied countries the main challenges are related to the lack of enough funding for an effective collaboration between the two types of services to support the collaboration (100% of the Bulgarian respondents, 64 % of the Croatian respondents and 54% of the Italian respondents).

The second challenge for the organizations is related to the lack of national guidelines on such collaboration and third challenge is related to the fact that collaboration is not foreseen by the national legislation on gender-based violence.

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REGIONE DEL VENETO



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**BGRF**  
bulgarian gender  
research foundation



Association **NAIA**



COMUNE DI FERRARA

## 2.1.1 BULGARIA: SUMMARY OF COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRES

### FILLED-IN QUESTIONNAIRES – 11

#### 1. PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

- **Positions in the organizations?**

- Managers/Directors of the organizations/agencies - 5
- Managers/Coordinators of the domestic violence program in the organizations/agencies - 2
- Coordinators/facilitators of the perpetrators program in the organizations/agencies - 1
- Coordinators/facilitators of the victims program in the organizations/agencies - 3
- Others (specify)

- **Age?**

- 18–24
- 25–39 - 2
- 40–54 - 9
- 55–64
- 65 and over

- **Gender?**

- Females - 11
- Males
- Other

- **Professional profile?**

- Psychologists/psychotherapists - 8
- Psychiatrists
- Counselors - 1
- Social workers - 2
- Pedagogues
- Social sciences
- Others (specify)

## 2. PROFILE OF THE ORGANIZATIONS/AGENCIES

- **Information about organizations** (*please fill in the blanks*):

- Country: Bulgaria
- Towns: Sofia, Targovishte, Varna, Doupnitsa, Pernik, Haskovo, Dimitrovgrad, Stara Zagora
- Names of the programmes: Center for social rehabilitation and integration, Specialised program for work with perpetrators of domestic violence, Consultative center for people who suffered from domestic violence and perpetrators of violence, Work with perpetrators of violence  
Programme for work with perpetrators, Work with parents perpetrators of domestic violence
- Names of organization running the programmes: Association Naya, Foundation "SOS – families in risk", Knowledge, success, change Non-profit association, Pulse Foundation, Association Center Dinamika, Foundation "H&D Gender perspectives", Foundation "Mission wings", Alliance for Protection from Gender-based violence, Animus Association.
- Names of the persons filling in those forms:
- Email addresses:
- Websites of the organizations:
- The programmes started in the years: 1999, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015

- **Type of organizations/agencies in which respondents work:**

- Exclusively treatment program for perpetrators of domestic violence - 4
- Exclusively program for victims of gender-based violence - 5
- Part of a larger counseling or other social service Centre - 6
- Other (specify) - Center for social rehabilitation and integration run by Association Naya, individual consulting of victims and perpetrators of domestic violence, organization delivering social services for victims of trafficking and violence

- **The organization/agency you work for is:**

- Public Institution
- University
- Research Center
- Private organization/agency
- NGO/foundation/charity - 11
- Other (specify)

- **Please state the main sources of your programme's funding** (*more than one option may be ticked*)

- EU/national/regional/municipal government funds - 9
- Criminal justice system funds
- Civil courts/children protection funds
- Social or health services funds - 2
- Contribution by clients - 1
- Private Funds (donations, etc.) - 3
- Others (specify) - own resources

- **Funding of your work is:**

- Permanent - 4 organisations have other services with permanent funding (delegated budget for the activity Center for social rehabilitation and integration and for other activities);
- Project based - 10 (Program for work with domestic violence perpetrators)
- Case based
- Others (specify)

- **What intervention methods do you mostly use in your organization/agency?** (please check all that apply)

- Individual counseling - 8
- Group treatment - 3
- Both individual and group treatment - 6
- Couples counseling - 4
- Couples groups
- Family counseling - 4
- Other (specify)

- **What are the three main goals of your work?**(*please write*)

1. 1. Providing protection, rehabilitation and integration of the victims of domestic violence; 2. Changing the behavior of perpetrators, mainly males who use violence and harassment against their partners, children, and others, as well as preventing subsequent violent acts; 3. Preventing domestic violence targeting pupils, children and young people.

2. 1. Effective protection and support for victims of gender-based violence; 2. Preventing recurrence of violence, prevention; 3. Increasing sensitivity and intolerance to gender-based violence

3. 1. Providing protection, rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of domestic violence, as well as working with the perpetrators of domestic violence, with a view to preventing domestic violence recurrence through timely provision of quality services to Southwestern Bulgaria; 2. Ensure that older and older victims of child abuse are more secure through more reliable and better-quality services for both victims and perpetrators of violence

4. 1. To protect the rights of victims of violence, trafficking, people at risk and other forms of exploitation, as well as dependent on psychoactive substances and their families, in the direction of social integration and personal realization; 2. To develop and develop specialized programs for the recovery of people, victims and perpetrators of violence; 3. To develop and develop training programs for dealing with people who have been victims of violence, trafficking, people at risk and other forms of exploitation, and addicted to psychoactive substances and their families;

5. 1. Reducing the aggressive behavior of perpetrators of domestic violence; 2. Learning new methods and skills to deal with aggressive behavior; 3. Implementation under a LPAA measure

6. 1. Carrying out crisis intervention; 2. Rehabilitation of the trauma; 3. Mobilizing the personal potential (empowerment) in order to achieve self-sufficiency and full functioning of the injured person.

7. 1. Empowering vulnerable people and groups; 2. Social inclusion and integration; 3. Protection and prevention.

8. 1. Ensure safety of victims and children; 2. Avoid recurrence of violence 3. Affirming the gender- based character of violence and understanding that it is striking expression of unequal treatment

9. 1. Ensure safety of victims and children; 2. Avoid recurrence of violence; 3. Affirming the gender-based character of violence and understanding that it is striking expression of unequal treatment

10. 1. Ending violence; 2. Ensuring the safety of victims in the long run; 3. Rehabilitation of victims of violence and reducing and stop the aggressive behavior of perpetrators

### **3.COLLABORATION BETWEEN CENTERS SUPPORTING VICTIMS AND SERVICES THAT WORK WITH PERPETRATORS**

- **Do you collaborate with other institutions / projects?** (*More than one option may be ticked*)
  - No
  - Police - 11
  - Criminal Court - 4
  - Civil/Family Court - 10
  - Prosecutor - 7
  - Family services - 3
  - Social Services - 10
  - Women's counseling services - 9
  - Women's shelter/refuge - 10
  - Children protection services - 9
  - General practice doctors - 7

- Alcohol or substance abuse treatment - 4
- Emergency units - 3
- Hospitals - 6
- Other (specify):
  
- **Does your organization/agency provide for a *specific* collaboration between Centers supporting victims and Services that work with perpetrators?**
  - Yes, always - 9
  - No
  - Only in some cases - 2
  
- **If yes, what are the tools/procedures/patterns you use?(please check all that apply)**
  - Telephone/email contacts between professionals of the two organizations - 7
  - Team meetings between professionals of the two organizations - 7
  - Operational protocol - 1
  - Joint risk assessment for victim's life - 4
  - Other (specify)
  
- **If the collaboration includes a joint risk assessment for victim's life, do you use a shared instrument for this aim?**
  - No - 9
  - S.A.R.A.
  - D.A.
  - PCL
  - Other (specify) - reply but not specified - 1, risk assessment of the method of Kemble - 1
- **How is collaboration assessed?(please check all that apply)**
  - It is not evaluated - 5
  - Verifying the satisfaction of all operators involved - 1
  - Verifying the decrease in recurrences of violent behavior - 5
  - Noting the decrease in risk for victims - 4
  - Other (specify)
  
- **How does the verifying process – if present - work?**
  - Individually feedback of operators - 4
  - Joint feedback in a structured meeting - 2
  - Other (specify) –individual feed-back of the clients - 1 reply
  
- **Collaboration between Centers supporting victims and Services that work with perpetrators is (or could be) mostly effective for(please check all that apply):**
  - Preventing recurrence of violence - 10
  - Increasing the security of victims of violence - 11



- Increasing the effectiveness of programs for perpetrators - 7
  - Reducing the impact of abuse on victims - 9
  - Reducing the effects of violence on children - 9
  - Increasing the awareness about gender roles - 7
  - Increasing community awareness on gender-based violence -8
  - Improve collaboration with public institutions and law enforcement agencies - 9
  - Other (specify)
- **What are the main difficulties about the collaboration between Centers supporting victims and Perpetrators programs?(please check all that apply)**
    - Collaboration is not foreseen by the national law on gender-based violence - 5
    - There are no national guidelines on such collaboration - 6
    - Centers supporting victims are not willing to collaborate
    - Perpetrators programs are not willing to collaborate
    - Law and Regulations about privacy (ex. EU GDPR) make it difficult to collaborate - 2
    - There is not enough funding for an effective collaboration between the two types of services to support the collaboration – 10
    - Other (specify) – There are not enough available and funded programs for perpetrators of violence - 1

*Thanks for collaboration!*



## 2.1.2 CROATIA: SUMMARY OF COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRES

### FILLED-IN QUESTIONNAIRES - 25

#### 1. PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

- **Positions in the organizations?**

- Managers/Directors of the organizations/agencies – 12
- Managers/Coordinators of the domestic violence program in the organizations/agencies – 4
- Coordinators/facilitators of the perpetrators program in the organizations/agencies – 5
- Coordinators/facilitators of the victims program in the organizations/agencies – 3
- Others (specify) – president of the organization, Psychologist/a practitioner of the psychosocial treatment for perpetrators of domestic violence and a psychologist working with victims of family violence at the shelter Sv. Ana in Rijeka, psychologist and psychotherapist in a family counseling center, the provider of the treatment for perpetrators, Head of Department for Diagnosis and Treatment, Expert Associate in Womens Shelter for Domestic Violence,

- **Age?**

- 18–24
- 25–39 – 8
- 40–54 – 10
- 55–64 – 4
- 65 and over – 3

- **Gender?**

- Females – 22
- Males – 3
- Other

- **Professional profile?**

- Psychologists/psychotherapists – 14
- Psychiatrists
- Counselors – 2
- Social workers – 5
- Pedagogues – 2
- Social sciences – 2
- Others (specify) – 1(Social pedagogue), 1(academic sculptor)

### 3. PROFILE OF THE ORGANIZATIONS/AGENCIES

- **Information about organizations**(*please fill in the blanks*):

- Country: Croatia
- Towns: Osijek, Rijeka, Split, Zadar, Dubrovnik, Šibenik, Bjelovar, Sisak, Slavonski Brod, Varaždin, Čakovec,
- Names of the programmes: psychosocial treatment and support for women and children - victims of family violence and psychosocial treatment for perpetrators of domestic violence; counseling center for victims; Psychosocial treatment for perpetrators of domestic violence “For a family without violence”, Psychosocial treatment of domestic violence perpetrators, Psychosocial treatment of domestic violence perpetrators, Psychosocial treatment for perpetrators of domestic violence, Psychosocial treatment of perpetrators of family violence, Psychosocial treatment for perpetrators of domestic violence, Providing existential protection and psychosocial support for women victims of violence and their children in Vukovar-Syrmia County, Shelter for victims of domestic violence, Counseling and shelter for women and children victims of domestic violence, shelter for victims of domestic violence, Help line and counseling, Womens Shelter for Domestic Violence, Counseling and shelter for women and children victims of domestic violence, shelter for adults and children victims of domestic violence, Reception Center - shelter, counseling center and SOS line for women and children victims of violence, Center for Victims of Sexual Violence, Accommodation and psychosocial treatment for women and children victims of domestic violence, Savjetovalište za žrtve nasilja/Counseling centre for victims of violence
- Names of organization running the programmes: Caritas Home for women and children victims of domestic violence Sv. Ana u Rijeci, NGO Bijelikrug Hrvatske, Caritas of the city of Zadar Archdiocese, Udrugazazaštituobitelji – Rijeka (U.Z.O.R.) – Family assistance association – Rijeka, Society for Psychological Assistance, The Home for children and adult – victims of domestic violence “Duga-Zagreb”, NGO Feniks, NGO "Svijetkvalitete", B.a.B.e. Be active. Be emancipated,"Iris" Bjelovar NGO,Womens center Adela, The Center for Professional Rehabilitation Osijek, Dom za djecu i odrasle žrtve obiteljskog nasilja “Duga-Zagreb” (The Home for children and adult – victims of domestic violence “Duga-Zagreb), Blue phone, Clinic for the Protection of Children and Young People in Zagreb, Udruga Brod, U.Z.O.R, Home for victims of domestic violence “Utičište Sv. Nikola”, Ženska pomoć sada, Ženska soba – the Center for sexual rights,

Home for victims of domestic violence “Safe house”, SOS Rijeka – centar za nenasilje i ljudska prava/SOS Rijeka – centre for nonviolence and human rights

- Names of the persons filling in those forms \*:
- Email addresses:
- Websites of the organizations:
- The programmes started in the years: 1993, 2005. (as part of Center for social services), - 2007. Founding of present organization, 2004, 2009, 2008, 2019, 2000,: Help Line in 1991.; free counseling “Open door” in 1997, 2002, 1998, 2010, ongoing program from 2014

*\* you are not obligated to state your personal information*

- **Type of organizations/agencies in which respondents work:**

- Exclusively treatment program for perpetrators of domestic violence – 3
- Exclusively program for victims of gender-based violence – 10
- Part of a larger counseling or other social service Centre – 3
- Other (specify) an organization that has a counseling center for victims and has a program for work with perpetrators, other: a programme for perpetrators with awareness-raising and educational activities - NGO that provides preventative and advisory psychological assistance to citizens of all ages, an organization which provides programs for victims of domestic violence and which provides treatment for perpetrators of domestic violence, an organization that has a counseling center for victims and has a program for work with perpetrators; Family Counseling Caritas of the Archdiocese of Zadar; Organization runs both perpetrators program AND counseling & shelter for women victims, The Home for children and adult – victims of domestic violence “Duga-Zagreb”, a physical person who carries out the treatment for perpetrators, a health institution that deals with the diagnosis and treatment of psycho-traumatized children, an organization conducting a program of treatment for perpetrators of violence and a program for victims of violence,

- **The organization/agency you work for is:**

- Public Institution – 8
- University
- Research Center
- Private organization/agency
- NGO/foundation/charity – 16

- Other (specify) – religious organization, physical person (expert on her own), Help-line,
- **Please state the *main sources of your programme's funding* (more than one option may be ticked)**
  - EU/national/regional/municipal government funds – 16
  - Criminal justice system funds – 9
  - Civil courts/children protection funds -1
  - Social or health services funds – 3
  - Contribution by clients
  - Private Funds (donations, etc.) – 4
  - Others (specify) – the city of Osijek and Osječko-baranjska county, payment by number of accommodation users, contract with the competent ministry, state budget, the local authority units, the Međimurje County and the competent Ministry,
- **Funding of your work is:**
  - Permanent – 11
  - Project based – 8
  - Case based – 7
  - Others (specify) – payment by the number of users of the accommodation
- **What intervention methods do you mostly use in your organization/agency? (please check all that apply)**
  - Individual counseling – 17
  - Group treatment – 10
  - Both individual and group treatment – 18
  - Couples counseling – 3
  - Couples groups
  - Family counseling – 6
  - Other (specify) – daily hospital
- **What are the three main goals of your work? (please write)**
  1. 1.Prevention of risk behavior  
2.Identification of disorders  
3.psychosocial assistance
  2. 1.to provide care for mothers, women and children victims of domestic violence  
2.work with perpetrators of domestic violence  
3. a happy child and a strengthened family in the community

3.
  - 1.to prevent further violent behavior
  - 2.to achieve positive changes in the behavior of perpetrators of domestic violence
  3. the protection of victims
  
4.
  1. To stop violent behavior of perpetrators and protecting victims
  2. Taking responsibility for violent behavior by the perpetrator
  3. Resocializing the perpetrators of violence; adopting views on inadmissibility and harm that violent behavior can have; emotional control and control of your behavior; adopting communicative skills and nonviolent skills for conflict resolution
  
5.
  1. Stopping violent behavior, prevention of repeating violent
  2. Developing insight and taking responsibility for one's violent behavior
  3. Learning of non-violent communication, social skills, better self-control
  
6.
  1. To stop physical violence and decrease other types of violent behavior.
  2. To obtain an insight into one's own violent behavior and take responsibility for it.
  3. To learn self-control and social skills to replace violent behavior with non-violent behavior.
  
7.
  - 1.protect the victim
  - 2.to stop repeating domestic violence
  - 3.increasing community awareness on violence
  
8.
  - 1.to successfully finish the treatment
  2. that there are no recidivist
  3. to help and achieve self-help
  
9.
  1. To stop and prevent future violent behavior
  2. To enable perpetrator to gain insight into his own violent behavior and to accept responsibility for that behavior
  3. To establish a better self-control over emotions and behavior of perpetrator
  4. To improve perpetrator's communication and social skills
  5. To help perpetrator to review and change the attitudes and beliefs about partner (male-female) relationships as the basis of his/her behavior
  
10.
  1. To complete the default program
  2. To keep track of the perpetrator for a while after the finished program
  3. To prevent further recidivism
  
11.
  1. To provide existential protection and psychosocial support for women victims of violence and their children
  2. To increase awareness and to contribute to changes in attitudes and behaviour as regards the issue of domestic violence

3. To provide legal assistance in any proceedings related to domestic violence to women victims of violence
12.
  1. Providing of immediate crisis help and protection, secured housing and psychosocial support, advice and counselling related to acute situations, health care, child care, legal services.
  2. Empowerment, help and support for victims of domestic violence.
  3. Promotion of human rights (woman and children rights who are victims of domestic violence)
13.
  1. The security and protection of victims of domestic violence
  2. The empowerment of victims of domestic violence
  3. To make changes in society, by changing attitudes on family violence
14.
  1. To provide accommodation for victims of domestic violence (women and children)
  2. To empower women for a life without violence, learning, and boosting parental compensation
  3. To provide psychosocial assistance to women and children victims of domestic violence
15.
  1. For victims of domestic violence provide housing, nutrition, social support, psychosocial treatment and support in carrying out daily activities
  2. Assist victims of domestic violence in order to abandon the shelter and participate in the local community
  3. By organizing preventive activities reduce the occurrence of domestic violence
16.
  1. To provide safety for victims of domestic violence and their children.
  2. To provide psychosocial support in the crisis.
  3. To support and empower survivors so they can live independent life free from violence.
17.
  1. develop competences for more effective, productive and more enjoyable living for children, youth and adults
  2. the development of mental health in an environment oriented towards sustainable development
  3. through public funds and media, to promote the activities of the Association
18.
  1. Diagnosis and treatment of children and adolescents
  2. Scientific-research and publishing activities
  3. Education of experts
19.
  1. Providing safe accommodation to women and children victims of domestic violence



2. Empower women to take over control of their own lives through psycho-social treatment and through getting acquainted with the legal possibilities of exercising their rights
3. Full physical and psychological recovery of women and children of victims of domestic violence and economic empowerment of women victims of violence
20.
  1. the protection and assistance for victims of domestic violence
  2. to empower victims of domestic violence
  3. sensitizing the public about the issue of violence against women and domestic violence
21.
  1. To provide protection and security for our victims
  2. To psychosocial treatment, overcoming trauma
  3. To help achieve an independent life
22.
  1. To reduce the tolerance of domestic violence and violence against women
  2. To provide free accommodation services, free counseling (psychological, social and legal)
  3. To establish cooperation with the institutions with which the victim comes into contact
23.
  1. Providing support to persons who survived sexual violence with the goal of achieving and maintaining their well-being
  2. To provide education to civil servants in order to adequately provide information and support to persons who survived sexual violence
  3. To raise awareness in the general public and lobby for changes in the legal regulations and practices related to sexual violence
24.
  1. Providing accommodation, care and psychosocial assistance to victims of domestic violence and helping to achieve the preconditions for an independent life of victims
  2. Implementation of awareness-raising activities on problems of domestic violence in the local and wider community
  3. Work based on expertise, confidentiality, availability, dedication and comprehensive and sustainable assistance
25.
  1. supporting victims of violence through providing free psychological and legal counselling
  2. promoting human rights and raising awareness
  3. lobbying for positive changes in the system for supporting victims of violence



### 3. COLLABORATION BETWEEN CENTERS SUPPORTING VICTIMS AND SERVICES THAT WORK WITH PERPETRATORS

- **Do you collaborate with other institutions / projects?** *(More than one option may be ticked)*
  - No
  - Police – 23
  - Criminal Court – 18
  - Civil/Family Court - 18
  - Prosecutor – 13
  - Family services – 16
  - Social Services – 23
  - Women's counseling services – 15
  - Women's shelter/refuge – 18
  - Children protection services – 18
  - General practice doctors – 17
  - Alcohol or substance abuse treatment – 9
  - Emergency units – 12
  - Hospitals – 13
  - Other (specify): we collaborate with all institutions if necessary, Probation service, schools, kindergartens, educational institutions, state administration offices, civil society organizations, CES, HZMO, HZZO, NZZJZ, commissions, committees, social welfare homes, policy makers, ministries, and others, other NGOs that promote human rights
  
- **Does your organization/agency provide for a *specific* collaboration between Centers supporting victims and Services that work with perpetrators?**
  - Yes, always – 4
  - No – 8
  - Only in some cases – 13
  
- **If yes, what are the tools/procedures/patterns you use?** *(please check all that apply)*
  - Telephone/email contacts between professionals of the two organizations – 16
  - Team meetings between professionals of the two organizations – 5
  - Operational protocol – 2
  - Joint risk assessment for victim's life – 1
  - Other (specify) – it is performed within the same facility, but on two different locations, 1 (N/A)
  
- **If the collaboration includes a joint risk assessment for victim's life, do you use a shared instrument for this aim?**

- No – 12
  - S.A.R.A.
  - D.A.
  - PCL
  - Other (specify) – individual assessment of victim needs, N/A,
- **How is collaboration assessed?***(please check all that apply)*
    - It is not evaluated – 14
    - Verifying the satisfaction of all operators involved – 1
    - Verifying the decrease in recurrences of violent behavior – 4
    - Noting the decrease in risk for victims – 1
    - Other (specify) – weekly meetings to assess the implementation and effectiveness of strategies, N/A
  - **How does the verifying process – if present - work?**
    - Individually feedback of operators – 6
    - Joint feedback in a structured meeting
    - Other (specify) – using specific instruments - following the client for the next 6 months, N/A
  - **Collaboration between Centers supporting victims and Services that work with perpetrators is (or could be) mostly effective for***(please check all that apply):*
    - Preventing recurrence of violence – 20
    - Increasing the security of victims of violence - 19
    - Increasing the effectiveness of programs for perpetrators – 16
    - Reducing the impact of abuse on victims – 12
    - Reducing the effects of violence on children – 13
    - Increasing the awareness about gender roles – 8
    - Increasing community awareness on gender-based violence – 9
    - Improve collaboration with public institutions and law enforcement agencies – 18
    - Other (specify) – 1 (N/A)
  - **What are the main difficulties about the collaboration between Centers supporting victims and Perpetrators programs?***(please check all that apply)*
    - Collaboration is not foreseen by the national law on gender-based violence – 7
    - There are no national guidelines on such collaboration – 9
    - Centers supporting victims are not willing to collaborate – 1 (some of them, not all)
    - Perpetrators programs are not willing to collaborate – 1
    - Law and Regulations about privacy (ex. EU GDPR) make it difficult to collaborate – 3
    - There is not enough funding for an effective collaboration between the two types of services to support the collaboration – 15
    - Other (specify) – in our organization we have difficulties in conducting psychosocial treatment for perpetrators of domestic violence because we do not have enough funds for

the material costs of treatment, vocational literature, psychodiagnostic means. We do not have the funds for supervision, education and participation in professional meetings since the Ministry of Justice has made a decision about drastically reducing the cost of the treatment for the convicted person. The local community, after the program of psychosocial treatment of domestic violence offenders was licensed by the Justice Ministry, is no longer participating in funding,

1 (N/A), We do not have enough information on programs that work with perpetrators of violence in our area so cooperation is almost non-existent, lack of time and expertise,

*Thanks for collaboration!*



REGIONE DEL VENETO



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BGRF  
bulgarian gender  
research foundation



Association NAIA



COMUNE DI FERRARA

## 2.1.3 ITALY: SUMMARY OF COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRES

### FILLED-IN QUESTIONNAIRES - 24

#### 1. PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

- **Positions in the organizations?**

- Managers/Directors of the organizations/agencies - 3
- Managers/Coordinators of the domestic violence program in the organizations/agencies
- Coordinators/facilitators of the perpetrators program in the organizations/agencies - 15
- Coordinators/facilitators of the victims program in the organizations/agencies - 4
- Others (specify) – the whole team - 1, psychologist of a violence service - 1

- **Age?**

- 18–24
- 25–39 - 9
- 40–54 - 12
- 55–64 - 3
- 65 and over

- **Gender?**

- Females - 15
- Males - 9
- Other

- **Professional profile?**

- Psychologists/psychotherapists - 15
- Psychiatrists
- Counselors - 1
- Social workers - 3
- Pedagogues - 2
- Social sciences - 1
- Others (specify) - Lawyer, criminologist (counsellor in training) - 1, expert professional counselor with a degree in psychological sciences and techniques - 1

#### 4. PROFILE OF THE ORGANIZATIONS/AGENCIES

- **Information about organizations** (*please fill in the blanks*):

- Country: Italy
- Towns: Trento, Firenze, Sassari, Castelleone, Montebelluna, Castelfranco Veneto, Verona, Ferrara, Torino, Pordenone Udine, Bassano del Grappa, Genova, Padova, Ravenna, Piacenza, Venezia, Biella, Foggia
- Names of the programmes: A.L.F.I.D. Onlus, CAM, CAM - Centro di Ascolto Uomini Maltrattanti Nord Sardegna: Servizio per la presa in carico di uomini autori di violenza, Cam sezione di Cremona, Cambiamento Maschile, Centro Antiviolenza Nilde, Centro Antiviolenza P.e.t.r.a., Centro Antiviolenza Stella Antares, Centro Ascolto uomini Maltrattanti di Ferrara, Centro d'Ascolto del Disagio Maschile e Prevenzione della Violenza alle Donne, Centro di ascolto uomini, CENTRO DONNE CONTRO LA VIOLENZA CATIA FRANCI E NICOLETTA LIVI BACCI, Centro per l'ascolto e il trattamento rieducativo di uomini autori di violenza domestica e di genere, Centro per non subire violenza Onlus, Gruppo R, Lato Oscuro, MUOVITI Mai più uomini violent, PRESIDIO CRIMINOLOGICO TERRITORIALE, Servizio di Consulenza per Uomini Autori di Violenza e Stalking, Servizio Protezione Sociale e Centro Antiviolenza, équipe del Centro Antiviolenza, Spam (Supporto Psicologico Adulti Maltrattanti), Spazio di Ascolto per Uomini che Agiscono Violenza: Non agire Violenza scegli il Cambiamento, SUM Servizio Uomini Maltrattanti, Uomini oltre la violenza
- Names of organization running the programmes: Associazione Ares, Paviol (Percorsi anti-violenza), cooperativa sociale Iside, Cam sezione di Cremona, Centro Ascolto uomini Maltrattanti di Ferrara, Centro di Ascolto Uomini Maltrattanti (CAM) Firenze, ASSOCIAZIONE ARTEMISIA, Impegno donna, White Dove, Centro per non subire violenza Onlus, Una casa per l'uomo - s.c.s. – 2, Gruppo R s.c.s – 2, CIPM EMILIA, L'Istrice Aps, Libra Società Cooperativa Sociale, Municipality of Sassari, CAM Nord Sardegna Onlus, Ass. Cerchio degli Uomini APS, A.L.F.I.D. Onlus, Municipality of Venezia, Municipality of Verona – 2
- Names of the persons filling in those forms \*:
- Email addresses:
- Websites of the organizations:
- The programmes started in the years: 1982, 1983, 1991, 1994, 2004, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016

*\* you are not obligated to state your personal information*

- **Type of organizations/agencies in which respondents work:**

- Exclusively treatment program for perpetrators of domestic violence - 8
  - Exclusively program for victims of gender-based violence - 3
  - Part of a larger counseling or other social service Centre - 7
  - Other (specify) an organization that has a counseling center for victims and has a program for work with perpetrators - 5, other: a programme for perpetrators with awareness-raising and educational activities - 1
- **The organization/agency you work for is:**
    - Public Institution - 4
    - University
    - Research Center
    - Private organization/agency - 1
    - NGO/foundation/charity - 19
    - Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- **Please state the *main sources* of your programme's funding (*more than one option may be ticked*)**
    - EU/national/regional/municipal government funds - 23
    - Criminal justice system funds - 1
    - Civil courts/children protection funds
    - Social or health services funds - 2
    - Contribution by clients - 4
    - Private Funds (donations, etc.) - 9
    - Others (specify) - own resources - 1
- **Funding of your work is:**
    - Permanent - 6
    - Project based - 17
    - Case based
    - Others (specify) - public contract renewed every 2 years - 1
- **What intervention methods do you mostly use in your organization/agency? (*please check all that apply*)**
    - Individual counseling - 7
    - Group treatment – 5
    - Both individual and group treatment - 14
    - Couples counseling - 1
    - Couples groups -
    - Family counseling
    - Other (specify) - individual treatment – 5, legal counseling – 1, self-help groups – 1,



- **What are the three main goals of your work? (please write)**

1. Help couples in crisis; 2. Parenting support and family mediation; 3. Treatment and support in case of domestic violence
- 1.Safety of the victim; 2. Interruption of violence 3. Social change
- 1.Interruption of violence; 2. Prevention of recidivism; 3. Secondary protection of women and children
- 1.Accountability of the perpetrator; 2. understanding of the pain caused and felt; 3. Decision not to use violence to manage conflicts anymore
- 1.Interrupt violent behaviors and mistreatments against women and children and prevent recidivism; 2. Create an adequate environment for a proper assessment of the risk related to the particular situation, also with the goal to provide safety measures for the victims; 3. Give male perpetrators a place where they can discuss about their behaviors and about the management of aggressiveness and rage in intimate relationships.
- 1.Helping women go out of violence situations; 2. Give legal advice; 3. Prevention activities
- 1.Help women victims gain awareness of their violence situation; 2. Asses risks; 3. Build a personalized safety plan
- 1.Safety of women and children; 2 interruption of violence; 3 deconstruction of toxic masculinity models
- 1.Acknowledgment of the damage done; 2. Accountability; 3. Relational autonomy
1. Interrupt violent behaviors; 2. Indirect protection of victims; 3. Foster personal change
- 1.Prevention and combat of violence in interpersonal relationships (in particular GBV and violence against children and adolescents, adults (male and female) who were victims of violence in their childhood/adolescence; 2. Consulting service for the local network of educational social and health services, and to police forces; 3. Promotion of activities of awareness-raising, cultural change and prevention of violence.
1. Interruption of any form of violence; 2. Safety of the victims of violence; 3. Awareness-raising and scientific research on this phenomenon
- 1.Provide services to support women in their journey out of violence; 2. awareness-raising actions about gender-based violence; 3. prevention interventions in schools



14. 1. Assistance; 2. Psychological and legal support; 3. Helping women go out of violence situations

15. 1. Safety of women and children; 2. Accountability of male perpetrators; 3 improvement of intimate relationships

16. 1. Protection of the woman; 2. intervention methodology to foster male change; 3 participation to the network of services

17. 1. Primary prevention of violence against women and children; 2 territorial awareness-raising and training activities; 3. Prevention of recidivism

18. Gain: 1. Awareness; 2. New strategies; 3. Behavioral and cognitive change

19. 1. Provide accommodation and protection/empowerment projects for the women victims of violence; 2. Territorial network; 3 awareness-raising actions in the territory

20. 1. Psychological and therapeutic treatment of male perpetrators; 2. Promotion of a new culture that recognizes out loud violence in relationships; 3 proper training of professionals

21. 1. Safety of the victims (both women and children); 2. Interruption of violence; 3. Foster a change in male perpetrators (by strengthening metacognitive abilities and offering alternatives to violent behavior)

22. 1. Interrupt violent behaviors and mistreatments against women and children and prevent recidivism; 2. Create an adequate environment for a proper assessment of the risk related to the particular situation, also with the goal to provide safety measures for the victims; 3. Give male perpetrators a place where they can discuss about their behaviors and about the management of aggressiveness and rage in intimate relationships.

23. 1. Safety of women and children; 2. Accountability by the male perpetrator; 3. Change path to avoid recidivism

24. 1. Provide services to support women in their journey out of violence; 2. Build practices to contrast gender-based violence; 3. Making the women victim the key player in her journey out of violence

### 3. COLLABORATION BETWEEN CENTERS SUPPORTING VICTIMS AND SERVICES THAT WORK WITH PERPETRATORS

- **Do you collaborate with other institutions / projects?** *(More than one option may be ticked)*
  - No
  - Police - 20
  - Criminal Court - 17
  - Civil/Family Court - 12
  - Prosecutor - 11
  - Family services - 15
  - Social Services - 24
  - Women's counseling services - 21
  - Women's shelter/refuge - 21
  - Children protection services - 17
  - General practice doctors - 7
  - Alcohol or substance abuse treatment - 14
  - Emergency units - 10
  - Hospitals - 6
  - Other (specify): schools – 1, all the entities and institution in the network in the Turin area - 1
  
- **Does your organization/agency provide for a *specific* collaboration between Centers supporting victims and Services that work with perpetrators?**
  - Yes, always - 14
  - No - 1
  - Only in some cases - 9
  
- **If yes, what are the tools/procedures/patterns you use?** *(please check all that apply)*
  - Telephone/email contacts between professionals of the two organizations - 20
  - Team meetings between professionals of the two organizations - 15
  - Operational protocol - 4
  - Joint risk assessment for victim's life - 10
  - Other (specify) - working on the collaboration on the interviews with the partners of the perpetrators – 1, joint awareness-raising projects in schools – 1, shearing of opinions on general topics and specific contacts with each anti-violence center -1, joint activities in schools and in the territory -1, the collaboration is in development - 1
  
- **If the collaboration includes a joint risk assessment for victim's life, do you use a shared instrument for this aim?**
  - No - 13
  - S.A.R.A. - 8

- D.A. - 1
- PCL
- Other (specify) - checklist "risk indicators in mistreatment situations" – 2, clinical assessment – 1, ODARA (waiting for specific training) - 1
  
- **How is collaboration assessed?** *(please check all that apply)*
  - It is not evaluated - 9
  - Verifying the satisfaction of all operators involved - 6
  - Verifying the decrease in recurrences of violent behavior - 5
  - Noting the decrease in risk for victims - 6
  - Other (specify) - weekly meetings to assess the implementation and effectiveness of strategies - 1
  
- **How does the verifying process – if present - work?**
  - Individually feedback of operators - 3
  - Joint feedback in a structured meeting - 9
  - Other (specify) - using specific instruments -1
  
- **Collaboration between Centers supporting victims and Services that work with perpetrators is (or could be) mostly effective for** *(please check all that apply):*
  - Preventing recurrence of violence - 19
  - Increasing the security of victims of violence - 22
  - Increasing the effectiveness of programs for perpetrators - 16
  - Reducing the impact of abuse on victims - 13
  - Reducing the effects of violence on children
  - Increasing the awareness about gender roles - 9
  - Increasing community awareness on gender-based violence - 10
  - Improve collaboration with public institutions and law enforcement agencies - 12
  - Other (specify)
  
- **What are the main difficulties about the collaboration between Centers supporting victims and Perpetrators programs?** *(please check all that apply)*
  - Collaboration is not foreseen by the national law on gender-based violence - 6
  - There are no national guidelines on such collaboration - 13
  - Centers supporting victims are not willing to collaborate - 4
  - Perpetrators programs are not willing to collaborate
  - Law and Regulations about privacy (ex. EU GDPR) make it difficult to collaborate - 6
  - There is not enough funding for an effective collaboration between the two types of services to support the collaboration - 13
  - Other (specify)- Problems of communication and collaboration on cases, no difficulty. Excellent collaboration, the methodology adopted by both parties does not include direct

collaboration on individual cases, no difficulty since we both belong to the area of social services

*Thanks for collaboration!*



## 2.2 Comparative Study on National working models in Italy, Croatia and Bulgaria

Implementing partner: BGRF

### 1. Common understanding on main notions and definitions. Role of Human Rights standards.

- The main notions and definitions on VAW, GBV and Domestic violence are based on the definitions and notions contained in regional standards and universal standards of Human Rights and against VAW: the Istanbul convention and other CoE standards and documents, the CEDAW Convention, the EU standards. In Italy these references and connections to the Istanbul Convention are the strongest as they first ratified it, less strong are the links in Croatia which ratified relatively recently the IC and the formal reference is not existent for Bulgaria where a painful process of rejection of the IC took place.

According to Article 3 of the Council of Europe Convention on the prevention and combating of violence against of women and domestic violence"<sup>4</sup> (Istanbul, 7 April 2011, in force since August 2014):

Violence against women" is "... a violation of human rights and a form of discrimination against women and shall mean all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life"

Domestic violence" is "...all acts of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence that occur within the family or domestic unit or between former or current spouses or partners, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim"

Violence against women based on gender" as "...any violence directed against a woman as such, or affecting women disproportionately" , meaning the term "women" even girls under the age of 18

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/istanbul-convention/text-of-the-convention>

and with the term "gender" the set of "...roles, behaviors, activities and socially constructed attributes that a given society considers appropriate for women and men".

Despite the fact that Bulgaria has only signed the IC, there is agreement, like in the other countries about the main definitions given and among the NGOs and other operators from partner countries on these terms. It is translated in practice also in the work on programmes for protection of victims and programmes for treatment of perpetrators of violence.

**Therefore the provisions of the Istanbul Convention on the work with perpetrators of domestic violence (Art.16)** as a form of prevention and also as part of the services related to those for victims of violence make part of the common denominator of work of the partners on these issues. It is equally valid also for the case of Bulgaria where these programmes, as well as in the other countries, started and are developing according to the principles of the Convention.

**Art. 16 (Preventive intervention and treatment programmes)** states as follows:

1. *Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to set up or support programmes aimed at teaching perpetrators of domestic violence to adopt non-violent behaviour in interpersonal relationships with a view to preventing further violence and changing violent behavioural patterns.*
2. *Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to set up or support treatment programmes aimed at preventing perpetrators, in particular sex offenders, from re-offending.*
3. *In taking the measures referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2, Parties shall ensure that the safety of, support for and the human rights of victims are of primary concern and that, where appropriate, **these programmes are set up and implemented in close co-ordination with specialist support services for victims.***

In this regard, in addition to the concrete provisions of the IC the partners recall the Council of Europe (Recommendation Rec (2002) 5 of the Committee of Ministers on the Protection of Women



against Violence, paragraphs 50 to 53, “Intervention programmes for the perpetrators of violence”), which complements the provisions and state that member Countries should:

- *organize intervention programmes designed to encourage perpetrators of violence to adopt a violence-free pattern of behavior by helping them to become aware of their acts and recognize their responsibility;*
- *provide the perpetrator with the possibility to follow intervention programmes, not as an alternative to sentence, but as an additional measure aiming at preventing violence; participation in such programmes should be offered on a voluntary basis;*
- *consider establishing specialized state-approved intervention Centers for violent men and support Centers initiated by NGOs and associations within the resources available;*
- *ensure co-operation and co-ordination between intervention programmes directed towards men and those dealing with the protection of women.”*

**These are the main notions and principles to which the partners adhere in their work although in the regional standards there are no operational and methodological indications on how to apply these principles and, namely, how to implement this collaboration between the programmes dealing with male perpetrators and those dealing with the prevention of violence and protection of women.**

**The processes and practice in countries, like Italy, show that further development of operational and methodological standards of work with perpetrators, as the current EU project, will contribute to the reporting and compliance with the Istanbul Convention.**

In fact, the information required by GREVIO questionnaire in this regard contains the following questions related to the theme.

*“E. Please provide information on action taken to set up or support programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence as referred to in Article 16, paragraph 1. In particular, please provide details on:*



1. *the overall number of existing programmes, their geographical distribution, the implementing*

*institution/entity/body (prison service, probation service, NGOs, other), their compulsory or voluntary nature, as well as the number of places and the number of perpetrators enrolled annually;*

2. *the measures taken within the framework of these programmes to ensure that the safety of, support for and the human rights of women victims are of primary concern **and that they are implemented in close co-ordination with specialist support services for women victims;***

3. *how a gendered understanding of violence against women has been incorporated in these programmes;*

4. *funding sources and annual amounts for these programmes; and*

5. *measures taken to evaluate their impact.*

*F. Please provide information on action taken to set up or support programmes for sex offenders as referred to in Article 16, paragraph 2.”*

## **2. Legislative and policy solutions in the different countries**

**The legislation and policy in the partner countries regulate the work with perpetrators in different ways and makes the basis, along with main principles of the IC, for further development of methodology and common strategies and practices.**

### **In Italy,**

the principles above were enshrined in the **Law No. 77 of 27 June 2013** afterwards converted in the **Law No. 119 of 15 October 2013** (*Conversion into law, with amendments, of Law Decree No. 93 of 14 August 2013, about Urgent measures about safety and to combat gender violence,*

as well as in the area of civil protection and external administration of provinces), currently in force. It affirms that the support for and the human rights of victims, are of primary concern.

The *Extraordinary Action Plan against Sexual and Gender-based Violence/ 2015- 2017/*, promotes the development and set up, throughout national territory, of actions, based on methodologies consolidated and coherent with specific guidelines, aimed to rehabilitate and support perpetrators of violence behaviors within close relationships, in order to promote their rehabilitation and limit reoffending. The plan provides for territorial agreements and protocols, which may provide coordination procedures between the integrated network formed by the centers supporting women on their paths out of violence and treatment centers for male perpetrators. Training courses for perpetrators may be carried out in the context of formalized collaborations between the centers for male perpetrators and the network of support services for women, through conventions or protocols which provide for procedures for sharing / collecting information and evaluating the effectiveness of the measures to be taken.

*The National strategic plan on men's violence against women 2017-2020* was elaborated by the Department for Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers with a mixed working group with the involved Ministries, of the Conference of Regions, of ANCI (National Association of Italian Municipalities), of Police Forces, of trade unions and of women's associations. The strategic plan is aimed also at preventing recidivism, in particular for sex crimes, stalking and violence in the family through treatment of male perpetrators. As objectives are mentioned allocation of specific resources and definition of purposes, methodology and contents of the programmes, with a definition of the professional profiles of the providers, as well as qualitative and quantitative results. It is provided that the Ministry of Justice will draft a national intervention protocol to identify the most effective treatment methods for incarcerated perpetrators of gender-based and sexual violence in the whole stay in the institution, from admission to release.

### In Croatia,

According to the *Law on Protection against Domestic Violence* (Official Gazette No. 70/17, in force since 1st of January 2018), *domestic violence is physical violence; bodily punishment or other forms of humiliating treatment towards children; psychological violence*

*which caused the victim an insult to her dignity or anxiety; sexual harassment; economic violence as a prohibition or disabling of the use of joint or personal property, disposing of personal income or property gained by personal work or inheritance, disabling employment, deprivation of resources for the maintenance of the common household and child care; neglecting the needs of a person with a disability or an elderly person that causes her anxiety or insults her dignity and thereby causes her physical or mental suffering.*

One of the main novelties of the law is that for the first time people with disabilities and older persons stand out as a particularly vulnerable group, and violence against them is defined as a special form of violence.

We note that there is an Act on the Lifelong Partnership of Persons of the Same Sex (Official Gazette No. 92/14), which lays down the principles on which a life partnership is based, which include equality, mutual respect and dignity, mutual assistance and respect for life partners. The law prohibits any form of violence, as well as any form of discrimination, direct and indirect, based on the established life partnership, sexual orientation and gender identity.

**Domestic violence in Croatia is regulated by the misdemeanor and criminal legislation, in 2015 the criminal offense of "Domestic Violence" was reintroduced, which significantly influenced positively the prosecution. By transposing the EU Directive 2012/29 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, in line with the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, ratified by Croatia, the rights of victims of domestic violence are more comprehensively regulated.**

According to the Law on Protection against domestic violence misdemeanor sanctions for protection against family violence include protective measures, fines, imprisonment and other misdemeanor sanctions prescribed by the law governing offenses. The purpose of misdemeanor sanctions is to protect family members exposed to violence, respect for the legal

system, and to prevent re-perpetration of family violence through appropriate sanctioning of offenders.

The court may impose the following protective measures on the perpetrator of domestic violence, except the safeguards prescribed by the Misdemeanour Act:

1. **compulsory psychosocial treatment**
2. prohibition of approaching, harassment or spying of the victim
3. relocation from the common household
4. compulsory treatment of addiction.

The protective measure of compulsory psychosocial treatment may be imposed on a perpetrator of family violence to eliminate his or her violent behavior or if there is a danger that he or she might be able to repeat violent behavior in the family. The measure may be determined for a period of at least six months.

In accordance with the *Criminal Code of Croatia*, several security measures can be imposed- compulsory psychiatric treatment, compulsory treatment of addiction, **compulsory psychosocial treatment**, prohibition of performing certain duties or activities, ban for usage of motor vehicles, the prohibition of approaching, harassment and detention, removal from the common household, prohibition of access to the Internet and safeguarding full punishment of imprisonment. **The security measure of psycho- social treatment may be pronounced on a perpetrator who committed a criminal offense with the characteristic of violence, if there is a risk of doing the same or similar offense.** The measure shall be **executed in an institution for the enforcement of a prison sentence or a health institution, or a legal entity or a natural person specializing in the removal of violent behavior.** The measure may be prescribed for up to 2 years.

The protective measure of psycho- social treatment for perpetrators of domestic violence is pronounced on the basis of the *Law on Protection against Domestic Violence* (Official Gazette No. 70/17) and is conducted in accordance with the provisions of the *Ordinance on the implementation of the protective measure of compulsory psycho-social*

***treatment (Official Gazette 116/18). The purpose of psycho-social treatment for perpetrators is to prevent further violent behavior of the perpetrator by achieving positive changes in his behavior and to encourage perpetrators to become aware of their violent behavior, to recognize their responsibility and to adopt forms of non- violent behavior. The treatment is carried out in health facilities and with authorized legal or natural persons specializing in the removal of violent behavior. The psycho- social treatment is conducted in health facilities for violent perpetrators who have a positive psychiatric history.***

### ***In Bulgaria,***

The definition of domestic violence and the respective roles of competent authorities for protection of the victims are given in the civil ***Law on Protection from Domestic Violence from 2005/LPDV/*** and the ***Regulation on the Implementation of the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence*** from 2010.

The law comprises protection against almost all forms of interpersonal violence/ IPV/- married persons, formerly married persons, persons in factual cohabitation and persons having a child in common, except in cases of persons in just close intimate relationship. It regulates the measures for protection of victims of domestic violence and the procedure of their implementation, with focus on the rights of the abused person. The law is gender neutral and does not offer specific protection against GBV and VAW. The Law on Protection from Domestic Violence /LPDV/ creates a remedy for victims of domestic violence in Bulgaria, allowing them to apply for protection before the regional court.

The Law defines domestic violence as *any act of physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or economic violence, as well as the attempt of such violence, forced restriction of privacy, personal freedom and personal rights committed against persons who are in relationship, who are or have been in a family relationship or de facto marital cohabitation. Any domestic violence committed in the presence of the child is considered as a mental and emotional abuse.*

*Any person affected from domestic violence can seek protection under this law when the violence is committed by:*

- 1. spouse or former spouse;*
- 2. a person, who is or has been a in de facto marital cohabitation;*
- 3. person with whom they have a child;*
- 4. ascending;*



5. *descending;*
6. *person, with whom there is kinship under lateral line up to the fourth degree included.;*
7. *person, with whom there is or has been in affinity up to the third degree;*
8. *guardian, trustee or adoptive parent;*
9. *ascendant or descendant of the person, with whom they are in a de facto marital cohabitation;*
10. *a person with whom a parent is or has been in a de facto marital cohabitation.*

The procedure for issuing the order for protection may be established at the request of: 1. the injured person, if above 14 years of age or placed under partial guardianship; 2. brother, sister or a person who is in kinship in a straight line with the victim; 3. guardian of the victim; 4. Director of Directorate "Social assistance " when the victim is a minor, is placed under guardianship or is with disabilities. The complaint is submitted in writing and contains a declaration/ affidavit by the victim on the violence committed, if he/she submits the action himself/herself. It is submitted within one month of the domestic violence act.

The judge may order one or more of the measures for protection against domestic violence provided in the LPDV, which are the following:

1. oblige the perpetrator to refrain from committing domestic violence;
2. the removal of the offender from the jointly occupied dwelling for a period determined by the court;
3. ban the offender from approaching the victim, housing, workplaces and places for social contacts and leisure of the victim under terms and conditions determined by the court
4. determining temporarily the domicile of the child at the parent who is victim or the parent who has not committed violence under terms and conditions determined by the court, if it does not contradict the interests of the child. This measure is not taken when there are pending legal cases between parents for custody, for determining the residence of the child or the regime of personal relationships.

5. **obliging the perpetrator of violence to attend specialized programs;**

6. **directing victims to rehabilitation programs.**

Measures under paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 are imposed for a period of three to up to 18 months.

According to the LPDV, **the NGOs which propose services for protection of victims of violence and/ or implement the specialized programmes for perpetrators inform the court in the region they provider services in about their programmes under the law.**

Protection orders are subject to immediate execution. The control over the execution of the prohibition for committing domestic violence, removing the perpetrator from the co-habited home and the prohibition of approaching the victim and the places he/she visits is entrusted with police authorities. In case of a violation, the police arrests the perpetrator and notifies immediately the prosecutor's office. **The violation of domestic violence protection orders is criminalized.**

**In conclusion, there is legislative basis for the services for treatment of perpetrators of violence in the three countries studied. The measure is prescribed by law and obligatory when mandated by the court in Croatia and Bulgaria. There are more explicit requirements for the professionals dealing with the programmes in Italy and Croatia, while in Bulgaria these services are entrusted predominantly within NGOs dealing with protection from DV. There are no clear protocols and methodological guidelines for these programmes in the three countries.**

### **3. Practical implementation of the programmes for treatment of perpetrators- cooperation mechanisms, agreements, protocols. Professional requirements, funding. Relations with NGOs dealing with victims' protection. Monitoring.**

In Italy, according to the above- mentioned plans, *Cabina di regia nazionale* (a National Steering Committee in charge of political planning, coordination , monitoring and verification), appoints **to the Regions and Autonomous Provinces the task of implementing a territorial governance plan**, in order to guarantee the application of *a standardized and simplified system* and maintain *the coordination of all the entities involved in the relevant territory. The purpose is to create a network of the various entities that, in various ways, work to prevent and combat male violence against women: these networks are to be formalized through specific institutional memoranda of understanding: these protocols must be inspired by the principle of private-public partnership and, therefore, all relevant entities must be fully involved.*

**Territorial anti-violence networks** which must guarantee "*the operational connection and the collaboration between all the general and specialized services operating in the field of prevention, protection and combating of male violence against women (anti-*



*violence centers, women's shelters, local social and health services, law enforcement agencies, judiciary, hospitals, other institutional subjects and qualified subjects of the third sector, labour services) ”.*

*It is a positive trend that in Italy the objective of programmes for perpetrators encompasses male violence more broadly, it is about the role of man in the society. This has the aim to influence deeply-rooted cultural models based on patriarchy and the supremacy of a man over a woman.*

**The Centers / programmes for male perpetrators of violence are not specifically indicated as part of the "anti-violence territorial networks"** and, although it is clear the need for a connection / collaboration between the subjects operating in the field of prevention and combating violence, no specific references are made to any collaboration between anti-violence centers and / or services that operate with special programmes.

**There are good practices at regional level** in Italy, like the **Region of Emilia-Romagna, Puglia, Campania, Lazio, Tuscany.**

In the *Regional Law of Emilia –Romagna No. 6 of 27 June 2014* (“*Framework law to support gender quality and combat gender discriminations*”) it is stated: “*The Region, in order to promote the achievement of gender equality as a tool to prevent violence against women, promotes, also in cooperation with local health districts, specific and experimental projects and services for men perpetr*

*ators, with the aim to give them different ways to act in their close relationships without using violence”.* The document goes into detail about intervention goals, preconditions to work with perpetrators, risk assessment, staff training and methodology. **Cooperation with services specialized in the support of women and children is identified as a necessary precondition to work with perpetrators.**

**The role of anti- violence centres** in Italy is a very good practice, these centres representing the first entity that historically started dealing with the phenomenon of male violence against women in a structured and organized manner. The centres initiated and lead by women’s organizations make

an important part of territorial coordination mechanisms and provide information for shadow reports to international and regional mechanisms, namely the recent Shadow Report to GREVIO. The latter identifies also gaps in the implementation, monitoring and control of efficiency of the programmes for perpetrators.

**The anti- violence centres share the ideology and objectives of the specialized centres for treatment of perpetrators of domestic and gender- based violence. *C.A.M. is the first Italian Center* that considered the implementation of specialized programs. It was established in 2009 in the city of Florence and its local branches in Ferrara, Rome, Monteleone, Olbia, Sassari, Cremona, Pistoia and Montecatini. It works through first telephone contact, individual assessment, psycho-educational and follow-up groups, phone contacts with partners victims of violence. It also carries out training and raising-awareness activities, clinical supervision, consultations, and publications on the theme. The Mission of C.A.M., as provided by its Charter, is “...to foster the counter, actions and prevention concerning violence against women and children, through the implementation of treatment programs addressing men perpetrators of violence in close relationships, with a particular focus on fatherhood”.**

**RELIVE – Relazioni Libere dalle Violenze** [Relationships free from violence, Ed.] is a national association born in 2014, which formalized the collaboration between the first 9 Italian Centers for perpetrators of domestic violence, in order to “create and promote a national network to combat gender violence, particularly violence against women”. In particular, Relive has the aim to “foster and implement programmes to prevent domestic violence and to support and treat perpetrators, working in close cooperation and collaboration with victims services. Relive association has currently 21 Centers across various Italian regions.

There are **“National Guidelines for treatment programmes for men perpetrators of violence against women in close relationships”**, which are written by founding Centers and entirely recall the previous Guidelines of Italian Coordination of Treatment Centers for Perpetrators, inspired in turn by European Guidelines of “Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence in Europe – WWP”.

As a methodological suggestion to be noted- ***inclusion, as experts, of representatives from women support services in the executive and advisory boards of perpetrators' programmes.***

**Concerning statistics**, in the period September - November 2018, the IRPPS-CNR (National Research Council-Institute for Research on Population and Social Policies) carried out **a survey on centers and services against violence, including centers for perpetrators operating in Italy.**

The survey reached a total of 59 centers, which altogether provide 76 "access points" (branches) in Italy.

In 2017, a total of 726 men joined the programmes: 56% of them were in a stable relationship; 72% were fathers to minor children; 76% of them had a stable employment ; 71% were Italian. Furthermore, only 39% of them were detainees, 7% were in the care of mental health services and 13% of addiction services.

The majority of the centers offer free services, including telephone helpline, individual and group psychotherapy, parenting support, orientation to local services.

### **In Croatia,**

The Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the ***Rules of procedure in cases of Domestic Violence (2008)***. The Protocol contains a set of precise measures on the treatment and co-operation of competent authorities (police, social welfare centers, educational and health institutions and judicial bodies) involved in the detection and suppression of violence and the provision of assistance and protection to a person exposed to any form of violence in the families. The Protocol pays special attention to the procedure of the competent authorities towards children victims of violence or witnesses of domestic violence.

The Government of the Republic of Croatia passed also the ***Rules of procedure in case of Sexual Violence in 2012***, and this Protocol was implemented in the year 2018. The protocol has been developed to provide immediate, sympathetic, gender and culturally sensitive comprehensive assistance and support from all competent institutions.

**Psycho- social treatment of perpetrators** is carried out with legal or natural persons with whom the ministry responsible for judicial affairs has concluded a contract on the implementation of

protective measures for compulsory psycho-social treatment. Psycho- social treatment provided by legal and physical persons is carried out by a psychiatrist, psychologist, social pedagogist and social worker with at least three years of working experience in the profession and additional training for working with perpetrators of violence, in accordance with the **Standards for the Implementation of the Mandatory Psycho- social Treatment Measures**. The legal entity with which the ministry responsible for judicial affairs shall enter into contract has to have adequate space (individual and group work room, waiting room and sanitary node), which must meet the minimum sanitary-technical and hygienic conditions.

In the Republic of Croatia, the courts imposed a total of 14,932 protective measures in the period from January 2012 - June 2016. Most of them were protective measures of compulsory treatment against addiction and the prohibition of approaching the victim of violence, then come the protective measures of compulsory psycho-social treatment, and protective measures of removal from the apartment. Despite the fact the measure of treatment of perpetrators is imposed often, the problem is the lack of physical and legal persons involved in the implementation of the above mentioned treatment.

**In 2018, the total number of treatment providers was 45, of which legal person who provided the treatment were 9 and physical persons were 36.** It is worrying that some counties still do not have treatment providers. *Since May 2009, Home "Duga-Zagreb" has been approved* for the implementation of psycho- social treatment of domestic violence offenders. This institution carries out the psychosocial treatment of the perpetrator of domestic violence at a separate location of the institution, with the financial support of the City of Zagreb (City Office for Social Welfare and Persons with Disabilities) and in cooperation with the State Attorney's Office and the competent courts.

The situation with **women's NGOs in Croatia** is reported to be not so favourable, the organisations being with limited financial resources, limited number of functioning NGOs and capacity to provide services for victims. Regular state support is missing, as well as cooperation with institutions. of stereotypes by feminist and women's is a lack of political expression and the lack of will to recognize the role and importance of NGOs in combating violence against

women. Therefore they **are not regarded as reliable current partners of those providing specialized treatment of perpetrators.**

In terms of statistics from the Criminal Directorate for the year 2017, psycho- social treatment was conducted with 474 persons, out of which 103 were women. In *the organisation „ Duga- Zagreb“* from 2009 till 15 March 2019 the number of perpetrators involved in the treatment has been 1272. The average age of the perpetrators was 38.96, of which the oldest was 81, and the youngest 15 years.

**Regarding the effectiveness of the treatment, 11.4% of perpetrators successfully completed the treatment and completely adopted non-violent patterns, 22.1% successfully completed the treatment and partially adopted non-violent forms, while 2.9% regularly attended, but did not sufficiently adopt non-violent patterns of behavior.**

### *In Bulgaria,*

**The new regulation of social services is in process** and it will affect in a short term also the specialized services for victims of violence, also in relation to programmes for treatment of perpetrators. According to the existing principles which will be confirmed also in the near future, in order for the services to have support from the state budget, they have to be planned and claimed by the municipalities from the state budget as needed for the community. If allocated, they are called “delegated social services delivered in the community”.

The women’s *NGOs from the Alliance for Protection from GBV* are among the major providers of services for victims of violence – integrated counseling services for victims and their children, crises centres for victims of violence and their children, the latter being supported through the state budget, to the extent possible. **The programmes for perpetrators are not mentioned explicitly as a social service but can be comprised, where existent, into the counseling centres managed by respective organizations. They are regulated in the civil legislation related to protection against domestic violence as one of the mandatory measures for protection against domestic violence, as mentioned above.**

In spite of all services of NGOs available to victims of violence, there is still lack of coherent policies and commitment to regular and adequate funding of activities aimed at prevention and protection from violence. The NGOs bear the burden of providing services and other activities



for prevention and protection without having the regular support of the state and municipalities. Therefore services are missing in many places and they have been under-funded.

The women's NGOs are **initiators and the most reliable elements of the mechanisms for coordinated response** to DV and GBV, which are not existing formally in most places but are based on the existing relations and cooperation with institutions. The coordination mechanisms have not been formalized and followed in practice. In different towns and cities the coordination is at different level and this is reflected also in the implementation of programmes for perpetrators.

The women's NGOs from the Alliance are working on **harmonization of the concept, methodology and protocols for the programmes for perpetrators of DV**. A special telephone number for first contact and consultation is under way.

The programmes for perpetrators of DV are mentioned as a priority in the National programmes for prevention and protection from DV and are **supported partially and on a project basis by the State budget through the Ministry of Justice**.

The main **positive trends** in the field are:- **The programmes for work with perpetrators in Bulgaria are closely connected with the services for protection of victims of DV and GBV. The main operators of the programme are women's NGOs dealing with these services. - The Ministry of Justice supports financially partially the programmes for perpetrators of violence on a project basis.- The methodology and the services provided for perpetrators of violence make part of the programme for training of different specialists under the Academy for Prevention of Violence, established by the Alliance.**

### **Main conclusions from the summary of this part of the mapping of the situation in the three countries:**

The work in Italy is at an advanced stage of cooperation with women's NGOs providing services as part of territorial agreements and protocols. There is clear involvement of the State and local government in the regions. The NGOs proposing the treatment programmes are among the first ones and are organized in active networks.

Croatia has very clear regulatory requirements for the agencies and persons dealing with programmes for perpetrators and strong regulation of the measures for perpetrators in civil and penal law. There is not sufficient coverage in the country with programmes for perpetrators of violence. The women's NGOs and connections of the programmes for WWP with their work for



protection of victims of violence are not an important factor for the development of the programmes.

In Bulgaria we observe the strong link of the programmes for treatment of perpetrators with the work of women's NGOs dealing with victims' protection, and with their educational activities. The Ministry of Justice is involved in financial support for the programmes at project basis.

There is monitoring and statistics kept in relation to programmes for WWP in Italy and Croatia. The ratification of the Istanbul Convention and monitoring by GREVIO will bring further positive results, including driving ahead the work with perpetrators of violence.

*The content of this document represents the views of the author only and is his/her sole responsibility. The European Commission does not accept any responsibility for use that may be made of the information it contains*





## 2.2.1. RESEARCH ON WORKING MODELS AND NATIONAL LEGISLATION IN BULGARIA

### Implementing partner: Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation

#### 1. Introduction

Bulgarian society has a deeply rooted notion of gender difference where there are still traditional gender roles without a real sense of gender inequality. Bulgarian society as a whole still denies the existence of a power imbalance between males and females as well as the prevalence of violence and abuse. Women are silenced by social and cultural norms and endure violence and cruelty in their homes. In the last year and a half over 55 women died/ about 40 only in 2018/ at the hand of their intimate partners or relatives but the protests and declarations against these cases of femicide were silenced by certain conservative circles, even openly by persons in power position. This all happened and was endured in the context of fierce opposition of these circles-political, religious, media circles to the issue of violence against women and to the ratification of Istanbul Convention. The term “gender” and related notions of “gender equality” and “gender-based violence” were rejected, distorted and debased by these political and ideological circles. We note that leading social scientists and women’s rights experts mention the link between the increased number of murdered women and the failed ratification of Istanbul Convention- it is an issue of atmosphere condoning violence against women and impunity for such acts of violence.

Istanbul Convention was introduced in the parliament for ratification in January 2018 and was after that referred to the Constitutional Court for a preliminary ruling on constitutionality in March 2018. For this reason the draft bill for ratification was withdrawn by the Council of Ministers. By the end of July 2018 the Constitutional Court ruled by majority that the Convention was not in compliance with Bulgarian Constitution for reasons of “going against the principle of legal certainty”. Although not being a convincing ruling and not fully in compliance with the Constitution, this decision had a very damaging effect on all the theme for gender equality and the for the fight against violence against women. Therefore Bulgaria remained a signatory of the Istanbul Convention which is currently a political document and not a legally binding instrument.

Every fourth woman in Bulgaria is a victim of domestic violence. More than 70% of women who are being abused at home do not seek help and medical assistance. Between 4 and 10% of the domestic violence victims seek justice, an estimated 900 000 women in Bulgaria suffer from domestic abuse every year. There is a severe lack of adequate support services for victims, and Bulgaria does not fulfil the Council of Europe recommendation of safe accommodation in specialised women’s shelters. Moreover, the absence of specific provisions criminalising

domestic violence and marital rape, until recently, called for reforms in the legal framework to ensure the protection of victims of such violence. *According to the organisation Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE) and based on the FRA EU- wide Survey on VAW launched in 2015.*

All forms of GBV are known in Bulgaria and are encountered- domestic violence/ physical, sexual, psychological, financial/ economic violence/, sexual violence, sexual harassment, early and child marriages, stalking, etc. The main groups of more vulnerable women and girls identified also by work of NGOs are Roma women and girls, women and girls with disabilities, women and girls seeking international protection. As main groups victims of multiple discrimination they were identified through the work of the Alliance for Protection against GBV.

- There is a National Study on Domestic and Gender-Based Violence, conducted and published with the support of the teams of Partners Bulgaria Foundation, Center for the Study of Democracy and Human Rights Academy, Norway: National Study on Domestic and Gender-Based Violence(DGBV) and Elaboration of Victims Support Model (VSM),<sup>5</sup> The results and findings from this study confirm the trends mentioned above, and namely:

- Low levels of awareness and willingness to share GBV
- The reported prevalence is significantly lower than the real occurrence of GBV;
- Women are still more vulnerable in terms of multiple, repetitive and systematic GBV, and Roma women and girls are more vulnerable than the general population;
- The prevention measures are still occasional and dependent on the good will and resources available to specific actors, awareness of GBV victimisation and perpetration is very low;
- The inter-institutional cooperation lacks of well-established and enforced rules, distribution of obligations and mechanisms of communication; its level in different regions of the country varies;

EIGE Gender Equality Index 2017 shows that Bulgaria ranks first in the EU in intensity by accumulation of factors for different forms of violence against women and is last among all countries according to the indicator of effectiveness of response of state institutions, which is also an indication of the exacerbation of the situation in the country. According to Eurobarometer for the same period Bulgaria occupies the “leading” position in the EU concerning gender stereotyping and sexism.<sup>6</sup>

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5 Policy Brief, 2016, available in English at: <http://www.csd.bg/artShow.php?id=17883> and Domestic and Gender-Based Violence: Victims Support Model. (Practical advice for victims and guidelines for work of professionals in the area of domestic and gender-based violence), 2016, available in English at <http://www.csd.bg/artShow.php?id=17885>

6 <https://sofiaglobe.com/2017/11/21/bulgaria-eu-sexism-champion-81-say-a-womans-most-important-job-is-taking-care-of-home-and-family/>

There have not been other prevalence qualitative data and quantitative research data on violence against women in Bulgaria. Data collection on issues of violence against women, including regular research and monitoring and also risk assessment are still problematic in Bulgaria. There are no special studies on programmes for perpetrators of violence.

The trends can be summarized as not so positive at the moment also due to the broader context in the EU and Europe at the moment.

In this context, it is worth mentioning also the negative trends in the field of violence in schools. School violence in the period 2015- 2016- 3043 cases, for 2017- 2018- 3616 cases- *According to statistics of the Ministry of Education*. Violence against teachers is also on a rise- for 2016- 2017 – 220 cases, for 2017- 2018- it amounts to 391 cases.

The role of prevention emerges as one of the main recommendations for remedying to the situation, as well as the increased role and support for NGOs whose effective work and promising practices in the field are an asset and hope. Despite the unfortunate process around the ratification of Istanbul Convention, in the end of 2018 and with the support of women's NGOs, the government and parliament initiated amendments in the Penal Code, providing for increased and strengthened penal protection from domestic violence- with qualifying and aggravating circumstances and with increased penalties. There are no negative attitudes towards the treatment programmes for perpetrators in Bulgaria.

The main provisions concerning the treatment programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence are contained in the Law on Protection from Domestic violence, adopted in April 2005 and are conditioned mainly by directing the perpetrators by the civil court orders for protection to specialized programmes for perpetrators, implemented primarily by NGOs which work for the implementation of the Law. The programmes make part of the services provided by these NGOs; they are separate or part of integrated services provided in cases of DV. Therefore judges and NGOs dealing with DV are the main actors in the field. Of course there is also possibility for voluntary attendance of the programmes for perpetrators but this makes small part of the practice of the service.

## 2. Analysis of the national legislation related to DV and VAW/ GBV

Republic of Bulgaria adhered to the *UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)*, an international act which is in force for Bulgaria since 1982.<sup>7</sup> The country ratified also the Optional Protocol to CEDAW (OP CEDAW) in 2006. According to Article 5 paragraph 4 of the Bulgarian Constitution, the international treaties, duly ratified and entered into force for Bulgaria are obligatory standards and prevail over domestic legislation which contradicts them. General Recommendation 19/92 and GR 35 from 2017 which

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<sup>7</sup> UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm>

represent interpretations of the Convention concerning GBV against women are valid also for Bulgaria.

As party to the OP CEDAW Bulgaria recognizes the validity of the Views of the CEDAW Committee issued under specific cases of violations of the Convention. Three of the major cases of the Committee related to violence against women were issued against Bulgaria- *V.K v. Bulgaria*- a case of domestic violence, *V.P.P. v. Bulgaria*- a case of sexual abuse against a child, and the case of *Isatou Jallow and her child v. Bulgaria*- a case of domestic violence against a woman from Gambia.<sup>8</sup>

Bulgaria is also party since 1992 to the ***European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR)*** which ensures protection also against violence against women, including in some case law against VAW as GBV. Examples of Bulgarian cases which contributed to the practice of the Court in Strasbourg on cases of sexual and domestic violence are *M.C. v. Bulgaria* (2004) and, respectively, *Bevacqua and S. v. Bulgaria* (2008). It is worth mentioning that Bulgaria ratified also the ***Council of Europe Convention on Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse***, also known as “the ***Lanzarote Convention***”.

As a EU country Bulgaria has to fully transpose EU law, like Directive ***2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime***. Notwithstanding the progress in this direction, the rights of adult victims of violence have not been fully addressed yet. Particular attention deserve, according to the Directive, victims with specific protection needs, namely, among them the victims whose relationship to and dependence on the offender make them particularly vulnerable- like victims of human trafficking, gender-based violence, violence in a close relationship, sexual violence. Further below some positive amendments of penal legislation are mentioned.

Pursuant to the signing of ***the Istanbul Convention*** in April 2016, Bulgaria was aiming at its ratification based on the implemented analysis of the legislation and its enforcement, both national analysis and from foreign experts. Unfortunately, as mentioned in the beginning of this report, in the end of July 2018 the Constitutional Court declared the Convention in contradiction with the Constitution. Hopefully this ruling will be reviewed and the government will renew the ratification process.

### **1. Protection by Civil Law**

The definition of domestic violence and the respective roles of competent authorities for protection of the victims are given in the civil ***Law on Protection from Domestic Violence*** –

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<sup>8</sup> All three cases were brought as a result of the training conducted in the framework of the Women's Human Rights Training Institute (WHRTI) - a long- term programme of the BGRF (since 2004) aimed at the training of lawyers on litigation skills in the field of women's rights.



**CIVIL LAW (LPDV** adopted in 2005)<sup>9</sup> and Regulation on the Implementation of the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence<sup>10</sup> from 2010.

In Bulgaria, the law offers direct remedies against domestic violence acts by means of a civil law procedure before civil courts within relatively short timeframes. Authorities cannot act *ex officio* and the launch of the proceedings is very much dependent on the will of the victim to submit a complaint. The law comprises protection against almost all forms of interpersonal violence/ IPV/- married persons, formerly married persons, persons in factual cohabitation and persons having a child in common, except in cases of persons in just close intimate relationship. It regulates the measures for protection of victims of domestic violence and the procedure of their implementation, with focus on the rights of the abused person. The law is gender neutral and does not offer specific protection against GBV and VAW.

The Law on Protection from Domestic Violence /LPDV/ creates a remedy for victims of domestic violence in Bulgaria, allowing them to apply for protection before **the regional court**. **Law Article 2 defines domestic violence as any act of physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or economic violence, as well as the attempt of such violence, forced restriction of privacy, personal freedom and personal rights committed against persons who are in relationship, who are or have been in a family relationship or de facto marital cohabitation. Any domestic violence committed in the presence of the child is considered as a mental and emotional abuse.**

Any person affected from domestic violence can seek protection under this law when the violence is committed by:

1. spouse or former spouse;
2. a person, who is or has been in a de facto marital cohabitation;
3. person with whom they have a child;
4. ascending;
5. descending;
6. person, with whom there is kinship under lateral line up to the fourth degree included;
7. person, with whom there is or has been in affinity up to the third degree;
8. guardian, trustee or adoptive parent;
9. ascendant or descendant of the person, with whom they are in a de facto marital cohabitation;
10. a person with whom a parent is or has been in a de facto marital cohabitation.

The application for protection may be submitted to the court within one month from the act of violence. There is no official form for applying for protection in Bulgaria, but the law regulates

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<sup>9</sup> Law on Protection from Domestic Violence, <http://lex.bg/laws/ldoc/2135501151>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.lex.bg/laws/ldoc/2135684122>

its necessary requisites. Affected persons can also submit complaints to **the police** for adopting measures within the police powers (Art. 4, par. 2, LPDV).

Under the law at the request of the victim **every doctor** is obliged to issue a document to certify in writing the bodily harm identified by him/her or signs of violence. There is no fee for submitting an initial application, but depending on the outcome, the applicant or the defendant pays the costs of the case. Where there is an application for protection, the court must schedule a hearing within thirty days. In cases of direct, immediate or consequent risk to life or health of victims, they can apply for immediate protection, in which the court shall decide within 24 hours in a closed session. The procedure for issuing the order for protection may be established at the request of: 1. the injured person, if above 14 years of age or placed under partial guardianship; 2. brother, sister or a person who is in kinship in a straight line with the victim; 3. guardian of the victim; 4. **Director of Directorate "Social assistance " when the victim is a minor, is placed under guardianship or is with disabilities.** The complaint is submitted in writing and contains a declaration/ affidavit by the victim on the violence committed, if he/she submits the action himself/herself. It is submitted within one month of the domestic violence act.

We note that the obligations of the state authorities to initiate a procedure under the LPDV are valid both for the cases when violence is directed against the child and when the child is witness of DV. According to the law, the child is considered victim in all cases.

- Access to justice under the law is easier for victims because it stipulates that in the absence of other evidence, the court shall issue a protection order based solely on the statement/ affidavit of the victim and the allegations described in the application and relating to domestic violence. Admissible evidence during the proceedings includes acts of Social Assistance Directorates, consulting doctors and psychologists, documents from social service providers, certified copies of written evidence from police and other authorities.

If a protection order is issued, the defendant must pay a fine of 200 to 1,000 leva. The judge may order one or more of the measures for protection against domestic violence provided in the LPDV, which are the following:

1. oblige the perpetrator to refrain from committing domestic violence;
2. the removal of the offender from the jointly occupied dwelling for a period determined by the court;
3. ban the offender from approaching the victim, housing, workplaces and places for social contacts and leisure of the victim under terms and conditions determined by the court
4. determining temporarily the domicile of the child at the parent who is victim or the parent who has not committed violence under terms and conditions determined by the court, if it does not contradict the interests of the child. This measure is not taken when there are pending legal cases between parents for custody, for determining the residence of the child or the regime of personal relationships.
5. **obliging the perpetrator of violence to attend specialized programs;**

## 6. directing victims to rehabilitation programs.

Measures under paragraphs 2.3 and 4 are imposed for a period of three to up to 18 months.

According to the LPDV, the NGOs which propose services for protection of victims of violence and/ or implement the specialized programmes for perpetrators inform the court in the region they provider services in about their programmes under the law.

**Execution of the protection orders** (Art. 20, LPDV): Protection orders are subject to immediate execution; The **control over the execution** of the prohibition for committing domestic violence, removing the perpetrator from the co-habited home and the prohibition of approaching the victim and the places he/she visits is entrusted **with police authorities** (Art. 21, par. 1-2, LPDV). In case of a violation, the police arrest the perpetrator and notify immediately the prosecutor's office (Art. 21, par. 3, LPDV). **The violation of domestic violence protection orders is criminalized.**

According to the Law, the state is also responsible for: the introduction of programs to prevent domestic violence and assist victims, selection and training of personnel in the field of protection from violence; working with individuals and legal entities registered under the Social Assistance Act, and supporting non-profit organizations for activities on prevention and protection in the implementation of the LPDV. Annually, with the State Budget of the Republic of Bulgaria and within the budget of the **Ministry of Justice**, funding for projects of non-profit organizations allocated, in case the projects meet the following thematic requirements - programs for prevention and protection from domestic violence; programs providing assistance to victims of domestic violence; training of professionals who carry out protection under the law; specialized programs for persons who have committed domestic violence, which include social and psychological counselling. (Art. 6 LPDV). Each year the Ministry of Justice announces the funding priorities for the given year of the tender, based on the priorities in the Programme for preventing and combating Domestic Violence, adopted by the Council of Ministers as a matter of principle at yearly basis. For the last 3- 4 years funding for programmes for perpetrators of DV have always been among the priorities of the Ministry of Justice.

The court decision of the first instance court can be appealed before the appellate court and this **appellate court instance** is also responsible for assessing the risk when taking the final decision whether to confirm or repeal the decision.

In accordance with Regulation (EU) 1215/2012 on jurisdiction and the recognition and enforcement of judgments in civil and commercial matters (Recast)<sup>11</sup> and Regulation (EU) 606/2013 on mutual recognition of measures and protection in civil matters, with the amendments of the LPDV since July 2015, Chapter III on mutual recognition of protection

<sup>11</sup> Regulation (EU) 1215/2012 on jurisdiction, recognition and enforcement of judgments in civil and commercial cases, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/bg/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32012R1215&qid=1407743170260&from=DE> .

measures in civil matters is introduced. A person who has a measure of protection stipulated in a country of the European Union, may request issuance of a protection order in the country by the Sofia City Court /Art. 23 of the LPDV/.

The Law on Protection from Domestic violence is a piece of legislation which is largely used by victims of DV in Bulgaria. According to data from police records for 2017, the police have received 2432 court orders for protection for execution. Out of this number 351 are the OFP in Sofia, 49 in Sofia- region, 205 are in Plovdiv, 115 in Plovdiv region, 185 are from Varna, 163 from Burgas, 97- from Stara Zagora and 72 from Pleven. And these are the numbers of the decided cases. The number of the applications for orders for protection varies on the average between 3000 and 3400 a year.

The Regulation on the Implementation of the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence confirms at regulatory level the obligations and tasks of the different state bodies, and especially of **police representatives for the enforcement of the orders for protection**. Furthermore **the social assistance directorates** are supervising the placements of children with the victim or with the non-guilty parent and referral to victim rehabilitation programmes for juveniles, people with limited legal capacity and people with disabilities (Art. 9 of the Regulation).

According to Article 10 of the Regulation, the perpetrator of DV who is obliged by the court order to attend the specialized programme has to attend it in the place and address indicated in the order. In case of non- compliance with this obligation the legal entity implementing the programme has to notify immediately the prosecutor.

When the specialized programmes are mandated and financed through the State budget under projects for the implementation of the LPDV, as mentioned above, it is up to the NGO which implements the project to monitor the implementation of the programme and to publicize related data on the programme.

**2. Protection of victims by Criminal Law:** Protection by criminal law against domestic and gender based violence acts comes to play when the specific acts have reached the gravity to be classified as crimes, e.g. murder, bodily injury, etc.

A manifestation of GBV can be at the same time a criminal offence as per Criminal Code and a DV act as per special non-criminal laws. The two types of legislation have different purposes and provide different means with different procedures; however, the measures under them are compatible, rather than competitive or alternative. The state has to avail itself of them in combination, whereby the non-penal defence has a wider application field.

***The Criminal Code***<sup>12</sup> contains penal provisions and sanctions against the crimes of murder( Article 116) and bodily injuries- severe, medium and trivial/ light bodily injury ( Articles 128-130). Murder of a mother, a father, son or daughter is aggravated murder, as well as bodily injury of a father or a mother. These crimes committed against a minor are always aggravated crimes. Criminal sanctions against sexual violence- for ex. fornication and statutory rape against a person under 14 years old (Article 149- 151) and rape (Article 152) are regulated in a special

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<sup>12</sup> Criminal Code, Наказателен кодекс, Bulgarian version available at [www.lex.bg/laws/ldoc/1589654529](http://www.lex.bg/laws/ldoc/1589654529)



section of the Criminal Code called “Debauchery”. Rape of a female relative of a descending line and rape of a minor girl are aggravated crimes.

Incest - sexual intercourse between relatives of ascendant and descendant line, between siblings and between adopted parents and their children is criminalized as well (Article 154).

Besides these provisions of the Criminal Code, relevant provisions are contained in Chapter IV of the Criminal Code- “Crimes against marriage, the family and youth”. They regulate sanctions against forced marriage, abduction of a female person for the purpose of a forced marriage; sanctions against factual cohabitation with minors under the marriageable age of 16 years and against facilitating such cohabitation.

In the review of the penal legislation it is worth mentioning the provision of Article 296 of the Criminal Code which contains sanctions for the non- compliance with the orders for protection against domestic violence issued by the courts, including the European order for protection. The punishment is imprisonment from 3 to 5 years or a fine up to 5 000 leva.

According to data from the Prosecutor’s Office of RB statistics, in 2016 – 278 criminal prosecutions were initiated, and in 2017 – 280. For the two years respectively, the first instance prosecutor’s offices have issued 107 refusals to open pre-trial procedure on claims for crimes under Article 296, Para. 1 CC in 2016 and 93 refusals in 2017.

Depending on how the criminal responsibility is realized the crimes under Bulgarian law are divided into publicly prosecuted crimes, or crimes of general nature- the majority of crimes, and privately prosecuted crimes or crimes of private nature- a smaller portion of crimes in the Code. For the first category the public attorney is in charge of prosecution, for the second type of crimes prosecution is triggered by private complaint of the victim who plays the role of private prosecutor.

Important amendments enhancing criminal responsibility for domestic violence mainly were introduced recently in the Criminal Code.<sup>13</sup> The changes are in the following direction:

- developing an additional qualifying feature “in the conditions of DV” which will provide grounds for graver punishment for the most important crimes against a person (homicide, coercion to suicide, premeditated infliction of bodily harm, coercion, threat); systemic exercise of DV as a model of behaviour is needed in order to apply this qualification/ it means in over two instances/;

- incrimination of the systematic stalking;
- removing the premeditated moderate gravity bodily harm inflicted in the conditions of domestic violence by an ascendant or descendant relative, spouse, sibling, from the scope of acts that are punishable upon plaint by the victim and defining it as a criminal offence of general nature;

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<sup>13</sup> Amendments in the CC in force since 26 February 2019

- widening the scope of the protection by means of criminal law and increasing the punishment for coercion to marriage and cohabitation;
  - When the crime of Article 296 paragraph 1 CC- non- compliance with the order for protection issued by the court is perpetrated again, the punishment is imprisonment from 1 to 5 years/ (Article 296 paragraph 4).
- amendments and addenda to other laws<sup>13</sup>, to guarantee the right of a victim with specific needs of protection to be informed about the decisions to impose and modify detention orders, arrest or release from the prison of the perpetrator on any ground.

Criminal procedure and the rights of the victims are regulated in the *Code of Penal Procedure*<sup>14</sup> (CPP) from 2006. Under this Code victims, including victims of different forms of violence and human trafficking, are granted a series of rights. Despite fragmented improvements of the status of victims also in line with Directive 2012/29, the regulation in this field still leaves to desire. The improvements are mainly in the field of the rights of the minor victims, the situation of adult victims and specifically of victims of GBV has not been regulated according to the EU law yet. It is worth mentioning the orders which may be issued by **the criminal court** and containing ban for the accused to approach the victim. At the proposal of the prosecutor with consent of the victim or at the request of the victim, the court may prohibit the accused from directly approaching the victim during the whole procedure, from establishing any contact with the accused, including by phone, fax, e- mail and mail, from visiting certain places on the territory where the victims resides and which are visited by the victim. / Article 67 of the CPP/. The request is considered immediately by the court.

The professionals at the Prosecutor's Office (prosecutors and investigators) are bound by an act of Methodological Guidelines – Guidelines for the organisation of the work of the PRB on files and pre-trial procedures, initiated upon receiving information about DV, murder threat and violations of orders for protection against DV. The Guidelines are intended for establishing a uniform mechanism of PRB's reaction in the case of indications of DV and murder threat, including when it is a gender-based crime. The Guidelines were endorsed with an Order by the Prosecutor General of 30.04.2018 and provide for: 1) the actions of the prosecutor's office when the information is received; 2) the circumstances that must be established; 3) the requirements for prosecutor's intervention in an already initiated/opened pre-trial procedure; 4) interaction with other institutions and organisational measures. In view of the leading/decision making role of the prosecutor in the pre-trial phase and when carrying out preliminary checks, the provisions of the Guidelines are binding for the authorities of the Ministry of Interior, who carry out investigations or preliminary checks upon prosecutor's instruction.

The EU law related to granting protection for the victims, including from GBV and DV acts, has been transposed in the national law as follows:

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<sup>14</sup> Code of Penal Procedure, Наказателно- процесуален кодекс, available in Bulgarian at [www.lex.bg/laws/ldoc/2135512224](http://www.lex.bg/laws/ldoc/2135512224)



- **Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and the Council** for establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, through:

- Adding to the rights of the victim in the pre-trial procedure the right to receive translations of the ordinances for termination and closure of the criminal prosecution if they have no command of Bulgarian language (Article 75 of the Code of Penal Procedure);
- Establishing the possibility to interview a witness with specific needs via videoconference (Article 39 CPP);
  
- Introducing the rule for interviewing a minor and adolescent witness provided there are measures in place to avoid his/her contact with the defendant (Article 140 CPP);
- Providing a procedural possibility for establishing specific needs of a witness by means of expertise (Article 144, Para. 3 CPP).

There is a new piece of legislation explicitly on social services in Bulgaria- *the Law on Social services, adopted in March 2019* and which will enter into force from 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2020.<sup>15</sup> The matter on social services is currently still regulated in the *Law on social assistance*<sup>16</sup> from 1999, along with issues of social assistance. The provision of specialized social services for victims of different forms of violence is not explicitly and not fully regulated. The programmes for perpetrators of violence are not explicitly regulated as services.

The new Law on Social Services creates some important divisions of the social services, namely the division into generally accessible and specialized services. The services for victims of violence, as well as the programmes for perpetrators will fall within the category of specialized services.

The financing of the services according to the new law follows the main lines and principles of the Law on Social assistance- the sources are the state budget, the municipal budgets and private sources.

In accordance with Bulgarian legislation, providers of social services in the country are: the state; municipalities; physical persons of Bulgarian nationality, registered under the Commercial Law, and legal entities (trade companies, cooperative societies, non-profit legal entities (NGOs). Generally providers of social services are divided into two categories: public providers – the state and/or the municipalities (or their structures and units), and the so called private providers. If private providers – both physical persons and legal entities, Bulgarian or foreign, intend to deliver social services they are obligated to register with the Social Assistance Agency, and in cases when they offer services to children under the age of 18 they need to be additionally licensed.

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<sup>15</sup> Law on Social Services, Закон за социалните услуги- available in Bulgarian at <https://lex.bg/laws/ldoc/2137191914>

<sup>16</sup> Law on social assistance, Закон за социално подпомагане, available in Bulgarian at [www.lex.bg/laws/ldoc/2134405633](http://www.lex.bg/laws/ldoc/2134405633)

The social services in the country are decentralized and the municipality is the body which initiates the development of specific types of social services on a local level on the basis of preliminary studies and analysis of the needs in the community. The management of the social services is entrusted to the mayors of the municipalities, who in turn may announce competitions/tenders for provision of social services from external suppliers. They are registered in the Agency for Social assistance. Currently, the register contains a total of over 30 non-governmental organizations providing social services in support of the victims. Around 25 organizations are registered to provide residential care services, and around 10 for counselling services.<sup>17</sup> The latter are also those providing treatment of perpetrators of violence through specialized programmes.

The social services claimed by municipalities as needed for their respective communities and which are approved by the government for financing through the central budget, are called “delegated social services delivered in the community”.

The types of social services provided in general to the citizens are provided for in the Regulation for application of the Social Assistance Act. The main community-based social services related to support and protection from violence and gender- based violence include Centre for social rehabilitation and integration; Centre for social support; Crisis Centre for victims of violence. Therefore according to the acting normative framework at the moment the “Crisis Center” is the sole specialized service delegated by the state and designed for women victims of domestic violence and human trafficking. The programmes for perpetrators are not mentioned but can be comprised, where existent, into the centres for rehabilitation and integration managed by respective organizations.

The non-profit organizations, duly registered for the protection of domestic violence victims in Bulgaria offer services, partly supported by the state such as one - stop centres, counselling, legal support, telephone lines, rehabilitation and empowerment centres, specialised programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence and programmes for recovery of the victims.

Services for children in the context of domestic violence exist but no services targeted specifically at mothers and children victims. Yet there are no shelters for victims, fully supported and run by the State, except for trafficking cases. Services are not yet available in rural areas and not run in all local languages, besides Bulgarian. State funded child protection services are available, as well as crèches, with limited space in bigger towns. Some NGOs provide on project basis mobile services for prevention of domestic violence for people living in the small settlements.

In spite of all above listed services of NGOs available to victims of violence, there is still lack of coherent policies and commitment to regular and adequate funding of activities aimed at prevention and protection from violence. The NGOs bear the burden of providing services and

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<sup>17</sup> Ref. based on information from: G. Tisheva and A. Nikolova - Monitoring report on SGBV in the context of international protection in Bulgaria- A study implemented for the UNHCR- Sofia

other activities for prevention and protection without having the regular support of the state and municipalities. Therefore services are missing in many places and they have been underfunded.

**In summary, the programmes for perpetrators are not listed explicitly among the social services. They are regulated in the civil legislation related to protection against domestic violence, as mentioned above. These programmes are not regulated in criminal law in Bulgaria.**

**There is no special statistics to assess court practice in the field of the special programmes, and no evaluation of the programmes so far.**

Some shortcomings and suggestions for changes with relation to legislation and policy and in connection with programmes for perpetrators are as follows:

**- Regarding programmes for perpetrators it is important to be officially recognized and supported by the state on a regular principle and financially/ with preserving the priority financing of services for victims/.**

- **The ratification of the Istanbul Convention is missing also for providing the main principles and tools for further regulating the specialized programmes for perpetrators of violence.**
- **There is need for further strengthening the civil and penal protection against DV and other forms of GBV, for strengthening equality legislation.**
- **Ensuring support and financing for services for victims of violence and all related services.**
- **Recognition and ensuring support for women's NGOs in Bulgaria**
- **Continuous education and training, international networking, also in the field of programmes and services for perpetrators.**
- **Specific gap in penal legislation should be tackled- despite the provision of Article 296 of the CC, the non- compliance of the aggressor with the mandatory court order to attend specialized programmes has not entailed prosecution of the latter. The implementation of the law should be ensured in practice.**
- **For the civil courts- they should be encouraged to issue orders for protection with a measure for attendance of the specialized programmes, as currently in many instances they abstain to do so in cases where children are involved. The court**

**apparently in such cases would not like to influence the result of the legal case for child custody and visitation, by “sparing” the aggressor as parent.**

### **3. Highlights of existing policy framework and responses of NGOs related to the theme. Analysis of prevention activities and good practices**

Since 2011, women's NGOs in Bulgaria started developing programmes for treatment of perpetrators based on the models developed in Europe and in the USA, mainly the Duluth model. The most active NGOs in developing this practice were BGRF, Demetra Association- Burgas and Open door association- Pleven. Both individual and group counselling were developed in the three locations- Sofia/ and also in the branch of BGRF in Haskovo/ Dimitrovgrad/, Burgas and Pleven. The three NGOs are active members of the Alliance for Protection against GBV established in 2009.<sup>18</sup> Gradually, other programmes were developed in the centres of the Alliance in the different towns and also by other NGOs outside the Alliance. Most of the programmes are located in the towns where the Alliance for Protection against GBV works and they are based in the good practice of combining individual and group work. The programmes were elaborated by the NGOs, initially by the first three NGOs under specific projects and later, all NGOs developed their programmes which have a common ideology. The Association NAYA, also member of the Alliance, developed an interesting model of programmes for perpetrators based on worthwhile cooperation with local police. Since all NGOs provide interdisciplinary support and counselling and also shelter for women victims, the programmes for perpetrators of violence are based on the link of these programmes with programmes for protection of victims and with the potential results and impact of the programmes on the safety of women victims. **This makes the programmes in compliance also with the Istanbul Convention despite the fact the Convention was not ratified by Bulgaria.** Such programmes in compliance with the principle of the Convention are predominantly the programmes of the NGOs from the Alliance and some other women's NGOs dealing with VAW which were inspired by similar models.

**We note that the BGRF and then the Alliance have long standing partnership with the Advocates for HR from Minnesota. They transferred their experience and models for coordinated community response and work with perpetrators since an early stage- since 1997- 98 with continuous partnership also after the adoption of the LPDV in 2005. Therefore European models but also the ideology of the Deluth model has been the main inspiration for Bulgarian NGOs.**

Another good practice is that the theory, the methodology and the services provided for perpetrators of violence make part of the programme for training of different specialists under

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<sup>18</sup> Since the beginning of 2014 up to now, according to data from the Alliance for Protection from Gender- based violence- a registered network of 11 NGOs providing services for victims all over the country, over 6 500 women sought protection from the NGOs members of the Alliance; over 1200 women and their children were placed in the crises centres of the organisations of the Alliance and over 1400 applications for orders for protection were lodged by victims of violence under the LPDV with the support of these NGOs.

the Academy for Prevention of Violence, established by the Alliance. This is a training programme of the Alliance.

The women's NGOs are initiators and the most reliable elements of the mechanisms for coordinated response to DV and GBV, which do not exist formally in most places but are based on the existing relations and cooperation with institutions. The coordination is mentioned in the regulatory framework for violence but has not been formalized and followed in practice. In different towns and cities the coordination is at different level and this is reflected also in the implementation of programmes for perpetrators.

The programmes rely on human resources and capacity building by NGOs. It has to be mentioned that the treatment programmes are not specialized for specific target groups; they are developed for the general population.

Part of the referral system is the hotlines which exist so far mainly for support of victims, including lines for children victims of abuse. Important services for protection against violence, including for situation of and at risk at national level are the national helplines. The State Agency for Child Protection and the Ministry of Interior through the Directorate "National System 112" work together in receiving and processing the signals and information about children on the Single European number 112 /SES/ and the National Child Hotline 116 111 /NTLD/. The National Child Hotline 116 111 of the SACP supports SES 112 of the Ministry of the Interior in the provision of specialized care for children through counselling, information, psychological support and crisis intervention for children at risk (neglect, victims of abuse, abandonment, intentions for suicide in a state of emotional distress); in assistance to take timely measures of protection; information and promotion of existing services for children and families; in calls in which the caller (child, parent, teacher and/or another adult) share of problems associated with child/children not requiring urgent intervention, as well as for other cases, which fall within the functions of the State Agency for Child Protection.

The Alliance for Protection against GBV and Animus Association have hotlines for victims of GBV, the Alliance line being specialized as a telephone line 24/ 7 for victims of DV on the territory. It is number 080011977 and it is a free national line. The more general telephone line for victims of violence of Animus Association is 080018676.

The perpetrators of DV are referred by the court to the NGOs which have such programmes, in cases of such measure included by the court in the order for protection. In addition to mandatory referral, the referral can be done by other organizations and institutions. Voluntary attendance is also a case and there are good examples in the organizations where the voluntary sessions bring promising results and have positive effect for non- reoffending. There are not yet specialized telephones lines for perpetrators of DV, there are projects of the Alliance in course of implementation where such lines will be experimented.



There are good practices of the Alliance members with regard to communities of persons seeking international protection- we would like to mention the initiatives of the Alliance for Protection against GBV and the UN HCR – Sofia for research and monitoring the situation on SGBV but also conducting information sessions with groups of women and groups of men from different communities. These sessions which started in 2016 will be established as good practice as they reveal attitudes, concerns and individual cases in need of intervention and support by women's NGOs. It is important to note that 6 sessions were conducted with men in the centres for persons seeking international protection in Sofia and Harmanli/South Bulgaria/. It was a very worthwhile initiative which revealed the need to work also with such groups of men in group and individual sessions. They faced the same problems with additional stereotyping as foreigners and from other religions, all challenges which should be tackled in specific work with them.

The Alliance members identified also the need for special approach also in cases of Roma perpetrators of violence and such opportunities have to be created in their communities.

Finally, an important initiative which the Alliance started since 2012- 2013 is the Black Sea Academy for Prevention of Violence. It aims at building the skills of different professionals for improving and strengthening their awareness and work in the field of Gender- Based Violence. The main goal of the Black Sea Academy is to develop and present training programs for GBV specialization for building and upgrading the skills of the specialists-social workers, psychologists, lawyers, policemen, magistrates and other experts who in their practice work with the problems of GBV. The Black Sea academy is designed for training for professionals in Bulgaria and in the near future will develop and deliver courses also for professionals from other countries. The training duration is 6 months to 1 year minimum or until the acquisition of the necessary knowledge and skills. The training is conducted on the basis of a training programme, validated by the Alliance for protection against GBV. The training sessions are conducted in training centers in the Black Sea cities in Bulgaria - Burgas and Varna. In addition to that, practical activities are conducted at the centers in the different cities and towns, where the NGO members of the Alliance are situated. The main training elements of the Black sea academy are the following: Modules under the form of seminars and lectures for acquiring specialized knowledge on GBV and consulting. The programme consists of two participatory modules of 5 days each and the rest of the training hours from the curriculum are under the form of e-learning (including training materials, presentations and papers). The Academy is developing also as specialized training sessions implemented by Alliance members. Currently, for example, the Alliance is implementing training sessions in Sofia and Haskovo region on the issue of SGBV in the context of international protection. Until now over 70 representatives of the judiciary were trained, over 80 police representatives  
And over 50 social workers and operators, also related to NGOs. To these numbers we will add the trainees from the special training currently implemented – they will be over 150 participants from different professions and institutions.



**The root causes of aggression and offending and the measures and programmes to tackle this phenomenon are an important element of the programme of the Academy for Prevention of Violence.**



## Annex

### List of member organizations of the Association "Alliance for Protection against Gender Based Violence" and the services they provide

21, Sinchec str., Varna, Bulgaria  
Tel.: +359 52 609 677; +359 888 436 754  
Tel./fax: +359 52 613 830  
33, Vasil Levski bul.  
Sofia 1142, Bulgaria Tel.: +359 2 96353757  
: [bulgarian\\_alliance@mail.bg](mailto:bulgarian_alliance@mail.bg), [office@bgrf.org](mailto:office@bgrf.org),  
[sos@mail.bg](mailto:sos@mail.bg), [sos@ssi.bg](mailto:sos@ssi.bg)  
[www.alliancedv.org](http://www.alliancedv.org)

#### 1. Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation /BGRF/ - Sofia

##### CONTACTS:

33, Vasil Levski blvd.

Sofia 1142, Bulgaria

Phone: +359 2 963 53 57, Mobile: +359 87 9133021

Fax: +359 2 963 53 57

Email : [office@bgrf.org](mailto:office@bgrf.org)

[www.bgrf.org](http://www.bgrf.org)

Contact person: Genoveva Tisheva - Manager and Daniela Gorbounova - Director Legal advice  
The Foundation has branches in Haskovo and Plovdiv and an office in Veliko Tarnovo

9, Pirin str.

Haskovo 6300, Bulgaria

Telephone: +359 38 624 685

e-mail: [bgrfhaskovo@mail.bg](mailto:bgrfhaskovo@mail.bg)

Contact person: Petya Petkova – Manager Branch Haskovo

Services provided: counselling centers for legal and social - psychological services for victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and other forms of gender based violence and for victims of discrimination. Program for working with perpetrators of domestic violence.

Crisis center for women and children victims of violence BGRF - Haskovo - situated in Dimitrovgrad.

#### 2. Women's Association Ekaterina Karavelova - Silistra

##### CONTACTS:

51, Vaptsarov str. fl. 2  
Silistra 7500, Bulgaria  
P.O.B 283  
Tel./Fax: +359 86 820 487  
E-mail: [ceta@mail.bg](mailto:ceta@mail.bg)

Website: [www.ekaravelova.org](http://www.ekaravelova.org)

Contact Person: Hristina Georgieva - Chairwoman

Provided services: counselling center for legal and social - psychological services to individuals, victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and other forms of gender-based violence, child victims of violence. Program for work with perpetrators of domestic violence.

Crisis center for women and children victims of violence.

### 3. Positive skills of the individual in the society Foundation /P.U.L.S/ - Pernik

CONTACTS:

2, Sredets str.

Pernik 2300, Bulgaria

Tel./Fax: +359 76 60 10 10

Email: [pulse.women@gmail.com](mailto:pulse.women@gmail.com)

Contact Person : Mariana Evtimova - board member

Provided services : counselling center for legal and social - psychological services to victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and other forms of gender based violence, child victims of violence. Programme for perpetrators.

Crisis center for women and children victims of violence.

### 4. SOS - Families at Risk Foundation - Varna

CONTACTS:

21, Sinchets str.

Varna 9002, Bulgaria

Phone: +359 52 609 677,

Tel. / Fax: +359 52 613 830

Email: [sos@ssi.bg](mailto:sos@ssi.bg), [sos@mail.bg](mailto:sos@mail.bg)

website: [www.sos-varna.org](http://www.sos-varna.org)

Person contact: Anna Nikolova - Manager

Provided services: counselling center for legal and social - psychological services for victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and other forms of gender based violence, child victims of violence.

Crisis center for women and children victims of violence.

Program for work with perpetrators of domestic violence.

Shelter for victims of human trafficking to the National Commission for fight against Human Traffic.

## 5. H&D Gender Perspectives Foundation – Haskovo and Dimitrovgrad

### CONTACTS:

9, Pirin str.  
Haskovo 6300, Bulgaria  
Telephone: +359 38 624 685  
e-mail: [hdgender@gmail.com](mailto:hdgender@gmail.com)

1, Kliment Ohridski blvd. fl.  
Dimitrovgrad 4600, Bulgaria

Phone: +359 391 2 50 55  
Mobile: +359 878 567 659  
Email: [hdgender@gmail.com](mailto:hdgender@gmail.com)

Provided services: counselling center for legal and social - psychological services to individuals, victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and other forms of gender-based violence. Program for work with perpetrators of domestic violence.  
Crisis center for women and children, victims of violence in Dimitrovgrad, together with BGRF - branch Haskovo.

## 6. Demetra Association - Burgas

### CONTACTS:

102A, Shejnovovo str.  
Burgas 8000, Bulgaria  
Phone: +359 56 81 56 18  
Fax: +359 56 83 66 57; Mob. +359 896 82 15 91  
Website: [http://Demetra - bg.org/index.html](http://Demetra-bg.org/index.html)  
Email: [office@demetra.bg](mailto:office@demetra.bg)  
Contact person: Anna Burieva - Chairperson

Provided services: counselling center for legal and social - psychological services for individuals, victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and other forms of violence, gender and children, victims of violence. Program for work with perpetrators of domestic violence.  
Crisis center for women and children, victims of violence. Crisis center for children affected by violence.  
Two shelters for victims of human trafficking to the National Commission for fight against trafficking in human beings  
New service offered - support center for victims of sexual violence. Work also in Sofia.

## 7. NAIA Association - Targovishte

### CONTACTS:

37, Antim I str.  
Targovishte 7700, Bulgaria  
Phone: +359 6016 28 89  
Fax: +359 601 6 28 89  
Hotline +359 601 6 70 25  
Mobile: +359 879 606 855  
Email: [naia\\_s@abv.bg](mailto:naia_s@abv.bg)  
Webpage: [www.naia.cf](http://www.naia.cf)  
Contact Person: Svetla Sivcheva - Chairperson

Provided services: counselling center for legal and social - psychological services for individuals, victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and other forms of gender based violence, and for children, victims of violence. Program for work with perpetrators of domestic violence as part of the Centre for social integration and rehabilitation.

## 8. Open door Centre Association - Pleven

CONTACTS:  
55, Neophyte Rilski str.  
Pleven 5800, Bulgaria  
Tel./Fax: +359 64 846 713  
Email: [opendoor\\_centre@hotmail.com](mailto:opendoor_centre@hotmail.com)  
Contact Person: Zlatka Macheva - Chairwoman

Provided services: counselling center for legal and social - psychological services to individuals, victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and other forms of gender based violence and children, victims of violence. Program for work with perpetrators of domestic violence. Crisis center for women and children, victims of violence. Contact centre for children, with work with parents in conflict.

## 9. Center Dynamics Association - Ruse

CONTACTS:  
9, Panayot Hitov str.  
Ruse 7012, Bulgaria  
Tel./Fax: +359 82 82 67 70  
Email: [centre\\_dinamika@abv.bg](mailto:centre_dinamika@abv.bg)  
Contact Person: Deana Dimova - Manager

Provided services: counselling center for legal and social - psychological services to individuals, victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and other forms of gender-based violence, and children, victims of violence. Program working with perpetrators of domestic violence.

Crisis center for women victims of violence.

## 10. Knowledge Success Change Association - Dupnitsa

### CONTACTS:

2, Solun str.

Dupnitsa 2600, Bulgaria

Tel.: +359 895 76 22 93

Email: [ksc\\_association@abv.bg](mailto:ksc_association@abv.bg)

Contact Person: Sylvia Ovcharchenska - Chairperson

With a branch in the town of Blagoevgrad

Provided services: counselling center for legal and social - psychological services for individuals, victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and other forms of gender-based violence, and children, victims of violence.

Programme for work with perpetrators. **Operates the telephone line of the Alliance for victims of DV.**

*The content of this document represents the views of the author only and is his/her sole responsibility. The European Commission does not accept any responsibility for use that may be made of the information it contains*



## 2.2.2 RESEARCH ON WORKING MODELS AND NATIONAL LEGISLATION IN CROATIA

**Implementing partner: Dom Duga-Zagreb**

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Domestic violence as a social problem first began to be recorded at the beginning of the 20th century, and the problem of violence against women was first mentioned in the 70s of the last century. We are witnessing that domestic violence is a problem which is present in all societies and affects all groups. Services for victims of domestic violence began to develop slowly at the end of the 19th century, and in our area they started developing in the early 1990s, owing to the feminist movement that began to develop in Croatia in that period. Today we can say that the situation is better, we are witnessing a growing number of services, with the aim of assisting and supporting victims of domestic violence and their psychosocial rehabilitation. However, the access and availability of these services is still unsatisfactory, given the needs of our society. One of the important services for victims of domestic violence, in crisis situations and situations of major escalation of violence, is also safe houses, with the purpose of protecting victims of domestic violence and their psychosocial rehabilitation. The House for children and adult victims of domestic violence “Duga-Zagreb” opened its doors in 2007. It was founded by the City of Zagreb, which recognized the need for this type of service.

Over the last 20 years all of South east Europe, especially the former Yugoslav republics, was marked by turbulent political, economical and cultural transformations. The transitions of these societies was characterized by wars, post conflict crises, transitions from socialist to market economies.

Gender issues were side-lined while national and international attention was focused on the importance of ethnic, regional and religious equality. Issues such as representation of

women and their positions in society had to wait until the issues of nationhood were resolved. In the many former Yugoslav wars, gender identities/roles were extremely polarized, with men perceived as warriors and women as mothers and victims, reinforcing traditional power relations and social and cultural roles and norms (Bamburać, Jusić and Isanović, 2006.).

Authors Rogić-Hadžalić and Kos (2008.) addressed the analysis of normative and phenomenological trends and changes in the field of domestic violence in Croatia, and concluded that legal regulation, without sensitizing the public and experts for this issue, cannot contribute to the prevention of domestic violence. In order for any legal measures to be effective, the recognition of domestic violence as an unacceptable behavior is needed, as is

timely and purposeful social response to violence. It is necessary to build the public's awareness that domestic violence is a problem for all of us, and that reporting it is a responsibility of every citizen. It should be noted that certain forms of violence are intertwined and affect all family members, either directly or indirectly, and become a fertile ground for the emergence of socially deviant forms of behavior within the family. When we think about domestic violence, the first association is physical violence, which is also the most visible, given the visible traces on the victim itself, so the general population and the institutions respond the fastest. However, there are various forms of violence that do not leave visible traces on the victim's body, and the consequences may be more far-reaching for the victim - such as psychological violence or economic. From a victim of domestic violence you will often hear that due to economic dependency and financial control it was not possible to leave the perpetrator. This is a common situation in Croatia, that victims stay with the perpetrator, out of economic and financial dependency, seeing they often don't have a job and don't have the sufficient means to take care of herself and their children.

## 2. MYTHS AND FACTS ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

When people do not have enough information on a particular phenomenon, a specific form of belief is created - a myth. We will look at the most common myths of violence against women, characteristic of our wider cultural environment (Ajduković and Pavleković, 2004.).

**1. Myth: The victim is causing violence. The abused woman asked for it**

**1. Fact: An abuser is causing violence. He is responsible for his actions.**

Based on this belief, often an image is created that the problem is in the victim or there is a cause for the perceived violence or the victims deserves some form of violence. It is often justified by a man's violence, with the explanation that a woman has in some way caused it. It is important to know that there is no justification for the violence, no matter what the victim did, and that the violence behavior is the sole decision of the perpetrator.

**2. Myth: Victims enjoy violence. If that were not the case, you would leave the abuser.**

**2. Fact: No one enjoys being abused.**

Society easily labels women, who remain in violent relationships, in a way that they are considered to be masochists and enjoy the violence. In fact, a woman is more often abused when she wants to leave the relationship and often stays in a violent relationship out of fear for her own life or economic dependence on her partner.

**3. Myth: Domestic violence and violence between marriage partners is their private thing.**

**3. Fact: Domestic violence is a serious social problem.**

Domestic violence is a serious social problem and we are all responsible to respond timely and report violence if we have information about it. Violence among partners is also manifested in the part of increased costs of social life, given the increased use of resources of health, justice, social and other systems in the situations of violence.

**4. Myth: If the victim leaves the abuser the violence will stop.**

**4. Fact: Most victims are in greater danger when they leave the abuser.**

Such a claim states that it is enough just to break the violent relationship and the violence will stop. However, some research has shown that violence is often reported after the emotional relationship is broken.

**5. Myth: Alcohol and drug abuse are the cause of domestic violence.**

**5. Fact: Generally speaking, alcohol and drugs are not the cause for violent behavior.**

The fact is that alcohol and drug abuse can lead to violent behavior, however, violent behavior is a deliberately chosen behavior and a violent person is violent in spite of the drug or alcohol in the body.

**6. Myth: Family abuse occurs only in lower social classes**

**6. Fact: Domestic violence occurs in all social classes.**

Violence is present in all social strata, however, we have a higher dark number in higher levels of society, where shame and fear of reporting is more pronounced. Also, women from higher levels of society still have a more developed social network and support network, so often they do not even address professional services for assistance.

**7. Myth: Women are as violent as men**

**7. Fact: Men are more often the perpetrators of domestic violence**

It should be stressed that both women and men can be violent, but statistically, men often express aggression and aggressive behavior then women, and statistics show that men are more often offenders than women.

**8. Myth: If a man hits a woman, he must be mentally ill**

**8. Fact: Mental illness is not a prerequisite for domestic violence**

Some perpetrators of violence may also be persons with mental illness, but it is important to emphasize how violent behavior is more often a chosen and willing behavior by the offender, and not a result of a mental illness.

**9. Myth: Martial fights are not serious. This happens in every marriage.**

**9. Fact: Marital fights are serious and require the attention of society.**

Once the violence started, it rarely stops without external intervention, which includes the intervention from the police, social welfare and health interventions.

**10. Myth: Children need their father even though he is violent towards their mother. A woman should stay with a violent partner for the good of children.**

**10. Fact: Growing up in such a family, children learn to be violent.**

This is one of the typical beliefs why women stay with a violent partner and do not get the needed support from the environment. A father is an important figure in the children lives, but growing up in a violent environment carries harmful emotional and developmental consequences for children.

### 3. DEFINITIONS OF VIOLENCE

In accordance to the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence (Official Gazette No. 70/17), domestic violence is physical violence; bodily punishment or other forms of humiliating treatment towards children; psychological violence which caused the victim an insult to her dignity or anxiety; sexual harassment; economic violence as a prohibition or disabling of the use of joint or personal property, disposing of personal income or property gained by personal work or inheritance, disabling employment, deprivation of resources for the maintenance of the common household and child care; neglecting the needs of a person with a disability or an elderly person that causes her anxiety or insults her dignity and thereby causes her physical or mental suffering.

In accordance to the report of the House for human rights for the year 2016 (The House for human rights, 2016.), it states that the problems encountered in combating gender-based violence have been repeated for years and it can hardly be concluded that there have been significant changes in this area, despite legal changes. Misdemeanor conduct in which a domestic violence case is prosecuted continues to be conducted in many cases formally, without any detailed involvement in the family problem and the causes of violence. This often results that perpetrators often acknowledge their violent behaviour, refuse their right to appeal, and the

victim does not have the opportunity to portray her side of the story and point to a potential problem with the partner's dependency, any mental problems as well as the need for treatment.

In addition to physical and psychological violence, women in Croatia are often the victims of economic violence most often manifested through the denial of the use of joint property and the inability to access their common home for many years. The only way to determine a common property is through a court proceeding that lasts for many years and does not lead to the desired outcome, since only the joint property is established in that procedure, and the division itself enters into a new procedure.

Also, the report refers to partnership violence in youth relationships, which is increasing nowadays. However, practice does not recognize this type of violence as a separate form but is put under violence among peers, which is not the same category or term.

According to the report of the NGO „Konta“ (Juras, 2010.), whose main activities are focused on the fight for equality of the LGBT population in Croatia, violence and discrimination against sexual and gender minorities are still common in Croatian society. The forms of violence are different, and include psychic, verbal and physical violence. The burning problem is still the fear of victims who do not report the perceived violence due to possible stigmatization of the environment. Members of sexual and gender minorities in a large number of cases are not familiar with their rights or mechanisms to protect these rights. They have no trust in state institutions, especially in the police, whose officials continue to be largely discriminatory against the members of sexual and gender minorities. However, they believe that the shift is visible in this area that victims are increasingly seeking help from non-governmental organizations, are more likely to publicly testify about their experiences, which, however, speaks of increasing openness and the desire for information and struggle for their rights.

#### 4. LEGISLATION

In Croatia, until 2003 there was no special law to protect the victims of domestic violence, but this protection was realized within the existing Criminal Code. In the Family Law,



which came into force in 1999, the term violent behavior in the family was first used and sanctions for violent behavior were predicted. The aforementioned law has led to major changes in the area of domestic violence and sanctioning it, and it served as a medium to prompt the Government to bring the first Family Protection Law in 2003 (Šapina, 2016.).

The Constitution of the Republic of Croatia (Official Gazette No. 56/90, 135/97, 08/89, 113/00, 124/00, 28/01, 41/01, 55/01, 76/10, 85/10, 05/14.) stipulates its obligation to protect human rights, prohibits abuse and discrimination. Pursuant to Article 14, all persons are equal before the law and are guaranteed equal rights and freedoms regardless of race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other belief, national or social origin, property, birth, education, social status or other features, which, among other things, shows a high degree of awareness of the necessity of preventing gender-based discrimination. Article 3 of the Constitution as one of the fundamental values of the constitutional order of the Republic of Croatia prescribes the equality of the sexes. Article 21 guarantees everyone the right to life. Article 22 guarantees the inviolability of freedom and personality. Article 23 prohibits any form of abuse, the protection of dignity and Article 26, equality before the courts and other bodies with public authority. In accordance with Article 62 of the Constitution, the State is obliged to protect maternity, children and young people and to create conditions for a decent life, to provide for care for minors without adequate parental care (Article 63, paragraph 5), and according to Article 64 they are obliged to protect children and helpless people.

Of the international legal instruments that prescribe the need to protect women from violence we should mention the Convention on the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of the Council of Europe, the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the General Recommendation no. 19 of 1992 of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women of 1993, Recommendation Rec (2002) 5 of the Committee of Ministers of Europe, the 1995 Beijing Platform and the Human Rights Resolution 2005 / 41, adopted at the 57th session of

the Human Rights Council on 19 April 2005 (The Ministry for demography, family, youth and social policy, 2017.).

The provisions of the Social Welfare Act (Official Gazette No. 157/13, 152/14, 99/15 and 52/16, 130/17) provide certain forms of assistance to various groups of users, including victims of domestic violence, such as counselling and assistance to the individual in overcoming the difficulties and the creation of conditions for the preservation and development of personal opportunities and responsible relations of the individual towards oneself, the family and society; counselling services and family help in overcoming family difficulties and parents' difficulties in upbringing and child care, and training the family for functioning in their daily lives; psychosocial support services that imply rehabilitation that promotes the development of cognitive, functional, communicative or social skills of users; temporary accommodation in crisis situations up to one year for a child and an adult - victims of domestic violence.

The Family Act (Official Gazette No. 103/15), among other things, protects both adults and children victims of domestic violence. One of the fundamental principles of the Family Law, the principle of equality of women and men, determines that women and men have equal rights and duties in all family-legal relationships, especially in relation to parental care, and that in partnership it is prohibited discrimination against sex and violence against a partner. Furthermore, the principle of solidarity, mutual respect and the support of all family members determines that solidarity is the fundamental principle of family life; all family members must be mutually respectful and assist each other and domestic violence is a particularly serious violation of this principle. The principle of the protection of the well-being and the rights of the child stipulates that courts and public law bodies conducting proceedings directly or indirectly deciding on the rights of the child must first protect the rights of the child and his or her well-being, and the child is entitled to exercise personal relations with both parents, contrary to his well-being. In the Chapter with Measures for the Protection of the Rights and Benefits of Children provide for measures taken by social welfare centers and / or courts in cases where violations of the child's rights and well-being has been violated or their rights, well-being and development are threatened. Furthermore, a special provision on child protection and domestic

violence sets out the obligation of professional workers to carry out counselling that, if they suspect that the rights and well-being

of the child is jeopardized in the family or there is a suspicion of domestic violence, determine the measure for the protection of the child or suggest a court measure to protect the child and urgently initiate the appropriate procedure according to a special regulation regulating the protection from domestic violence. The law also prescribes the conduct of family mediation, in which the parties seek to resolve disputes from family relationships by agreement with one or more family mediators. In cases where, according to the assessment of a social welfare team or a family mediator, it is not possible to have equal participation of spouses in the mediation process, due to family violence, the mediation is not carried out.

Although the problem of violence against women remains marginalized, we are witnessing that public campaigns are becoming more and more powerful, and victims are more open in talking about their experience. More and more services are available to victims of violence, all with the aim of protecting and abandoning the circle of violence.

The problem of domestic violence in Croatia is regulated by the misdemeanor and criminal legislation, and certain positive shifts are also visible.

The moves were made in the Criminal Act (Official Gazette No. 125/11, 144/12, 56/15, 61/15, 101/17, 118/18), when in the last amendment, in 2015, the criminal offense of "Domestic Violence" was reintroduced, which significantly influenced the prosecution of this criminal offense and enabled new legal solutions. Therefore, the possibility of protecting the victim and sanctioning the perpetrator increased. Of course, practice shows that criminal proceedings in Croatia are still too long, victims of violence are often traumatized and victimized during this process, so it is legitimate to question its relevance.

The Criminal Procedure Act (Official Gazette No. 152/08, 76/09, 80/11, 121/11, 91/12, 43/12, 56/13, 145/13, 152/14) and the Law on Courts for youth (Official Gazette 84/11, 143/12, 148/13, 56/15), prescribes a series of measures to protect the security, privacy, personal and family life of witnesses and victims from secondary victimization. The Criminal Procedure Code introduces the victim among the participants in the Special Rights Act prescribed in the separate

chapter of the Criminal Procedure Act. The victim was conceptually defined, taking into account the conceptual definition in international sources and foreign legislation. With the rights belonging to each victim, the Criminal Procedure Act provides special protection for certain categories of victims - children as victims of criminal offenses, victims of criminal offenses against sexual freedom and victims of trafficking.

The Act on Amendments to the Criminal Procedure Act (Official Gazette 152/08, 76/09, 80/11, 121/11, 91/12, 56/13, 145/13, 152/14, 70/17) and the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence (Official Gazette 70/17) transposed Directive 2012/29 / EU of the European Parliament and of the Council from 29 October 2012 on the establishment of minimum standards for the rights, support and protection of victims of criminal offenses and on the replacement of Council Framework Decision 2001/220 / PUP. The transfer of victims' rights from the Victims Rights Directive to national legislation aims at the achievement of an appropriate approach to the victim of violence aimed at preventing her secondary victimization, adequate information of victims about her rights and the care of competent authorities about the rights of victims in procedural actions. By transposing the Directive in line with the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, the rights of victims of domestic violence are comprehensively regulated. By prescribing the catalogue of rights of domestic violence, they will strengthen their procedural position, enable them to actively participate in the procedural actions that the competent authorities undertake to protect and sanction perpetrators and prevent their trauma and secondary victimization in the process.

The new Law on Protection against Domestic Violence (Official Gazette No. 70/17), which was passed in Parliament in July of 2017 and entered into force on January 1st 2018, brings some novelties and you can immediately see that the law is more technical. The novelty of the new law is the fact that for the first time people with disabilities and older persons stand out as a particularly vulnerable group, and violence against them is defined as a special form of violence, where special attention has to be paid. Also, the rights of victims are defined in more detail, as well as the treatment of the institutions. It has to be emphasized that the previous Law was also well written, but its application was very questionable and sporadic.

The Act on Monetary compensation for Victims of Criminal Offenses (Official Gazette, No. 80/08, 27/11) entered into force on the day of accession of the Republic of Croatia to the European Union. The applicable law defines the right to monetary compensation for victims of criminal offenses, the prerequisites and procedure for the exercise of the right to compensation, decision-making bodies and participation in the decision-making process on the right to compensation, and the bodies and procedures applicable in cross-border cases.

The Misdemeanour Law (Official Gazette No. 107/07, 39/13, 157/13, 110/15, 70/17, 118/18) as a general regulation protecting public order, social discipline, social values guaranteed and protected by the Constitution, international law and laws whose protection is not possible without a misdemeanour sanction, on unlawful actions related to domestic violence outside of criminal responsibility, is applied in a subsidiary part of a section that is not regulated by the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence.

The Law on Police Affairs and Authorities (Official Gazette No. 76/09, 92/14) regulates police affairs and police powers that police officers apply to prevent and eliminate dangers and during the conduct of criminal investigations. At the same time, the law also prescribes the co-operation of police with judicial bodies, state bodies, local and regional self-government units, legal persons with public authorities, other bodies, organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and citizens to develop partnerships in preventing and detecting unauthorized behavior and the perpetrator of such forms of behavior. The law furthermore imposes on police officers special care for children, juveniles, elderly and infirm persons, persons with disabilities, victims of criminal offenses and offenses (Articles 14 and 36 of the Act), as well as the obligation to protect the victims of criminal offenses and others persons who are threatened in any way or other persons in connection with criminal proceedings (Article 99 of the Law).

The Witness Protection Act (Official Gazette Nos. 163/03, 18/11, 73/17) lays down the conditions and procedures for providing protection and assistance to the endangered and persons exposed to a serious risk to life, health, bodily integrity, freedom or property of a larger extent for serving in the criminal proceedings for criminal offenses provided in this Law. Measures to



protect the vulnerable persons prescribed by the provisions of the Act are physical and technical protection, displacement, concealment of identity and ownership and change of identity.

The Act on Combating Discrimination (Official Gazette 85/08, 112/12) creates the preconditions for achieving equal opportunities and regulates protection against discrimination based on race, ethnicity, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other belief, national or social background, property status, union membership, education, social status, marital or family status, age, health status, disability, genetic heritage, gender identity, expression or sexual orientation.

The Gender Equality Act (Official Gazette No. 82/08, 69/17) provides for a general prohibition of discrimination based on sex, marital or family status and sexual orientation, introduces a provision that discriminates against unfavourable treatment of women on grounds of pregnancy and maternity lists as well as sexual harassment. The law also includes provisions relating to the application of the principle of gender equality in the field of employment and labour; education; the media's commitment to promoting the development of awareness of the equality of men and women; collecting statistical data, acting as political shifts, and more. At the same time, the Law introduces the obligation to use a workplace name in male and female when deciding on a workplace placement and other decisions on civil servants' rights and obligations and in the field of education (introducing to all educational institutions the obligation to use language standards in male and female in the contents of certificates, diplomas and other documents).

The Act on the Lifelong Partnership of Persons of the Same Sex (Official Gazette No. 92/14) lays down the principles on which a life partnership is based, which include equality, mutual respect and dignity, mutual assistance and respect for life partners. At the same time, the law prohibits any form of violence, as well as any form of discrimination, direct and indirect, based on the established life partnership, sexual orientation and gender identity.

The National Policy for Gender Equality 2011-2015 is the basic strategic document of the Republic of Croatia that is being adopted with the aim of eliminating discrimination against women and establishing real gender equality by implementing equal opportunity policies. The



National Policy for Gender Equality for the period 2011-2015 contained seven key areas, one of which is on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women. The measures targeted to remove all forms of violence against women and improve the status of women victims, improve the system of statistical data management, cross-sector cooperation and education of competent bodies, and raise awareness of the phenomenon and ways of combating gender-based violence. The new National Gender Equality Policy for the period 2017 - 2020, which is under preparation, will also include the area of Removal of Violence against Women.

The National Strategy for Children's Rights in the Republic of Croatia for the period 2014-2020 was adopted by the Government of the Republic of Croatia on September 25, 2014. The purpose of the Strategy is to achieve more effective promotion and protection of children's rights in the Republic of Croatia through the implementation of existing international and national standards in the area of children's rights, promoting a comprehensive and integrative approach to the rights of children. The Strategy represents a multidisciplinary and systematic framework that needs to be integrated into all other national, regional and local documents and plans, as well as immediate action pertaining to children under the Convention on the Rights of the Child. One of the four strategic goals of this document is the elimination of all forms of violence against children, which includes the area of protection against corporal punishment, physical and psychological abuse and testimony of family violence, which implies, inter alia, the realization of the child's right to a non-violent family environment. It also states a timely state support for parents in fulfilling their parental responsibilities and duties, providing early detection mechanisms on violence against children and effective and accessible child support and the necessary interventions and activities for the physical and mental recovery of children exposed to domestic violence including treatment of violent members of their families.

The Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the Rules of procedure in case of Domestic Violence (2008.) in 2005 and its Amendments in 2006. The Protocol contains a set of precise measures on the treatment and co-operation of competent authorities (police, social welfare centers, educational and health institutions and judicial bodies) involved in the detection and suppression of violence and the provision of assistance and protection to a person exposed to

any form of violence in the families. The Protocol pays special attention to the procedure of the competent authorities towards children victims of violence or witnesses of domestic violence.

The Government of the Republic of Croatia passed the Rules of procedure in case of Sexual Violence in 2012, and the new amended and revised document in 2014. The Protocol includes the responsibilities of the competent authorities and other actors involved in the detection and suppression of sexual violence and the provision of assistance and protection to persons exposed to sexual violence, the means and forms of co-operation between the competent authorities, and prescribes action in accordance with the activities of the Protocol. The flow of time resulted in the adoption of new national and international regulations with which the Protocol must be harmonized today. Therefore, a new Protocol, with its foundation and content, derives from the previous Protocol, with the modernization of current regulations

and new available data. This Protocol was implemented in the year 2018. The protocol has been developed to provide immediate, sympathetic, gender and culturally sensitive comprehensive assistance and support from all competent institutions.

The protective measure of psychosocial treatment for perpetrators of domestic violence is pronounced on the basis of the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence (Official Gazette No. 70/17) and is conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Ordinance on the implementation of the protective measure of compulsory psychosocial treatment on (Official Gazette 116/18). The purpose of psychosocial treatment for perpetrators is to prevent further violent behavior of the perpetrator by achieving positive changes in his behavior and to encourage perpetrators to become aware of their violent behavior, to recognize their responsibility and to adopt forms of nonviolent behavior.

## 5. THE PREVALENCE OF VIOLENCE

**According to the Gender Equality Ombudsperson report for the year 2016** (The Gender Equality Ombudsperson, 2017.) the police reported the total of 11,948 persons for misdemeanor offenses of domestic violence, which is 13.2% less than in the same period of 2015

when the police reported on 13.775 persons. However, the majority of such cases remain unrecorded. One of the reasons for not reporting is that women lack trust in the work of institutions, primarily the police, the state attorney's office, and the judiciary.

According to the sex structure of the reported perpetrators of domestic violence in 2016 there were 9,217 men (77%), which is 1,358 or 12.8% less than in 2015, and 2,731 women (23%). The percentages are the same as in 2015. The police arrested a total of 7,561 persons for domestic violence, out of which 84% were men and 16% women. A total of 13,362 persons were harmed, out of which 64% were female and 36% male. Out of the total of 8,182 sanctions issued by the courts for misdemeanor offenses of domestic violence, 2,373 conditional sentences were imposed on men and 521 on women, 728 unconditional jail terms for men and 41 for women, 3,574 fines for men and 945 for women. A total of 3,849 protective measures were proposed, out of which 2,493 protective measures were imposed. The number of reports about criminal offenses among closely related persons still rises. However, it significantly slowed down in comparison to the past reporting period when the rates of violence jumped more than 100% in relation to the previous reporting period.

In 2016, according to the data of the Ministry of the Interior, the total of 2.408 *criminal offences of violence between closely related persons was recorded* (9.5% increase since 2015 when 2.220 were recorded). There were a total of 2.552 victims (which is 7.5% more than in 2015 when there was a total of 2.359 victims). In the total number of victims, 1.948 was women (10% more than in 2015) and 604 men (0,5% less than in 2015).

Out of the total number of 1.648 perpetrators of violence between closely related person, there were 1.519 (92%) men and 129 (8%) of women. **In all criminal offenses between closely related person, men are predominantly perpetrators and women are victims.** In 2016, all 100 perpetrators of criminal offences of rape, sexual intercourse without consent and sexual harassment, were men. Regarding the criminal offense referred to in Article 179a - *Domestic Violence*, a total of 330 criminal offenses were committed by 46 male perpetrators and 3 female perpetrators at the expense of 279 women and 51 men. Compared to 2015, there were no significant differences in numbers.

## **The year 2016 records the highest number of homicide of women in the past 7 years**

(19 between closely related persons, out of which 15 women were killed by men who were their intimate partners - 78%). With the trend of brutalization of violence, i.e. the transition of violence against women and domestic violence from the field of misdemeanor offenses into the field of criminal justice, the increase in the number of murdered women indicates that legal, judicial, media and other educational measures to combat violence against women have not reached desired results. Although somewhat diminished, the trend of arresting both partners during police interventions in domestic violence cases still exists. The Ombudsperson emphasizes that the context and the history of domestic violence are key elements in deciding who the victim and who the perpetrator of the violence is, and all the later decisions of the judicial bodies about the detention of perpetrators, the protective measures, the punishment, depend on it. The police also lose sight of the fact that the victim has the right to necessary self-defense against the attacker and that swearing is sometimes the only 'weapon' victim has. Failures of the competent authorities which often lead to tragic consequences for the victim are that in most cases the courts continue to release domestic violence suspects or defendants, allowing them to replace prison custody with a protective measure, which in certain cases the police are unable to carry out, that they distrust the victim, that there is a misunderstanding of or inability to recognize all forms of domestic violence, primarily verbal, psychological or economic, as well as sexual violence from the Law on Protection against Family Violence.

In 2016, the Ombudsperson continued to point out that violence against women does not only take place in marital and common-law relationships, but that it, to a large extent, includes violence in partner relationships in which the intimate or emotionally involved partners are not or were not the members of the same household. The protection of victims of partner violence has still not found an appropriate and consistent legislative solution. Hence, better legal solutions should be sought that will go in the direction of more effective protection of people in partner relationships in case of violent behavior. Based on the received complaints on partner violence (5 in 2016), it was noted that partner violence characterizes retaliation for reporting on previous violence, coercion and imposed control. In recent years, partner violence is becoming more brutal. In 2016, the Ombudsperson continued to cooperate with the civil society organizations

dealing with the protection of women from partner violence. Until the necessary legislative changes are made, the protection of victims of partner violence is provided in two ways: (1) If a police reports that the violence took place between intimate partners (present or former), with elements of common-law marriage, protection is provided in accordance with the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence, (2), Partner violence should be appropriately sanctioned by applying a misdemeanor provision from the Article 31. of Gender Equality Act, which should be supplemented by authorized prosecutors, sanctions and appropriate protective measures.

In 2016, the number of registered criminal offenses of rape and sexual intercourse without consent continued to rise. There was a 12.5% increase in rape cases and 65.7% in cases of sexual intercourse without consent. In addition, the increase in the mentioned criminal offenses is also noted between closely related persons. In cases of sexual intercourse without consent there was an increase of 220%, out of which 71% was an intercourse between a stepfather and stepdaughter. In the total of 81 registered cases of rape, 34 cases concerned rape between close persons, out of which in 50% the perpetrator was a common-law husband and the victim was his common-law wife, while in 23.5% cases the perpetrator was a brother and the victim was his sister. In relation to the criminal offense of rape committed between close persons, in 50% of cases it was committed between extramarital partners, and in as much as 23.5% of cases between brothers (as perpetrators) and sisters (as victims). The aforementioned data indicate that victims of the sexual intercourse without consent and rape among close persons, in addition to spouses and extramarital (present or former) partners, increasingly become other close persons, especially stepdaughters and sisters.

**According to the Gender Equality Ombudsperson report for the year 2017** (The Gender Equality Ombudsperson, 2018.) the number of complaints increased in comparison to the previous reporting period. The biggest share of complaints is still related to social security issues (30.1%) and labor conditions (22.3%), followed by the area of state administration (18.1%) and mass communication and the media (8.5%). In cases related to the protection of citizens exposed



to physical, psychological and other forms of domestic or partner violence, as well as in public space, protection was sought mostly by (79.6% of cases)<sup>19</sup> and men in 20.4%.

For several years now, the Ombudsperson has highlighted negative trends in the processing cases of violence against women and domestic violence, the result of which are fewer reported cases of domestic violence of misdemeanor nature while, at the same time, the number of criminal offenses of violence against women and domestic violence is increasing, as well as the number of femicide cases in the past two years.

In 2017, the police reported the total of 11.506 persons for misdemeanor offenses of domestic violence, which is 3.7% less than in 2016. According to the sex structure of the reported perpetrators of domestic violence, out of the total number of reported persons, 8.882 were men (335 men or 77% -3.6% less than in 2016) and 2.624 women (107 or 23% or 3.9% less than in 2016) which are identical percentages to those in 2015 and 2016. As for the number of arrested individuals, the police arrested a total of 7,265 persons for domestic violence, of whom 84% were male and 16% female. On the other hand, according to data submitted by the Ministry of Justice, out of the total number of reported perpetrators (11,506 persons), 7,864 men and 2,167 women (10,031 or 87%) were accused, while only 806 (7%) were convicted to an unconditional imprisonment, out of which 761 men and 45 women. All the others, 7,190 persons or 63% were sentenced to fines or suspended jail sentences (of which 5,792 men and 1,398 women), and 3,510 (30%) were either acquitted or the proceedings were suspended or filing with the police did not result in any proceeding.

The analysis of the data received by the Ministry of the Interior (MI) a total of 3,073 criminal offenses with elements of domestic violence were recorded, which is 21% more than in 2016. The aforementioned criminal offenses resulted in hurting 3,275 victims (up 723 more than in 2016). Out of the total number of victims, 2,488 were women (21% more than in 2016) and 787 men (23% more than in 2016). There were 2,046 perpetrators of criminal offenses among close persons, which are 19% more perpetrators than in 2016. Out of the total number of perpetrators of violence among close persons, there were 1,880 (92%) men and 166 (8%)



women. As can be seen from the enclosed figures, there is an average increase of 20% at all levels, while in all criminal offenses the predominant perpetrators among close persons are men. Among perpetrators of criminal offenses against sexual freedom, men are perpetrators in 100% of cases and no women. The Ministry of the Interior data show that, in comparison to 2016, the following **criminal acts increased**: Threat (25%), Bodily Harm (9%), Obtrusive Behavior (20%), and the following **decreased**: Heavy Bodily Harm (9%), Sexual Intercourse without Consent (60%), Rape (26%). Regarding the criminal offense referred to in Article 177a - Domestic Violence, in 554 of these criminal offenses (last year 330) 89 males and 4 female perpetrators committed this crime against 464 women (last year 279 women) and 90 men (last year 51 men). Compared with 2016, the number of this criminal offense is rising, which means that sanctions, prevention, suppression and protection of victims - do not work in practice.

One of the persisting trends is the trend of increasing number of women killed by close persons. The perpetrators were most often men who were close to women or their intimate partners. **In 2017, the total of 18 women were killed** (in 2016 - 19), out of which 15 were killed by closely related men. As we emphasized last year, some of the major causes of transition of violence against women and domestic violence from the field of misdemeanor-legal protection into the area of criminal justice, and then migration from lighter criminal offenses to the more serious ones, are: formal, disorganized and to gender violence insensitive system of victim protection and support; an extremely mild judicial policy toward offenders; the overall inefficiency of implementing protective measures for victims with a low number of adopted measures; the lack of quality and long-lasting programs for the rehabilitation of perpetrators, primarily psychosocial treatment. **Femicide in Croatia accounts for 25-30% of all murders, which is really a worrying percentage.**

In their treatment of domestic violence, police and judiciary rarely take into account the overall context and chronology of violence among family members and they still, in some cases, do not distinguish the act of violence from the victim's right to the necessary defence. Courts regularly release offenders to await trials by imposing mild, mostly conditional sentences or fines, and in many cases avoid the protective measures proposed by the police. Police are often unable to effectively enforce protective measures, particularly because of the strict and

sometimes illogical interpretation of regulations, focusing on victim rather than on perpetrator. In the recent years, the violence (including femicide) between partners has become more brutal. The Ombudsperson regularly acquires data from the Ministry of the Interior about the cases in which the police initiated misdemeanor procedures according to the Article 31. of GEA. There is total of 19 registered misdemeanors for which the police filed a motion, and 22 perpetrators, from which 19 persons were male and 3 persons were female. In conclusion, there has been a decrease in number of misdemeanor offenses according to the Article 31. of GEA and, therefore, new and more effective legal solutions for better protection of persons in the intimate partner relationships have to be found.

During 2017, there has been a certain decrease in the number of registered criminal offenses such as rape and sexual intercourse without consent, committed between closely related persons or in general population. According to data from the Ministry of the Interior, there is a total of 33 recorded criminal offenses of sexual intercourse without consent between close persons (in regard to 83 in 2016), and 25 criminal offenses of rape between close persons (in regard to 34 during 2016) whereby the listed crime offenses were in the most cases committed between spouses (former and present). In regard to overall population, crime offense of sexual intercourse without consent has been registered in 67 cases (decrease by 42%) out of which 49% refers to close persons, and criminal offense of rape has been registered in 61 cases (decrease by 25%) out of which 40% refers to close persons. All the victims were females, and all the perpetrators were males, which indicate that it is a dominant form of gender-based violence. As in the previous years, almost all the coordinators obtained data from the police, the centers for social care and judiciary, and most of them obtained data from the health institutions and judiciary bodies, while in a lesser degree from educational institutions. Almost all the coordinators stated the collaboration with county commissions for gender quality, local self-government units and civil society organizations. However, the meetings on issues of individual cases of domestic violence are still not being held in the majority of counties.

Within the EU project „*Building more effective protection: transforming the system for combating violence against women*“, the Ombudsperson carried out the analysis of the media

reporting about violence against women on the sample of 3,499 articles collected from 5 Internet portals (index.hr, 24sata.hr, jutarnji.hr, vecernji.hr, tportal.hr) in the period of 5 years (1/1/2012 - 12/31/2016). According to the questionnaire with 35 questions, and 150 variables, which the Ombudsperson developed in cooperation with the project partner, the Croatian Journalists' Association, data about each and every article was entered into the SPSS program in order to get statistical data. In this Report we provided only a brief overview of the results of the first phase (statistics) that was completed by the end of 2017. Based on the obtained results and qualitative analysis, the Media Codex about sensitive reporting on cases of violence against women will be drawn in cooperation with journalists and editors-in chief. Conclusions of the quantitative analysis were that one in three articles had a sensationalistic title to draw the reader's attention as if the case of violence against women itself is not a matter of public interest. The perpetrator of violence was the primary focus of the highest percentage of articles and at the same time the perpetrator was quoted in the highest percentage of the texts. Nearly half of the articles about violence against women described their guilt and assumptions. Almost one in ten articles directly or indirectly accused the victim

and described her as guilty or responsible for the violence committed against her. One in ten articles placed violence in the context of jealousy and love triangle or excessive expression of love, minimizing the act of violence, and emphasizing the victim's love for the perpetrator while also using humorous remarks. One third of all the articles published full name and surname of the victim or perpetrator and one in five articles contained the address where a violent act was committed.

**In accordance with the report of the Ombudsperson for disabled persons for the year 2016** (The Ombudsperson for disabled persons, 2017.), women and girls with disabilities are a special category that need to pay more attention to and are more disadvantaged in the Republic of Croatia than women and girls without disabilities. Only the existence of disability has a negative impact on the woman's awareness of violence at all. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in Article 6, recognizes multiple discrimination of women with disabilities and obliges the state to take measures to ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

At the international level, special attention is paid to this issue, especially to combat violence against women and girls with disabilities who are exposed to violence (sexual, physical, economic, etc.) due to their disability. The Committee for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities issued a General Comment no. 3 (2016) relating to the application of Article 6 of the Convention extending to Article 16 of the Convention which clarifies the obligations of the State party to the Convention and which states that within the same category of persons with disabilities the most threatened are person with intellectual disabilities, and blind and deaf persons because they are more isolated and limited in receiving the information.

In 2017, the Ombudsperson for disabled persons continued to work on the area of accessible shelters for people with the highest level of support needed, in line with the recommendations of the UN Committee, which recommendations have been recognized as important. Based on the research conducted by the Ombudsman for disabled person last year, the problems of overcoming the height differences and the absence of elements of independent living that do not meet the standards laid down in the Rulebook on accessibility of buildings for persons with disabilities and reduced mobility (Official Gazette, No. 151/05 and 61/07, 78/13).

When we talk about the complaints for domestic violence, in 2016, it was mostly verbal attacks or psychological violence towards women with disabilities. Frequent, though unannounced, verbal attacks on people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities are: common names, mockery and ridicule, especially in the way that mockery is recorded and put on the Internet or statements in the media. According to the information obtained from the SOOS SOS telephone for women with disabilities and victims, during the year 2016 they received a total of 182 calls, of which 3 calls were from men with disabilities. The age of disabled women who came to the SOS phone ranges from 19 to 70 years, and women are usually aged between 50 and 59 years. There were 8 reports of physical assault, 25 reports of psychological, 0 reports of sexual assault and 6 reports of economic violence. The most common offenders are spouses and neighbours. A total of 5 women have decided to stop the violence by calling the police and 3 women have decided to divorce. Apart from the described, SOS phone received 1 complaint of violence in the healthcare system and in the social welfare system, and 2 complaints of violence in the justice system.

In 2016, a total of offenses concerning domestic violence described the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence, injured 105 (0.79%) persons with disabilities, of which 47 refers to men with disabilities, and 58 women with disabilities.

**In accordance with the report of the Ombudsperson for disabled persons for the year 2017** (The Ombudsperson for disabled persons, 2018.) from the experience of the Office it follows that women with disabilities seldom decide to report violence just because they believe that the institutions will not seriously understand it and that the police, the state attorney's office and the court will dismiss their applications. Police specialists, as well as other emergency response personnel, must be trained to recognize people with disabilities as full-fledged persons equal to the law and to give the same weight to their complaints and statements as they would have people without disabilities. The lack of awareness, training and policies to prevent the harmful stereotyped division of women with disabilities can often lead to violation of rights. There are situations when institutions are questioning the credibility of the testimony of women with disabilities, especially women with intellectual or mental impairments just because of the existence of disability themselves. Disabled women are at greater risk of violence, exploitation and abuse compared to other women.

The National Strategy for Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (Official Gazette No. 42/17) from 2017-2020 the goals and expected outcomes are improved system for the protection of women with disabilities and girls with developmental problems from violence, including sexual violence; increased level of awareness of violence and the possibilities of protection against violence for people with disabilities; provision of shelters, psychosocial support services/programs and other forms of protection for persons with disabilities, victims of violence.

From the data obtained from the Ministry of Justice the data show that in 2017 there were 26 disabled persons with disabilities, out of which 14 were women. In the case of domestic violence, 92 persons with disabilities have been victims of domestic violence, which is 0.74% of the total number of injured persons, which is less than the same period in 2016, and 52 are women with disabilities.



The statistics show that the most common perpetrators of violence are spouses, former partners, and other family members (nephew, children and brothers). Namely, according to information obtained from the SOS SOHO line for women with disabilities victims of violence, during the year 2017 a total of 189 calls were received, out of which 5 calls were from men with disabilities. The age of disabled women who came to SOS phone ranges from 19 to 70 years, and women are usually aged between 50 and 59 years. There were 7 reports of physical assault, 26 psychological reports, 1 report of sexual violence and 14 reports of economic violence. A total of 4 women decided to stop the violence by calling the police, 4 women decided to divorce while 6 turned to help to the welfare center.

**According to the Ministry of Interior data on the prevalence of violence for the year 2016** (Ministry of the Interior, Strategic Planning Service, analytics and development, 2017.), we see an increase in the number of rape cases in relation to year 2015, by 12.5%. In 2016 there were 81 entries. The perpetrators are all men, mostly at the age of 21-25 and 29-39. When we look at the criminal offense of sexual intercourse without consent, it is also increasing in relation to year 2015, and by 66%. There are 116 entries, respectively. The perpetrators are all men, mostly at the age of 21-25 and 29-39. Victims are mostly women between 18-22 and 30-40 years. The offense of sexual harassment is also increasing in relation to the year 2015, and by 38%. That is, 36 entries were recorded. The criminal offense of threat is also increasing in relation to the year 2015, and by 4%. There are 1094 entries.

Regarding the offense of domestic violence, it is also increasing in relation to the year 2015, and by 127%. That is, 330 entries have been recorded. It is worrying that there were only two arrests. The perpetrators are mostly men, aged 29-39 and 49-59. The victims were mostly women, between 30-40 and 50-60 years.

**According to the Ministry of Interior data on the prevalence of violence for the year 2017** (Ministry of the Interior, Strategic Planning Service, Statistics and Improvement of Work, 2018.), we see that the number of rape cases in relation to year 2016, has fallen by 24%. In 2017 there were 61 entries. The perpetrators are all men, mostly at the age of 29-39. The victims were women, aged 18-22 and 30-40. When we look at the criminal offense of sexual intercourse



without consent, it is also falling in relation to year 2016, and by 42%. There were 67 entries. The perpetrators are all men, mostly at the age of 29-39 and 39-49. The victims are mostly women between 18-22 and 30-40 years. The offense of sexual harassment is also falling in relation to the year 2016, and by 27%. That is, 26 entries were recorded. The criminal offense of threat is increasing in relation to the year 2016, and by 29%. There were 1472 entries.

Regarding the offense of domestic violence, it is also increasing in relation to the year 2016, and by 67%. That is, 552 entries have been recorded. It is worrying that there were only two arrests. The perpetrators are mostly men, aged 29-49. The victims were mostly women, between 30-50 years.

**According to the Ministry of Interior data on the prevalence of violence for the year 2018** (Ministry of the Interior, the Secretary General, Strategic Planning Service, Statistics and Improvement of Work, 2019.), we see that the number of rape cases in relation to year 2017, has fallen by 8%. In 2018 there were 56 entries. The perpetrators are all men, mostly at the age of 29-39. The victims were women, aged 18-22 and 30-40. When we look at the criminal offense of sexual intercourse without consent, we see an increase in relation to the year 2017, and by 3%. There were 69 entries. The perpetrators are all men, mostly at the age of 29-39 and 39-49. The victims are mostly women between 18-22 and 30-40 years. The offense of sexual harassment is increasing in relation to the year 2017, and by 88%. That is, 49 entries were recorded. The criminal offense of threat is increasing in relation to the year 2017, and by 0,5%. There were 1479 entries.

Regarding the offense of domestic violence, it is also increasing in relation to the year 2017, and by 12,9%. That is, 623 entries have been recorded. It is worrying that there were only two arrests. The perpetrators are mostly men, aged 29-49. The victims were mostly women, between 30-50 years.

Between the years 2013 and 2017, 91 women were killed in Croatia, which makes up 47% of all murders. In 70% of these murders, the perpetrators were persons close to the women, and in more than half of the cases (54%) their intimate partners. Unfortunately, the statistics do

not show a downward trend. By returning the criminal offense of domestic violence to the Criminal Code, there is a visible trend of increasing and prosecuting the criminal offense.

Regarding the offenses of domestic violence, in accordance with the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence which are prosecuted in accordance with the Misdemeanor Act, there are still a large number of offenses, but slightly lesser than in the period when the offense of domestic violence was excluded from the Criminal Code. So in 2017, we record 12,000 violations, of which 8,000 women were victims of violence (The Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy, 2018.)

### *5.1. Review of the state in the City of Zagreb*

**According to the Zagreb strategy for protection against domestic violence for the period 2018-2022** (City Assembly of the City of Zagreb, 2018.), the implementation of the Zagreb Strategy has shown some significant trends that need to be given special attention in the coming period. This is primarily related to the high share of undeclared violence, which is confirmed by the fact that beneficiaries of shelters for victims of domestic violence in the City of Zagreb in the period from 2011 to 2016 reported on average 40% of the cases to the competent authorities, and only when they were accommodated in the shelter. In cases when reporting violence, they are usually referred to the police, a smaller number to social welfare centers and judicial bodies. Also, there is a high proportion of long-term exposure to violence (10 or more years) especially among the beneficiaries of autonomous shelters, also more than a third of victims, after leaving the shelter, returns to the violent partner. The most common reasons for staying in violent relationships are the economic and / or emotional dependence on a partner. According to the type of violence to which they were exposed, the largest number is exposed to combined violence (psychological, physical, economic and / or sexual violence). In most cases the perpetrator of violence is a present or former spouse or partner.

Data from 2011 to 2016 show an increase in the number of requests for accommodation in the shelters in the City of Zagreb (where half of the beneficiaries have a residence in the Zagreb area and half are from other areas of the Republic of Croatia).

At the level of the Republic of Croatia, the courts imposed a total of 14,932 protective measures in the period from January 2012 - June 2016. Most of them were imposed a protective measures of compulsory treatment against addiction and the prohibition of approaching the victim of violence, then we have protective measures of compulsory psychosocial treatment, protective measures of removal from the apartment, houses or other housing, and the prohibition of harassment or detention of a person exposed to violence. In the smallest number of cases, measures of seizure of an object intended or used in committing an offense are pronounced. Of the total number of measures imposed, 55% were applied (8 138 measures), among which the most applied protective measures were the prohibition of approaching the victim of violence (40% of the imposed measures), and other protective measures were applied to a significantly lower proportion in relation to the measures imposed (from 8% to 16%). Also, in the period from January 2012 to June 2016, the courts have imposed a total of 4 128 precautionary measures on the perpetrators, including 618 prohibitions of visiting a certain place or area, and 3 510 measures of approximation to a particular person and the prohibition of establishing or maintaining contact with a particular person. In 88% and 94% of cases, this measure was determined for males.

The 2017 data on violations present 13 153 violations of domestic violence at the level of the Republic of Croatia, while 3,190 refer to the area of police administration in Zagreb, i.e. 24,2%. At the level of the Republic of Croatia, the courts issued a total of 8,731 custodial measures, out of which 2,224 perpetrators were from the Police Administration of Zagreb (25%).

Precautionary measures were imposed on 2 467 perpetrators at the level of the Republic of Croatia while 164 in the Police Administration area of Zagreb (6.5%), where we have 77.4% of men issued in the Republic of Croatia and 22.6% in women. In the Police Administration area of Zagreb there were 77.6% of men and 22.3% of women.

The victims were in 70% of cases women at the level of Police Administration in Zagreb.

## 6. SHELTERS FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

In Croatia, assistance and support to victims of domestic violence is provided by various stakeholders - police, social welfare centers, social welfare institutions, civil society organizations and others. However, the capacity of shelters and institutions for victims of domestic violence is still too small considering the real needs (Mamula and Dijanic Plašć, 2014).

The analysis of the organization Ženska soba (Zore and Droždan-Kranjčec, 2014) shows the situation in Croatia regarding the availability and distribution of civil society organizations aimed at assisting women victims of violence. Although there is a large number of registered organizations in Croatia, there are only 32 organizations that meet the set criteria, such as: that the organization is active for more than two years, that they have a certain number of consultations provided, etc. Research shows that there is a major problem in the availability of these services, as most of them are located in larger cities, in particular 56% of them are located in Zagreb, Rijeka and Split. It is concerning that in nine counties only one organization operates, and in six counties there are none operating. Also, this analysis points out that in Croatia there is 337 family places less in shelters that is needed.

The UNDP noted that shelters in Croatia were at least 20% lower in capacity than are standards of the Council of Europe for Croatia. The exact number of shelters is difficult to get, given that many of them are often on the edge of closure because of the lack of financial resources. The opening of shelters in Croatia began in the 90s of the last century, when the first shelter was opened by women activists who were part of the women's movement and operated on the basis of volunteering and donations of good citizens. Shelters whose activities are based on feminist worldviews still work in Croatia (The Advocates for Human Rights et al., 2012).

According to the list of shelters and counseling centers available on the Gender Equality website, there are 19 shelters for the protection of victims of domestic violence in Croatia. According to the list, we distinguish two institutions established and financed by local and / or regional government – Duga-Zagreb and Sv. Nikola in Varaždin, then five shelters founded by religious organizations, namely Caritas, in Zagreb, Rijeka, Sibenik, Split and Dubrovnik. Other

shelters in Croatia were established by non-profit NGOs, which are independently funded - through projects, donations or contracts with the relevant Ministry

(Gender Equality Ombudsperson, 2016). Of the 12 shelters established by non-profit organizations, there are two shelters established in the cooperation of a non-profit organization and local and / or regional government – a shelter in the city Čakovec and in the city Vukovar – Vukovar Babe.

Given the differences in the way of founding and financing, there is a lack of uniformity in the quality of services for women in Croatia, given that the majority of shelters in Croatia are acting as non-profit organizations, which are self-financed and countless times predetermined for closing, due to the lack of financial and human resources.

The Social Welfare Act (Official Gazette No. 157/13, 152/14, 99/15, 52/16, 130/17) predicts the right to accommodation in crisis situations in accordance with Art. 89 for different categories of users who find themselves in life-threatening situations. The same Law predicts this obligation at the local and / or regional self-government level, pursuant to Art. 117. 4, but only for institutions who provide shelter for homeless people. The same article predicts the obligation to cover expenses for those institutions where the local and / or regional self-government is the founder. In case of shelters for domestic violence victims there are only a few for which the government covers the full cost. Therefore, it is legitimate to raise the issue as to why the same obligation does not include provision of temporary accommodation for victims of domestic violence, given the known fact that the capacities on the territory of Croatia are too small. If implemented, the law would allow a greater number of institutions to protect victims of domestic violence, which would ensure the same level of quality of service throughout the whole of Croatia, and thus equal control and verification of the work of the shelter.

Most of the shelters have small accommodation capacities, mostly for up to 15 people, while Dom "Duga-Zagreb" and the Caritas House "Sv. Ana "in Rijeka are the only ones with more accommodation capacities for 30 to 40 people. The reason for this are the limited financial resources that are available to non-profit organizations, which are countless times at risk of closing, precisely because of the shortage of the financial support. Also, the accommodation



capacities in certain shelters are too small, the accommodation conditions are tailored to the financial possibilities, and most of the shelters use the space of a city dwelling or house, which is often not adapted to the needs of the victims. Specifically, certain shelters are not adequately equipped, ie there is no video surveillance system or security guard, which would provide physical protection against the perpetrator's arrival at the door. This increases the risk for the victims, but also for the employees of these shelters, who are exposed to various possible attacks by the perpetrators.

During their stay in the shelter, the victim allows herself to move away from the violent relationship, to think peacefully about the relationship and what are her expectations of that relationship, her own needs, the needs of her children, the objective possibilities within the family and / or the working environment for a life-long independent life-cycle. It is also a chance to look at the breadth of her social network, to make a safety plan for herself and her children and to think about short-term and long-term goals to change the quality of their life (Ajduković and Pavleković, 2004). It is therefore important to have the same quality of service provided.

**In accordance with the Ombudsman's report for the year 2017** (The Ombudsman, 2018.) our national legislation with the latest amendments to the CPC is ordinarily broadly aligned with Directive 2012/29 / EU on the establishment of minimum standards for the rights, support and protection of criminal offenses, which should have been transposed into domestic legislation by the end of 2015. However, the range of rights guaranteed to the victims by the Directive is far more widespread and more complex than it has been transferred to the CPC and requires the harmonization and enforcement of other laws. For example, the Ordinance on the Method of Implementing Individual Victim Estimates was only adopted by the end of 2017, so it remains to be seen to what extent the prescribed conditions and the method of making an individual assessment of the needs of victims of criminal offenses will meet the expectations of additional protection to reduce the risk of further traumatization or re-victimization. According to data obtained from NGO-s who provide psychosocial and counseling assistance, there is already visible inconsistency in the treatment among different bodies, indicating insufficient preparedness to implement these rights. In addition, the Ordinance should also apply to victims



of misdemeanor offenses because the tendencies of European legislation and the standards of the Directive go to equalizing victims of criminal offences with the victims of misdemeanors. Some of the measures outlined in the National Strategy for the Development of Victims and Witness Support Systems in the Republic of Croatia from 2016 to 2020 have not yet survived.

The police, state attorney's offices, and the courts are still primarily directed at the defendant and his rights, while the rights of victims and witnesses are not sufficiently protected and often the experience of giving a testimony is an extremely embarrassing and disturbing experience, it can often be a traumatic event where the victims is unfamiliar with court proceedings. Citizens' complaints were mostly related to insufficient information on the rights and procedure, inappropriate behavior of the institutions, lack of psychosocial support, lengthy procedures, multiple inquiries, failure to notify the outcome of the criminal charges filed, lack of support in misdemeanor proceedings, inability to compensate for damages and the exercise of guaranteed rights. In order for victims to exercise their rights, first of all they must be informed. The Directive regulates the way in which this should be done, insisting on the individual approach and assessing the communication skills and obstacles of each individual victim. From the first contact with the competent bodies, they should be fully informed in order to allow them to effectively exercise the rights guaranteed by the Directive. Therefore, it is important for them to provide free information about support services in an understandable form, written and verbally, repeating them throughout the entire process. The system as a whole is sluggish, while criminal proceedings themselves last for years, and almost a third of all misdemeanor proceedings are suspended due to statutory limitations. Bearing in mind the frequent overload of judges with a large number of cases, to the position of the victim but also the defendant, it is unacceptable not to schedule a hearing for the first hearing months after the indictment has been confirmed, which is often the case. Namely, one of the basic principles of criminal proceedings is that the court should decide on charges within a reasonable time, leading the proceedings without delay and taking care of the rights and interests of the victim. Consequently, court presidents should, in accordance with the powers and duties prescribed by the Rules of Court and the Courts Act, continuously undertake measures and activities aimed at more orderly and timely conduct of all court proceedings, as well as the effectiveness of trials in relation to deadlines.



Also, the right to complain to a senior state attorney due to failure to report a criminal offense is in practice an ineffective means of protecting the victim's interest.

The Victims and Witness Support System was, during 2017, organized into seven county courts, and based on the agreement on the establishment of joint services, the officials of these courts provide support to seven municipal and five misdemeanor courts. Taking into account that at that time only two persons were permanently employed in these departments and that municipal and misdemeanor courts are often dislocated from the county, it is clear that existing capacities are insufficient. In accordance with this, but also with the upcoming reorganization of the network of courts, in which the misdemeanor courts will become part of the municipal ones, it is necessary to prioritize the planning of the support system. It is necessary to develop strategies for better support of victims in the misdemeanor process, especially the most sensitive categories of victims, those of domestic violence, which so far have not been sufficiently recognized.

## **7. PSYCHOSOCIAL TREATMENT FOR PERPETRATORS OF VIOLENCE**

According to the Law on Protection against domestic violence (Official Gazette No. 70/17) misdemeanor sanctions for protection against family violence include protective measures, fines, imprisonment and other misdemeanor sanctions prescribed by the law governing offenses. The purpose of misdemeanor sanctions is to protect family members exposed to violence, respect for the legal system, and to prevent re-perpetration of family violence through appropriate sanctioning of offenders.

The court may impose the following protective measures on the perpetrator of domestic violence, except the safeguards prescribed by the Misdemeanor Act:

1. compulsory psychosocial treatment
2. Prohibition of approaching, harassment or spying of the victim
3. Relocation from the common household
4. compulsory treatment of addiction.

The protective measure of compulsory psychosocial treatment may be imposed on a perpetrator of family violence to eliminate his or her violent behavior or if there is a danger that he or she might be able to repeat violent behavior in the family. The measure may be determined for a period of at least six months.

In accordance with the Criminal Code, we distinguish several security measures in art. 65 - compulsory psychiatric treatment, compulsory treatment of addiction, compulsory psychosocial treatment, prohibition of performing certain duties or activities, ban for usage of motor vehicles, the prohibition of approaching, harassment and detention, removal from the common household, prohibition of access to the Internet and safeguarding full punishment of imprisonment.

In accordance with Art. 70 of the same law, the security measure of psychosocial treatment, the court may pronounce on a perpetrator who committed a criminal offense with the characteristic of violence, if there is a risk of doing the same or similar offense. The measure shall be executed in an institution for the enforcement of a prison sentence or a health institution or legal entity or a natural person specializing in the removal of violent behavior. The measure may take up to 2 years.

The Law on Protection from Domestic Violence provides for various protection measures in relation to the victim of violence. If we analyze data for the period from 2005 to

2014 we can see that the measure of inclusion in the psychosocial treatment for perpetrators of domestic violence is most often suggested. Therefore, measures are proposed to change the behavior of perpetrators and not necessarily repressive measures. However, the problem is the lack of physical and legal persons involved in the implementation of the above mentioned treatment, and the courts do not have to send them. The upward trend of pronouncement exists also with the protective measure of the prohibition of approaching the victim of violence, which is in charge and monitored by the police. There is also an upward trend by the Magistrates Court, which accepts the proposed measures by the police, but there is still a large number of proposed measures that the court does not accept. The protective measure of distance from the apartment is much less suggested and pronounced, which can be problematic, especially if it is a common area where the victim has to return (Šapina, 2016.).

In accordance with the Ordinance on the implementation of psychosocial treatment for perpetrators of violence (Official Gazette No 116/2018) the psychosocial treatment is carried out in health facilities and with authorized legal or natural persons specializing in the removal of violent behavior. The psychosocial treatment is conducted in health facilities for violent perpetrators who have a positive psychiatric history. Psychosocial treatment is carried out with legal or natural persons with whom the ministry responsible for judicial affairs has concluded a contract on the implementation of protective measures for compulsory psychosocial treatment. Psychosocial treatment which provide legal and physical persons is carried out by a psychiatrist, psychologist, social pedagogist and social worker with at least three years of working experience in the profession and additional training for working with perpetrators of violence, in accordance with the Standards for the Implementation of the Mandatory Psychosocial Treatment Measures. The legal entity with which the ministry responsible for judicial affairs shall enter into contract has to have adequate space (individual and group work room, waiting room and sanitary node), which must meet the minimum sanitary-technical and hygienic conditions; must provide at least one high skilled worker (psychiatrist, psychologist, social pedagogue or social worker) with at least three years of work experience in the profession and specially trained to work with a perpetrator of a domestic violence. A natural person with whom the ministry responsible for judicial affairs enters into a contract must have business capability; must have adequate space (individual and group work room, waiting room and sanitary node), which must meet the minimum sanitary-technical and hygienic conditions; must have a high level of professional training and additional training for perpetrators in accordance with the Standards.

**According to the data of the Ministry of Justice, the records of the Directorate for Criminal Law and Probation, in the year 2016** (The Gender Equality Ombudsperson, 2017.), psychosocial treatment was conducted with 336 persons, out of which 53 were women (15%). The total number refers to all perpetrators of family violence sentenced by misdemeanor courts for the purpose of enforcing the protective measure of compulsory psychosocial treatment, even those perpetrators who only participated in the initial interview but were not included in the treatment because they did not meet the conditions for inclusion in the same, as well as for the

perpetrators who were involved in the treatment, but gave up. According to the aforementioned, the psychosocial treatment completed 220 persons, of whom 39 were women. The contract on the provision of Psychosocial Treatment for Family Violence Offenders Outside of Health Institutions in 2016, was signed with 43 executives, including 6 legal entities and 37 natural persons, and the Ministry of Justice. Treatment providers are represented in a total of 17 counties, and in 2016 there were still no providers in the Ličko-Senjska, Bjelovarsko-Bilogorska, Požeško-Slavonska and Zadar County. The Ombudswoman expresses concern that the funds for this measure are reduced and warns that the psychosocial treatment of perpetrators of domestic violence is one of the most important social measures in terms of long-term prevention of relapse of violence through the quality rehabilitation of the offenders, which this trend certainly does not allow.

**According to the records of the Criminal Code Directorate for the year 2017,** psychosocial treatment was conducted with 474 persons. Out of which 103 were women. The total number refers to all perpetrators of domestic violence sent to misdemeanor courts for the purpose of enforcing a protective measure of compulsory psychosocial treatment, i.e. those perpetrators who only were involved in the initial interview but were not included in the treatment because they did not meet the conditions for inclusion in the same. The aforementioned number of persons also refers to the perpetrators who were involved in the treatment but subsequently abandoned the treatment or the treatment was terminated. Out of the total number of people (474), psychosocial treatment was completed by 342 people, of whom 78 were women (The Gender Equality Ombudsperson, 2018).

Since May 2009, Home "Duga-Zagreb" has been approved for the implementation of psychosocial treatment of domestic violence offenders. This institution carries out the psychosocial treatment of the perpetrator of domestic violence at a separate location of the institution, with the financial support of the City of Zagreb (City Office for Social Welfare and Persons with Disabilities) and in cooperation with the State Attorney's Office and the competent courts.





In the period from 2009, when the treatment began to work until March 15, 2019. up to now 1272 perpetrators were involved in the treatment. The average age of the perpetrators is 38.96, of which the oldest was 81, and the youngest 15 years. The number of first-time users is 1116. Of the total number involved in the treatment, 23% were women. When we talk about their working status, 580 were employed, while 442 were unemployed. As for marital status, 573 are married, 305 single and 157 are in extramarital communities. When we talk about the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator, or the kinship of the perpetrator and the victim, 494 were spouses, 220 parents, 146 children, 118 extramarital partners. According to the type of abuse, there was mainly psychological violence (626), combined violence (367) and physical violence (478).

Out of the total involved perpetrators in the treatment, 35% were rejected for various reasons - 7.9% abandoned treatment, 6.2% dropped out because of illness, 0.6% were rejected because of the presence of alcoholism, 4.6% were rejected for non-existence prerequisites in terms of capacity and acceptance of responsibility for a committed offense, while for 12.4% was estimated that there is no need for inclusion.

Regarding the success of the treatment, 11.4% of perpetrators successfully completed the treatment and completely adopted non-violent patterns, 22.1% successfully completed the treatment and partially adopted non-violent forms, while 2.9% regularly attended, but did not sufficiently adopt non-violent patterns of behavior.

Psychosocial treatment of offenders with a characteristic of violence in relation to the security measure of compulsory psychosocial treatment is also carried out in accordance with Article 70 of the Penal Code (Official Gazette No. 125/11, 144/12) and the Ordinance on the Implementation of the Security Measures of Mandatory Psychosocial Treatment (Official Gazette , No. 42/13, 142/13). This measure may be imposed on a perpetrator committing a criminal offense with a characteristic of violence, if there is a risk of doing the same or similar offense. According to Article 4 of the Ordinance concerned, the security measure implemented within the prison system is carried out by specialists specially trained to deal with perpetrators in accordance with the Standards for the Implementation of the Mandatory Psychosocial Treatment



Measures that are an integral part of the said Ordinance. By analyzing the cases of prisoners with this security measure and the practice of the inmates' treatment with the imposed measure, it has been established that the existing Program for the Treatment is not fully applicable to prisoners who are perpetrators of violence since it is intended primarily for perpetrators of domestic violence that are at liberty and is not adapted to penal conditions. Also, part of the prisoners cannot be included in the existing Program because they do not meet some of the Program's assumptions and because of the specificity of the criminogenic risks and needs of an individual prisoner can not be carried out by the existing Program. Due to all of this, a new program for the treatment of prisoners who are perpetrators was conducted in two criminal bodies. From January 1, 2013 until the end of 2016, in the criminal bodies of the Republic of Croatia, 27 security measures for compulsory psychosocial treatment was issued, 26 male inmates and one for a female inmate (City Assembly of the City of Zagreb, 2018.).

According to the latest list of the Ministry of Justice and the list of legal and natural persons with whom the contract for provision of the psychosocial treatment for perpetrators of domestic violence outside the healthcare institutions has been concluded, the treatment is carried out in the following counties: Brodsko-posavska, Dubrovačko-neretvanska, Istarska, Karlovačka, Krapinsko-Zagorska, Međimurje, Osiječko-Baranjska, Požeško-Slavonska, Primorsko-Gorska, Sisačko-Moslavačka, Splitsko-Dalmatinska, Varaždinska, Virovitičko-Podravska, Vukovarsko-Srijemska, Zadarska, Zagrebačka, Šibensko-kninska and the City of Zagreb. The counties that do not have treatment providers are: Bjelovarsko-bilogorska, Koprivničko-Križevačka and Ličko-Senjska. In 2018, the total number of treatment providers was 45, of which legal person who provided the treatment was 9 and physical persons was 36. It is worrying that some counties still do not have treatment providers.

## 8. ISSUES OF NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS IN CROATIA

We will briefly look at the results of a research conducted by the NGO Ženska soba on the issues of non-profit organizations in Croatia (Mamula, Zore and Tukara Komljenović, 2016.).



A total of 9 shelters took place in the survey, averaging annually accommodate more than 50 victims of violence and their children (4 organizations), from 20 to 35 victims (4 organizations) and 10 victims (1 organization).

The main problems of CSOs can be divided into five basic categories. The largest number of participants (56.5%) pointed out that the basic problem was not enough financing, which enbles the viability and existence of the organization and prevents it creating a long-term work strategies. The following are issues related to the team's under capacity (52.2%), whereby a small number of people working in the team is overloaded with numerous projects whose purpose is to survive the basic service (most commonly the counseling center). Also, this problem is directly related to financing, ie its consequence. Also, the big problem is often changes to the employees of the team, since it is difficult to keep quality people on a small salary, overloaded with numerous tasks and roles and a high level stress related to the job itself. This also adds to the problems of the volunteer work, opportunities for motivation and retention of volunteers, or lack thereof.

As the next prominent problem, there is a general climate in society for NGOs (34.8%), which includes negative impacts of economic and political climate, is a poor picture of NGOs and their work, which is often overlaid through the media as well as the general distrust of citizens in institutions and justice. It has been emphasized several times that the patriarchal society and insensitivity to the issue of violence against women, directly reflects on the work gn the organization and the relationship with the victims. A significant part of the participants (30.4%) mentioned the problem of poor cross-sectoral cooperation and relations of the institutions towards NGOs, which is still significantly burdened with the existence of stereotypes by feminist and women's organizations, as well as prejudice against their work that its not under the direct control of the competent authorities and institutions, but remains its autonomy. This is a lack of political expression and the lack of will to recognize the role and importance of NGOs in combating violence against women, low level of co-operation with competent institutions, which is often reflected in slowness of solving cases, but also in the absence of feedback between the institutions and NGOs.



As the last group of problems, there was a lack of sufficient number of necessary services for working with women victims of violence, as well as inappropriate work conditions (26.1%). There is a lack of SOS phones for victims, lack of expertise lawyers and lawyers to represent victims, inadequate working space to talk with victims, as well as inadequate working space for people with disabilities. Three of the major problems in NGO work are highlighted: Financial instability and lack of resources that directly affect the work of shelters and counseling centers (N = 6); Incompliance with the quality of work, the issue of work standards and the expertise of persons who are working with victims, promoting principles of work that are not scientifically based, and also non-transparency, discrimination in respect for human rights, unclearly defined tasks and goals, low control, dispersion, ambiguous roles and responsibility, lack of systematic approach to issues (N = 5); Low level of cooperation with competent institutions, but also a problem with the lack of understanding by some institutions the role and importance of the NGOs.

## 9. MEDIA REPORTING ON FEMICIDE IN CROATIA

Media coverage of the world and events, including femicide, is an important social and political issue, as the media at least partly influence our understanding of reality. They can consolidate or question our prejudices and attitudes, they can boast or criticize state institutions for wrongdoing or non-violation, they may be an important factor in changing our attitudes towards some social problem. In the case of violence against women, the media can remain indifferent reporters, biased rapporteurs who have a lot of understanding for the bully and a bit for the victim or, as it would be, responsible critics who sharply condemn violence and encourage awareness of the inadmissibility of violent behavior in relationships and the necessity for stronger engagement of the society and the state in its suppression and sanctioning. We will briefly look at the results of the analysis of media reporting on cases of femicide 2012-2016, which was published by Ženska soba – Center for Sexual Rights, (Sarnavka, 2018).

As far as media reporting is concerned in Croatia, it is obvious that daily newspapers decide to report crimes that we can estimate as extremely brutal or unusual, confirming many theoreticians' claims that tabloidization and turning to sensationalism occur in all media.

In feminized texts we find very often statements by family members and neighbours as the only witnesses to the murder and what preceded him, but we rarely get an answer to the question why the femicide occurred. Experts dealing with the issue of violence against women in news and reports of individual murders rarely appear as sources of information. What is being quoted by saying "he was a quiet man," "a harmonious family," "we never heard them arguing," remains the question to the authors of such texts.

Victims are often referred to as "unfortunate" in texts, as if they had bad luck compared to most women who live in a ideal marriage. If people read the articles carefully, it would be obvious that there is no age in which a woman cannot be a victim of violence and that education has nothing to do with the spamming: girls, students, professors, managers, attorneys, educators, lecturers.

The stereotypical understanding of gender roles and sexism is evident when the description of the victim specifically points out her appearance: she was "beautiful," "one of the most beautiful," "a beautiful dark-haired girl with recognizable large eyes," "a beautiful professor," "one of the Most Beautiful Sišćanki "," a beautiful student of economics ". To presume, it is likely that to these authors the crime is worse if they kill a nice and pretty women, rather than an ugly woman, with whatever criterion they evaluate one's appearance. As long as we talk and write about women as a nicer and weaker seks, the assessment and discrimination of women due to physical appearance will continue.

If we were to evaluate daily newspapers according to articles on femicide, we could state that most of the texts in Jutarnji list, Vecernji list and Slobodna Dalmacija rank in a group of media whose representations are characterized by the scarcity of the factual basis of the news (report) and a small number of data and facts, holding on only to the surface of the event, with the absence of background elements of the event.

When femicide is mainly shown as a single case where attention is focused on the basic facts - who killed, whom he killed, where and when and how, at times very superficial why - there is no possibility of knowing the complexity of this phenomenon, there is no conceptualization from which one can see that this is a serious social and civilization problem, in which neither the state institutions nor the society as a whole are involved in the right way.

In lightening the background of women's murder it does not help using dramatic reports with expressive expressions (in fact, long ago spent phrases), but it is necessary to seriously explore the topic and to point out the relevant facts and roots of the violence that often ends with murder.

The legislative framework establishes gender and gender equality, but stereotypes and sexism persist in our society, as the media are often confirmed by their gender / gender roles. There is no change if daily newspapers are appalled over the murders of women, but at the same time in most other texts women and men are stereotyped.

Although significant progress has been made in relation to the reporting of femicide, given the proclaimed aspiration to gender equality, changes to the legislative framework that have occurred and institutional mechanisms promoting gender equality, the media are still not at the level of tasks and roles they have in society.

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## 2.2.3 RESEARCH ON WORKING MODELS AND NATIONAL LEGISLATION IN ITALY.

### Implementing partners: Una Casa per l'Uomo and Gruppo R

#### 1 INTRODUCTION

##### 1.1 The "Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence"

In Italy, the main reference document on preventing and combating male violence against women and violence against minors (both direct and assisted) is the "**Council of Europe Convention on the prevention and combating of violence against of women and domestic violence**"<sup>20</sup> (Istanbul, 7 April 2011).

The Convention is the first international legally-binding document on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

The preamble of the "Istanbul Convention" quotes the main European and international recommendations that inspire the Convention, **and defines the key concepts for a correct interpretation of the phenomenon and of its causes**, namely:

- that violence against women is a structural phenomenon:  
*"... violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between women and men, which have led to domination over, and discrimination against, women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women";*
- that, consequently,  
*"...the realization of de jure and de facto equality between women and men is a key element in the prevention of violence against women";*

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<sup>20</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/istanbul-convention/text-of-the-convention>

- that women and girls are more exposed, compared to men, to the risk of suffering various forms of violence (domestic violence, sexual harassment and violence, forced marriages, so-called "honor" crimes, female genital mutilation ...) and that all of this constitutes  
*"...a serious violation of the human rights of women and girls and a major obstacle to the achievement of equality between women and men".*

Given these premises, Article 3 ("Definitions") describes "violence against women" as "*... a violation of human rights and a form of discrimination against women and shall mean all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life*"( Art.3 a).

It also defines "domestic violence" as "*...all acts of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence that occur within the family or domestic unit or between former or current spouses or partners, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim*"(Art.3 b)

Finally, it defines "violence against women based on gender" as "*...any violence directed against a woman as such, or affecting women disproportionately*" (Art.3 d), meaning the term "women" even girls under the age of 18 (Art.3 f) and with the term "gender" the set of "*...roles, behaviors, activities and socially constructed attributes that a given society considers appropriate for women and men*" (Article 3 c).

The main purpose of the Convention is "*...to protect women against all forms of violence, and prevent, prosecute and eliminate violence against women and domestic violence*" (Chapter I – Purposes, definitions, equality and non-discrimination, general obligations - Art .1 a).

This goal is pursued through actions and interventions relating to three main thematic areas:

1. the prevention of violence (Chapter III - Prevention)
2. the protection of victims (Chapter IV - Protection and support)
3. the prosecution of perpetrators (Chapter V - substantive law)

In Chapter III, **the work with perpetrators of domestic violence (Art.16) is listed as one of the possible forms of prevention**, in addition to other actions like awareness-raising, education and training of professionals (Art.13, 14 and 15).

More specifically, Art. 16 (Preventive intervention and treatment programmes) states as follows:

1. *Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to set up or support programmes aimed at teaching perpetrators of domestic violence to adopt non-violent behaviour in interpersonal relationships with a view to preventing further violence and changing violent behavioural patterns.*
2. *Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to set up or support treatment programmes aimed at preventing perpetrators, in particular sex offenders, from re-offending.*
3. *In taking the measures referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2, Parties shall ensure that the safety of, support for and the human rights of victims are of primary concern and that, where appropriate, **these programmes are set up and implemented in close co-ordination with specialist support services for victims.***

**Art.16 3 underlines the need for a coordinated work between services that support victims (as defined in Articles 20 and 22 of Chapter IV) and programmes for perpetrators, but no methodological indication is given regarding the possible forms of this collaboration.**

In conclusion, the "Istanbul Convention":

- defines male violence against women as a structural phenomenon, mainly caused by social and cultural reasons (gender inequality and its consequences in terms power inequality between men and women);
- states and defines the different forms of gender-based violence (physical, sexual, economic, psychological, stalking);
- states that protection and support of victims (women and minors) is the main goal to be pursued by the Parties that ratified the Convention;
- details the main areas of intervention for the prevention and combat of violence (prevention, protection and punishment);
- quotes the work with perpetrators as one of the necessary preventive interventions, acknowledging the need for collaboration between programmes for perpetrators and support services for victims (although there are no operational and methodological indications on how to implement this collaboration).

## 1.2 The implementation of the “Istanbul Convention” in Italy

Chapter IX of the “Istanbul Convention” (Articles 66 to 69) provides for the creation of GREVIO (Group of experts on action against violence against women and domestic violence), an independent panel of experts, whose duty is to investigate and assess to what extent and by what means the participating Parties have implemented the dictates of the Convention.

GREVIO monitoring fundamentally occurs in two phases, the first concerning the fill in – by each Country - of a report based on a questionnaire<sup>21</sup> elaborated in 2016.

This questionnaire provides that each participating Country explains detailed information “*on the adoption of comprehensive and co-ordinated policies on violence against women, the financial resources dedicated to the implementation of these policies, and support of the work of NGOs and other civil society actors, in particular women’s organizations, **the establishment of effective co-operation with these organizations, as well as data collection.***”

GREVIO also prompts for indication of how data on the phenomenon are collected and disseminated.

Concerning the specific Line of Istanbul Convention about *prevention* (Chapter III, Articles 12 to 17), the questionnaire asks to report about campaigns, programmes, teaching material in formal education curricula, professional training.

The prevention Line, as discussed above, also provides for support programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence.

To such intention, we believe it is useful to integrally report the information required by GREVIO questionnaire in this regard.

*“E. Please provide information on action taken to set up or support programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence as referred to in Article 16, paragraph 1. In particular, please provide details on:*

*1. the overall number of existing programmes, their geographical distribution, the implementing institution/entity/body (prison service, probation service, NGOs, other),*

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<sup>21</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/16805c95b0>



*their compulsory or voluntary nature, as well as the number of places and the number of perpetrators enrolled annually;*

*2. the measures taken within the framework of these programmes to ensure that the safety of, support for and the human rights of women victims are of primary concern **and that they are implemented in close co-ordination with specialist support services for women victims;***

*3. how a gendered understanding of violence against women has been incorporated in these programmes;*

*4. funding sources and annual amounts for these programmes; and*

*5. measures taken to evaluate their impact.*

*F. Please provide information on action taken to set up or support programmes for sex offenders as referred to in Article 16, paragraph 2.”*

It is for the Government of each Country to answer the questionnaire, but collaboration from other civil society actors is not excluded, but - in fact - wished.

With regard to our Country, some associations of activist women and female experts on violence against women phenomenon, have drafted the Report entitled “Implementation of the Istanbul Convention in Italy: Report of the Women’s NGOs”<sup>22</sup> (so called “Shadow Report”), which was sent to the Council of Europe in October 2018 and presented in February 26th of 2019 in Rome.

This document has been fundamental to define the monitoring programme that GREVIO will actually carry out in our Country – between 11th and 21st March of 2019 - through some meetings with representatives from Institutions and civil society.

The field trip is the *second phase* through which the Council of Europe carries out the monitoring of the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in the Countries that have ratified it.

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<sup>22</sup><https://www.direcontrolaviolenza.it/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Rapporto-ombra-GREVIO.pdf>

The Italian Report sent to GREVIO has detected a highly critical situation concerning the adaptations to dictates and provisions of the Istanbul Convention.

Some critical points found are identified below, according to the breakdown of the Report:

a) *Integrated policies and data collection*

- failure of the three National Action Plans to adapt to the Istanbul Convention prescriptions (the first, produced in 2011, had an emergency, rather than a structural, approach; the second, 2014-2017, provided for general rather than global policies; the 2017-2010 Plan contains no concrete indications concerning the allocation of funds and “*does not make adequate reference*” to the key role of Anti-violence Centers and Shelters to prevent and combat the phenomenon);
- lack of a disaggregated and coordinated data collection system;
- absence of data about risk assessment and costs of violence against women;
- incomplete data provided by the Police Forces and Courts;
- no stable and uniform funds allocated for Anti-violence Centers and Shelters.

b) *Prevention*

- few or inefficient sensitization programs about violence against women and gender differences, also with a focus on a respectful language;
- need to “*promote and finance campaigns to raise awareness, with particular regards to educational plans inside and outside schools, from early childhood onwards and at all school levels*”;
- need to map the Centers /services for perpetrators of domestic violence and establish operative guidelines, as laid down in the Istanbul Convention

c) *Protection and support*

- inadequate legislative measures and policies, especially as regards their implementation;
- widespread presence of secondary victimization mechanisms, also through the blaming of women as mothers;

- support services present in the territory in a very uneven way;
- Shelters in number considerably lower than what international standards provide, and with uneven funding;
- inadequate specific training and support for women with disabilities;
- serious lack of attention about children victim of witnessing violence.

d) *Substantive law*

- “constant non-recognition” of compensation “in penal and civil branches”;
- non-recognition of gender and witnessing violence during judicial separations and custody of minors children;
- very serious lack of knowledge about gender violence within family law and Courts;
- persistence of strategies of violence cover-up and devaluation of women in her role of mothers.

e) *Investigation, prosecution, procedural law and protective measures*

- lack of shared systems of risk assessment;
- persistent and pervading secondary victimization, also because of the lack of an adequate and homogeneous training of judicial operators;
- risk of non-recognition of violence, especially during investigations, which are often non consistent with victims’ need for protection.

f) *Migration and asylum*

- constant underuse of the residency permit addressed to victims of domestic violence, and lack of actions to combat the phenomenon of forced marriages.

For the purpose of this project, we believe it is worth deepening the notations of the Report in the Chapter about the implementation of the *Prevention* line (Chapter III) in Istanbul Convention.

The *Shadow Report* underlines how “general” are the Guidelines for the rehabilitation/reintegration of men perpetrators of domestic violence, provided by the “Extraordinary Action Plan against

Sexual and Gender –based Violence” 2015-2017 (see below), and considers that, in the face of an increased request – especially from the end of 2015 – for the establishment of specific Centers for the treatment of men, there are neither local programming nor “controls” or “*certification of the quality of the measures*”.

In this connection, however, it is underlined that Centers joined to Relive network share “*goals, internal organization and set-up*” and, above all, the two primary objectives, which are the safety of women and children and the collaboration with local service networks.

The Report identifies as critical points: the difficulty to assess “*the impact they have and how effective they are*” (given the lack of a shared programme for the results evaluation), **the lack of a defined collaboration with the local anti-violence network and with Anti-violence Centers**, the absence of obligations for sentenced perpetrators, no application of the reporting provided by warnings, insufficient funding that stops these Centers for men from “*become effective prevention tools and play a more inclusive role in anti-violence strategies*”.

There is the need for “*planning, regulation and coordination on a national level*”, besides a network to be implemented with the justice system.

The Report ultimately recommends that the Centers/services for perpetrators increase the assessing risk of reoffending, in order to establish adequate preventive measures.

## **2 THE NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1 Laws No. 77 and 119 of 2013**

The “Istanbul Convention” was ratified by Italy with the **Law No. 77 of 27 June 2013**<sup>23</sup> (Ratification and agreement of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, opened for signature in Istanbul on 11 May 2011), afterwards converted (with Law Decree No. 93 of 14 August 2013, “*Urgent measures about safety and to combat gender violence, as well as in the area of civil protection and external administration*

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<sup>23</sup> <http://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2013/07/01/13G00122/sg>

of provinces”) in the **Law No. 119 of 15 October 2013** (*Conversion into law, with amendments, of Law Decree No. 93 of 14 August 2013, about Urgent measures about safety and to combat gender violence, as well as in the area of civil protection and external administration of provinces*), currently in force.<sup>24</sup>

Italian regulatory framework duly recalled what is provided by the Istanbul Convention about the definition of gender violence, the various types of this phenomenon, its causes, preventive measures and instruments to support victims (women and children). With regard to the treatment of perpetrators, Law No. 77 in Article 16 (“Preventive intervention and treatment programmes”) quotes what is said in the same Article of Istanbul Convention (see above):

*“Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to set up or support programmes aimed at teaching perpetrators of domestic violence to adopt non-violent behaviors in interpersonal relationships with a view to preventing further violence and changing violent behavioral patterns.*

*Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to set up or support treatment programmes aimed at preventing perpetrators, in particular sex offenders, from reoffending. In taking the measures referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2, Parties shall ensure that the safety of, support for and the human rights of victims, are of primary concern and that, **where appropriate, these programmes are set up and implemented in close co-ordination with specialist support services for victims.**”*

Between the Law Decree of 14 August 2013 and its conversion in Law No. 119 of 2013, the Chamber of Deputies conducted a survey, holding hearings of some experts representatives of associations and institutions.

On 10th September 2013, Alessandra Pauncz, founder of C.A.M. in Florence – the first Italian Center for perpetrators of domestic violence (see below) – and current president of National

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<sup>24</sup> <http://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2013/08/16/13G00141/sg>

Association RELIVE – Relationships free from violence – and Andrea Cicogni, then vice-president of C.A.M., have been heard.

A. Pauncz, from the beginning of her speech<sup>25</sup>, mentioned Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention, and suggested, for the first time in a national institutional forum, the theoretical and clinical motivations for which – according to her – an intervention on perpetrators is needed: the *recurrence* of such behaviors, that are often repeated in the following relationships; the fact that the end of the relationship doesn't match the end of violent behaviors (post-separation violence, transition from maltreatments to other crimes such as stalking), the intergenerational transmission of violence, with serious and heavy consequences on children.

Within her speech, the President of C.A.M. proposed some amendments to the Law Decree that Parliament was debating, namely:

- in Article 2, second paragraph, letter d), the addition of “*moral*” integrity, beyond the physical one, as a possible reason to ask the removal of the perpetrator;
- in Article 3, first paragraph, the reference to Article 581 of Penal Code;
- in Article 3, first paragraph, the elimination of the term “*non episodic*”;
- in Article 3, the introduction of a paragraph providing for “*towards those who have been warned, in compliance with Article 3 first paragraph of the present Decree, the “Questore” [Chief Constable, Ed.] addresses the person to Social Services or Centers specialized in the treatment of perpetrators of domestic violence*”;
- in Article 5, second paragraph, after letter e), another letter which “*provides the development and activation, throughout national territory, of treatment programs for men who have perpetrated violence in close relationships, based on a methodology focused on the protection of victims*”.

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[http://www.camera.it/leg17/1079?idLegislatura=17&tipologia=indag&sottotipologia=c0102\\_violenza&anno=2013&mese=09&giorno=10&idCommissione=0102&numero=0001&file=indice\\_stenografico](http://www.camera.it/leg17/1079?idLegislatura=17&tipologia=indag&sottotipologia=c0102_violenza&anno=2013&mese=09&giorno=10&idCommissione=0102&numero=0001&file=indice_stenografico)



Law No. 119 of 2013 completes the previous document, providing also for some amendments to the Code of Criminal Procedure in regard to the crime aim of the study (cf. Article 2 - *“Amendments to the Code of Criminal Procedure and dispositions concerning criminal proceedings for the offences against the persons”*).

It also imposes the institutions of some measures to protect victims, previously only provided for crimes such as the stalking. For example, the possibility for the “Questore” [Chief Constable, Ed.] of warning the offender, even without the complaint of the victim.

In this regard, in Article 3 (*“Prevention measures for domestic violence behaviors”*) it is stated: *“In the event that someone reports to Police Forces, (non anonymously) a fact which can be attributed (to the crimes as in Article 581, as well 582, second paragraph, committed or attempted, of Penal Code), in the framework of domestic violence, the “Questore” [Chief Constable, Ed.], even without the complaint of the victim, can proceed with the warning, once he has acquired the necessary informations from investigative sources and heard the persons of interest.”*

Consequently, in Article 3 paragraph 5-bis, it is stated the *“When the “Questore” [Chief Constable, Ed.] proceeds with the warning, pursuant to Article 8 of Law Decree No. 11 of 23 February 2009, converted, with amendments, into Law n. 38 of 23 April 2009, as modified by present Decree, and of the present Article, immediately informs the offender about local services, including family counsellings, Mental health services and Addiction Services, as identified by the Plan as in Article 5, and aimed to act on perpetrators of domestic or gender violence”*.

It represents an important extension not only to punish, but also in order to prevent and protect the victim/s in different and more widespread situations, such as domestic violence or maltreatment.

Congruent with the “Extraordinary Action Plan against Sexual and Gender-based Violence”, described in detail within the next paragraph, in Article 5 second paragraph, it is stated that the Plan *“...in order to guarantee uniform actions on the national territory, pursues the following goals:* (...)

*g) promote the development and set up, throughout national territory, of actions, based on methodologies consolidated and coherent with specific guidelines, aimed to rehabilitate and*

*support perpetrators of violence behaviors within close relationships, in order to promote their rehabilitation and limit reoffending”.*

## **2.2 The "Extraordinary action plan against sexual and gender-based violence"<sup>26</sup>**

After the ratification of the "Istanbul Convention" in June 2013 (see above), Italy approved Decree-Law No. 93/2013 adopting specific measures (both civil and criminal) aimed at preventing and combating male violence against women, setting up different lines of action with dedicated grants.

In this framework, in 2015 the President of the Council of Ministers adopted the "Extraordinary Plan of Action against sexual and gender violence" with validity over the 2015-2017 period.

The preliminary work for the drafting of the Plan involved various entities working in the field, including the Centers for Perpetrators; in fact, the Florence Center for Perpetrators "C.A.M." (CAM-Centro di AscoltoUominiMaltrattanti) joined the subgroup "Risk Factors" of the inter-institutional Task Force on violence against women coordinated by The deputy Minister of Labour and Social Policies Mrs Guerra.

The 3 levels of intervention (1. "Preventive", 2. "Protective" and 3. "Punitive") laid out by Chapter 5 ("Lines of Action of the Plan") are clearly in line with the three areas ("Prevention", "Protection", "Prosecution") indicated by the "Istanbul Convention" (see above).

Section 5.7 ("Rehabilitation of perpetrators") is specifically dedicated to the work with perpetrators of violence.

This section states that in order to, prevent recidivism by perpetrators of violence and the physical and psychological consequences it produces on women's health, the systemic measures for combating violence must be aimed at activating *“...interventions for the recovery and accompaniment of those responsible for acts of violence, in particular by **establishing connections between the subjects involved in the work with perpetrators and the public and private networks of services that support victims, in order to offer integrated and coordinated responses”.***

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<sup>26</sup>[https://www4.istat.it/it/files/2017/11/piano\\_contro\\_violenzasessualeedigenere\\_2015.pdf](https://www4.istat.it/it/files/2017/11/piano_contro_violenzasessualeedigenere_2015.pdf)

Annex G to the document ("Guidelines for the recovery /reintegration of male perpetrators of violence ") details the guidelines concerning what stated in section 5.7.

It stipulates that *"treatment programmes for male perpetrators must be implemented in the context of measures and actions aimed at combating gender violence and must be developed alongside support services for victims of violence"*.

As for collaborations, it is asserted that *"the promotion of synergies can be formalized with the customary institutional instruments such as territorial agreements and protocols, which may provide coordination procedures between the integrated network formed by the centers supporting women on their paths out of violence and treatment centers for male perpetrators"*.

On the same subject, the plan also stipulates that *"training courses for perpetrators may be carried out in the context of formalized collaborations between the centers for male perpetrators and the network of support services for women, through conventions or protocols which provide for procedures for sharing / collecting information and evaluating the effectiveness of the measures to be taken"*.

As we see, the "Extraordinary action plan" contains several references to the work with perpetrators, placing it among the strategies for preventing violence.

The action plan clearly states the need for a collaboration between centers for perpetrators and the network of services for victims: as it is repeatedly stressed, this synergy must be formalized through the adoption of institutional instruments such as territorial agreements and protocols

### **2.3 The "National strategic plan on men's violence against women" 2017-2020**<sup>27</sup>

Given the experience gained thanks to the "Extraordinary Action Plan" mentioned above, the Department for Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers promoted the establishment of a mixed working group (which included representatives of the involved Ministries,

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<sup>27</sup><https://www.irpps.cnr.it/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/testo-piano-diramato-conferenza.pdf>

of the Conference of Regions, of ANCI (National Association of Italian Municipalities), of Police Forces, of trade unions and of women's associations. This group worked together to elaborate the **“National strategic plan on men's violence against women 2017-2020”**.

The Plan is divided into three main areas of intervention (1. "Prevention"; 2. "Protection and Support", 3. "Pursue and Punish") once again in line with the three thematic areas indicated in the "Istanbul Convention" as well as with the three levels of intervention of the previous Plan. For each of the three areas, specific intervention priorities are defined.

The fourth area ("Assistance and Promotion") provides for interventions that cut-across all the other areas.

Chapter 4 ("Commitments of the Plan") make a specific reference to Art. n.16 of the "Istanbul Convention", and states that the Plan intends to take action *"...in an area that is relatively new in Italy, that is the treatment of male perpetrators (both those who have been convicted and incarcerated, and those perpetrating domestic violence). These interventions are aimed at supporting non-violent behavior in interpersonal relationships, also in order to prevent recidivism, in particular for sex crimes , stalking and violence in the family "*.

Accordingly, Priority number 1.4 of the “Prevention” area is *“Activation of intervention programs for male perpetrators or potential perpetrators of violence and of crimes related to male violence against women”, which responds to the need to “strengthen the effort to prevent recidivism through re-education courses for male perpetrators of violence and of crimes related to male violence against women ”.*

More in depths, this priority declares that specific economic resources (and the related funding criteria) are to be allocated for prevention and treatment programmes for male perpetrators or potential perpetrators; the priority also states the need for a quantitative and qualitative mapping of these programmes that will thus be included in field research with the goal of defining *" purposes, methodology and contents of the programmes, with a definition of the professional profiles of the providers, as well as qualitative and quantitative results”*.

This chapter also underlines the commitment of the Ministry of Justice to draft a national intervention protocol to identify the most effective treatment methods for incarcerated perpetrators of gender-based and sexual violence in the whole stay in the institution, from admission to release.

Chapter 5 ("Methods of Governance and Implementation of the Plan") clarifies the governance model provided for by the Plan which, while confirming the central role of *Cabina di regia nazionale* (a National Steering Committee in charge of political planning, coordination, monitoring and verification), appoints **to the Regions and Autonomous Provinces the task of implementing a territorial governance plan**, in order to guarantee the application of *a standardized and simplified system* and maintain *the coordination of all the entities involved in the relevant territory*.

In this regard, it is specified the opportunity to "*... create a network of the various entities that, in various ways, work to prevent and combat male violence against women: these networks are to be formalized through specific institutional memoranda of understanding: these protocols must be inspired by the principle of private-public partnership and, therefore, all relevant entities must be fully involved*".

The level of territorial governance is identified in the "territorial anti-violence networks" which must guarantee "*the operational connection and the collaboration between all the general and specialized services operating in the field of prevention, protection and combating of male violence against women (anti-violence centers, women's shelters, local social and health services, law enforcement agencies, judiciary, hospitals, other institutional subjects and qualified subjects of the third sector, labour services<sup>28</sup>)*".

The Centers / programmes for male perpetrators of violence are not specifically indicated as part of the "anti-violence territorial networks" and, although it is clear the need for a connection / collaboration between the subjects operating in the field of prevention and combating violence, no specific references are made to any collaboration between anti-violence centers (and / or services

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<sup>28</sup> Given the importance of local networks, the Department for Equal Opportunities, in cooperation with Regions and national associations working on the phenomenon, is conducting a survey on **good collaboration practices within local networks** in order to elaborate specific national Guidelines to foster the implementation of efficient and appropriate collaboration protocols.



that operate to support victims) and programmes for perpetrators and, consequently, to the operational procedures to implement these collaborations.

In conclusion: Italian legislation highlights and reiterates on several occasions the importance of effective collaboration between the various services, both public and private, which in different ways deal with prevention and combating of gender-based violence.

The analysis of the official documents shows that the collaboration between Centers dealing with combating gender-based violence (in particular Anti-violence centers and programmes for perpetrators) is very clear in the general framework, but is lacking in details. This collaboration is considered important and it is highly recommended, but no methodological indication is given on how to implement it.

## 2.4 The Regional legislation

In order to implement what is provided by the “National strategic plan on men's violence against women 2017-2020” (see above) the **Region of Veneto**, leading of A.S.A.P. project, equipped (as other Italian Regions) with an own specific Law (**Regional Law No 5 of 23 April 2013 – “Regional interventions to prevent and combat violence against women”<sup>29</sup>**), which recalls the mandates of national Law.

In Article 1, it is underlined that this law originates in agreement with the principles of Italian Constitution, with the current legislation, with U.N., W.H.O. resolutions and E.U. programmes, recognizing that “...every form of violence against women represents a violation of fundamental human rights to life, dignity, freedom, safety, physical and psychic integrity, and it also affirms its structural nature, as it is based on gender, and underlines how women, also minor girls, are often exposed to serious forms of violence, that represent a serious violation of human rights and the main obstacle to the achievement of gender equality.”

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<sup>29</sup> <https://bur.regione.veneto.it/BurVServices/pubblica/DettaglioLegge.aspx?id=248344>



Region of Veneto is committing to promote actions to support women victims of violence, and their sons and daughters (Articles 1 and 2), structured services as Anti-violence Centers and Shelters (Articles 3, 4 and 5), trainings, instruments and inter-institutions strategies, also about prevention, that have to occur in cooperation with local authorities, Police Forces, Judiciary, Prefecture, National Healthcare System, educational institutions and associations.

For this reason, to guarantee in the best possible way the coordination of actions and the monitoring of the phenomenon, it was established among the Regional Council the “Regional coordination task-force to prevent and combat violence against women” (Article 8).

Law No. 5 of 2013 was later adjusted in the **Regional Law No. 22 of 21 June 2018**<sup>30</sup> (Amendments to the Regional Law No 5 of 23 April 2013, “Actions to prevent and combat violence against women”), currently in force.

In Article 2 (4-ter), it is declared that the Region, as provided in Article 1, promotes “*interventions of rehabilitation of people guilty of violent behaviors as in national legislation and to national implementation actions*”.

The current Law mentions, consistent with national provisions, the need to promote actions addressed to perpetrators; it doesn't go into the details, but it redirects to normative framework and national dispositions.

Legislation adopted by several Italian Regions has spoken about the topic of working with perpetrators, that has to be done through specific programmes (locally or within penal institutions) in cooperation with local victims support services.

Here are a few examples:

- Region of **Campania** (Article 4, 2, Regional Law No. 2 of 2011): “*The Region promotes the training and update of social and healthcare professionals who get in touch with perpetrators, and fosters the creation of specialized teams*”;

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<sup>30</sup> <https://bur.regione.veneto.it/BurVServices/pubblica/DettaglioLegge.aspx?id=372638>

- Region of **Sardegna** (Article 5, 2-ter and quater): *“The Anti-violence Centers can promote project aimed to prevention and rehabilitation of perpetrators of domestic violence and stalking”, “The Anti-violence Centers cooperate with in charge structures within the regional healthcare system in the event it is necessary an health action towards the offender”;*
- Region of **Lazio** (Article 2, p, Regional Law No. 4 of 2014): *“To the implementation of the purposes as provided in Article 1, the Region, within the available human, instrumental and financial resources, in particular promotes specific programs, also in prison, addressed to rehabilitate perpetrators, indicated by judicial bodies or social professionals and directed to those who ask for them”;*
- Region of **Puglia** (Article 5, 1 h, I; Article 16, 4e Regional Law No. 29 of 2014): *“...promotes the creation of specific treatment programs for perpetrators, also through cooperation agreements with the Department of Prison Administration; it arranges, in coherently addition to local social planning, integrated three-years action plans to combat gender violence, which have to be funded by all different actors involved”... “Anti-violence programs provide for: specific route projects, also therapeutic, towards perpetrators”;*<sup>31</sup>
- Region of **Toscana** is engaged in a coordination that published in 2016 the second study on Centers for perpetrators within the “Eighth Report on gender violence in Tuscany”<sup>32</sup>.

Article 5 of this Report (“Centers for perpetrators of violence”) tells that:

*“Extraordinary Action Plan against Sexual and Gender-based Violence (from now on “Extraordinary Action Plan”) recognizes the importance of providing rehabilitation actions for perpetrators, in line with Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention. In recent years, institutions and other actors working in the field have focused almost exclusively on projects aimed to safeguard, protect and reintegrate the victims of violence.*

*But this approach has nevertheless underestimated the importance of interventions also towards the other person taking part in the violence within close relationships, the man,*

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<sup>31</sup> “WeWorld, Diritti contro la violenza. Le leggi regionali sulla violenza contro le donne. Analisi comparata”, a cura di Maria Merelli, Milano, 2015

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.regione.toscana.it/-/ottavo-rapporto-sulla-violenza-di-genere-in-toscana-anno-2016>

*in order to combat reoffending, to prevent and to raise awareness, also because violence against women is [...] “a social phenomenon that comes from heritages of patriarchal attitudes seeing women as subjects with a “subordinate” role, and that is also the expression of men inability to accept and admit the independence and the freedom of women to self-determination... the theme of Centers for perpetrators of gender violence has been first faced in this Report in the IV edition, through an analysis of CAM-Center for men perpetrators of Violence, which at that time was one of the pioneering experience at national level.*

*In the following years, there has been an evolution of these Services, even in Tuscany, where have been opened three Services of this kind (“Association LUI” in Livorno, “Association Nuovo Maschile” in Pisa, “SAM-Counselling office for perpetrators” in Lucca), that started to work both on rehabilitation projects for offenders and organization of raise-awareness activities about male violence and, more broadly, about the role of man in the society. This to the aim of influence on deeply-rooted cultural models based on patriarchy and the supremacy of man over woman.*

*Starting from the VI Tuscany Report on gender violence, the theme and the data of Centers for perpetrators have been taken permanently part in the analysis of the Regional Social Monitoring Center, adding an important element to understand the phenomenon. So far, the part concerning the perpetrators has been the less studied (not only within this Report), both about offenders features and about the methodology used by the Centers for men perpetrators of domestic violence.*

*Last year, thanks to a close cooperation with the four Services in Tuscany, the team of the Monitoring Centre elaborated an homogeneous system of data collection, in order to address the need for the study of the phenomenon through shared categories and outline the results.”*

In regard to the object of the current study, it is particularly interesting the normative framework in **Region of Emilia-Romagna.**

In the Regional Law No. 6 of 27 June 2014 (*“Framework law to support gender quality and combat gender discriminations”*), within the Section V (*“Guidelines to prevent gender violence”*) in Article 20 (*“Actions for male perpetrators”*) it is stated: *“The Region, in order to promote the achievement of gender equality as a tool to prevent violence against women, promotes, also in cooperation with local health districts, specific and experimental projects and services for men perpetrators, with the aim to give them different ways to act in their close relationships without using violence”*.

To supplement and recall the above mentioned legislation and the other local policy instruments, the *“Regional Plan against gender violence”*<sup>33</sup> (2016) has the aim to *“prevent and combat the violence against women and activate an effective protection system”*.

In the Regional Law there are several indications about the work with offenders: programmes and services working with men perpetrators (**public**, such as *“... Family Counsellings and LDV – Liberi dalla violenza [Free from violence, Ed.] – for the treatment of men perpetrators of violence...”*; **private**, such as *“... subjects that carry out intervention and treatment programs addressed to men perpetrators of violence”*) are considered part of local prevention (Article 2.1 *“Actors of the prevention network”*) and protection networks (Article 3.1 *“Actors of the protection network”*).

In Chapter 2.2.1 e) (*“Communication actions”*) it is expected the *“implementation of communication actions targeting effective or potential male perpetrators”* in order to *“promote the change of authors of violent behaviors”*.

In Chapter 3.2 (*“Protection actions”*) the taking care of perpetrators of violence is indicated as a possible protection instrument – in addition to the others – that has to be done according to standards and requirements of *“Guidelines for the reception of women victims of violence”*.

In Chapter 3.2.4 a) (*“Actions targeting the treatment of men perpetrators of violence”*) it is detected as a possible strategy the *“...implementation of services targeting the perpetrators of domestic violence, in order to create individual and group programmes aimed to emerge from violence”, in order to “consolidate actions taken to combat gender violence and reoffending”*.

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<sup>33</sup> <http://bur.regione.emilia-romagna.it/dettaglio-inserzione?i=4e3629633c18407f8b2f0a2d5a80845d>

Chapter 5 (“Intervention and treatment programs for men perpetrators of violence”) described in detail “characteristics and methodology which has to be adopted in order to guarantee the quality of intervention programs, both from public and private Centers”, referring to the “Guidelines to develop standards for programmes working with perpetrators of domestic violence” of W.W.P.-EN (2004)<sup>34</sup>.

Then the document goes into detail about intervention goals (Chapter 5.1), preconditions to work with perpetrators (Chapter 5.2), risk assessment (Chapter 5.3), staff training (Chapter 5.4) and methodology (Chapter 5.5).

In particular, in Chapter 5.2 paragraph c), **cooperation with services specialized in the support of women and children is identified as a necessary precondition to work with perpetrators** (“*There have to be the following prerequisites to working with men perpetrators of violence: cooperation with services specialized in the support of women and children and with the local services and associations, including programmes for prisoners. Programmes for perpetrators are only a part of a wider system to combat and prevent violence against women, which includes Social and Healthcare Services, Police Forces, justice system and Child Services. The programmes go ahead is contingent upon on the presence of a women support Centre*”).

Finally, in Chapter 6 (“Executive actions”) is one more time discussed the topic of professional training (Chapter 6.1) and it is established the “Regional Monitoring Centre for gender violence” (Chapter 6.1 - d) which “... *acquires from the Centers for perpetrators of violence the data concerning the accesses, drop out, actual admittances, types of programmes available, user typology, and interactions with local service network, with particular reference to cooperation with Anti-violence Centres and Children Social Services*”.

To conclude, the normative framework of Region of Emilia-Romagna examines in depth the topic of programmes and services for perpetrators, considering them as a fundamental point within preventive and combating strategies against male violence on women.

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<sup>34</sup> Linee Guida per lo sviluppo di standard per i programmi che operano con uomini perpetuatori di violenza domestica, Versione 1, dichiarazione del rispetto dei principi e standard minimi di pratica 2004, - Work with Perpetrators of domestic violence in Europe- Daphne II Project 2008- [www.work-with-perpetrators.eu](http://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu)



It mentions several times the need for a cooperation with Children and Women Services, even if it doesn't get into the methodologies and procedures through which this cooperation has to be implemented.

### **3 THE ANTI-VIOLENCE CENTERS**

In Italy, Anti-violence Centers represent the first entity that historically started dealing with the phenomenon of male violence against women in a structured and organized manner.

They have a quite recent history: they arise from considerations within women's liberation movement of the 1970s, from the experience of UDI (Unione Donne in Italia - Women's Union in Italy, established in 1945) and from the experience of the feminist movement, both social and political experiences that have profoundly marked the social and cultural balance of our country.

In self-awareness groups, women built a space for reflection and for questioning the socially constructed roles of women, starting from their own personal experiences.

This raised awareness of the structural nature of male violence against women, and, on the other hand, it also gave women the possibility to share within the groups the abusive experiences there hadn't been able to tell before.

These experiences were the basis for the first experiments: the first "Casa delle Donne" (Women's House) opened in 1989 (after this, in a single decade, 70 other Antiviolence Centers were established), alongside with the first women's shelters, in which women victims of violence perpetrated by their partners were welcomed by other women, who offered them protection and support, within a joint and mutual relationship.

The notion of *relationship between women* is an essential assumption on which Anti-violence Centres and their statutes are still based: the operators are all female, since the gender difference is one of the foundations of the relationship between the hosting woman and the hosted woman.



Another key concept is the consideration of violence against women as a deeply rooted social and cultural phenomenon, *"which has roots in the inequality of power between genders"*<sup>35</sup>.

Anti-violence Centers strongly reject any psychological interpretation of the phenomenon and for the same reason, they deem emergency interventions ineffective, given that violence against women isn't in fact considered an emergency but rather a structural phenomenon (as clearly stated by "Istanbul Convention").

Anonymity and secrecy are two founding principles of every Anti-violence Center and Shelter.

The methodology is based on the relationship between women and on the respect for the pace and timing of the victim, who is the protagonist of each and every decision regarding her situation. Each individual plan is therefore decided together with the victim and tailored to her need, and each step is agreed and shared with her.

All the women working at the Anti-violence Centers and Shelters have specific expertise on violence and receive proper and continuous training. This "power inequality" is used to the exclusive advantage of the victim.

*"The relationship that develops between the woman who listens and the woman who tells her story, allows the latter to achieve change and a deeper awareness of herself and her own abilities.*

*A self-fulfilment process, rather than a changing process, starts; what is potentially and realistically possible to pursue for the woman is facilitated .*

*Women are not offered pre-established solutions, but specific support and adequate information, so that they can find the right solution for themselves and their situation.*

*The methodology establishes that every action (complaint, separation, activation of services, etc.) can only be undertaken with the consent of the woman and that everything is done for her advantage, through an approach that allows the woman to*

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<sup>35</sup>[https://www.direcontrolaviolenza.it/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Carta\\_della\\_Rete\\_Nazionale\\_dei\\_Centri\\_antiviolenza\\_e\\_delle\\_Case\\_delle\\_donne.pdf](https://www.direcontrolaviolenza.it/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Carta_della_Rete_Nazionale_dei_Centri_antiviolenza_e_delle_Case_delle_donne.pdf)

*talk about herself, giving her the possibility of believing in herself, according to the assumptions of protection, confidentiality and non-judgment by the operators.* <sup>36</sup>

All the activities of the Anti-violence Centers are organized according to the concepts of *empowerment*, autonomy and self-determination. These activities include not only telephone helpline and/or direct reception, psychological support and legal assistance, but also awareness-raising, promotion and training interventions, aimed at preventing and combating violence against women on a cultural and social level.

Also important is the role played by the Centers in creating, weaving and strengthening formal and informal networks with different civil and institutional subjects and between the individuals themselves.

To summarize, the main services offered by Anti-violence Centers are:

- *telephone helpline*
- *interviews*
- *information and legal advice*
- *psychological counseling*
- *assistance with finding an accommodation*
- *assistance with finding a job*
- *assistance in the use of services, in administrative-bureaucratic procedures, in the judicial process*
- *support and self-help groups*
- *specific interventions for migrant women and for women victims of sexual exploitation and trafficking*
- *housing in shelters*
- *projects with the women's children, victims of witnessing violence.*

Anti-violence centers also offer the following services:

- *awareness-raising and prevention activities*

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<sup>36</sup>(<https://www.direcontrolaviolenza.it/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/LizKelly-DefinizioneCentroAntiviolenza.pdf>)

- *creation of working tables, and regional, national and international networks*
- *data collection*
- *research*
- *training for healthcare workers, for judicial and law enforcement officers.*<sup>37</sup>

All services offered to women are free of charge.

In 2018<sup>38</sup> ISTAT (Italian National Institute of Statistics) conducted the first survey on the services provided by Italian Anti-violence Centers, according to which, in 2017 more than 49,000 women addressed to the 253 Centers in Italy.

According to the research, most of the Anti-violence Centers (85.8%) work in a network with other subjects active against gender-based violence. Only some of them (around 80) belong to the national association Di.Re. (Women's Network against violence)<sup>39</sup>, established in 2008 as a natural continuation of the *Network of Anti-Violence Centers and Women's Shelters*, that met for the first time in Bologna in 1991.

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<sup>37</sup><https://www.direcontrolaviolenza.it/i-centri-antiviolenza/>

<sup>38</sup><https://www.istat.it/it/archivio/224083>

<sup>39</sup><https://www.direcontrolaviolenza.it/>



## 4 INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES FOR MEN PERPETRATORS OF VIOLENCE

### 4.1 C.A.M. – Centro di Ascolto per Uomini Maltrattanti<sup>40</sup>

C.A.M. is the first Italian Center that considered the implementation within our Country of programs specialized in the treatment of men perpetrators of domestic and gender violence.

It was established in 2009 in the city of Florence, and it is involved in combating gender violence through the implementation of programmes addressed to perpetrators (first telephone contact, individual assessment, psychoeducational and follow-up groups, phone contacts with partners victim of violence).

It also carries out training and raising-awareness activities, clinical supervision, consultations, and publications on the theme.

C.A.M. is currently on national territory through its local branches, besides Florence: Ferrara, Roma, Monteleone, Olbia, Sassari, Cremona, Pistoia and Montecatini). It is part of the interministerial Task Force (specifically within Working Table on perpetrators treatment) and it is a founding member of WWP-EN (Work with perpetrators – European network<sup>41</sup>) and Re.li.ve. (see below).

The Mission of C.A.M., as provided by its Charter, is “...to foster the counter, actions and prevention concerning violence against women and children, through the implementation of treatment programs addressing men perpetrators of violence in close relationships, with a particular focus on fatherhood”.

The purpose is “...to eliminate male violence against women and children, to improve the safety of victims of violence and to force a cultural shift within social and health care, education and civil rights”.

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<sup>40</sup><http://www.centrouominimaltrattanti.org/>

<sup>41</sup><https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/>



C.A.M. Guidelines recall, right from the start, the main European recommendations on male violence against women, referring specifically to the work with perpetrators.

In this regard, it is mentioned the call of Council of Europe (Recommendation Rec (2002) 5 of the Committee of Ministers on the Protection of Women against Violence, paragraphs 50 to 53, “Intervention programmes for the perpetrators of violence”), which states that member Countries should:

- *“organize intervention programmes designed to encourage perpetrators of violence to adopt a violence-free pattern of behavior by helping them to become aware of their acts and recognize their responsibility;*
- *provide the perpetrator with the possibility to follow intervention programmes, not as an alternative to sentence, but as an additional measure aiming at preventing violence; participation in such programmes should be offered on a voluntary basis;*
- *consider establishing specialized state-approved intervention Centers for violent men and support Centers initiated by NGOs and associations within the resources available;*
- *ensure co-operation and co-ordination between intervention programmes directed towards men and those dealing with the protection of women.”*

This last suggestion is recalled in the Section of the Mission, where it is claimed that, in order to achieve the set goals (“...to eliminate male violence against women through the implementation of programmes addressing the perpetrators, to improve the safety of victims of violence and to force a cultural shift”) it is fundamental “...to work in close cooperation with **Anti-violence Centers, in order to guarantee the safety of women/partner victims of violence and to foster an integrated and holistic approach to the violence**”.

In the Section “Responsibility of treatment programmes” it is claimed that such programmes “...are part of a complex framework of separated and multidisciplinary interventions, which have to be integrated in a social overall response to end violence against women”, and that they have to be implemented “... where there have already been structured **Anti-violence Centers and Shelters for women and children victims of violence.**”

The first commitment of C.A.M. (“The commitment of Centro di ascolto per uomiminaltrattanti) is *“...to set up cooperation with local Anti-violence Centers in order to support, inform and welcome the victims”*.

#### 4.2 RELIVE – Relazioni Libere dalle Violenze<sup>42</sup>

RELIVE – Relazioni Libere dalle Violenze [Relationships free from violence, Ed.] is a national association born in 2014, which formalized the collaboration between the first 9 Italian Centers for perpetrators of domestic violence, in order to *“create and promote a national network to combat gender violence, particularly violence against women”*.

In particular, Relive has the aim to *“foster and implement programmes to prevent domestic violence and to support and treat perpetrators, **working in close cooperation and collaboration with victims services** (as sanctioned in Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention)”*.

Relive association has now 21 Centers, dislocated across various Italian Regions.

**“National Guidelines for treatment programmes for men perpetrators of violence against women in close relationships<sup>43</sup>”**, written by founder Centers, entirely recall the previous Guidelines of Italian Coordination of Treatment Centers for Perpetrators, inspired in turn by European Guidelines of “Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence in Europe – WWP<sup>44</sup>”.

In the introduction it is clarified that the Guidelines are *“...directed to guarantee a high-quality work, and, in particular, to ensure the safety of women and children, limiting the risk that inappropriate interventions on perpetrators could have negative consequences for women and children.”*

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<sup>42</sup>[http://www.associazionerelive.it/joomla/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1&Itemid=101](http://www.associazionerelive.it/joomla/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1&Itemid=101)

<sup>43</sup><http://www.associazionerelive.it/joomla/images/LineeGuidaRelivea.pdf>

<sup>44</sup>Si veda la Dichiarazione del rispetto dei principi e standard minimi di pratica 2004, WWP – Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence in Europe – Daphne II Project 2006 – 2008; [www.work-with-perpetrators.eu](http://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu)



One paragraph of the Chapter “Preconditions to work with men perpetrators of domestic violence” is dedicated to the theme of collaboration with local network (“Cooperation with support services for women and children and with local intervention systems”). This section clarifies that *“perpetrators programmes represent only a part of a wider intervention system to combat violence against women, and **should be implemented in synergy with the specialized support services for women**”*, and that *“the implementation of a Center for perpetrators of violence is subordinated to the structured presence of women support services”*.

Moreover, programmes *“have to be part of an integrated intervention system, and have to actively participate in collaborations and network strategies against gender violence; it is therefore important the close cooperation with services supporting women victims of violence, and their children”*.

In conclusion, these Guidelines offer a methodological suggestion about how to create this cooperation, that has to be implemented *“... through the inclusion, as experts, of representatives from women support services in the directive and advisory boards of perpetrators programmes”*.

## **5 RESEARCH ON INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES FOR MALE PERPETRATORS OF VIOLENCE**

### **5.1 "The Centers for Male Perpetrators of Violence Against Women in Italy"<sup>45</sup>**

The research published in January 2017 by "LeNove" (an association that works in the field of sociological and historical research) was carried out to provide an update on the Centers operating with perpetrators in Italy. The Association carried out two other surveys in October 2014 and in 2011-2012 (published in the volume "The dark side of men", edited by the association<sup>46</sup>).

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<sup>45</sup> [www.lenove.org/newsite/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Ricerca\\_centri\\_per\\_uomini.pdf](http://www.lenove.org/newsite/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Ricerca_centri_per_uomini.pdf)

<sup>46</sup> “Il lato oscuro degli uomini .La violenza maschile contro le donne: modelli culturali di intervento”, M. Paci, M. Di Masi (a cura di), 2013, Sessismo e razzismo

The goal of the survey was to track any change both in the characteristics and in the functioning of the programmes, and in the public opinion.

33 Centers were involved in the survey carried out through a questionnaire articulated in 4 sections (1 Description of the service; 2 Activities of the service; 3 involvement of the victim; 4 Local Anti-violence network). Section n.4 of the questionnaire made specific reference *to the working procedures within Networks and with the Anti-violence centers* in the relevant territory.

The research mentions the Regional Plan of Regione Emilia-Romagna (see above) which states that "*the activation of the programmes [for perpetrators] must be subordinated to the presence of a support center for women victims of violence*" and this observation is defined as "*... a clear sign not only of the common purpose of the two types of structures, one of which - the Antiviolence center - acts as a focal point, as well as the need to create a network of anti-violence services in the territory in which the common work can benefit from an operational integration*".

The survey also stresses that other Italian Regions are legislating about this: it's a signal that allows us to reiterate that "*...the Centers aimed at the recovery of perpetrators are set within an institutional framework that legitimates their prevention purpose together with anti-violence centers, and that promotes their action*".

Paragraph 3.5 ("The work with the territorial Networks and the Anti-violence Centers") of chapter n.3 ("The organization of work"), shows that, the relationships with Anti-violence Centers are increasingly widespread and stable: "*The answers say that, in most cases, the habit of talking to and confronting each other rose from the practice of every day's work, in spite of the (...) initial reluctance (perhaps based on preconceptions). Undoubtedly, in several cases, the consolidation of the activity of the Centers for perpetrators, together with a greater social attention on prevention, show the effectiveness of these centers as part of that anti-violence network that has become an essential protection service on the territory*".

Among the Centers for perpetrators interviewed, 55% declare that they have a permanent collaboration with anti-violence centers; 27% an occasional collaboration, and the remaining 18% do not have any form of collaboration.

For the majority (61%), the synergy with the territorial network has become a regular working practice, and in 32% of cases the network has been formalized.

The research cites the note from the Department of Criminology of the University of Milan entitled "Proposal for an integrated model of intervention aimed at the recovery / reintegration of men perpetrators of violence (Proposta per un modello integrato di intervento finalizzato al recupero/reinserimento degli uomini autori di violenza)" where it states that: *"The effectiveness of the intervention programmes aimed at men depends decisively on the overall system of intervention in which they are inserted and, therefore, on the reactions and responses of each of the subjects that make up the network.. . (...) **The connection between Centers for perpetrators and Centers for victims can, in fact, ensure a better assessment of the abusive behavior and of its level of severity; the establishment of joint procedures fosters the adoption of appropriate protection and safety measures for the victims and the prevention of recidivism**"*.

In this regard, the paper also quotes the "European Guidelines to develop standards for programmes that work with perpetrators of domestic violence"<sup>47</sup>: *"It is particularly important to work closely with services for women victims of violence and their children to ensure their safety and ensure an integrated approach to domestic violence"*.

Therefore, the research shows specific attention to collaborations with the territorial network of services that operate to prevent and combat gender-based violence, with specific regard to relations with anti-violence centers. There is no in-depth detail on the practical implementation of these collaborations.

## 5.2 Survey on the Centers, anti-violence services and programmes for perpetrators<sup>48</sup>

Given the provisions of the "National Strategic Plan on male violence against women 2017-2020" (see above), in compliance with article 16 of the "Istanbul Convention", the DEO Department for Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers undertook to allocate specific

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<sup>47</sup>WPP – Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence in Europe – Daphne II Project 2006 - 2008

<sup>48</sup><https://www.istat.it/it/violenza-sulle-donne/la-fuoriuscita-dalla-violenza/programmi-per-autori-di-reato>

resources for the support of prevention, recovery and treatment programmes for perpetrators and to provide a mapping of the Centers for perpetrators active on the national territory.

With respect to this last point, in the period September - November 2018, the IRPPS-CNR (National Research Council-Institute for Research on Population and Social Policies) carried out a survey on centers and services against violence, including centers for perpetrators operating in Italy. The survey reached a total of 59 centers, which altogether provide 76 "access points" (branches) in Italy.

In 2017, a total of 726 men joined the programmes: 56% of them were in a stable relationship; 72% were fathers to minor children; 76% of them had a stable employment ; 71% were Italian. Furthermore, only 39% of them were detainees, 7% were in the care of mental health services and 13% of addiction services.

The majority of the centers offer free services, including telephone helpline, individual and group psychotherapy, parenting support, orientation to local services.

Regarding the field of interest of this Report, **a good part of the programmes (34) declares to be part of a Territorial Anti-violence Network** and 8 of them declare to be part of more than one Network.

On the other hand, 17 centers declare that they **are not part of any network with services for women victims of violence**, while 5 centers justify this by stating that there are no Anti-violence Networks in their territory.

The survey did not include any specific question on the methods of collaboration between services adopted within the Networks.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

The "Istanbul Convention" (2011) is the first legally binding document on preventing and combating male violence against women and domestic violence, which are considered structural

phenomena rooted in the social and cultural discrimination by men against women throughout history.

Violence against women is described as a violation of human rights, and the purpose of the Convention is to work to protect women and children and prevent, prosecute and eliminate all forms of violence against them. Among preventive actions, great relevance is given to the work with male perpetrators of violence.

Italian legislation, with Law No. 119 / 2013 (and the related regional laws) takes up the provisions of the "Istanbul Convention" regarding the definition of gender-based violence, the various forms of violence, its causal factors, the prevention and support measures for victims (women and minors).

It also provides for the introduction of protection measures for victims, not only for stalking, but for other crimes too. One of the new protection measures is the possibility for the Questore (Police Authority) to issue a warning to the perpetrator, without the need for a complaint by the victim. This is an important addition to the existing punitive and preventive actions that can be carried out to protect the victim(s) of domestic violence or maltreatment.

In this framework, in 2015 Italian Government approved the “Extraordinary action plan against sexual and gender-based violence” (2015–2017), followed by the “National strategic plan on male violence against women "(2017-2020).

The two plans reiterate the need to activate interventions for the rehabilitation and treatment of perpetrators of violence, in particular through the cooperation between the Centers for perpetrators and the public and private networks of services for the victims. These collaborations should be formalized through conventions or protocols establishing information-sharing procedures and assessment methods for the measures to be undertaken.

The limits and fragility of this process have also been underlined: the recent "Shadow Report" sent to GREVIO in 2018, highlights the existing critical issues : a) on the political level, issues related to the implementation of the "National Plans" (eg emergency and extraordinary measures, lack of practical indications regarding the allocation of economic resources, incomplete recognition of Anti-violence Centers and Shelters as key players in the welfare networks for the prevention and



combating of this phenomenon; uncertain funding available for the various structures that operate in this field etc. ...); b) on the prevention level (eg necessity to map the Centers for perpetrators of violence and establish operational guidelines; insufficiency and/or lack of effectiveness of the awareness-raising initiatives not only on violence but also on gender differences etc. ... ); c) on the protection level (eg inadequate implementation of the existing regulatory and legal measures; frequent episodes of "secondary victimization" due to the non-standardized training of professionals working in the investigating and judicial sector; number of Shelters significantly lower than international standards etc. ...). Finally, the Report detects two main critical areas: the difficulties in assessing the "impact and effectiveness" of the Centers for perpetrators (in the absence of a shared program for evaluating the results) and the lack of definition, both in the national and regional legislation, of the collaboration relationships with local Anti-violence Networks and Anti-violence Centers.

Moving from these considerations, the A.S.A.P. project intends to develop an operational protocol that defines the working and collaboration methods between Programmes for Perpetrators and Anti-violence Centers, within the context of the guidelines drafted by the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence WWP-EN and the Italian association RELIVE.

The first step of the project is a survey on the collaboration between the two types of centers.

The survey is carried out through a specific questionnaire filled out by both types of centers, that focuses on the strengths and weaknesses of the existing collaborations in the three partner Countries.

The hope is that this protocol, which will be tested in the field in the second phase of the project, becomes an operational model of collaboration that makes the work of combating violence and protecting victims more effective and efficient and facilitating collaboration possibilities among the various services through the sharing of values, operational strategies, final objectives, evaluation of results.



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## 4. RESEARCH ON WORKING MODELS IMPLEMENTED IN OTHER EU MEMBER STATES

### 3.1 Report on Working Models Implemented in Other EU Member States

#### Implementing Partner: WWP EN

##### BACKGROUND

In 2016, the European Network for Work with Perpetrators (WWP EN) and its Women's Services Working Group conducted a survey, mapping practice and issues of WWP EN Member organisations on building and strengthening partnerships in work with perpetrators to prevent violence against women and children.

In 2017 the Women's Services Working Group conducted a follow-up survey in order to collect more specific data on the member organisations' good practice or positive problem solving experiences.

The survey focused on the following areas of work:

- (ex)partner support;
- how the programme ensures victim safety in practical ways;
- **partnerships between perpetrator programmes and specialist women's support sector.**

## **PARTNERSHIP WORK**

The report identified the following partnership patterns:

### **1. PPs established through the initiative of women's organisations.**

The Men's centres were initiated as projects of the bigger women's organisations, and developed into semiautonomous or autonomous centres offering specific PPs.

### **2. Different programs - both VSS and PPs – exist within the same organisation.**

This is a very common model and is encountered in both women's organisations and men's centres.

### **3. Established partnership between VSS and organisations providing PPs –** Separate programmes cooperating through the referral of the cases.



## 1. PPs established through the initiative of women's organisations.

**a) Association of Citizens “Buducnost” (Bosnia and Herzegovina):** Men's centre cooperation with the women's counselling centre and the safe house for victims of DV. Both services develop **joint follow-up visits** to the house of the couple when the woman decides to return to the abusive husband.

**b) Albania:** Case management sharing. The cooperation is based on the coordination of service provisions for perpetrators and victims.

**c) Men of 21st century – M21 (Russia):** The cooperation between PPs and VSS is based on different approaches:

- Share the **clients referring** (perpetrators & victims) to each other and when possible work on cases together sharing information and evaluating risk and performances;
- They support each other on **capacity building and sharing knowhow:**
  - M21 seeks the crisis centre's expertise on how to **motivate** M21's clients while the Crisis Centre for Women needs M21's help and advice in regard to **risk evaluation**.
  - Crisis centre “tell (M21) about feelings and emotional experiences of victims which (M21) discusses with (their) clients”.
  - Cooperation is based on **joint activities to enhance the visibility** of the problem of DV, development of joint projects, **trainings** as well as **methodological materials** & standards

## 2. Different programs - both VSS and PPs – exist within the same organisation.

**a) Association NAIA (Bulgaria):** supports victims of DV providing social, psychological and legal assistance as well as applying the programme for work with perpetrator of DV. The partnership work between the two programmes is implemented through the development of **couple's therapy** when the case demands it or when it is required by other institutions to work with the whole family (especially when children are involved).

**b) Caledonian System (Scotland):** fully integrates services for men, women and children. The three parts of the services are managed within the same structure.

Any system of domestic abuse intervention needs to address three distinct clusters of factors:

- **men's risks and strengths** – through men's PP to assess and address men's risks and to build on their strengths;
- **women's and children's vulnerabilities and strengths** – through women and children services to aim to understand and address women's and children's vulnerabilities and increase their strengths; and
- **service-generated risks** – through effective protocols for multi-agency working.





The system is at its most effective where all the three clusters are addressed through the integrated services.

The **integration** occurs at many levels:

1. The **funding** of the different services all comes from the Scottish Government;
2. The **workers are managed** through the same line management structure;
3. In most areas women's workers **share an office space** with men's workers;
4. Men's workers and women's workers **meet formally to discuss** all families they are working with on a regular basis;

**5. Information given by women informs the work with men** based on a very clear practice in relation to confidentiality and safety. The **WSS provides:**

- **safety-planning,**
- **support and advocacy** services to women being subjected to violence.
- **women feedback** on progress made by the men or absence of any progress, as well as on the developments in their own lives, especially in terms of their access to justice, autonomy, rehabilitation/recovery and safety.

### 3. Established partnership between VSS and organisations providing PPs

a) **Anti-Violence programme in Vienna (Austria)** is carried out in partnership between the Domestic Violence Intervention centre and Men's Centre, which means, "that the programme is run together and the decisions are carried out jointly".

b) **Domestic Violence Intervention Centre (Austria):** principle that "partnership does not exist without equality". The Anti-Violence programme is carried out in partnership and together with the Men's Centre that means that:

- The **programme is managed together by both centres** and
- Both **decide together on admission to – and termination of – the programme.**

- The programme is **presented together** by the Domestic Violence Intervention Centre and Men's Centre in order to **make the partnership approach visible** and avoid the devaluation of women's work.



## 3.2 Research on National working models and other EU countries best practices

### **Implementing partner: BGRF**

**Legal and policy framework for work with perpetrators. Key stakeholders, NGOs and professionals, link with women's NGOs dealing with VAW and protection of victims.**

**Main notions, concepts, elements of future experimental protocol.**

**Main characteristics of programmes for work with perpetrators.**

**The detailed mapping in the three partner countries, with additions from mapping done in previous period by the WWP-EN shows the following results main and trends, subject to further discussion:**

#### **1. Common understanding on main notions and definitions. Role of Human Rights standards.**

**The main notions and definitions on VAW, GBV and Domestic violence are based on the definitions and notions contained in regional standards and universal standards of Human Rights and against VAW: the Istanbul convention and other CoE standards and documents, the CEDAW Convention, the EU standards. In Italy these references and connections to the Istanbul Convention are the strongest as they first ratified it, less strong are the links in Croatia which ratified relatively recently the IC and the formal reference is not existent for Bulgaria where a painful process of rejection of the IC took place.**

**According to Article 3 of the Council of Europe Convention on the prevention and combating of violence against of women and domestic violence"<sup>49</sup> (Istanbul, 7 April 2011, in force since August 2014):**

Violence against women" is "... a violation of human rights and a form of discrimination against women and shall mean all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life"

Domestic violence" is "...all acts of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence that occur within the family or domestic unit or between former or current spouses or partners, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim"

Violence against women based on gender" as "...any violence directed against a woman as such, or affecting women disproportionately" , meaning the term "women" even girls under the age of 18 and with the term "gender" the set of "...roles, behaviors, activities and socially constructed attributes that a given society considers appropriate for women and men".

**Despite the fact that Bulgaria has only signed the IC, there is agreement, like in the other countries about the main definitions given and among the NGOs and other operators from partner countries on these terms. It is translated in practice also in the work on programmes for protection of victims and programmes for treatment of perpetrators of violence.**

**Therefore the provisions of the Istanbul Convention on the work with perpetrators of domestic violence (Art.16) as a form of prevention and also as part of the services related to those for victims of violence make part of the common denominator of work of the partners on these issues. It is equally valid also for the case of Bulgaria where these programmes, as well as in the other countries, started and are developing according to the principles of the Convention.**

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<sup>49</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/istanbul-convention/text-of-the-convention>

**Art. 16 (Preventive intervention and treatment programmes)** states as follows:

1. *Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to set up or support programmes aimed at teaching perpetrators of domestic violence to adopt non-violent behaviour in interpersonal relationships with a view to preventing further violence and changing violent behavioural patterns.*
2. *Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to set up or support treatment programmes aimed at preventing perpetrators, in particular sex offenders, from re-offending.*
3. *In taking the measures referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2, Parties shall ensure that the safety of, support for and the human rights of victims are of primary concern and that, where appropriate, **these programmes are set up and implemented in close coordination with specialist support services for victims.***

In this regard, in addition to the concrete provisions of the IC the partners recall the Council of Europe (Recommendation Rec (2002) 5 of the Committee of Ministers on the Protection of Women against Violence, paragraphs 50 to 53, “Intervention programmes for the perpetrators of violence”), which complements the provisions and state that member Countries should:

- *organize intervention programmes designed to encourage perpetrators of violence to adopt a violence-free pattern of behavior by helping them to become aware of their acts and recognize their responsibility;*
- *provide the perpetrator with the possibility to follow intervention programmes, not as an alternative to sentence, but as an additional measure aiming at preventing violence; participation in such programmes should be offered on a voluntary basis;*
- *consider establishing specialized state-approved intervention Centers for violent men and support Centers initiated by NGOs and associations within the resources available;*
- *ensure co-operation and co-ordination between intervention programmes directed towards men and those dealing with the protection of women.”*

**These are the main notions and principles to which the partners adhere in their work although in the regional standards there are no operational and methodological indications on how to apply these principles and, namely, how to implement this**

**collaboration between the programmes dealing with male perpetrators and those dealing with the prevention of violence and protection of women.**

**The processes and practice in countries, like Italy, show that further development of operational and methodological standards of work with perpetrators, as the current EU project, will contribute to the reporting and compliance with the Istanbul Convention.**

In fact, the information required by GREVIO questionnaire in this regard contains the following questions related to the theme.

*“E. Please provide information on action taken to set up or support programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence as referred to in Article 16, paragraph 1. In particular, please provide details on:*

*1. the overall number of existing programmes, their geographical distribution, the implementing*

*institution/entity/body (prison service, probation service, NGOs, other), their compulsory or voluntary nature, as well as the number of places and the number of perpetrators enrolled annually;*

*2. the measures taken within the framework of these programmes to ensure that the safety of, support for and the human rights of women victims are of primary concern **and that they are implemented in close co-ordination with specialist support services for women victims;***

*3. how a gendered understanding of violence against women has been incorporated in these programmes;*

*4. funding sources and annual amounts for these programmes; and*

*5. measures taken to evaluate their impact.*

*F. Please provide information on action taken to set up or support programmes for sex offenders as referred to in Article 16, paragraph 2.”*



**These principles are confirmed by the practice in other European countries as well.**

For example, *the organisation Move Ireland*, member of the WWP EN sees victim safety and “wellbeing of women and their children, who have experienced violence and abuse” as a core aim of the organisation. *Violence is a perpetrator’s responsibility*, and the PPs need to challenge the perpetrators to take responsibility for their abusive behaviours and to develop non-abusive relationships based on mutual respect. They consider the question of responsibility as a core question of the perpetrator work that goes hand in hand with the issue of victims’ safety.

Similar trends are followed by others as well:

*The Caledonian System (Scotland)* brings up an example of men’s violence against children arguing that, while attempting to meeting the needs of children affected by men’s abuse, the focus should be on the perpetrator’s – father’s – responsibility instead of the mother’s failure to protect.

## **2. Legislative and policy solutions in the different countries**

**The legislation and policy in the partner countries regulate the work with perpetrators in different ways and makes the basis, along with main principles of the IC, for further development of methodology and common strategies and practices.**

### **In Italy,**

the principles above were enshrined in the **Law No. 77 of 27 June 2013** afterwards converted in the **Law No. 119 of 15 October 2013** (*Conversion into law, with amendments, of Law Decree No. 93 of 14 August 2013, about Urgent measures about safety and to combat gender violence, as well as in the area of civil protection and external administration of provinces*), currently in force. It affirms that the support for and the human rights of victims, are of primary concern.

The *Extraordinary Action Plan against Sexual and Gender-based Violence/ 2015- 2017/*, promotes the development and set up, throughout national territory, of actions, based on methodologies consolidated and coherent with specific guidelines, aimed to rehabilitate and support perpetrators of violence behaviors within close relationships, in order to promote their rehabilitation and limit reoffending. The plan provides for territorial agreements and protocols, which may provide coordination procedures between the integrated network formed by the centers supporting

women on their paths out of violence and treatment centers for male perpetrators. Training courses for perpetrators may be carried out in the context of formalized collaborations between the centers for male perpetrators and the network of support services for women, through conventions or protocols which provide for procedures for sharing / collecting information and evaluating the effectiveness of the measures to be taken.

***The National strategic plan on men's violence against women 2017-2020*** was elaborated by the Department for Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers with a mixed working group with the involved Ministries, of the Conference of Regions, of ANCI (National Association of Italian Municipalities), of Police Forces, of trade unions and of women's associations. The strategic plan is aimed also at preventing recidivism, in particular for sex crimes, stalking and violence in the family through treatment of male perpetrators. As objectives are mentioned allocation of specific resources and definition of purposes, methodology and contents of the programmes, with a definition of the professional profiles of the providers, as well as qualitative and quantitative results. It is provided that the Ministry of Justice will draft a national intervention protocol to identify the most effective treatment methods for incarcerated perpetrators of gender-based and sexual violence in the whole stay in the institution, from admission to release.

### **In Croatia**

According to the ***Law on Protection against Domestic Violence*** (Official Gazette No. 70/17, in force since 1st of January 2018), *domestic violence is physical violence; bodily punishment or other forms of humiliating treatment towards children; psychological violence which caused the victim an insult to her dignity or anxiety; sexual harassment; economic violence as a prohibition or disabling of the use of joint or personal property, disposing of personal income or property gained by personal work or inheritance, disabling employment, deprivation of resources for the maintenance of the common household and child care; neglecting the needs of a person with a disability or an elderly person that causes her anxiety or insults her dignity and thereby causes her physical or mental suffering.*

One of the main novelties of the law is that for the first time people with disabilities and older persons stand out as a particularly vulnerable group, and violence against them is defined as a special form of violence.

We note that there is an Act on the Lifelong Partnership of Persons of the Same Sex (Official Gazette No. 92/14), which lays down the principles on which a life partnership is based, which include equality, mutual respect and dignity, mutual assistance and respect for life partners. The law prohibits any form of violence, as well as any form of discrimination, direct and indirect, based on the established life partnership, sexual orientation and gender identity.

**Domestic violence in Croatia is regulated by the misdemeanor and criminal legislation, in 2015 the criminal offense of "Domestic Violence" was reintroduced, which significantly influenced positively the prosecution. By transposing the EU Directive 2012/29 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, in line with the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, ratified by Croatia, the rights of victims of domestic violence are more comprehensively regulated.**

According to the Law on Protection against domestic violence misdemeanor sanctions for protection against family violence include protective measures, fines, imprisonment and other misdemeanor sanctions prescribed by the law governing offenses. The purpose of misdemeanor sanctions is to protect family members exposed to violence, respect for the legal system, and to prevent re-perpetration of family violence through appropriate sanctioning of offenders.

The court may impose the following protective measures on the perpetrator of domestic violence, except the safeguards prescribed by the Misdemeanor Act:

1. **compulsory psychosocial treatment**
2. prohibition of approaching, harassment or spying of the victim
3. relocation from the common household
4. compulsory treatment of addiction.

The protective measure of compulsory psychosocial treatment may be imposed on a perpetrator of family violence to eliminate his or her violent behavior or if there is a danger that he or she might be able to repeat violent behavior in the family. The measure may be determined for a period of at least six months.

In accordance with the *Criminal Code of Croatia*, several security measures can be imposed- compulsory psychiatric treatment, compulsory treatment of addiction, **compulsory psychosocial treatment**, prohibition of performing certain duties or activities, ban for usage of motor vehicles, the prohibition of approaching, harassment and detention, removal from the common household, prohibition of access to the Internet and safeguarding full punishment of imprisonment. **The security measure of psycho- social treatment may be pronounced on a perpetrator who committed a criminal offense with the characteristic of violence, if there is a risk of doing the same or similar offense.** The measure shall be **executed in an institution for the enforcement of a prison sentence or a health institution, or a legal entity or a natural person specializing in the removal of violent behavior.** The measure may be prescribed for up to 2 years.

**The protective measure of psycho- social treatment for perpetrators of domestic violence is pronounced on the basis of the *Law on Protection against Domestic Violence* (Official Gazette No. 70/17) and is conducted in accordance with the provisions of the *Ordinance on the implementation of the protective measure of compulsory psycho-social treatment* (Official Gazette 116/18). The purpose of psycho-social treatment for perpetrators is to prevent further violent behavior of the perpetrator by achieving positive changes in his behavior and to encourage perpetrators to become aware of their violent behavior, to recognize their responsibility and to adopt forms of non- violent behavior. The treatment is carried out in health facilities and with authorized legal or natural persons specializing in the removal of violent behavior. The psycho- social treatment is conducted in health facilities for violent perpetrators who have a positive psychiatric history.**

### *In Bulgaria*

The definition of domestic violence and the respective roles of competent authorities for protection of the victims are given in the civil ***Law on Protection from Domestic Violence from 2005/LPDV/*** and the ***Regulation on the Implementation of the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence*** from 2010.

The law comprises protection against almost all forms of interpersonal violence/ IPV/- married persons, formerly married persons, persons in factual cohabitation and persons having a child in common, except in cases of persons in just close intimate relationship. It regulates the measures for protection of victims of domestic violence and the procedure of their implementation, with focus on the rights of the abused person. The law is gender neutral and does not offer specific protection against GBV and VAW. The Law on Protection from Domestic Violence /LPDV/ creates a remedy for victims of domestic violence in Bulgaria, allowing them to apply for protection before the regional court.

The Law defines domestic violence as *any act of physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or economic violence, as well as the attempt of such violence, forced restriction of privacy, personal freedom and personal rights committed against persons who are in relationship, who are or have been in a family relationship or de facto marital cohabitation. Any domestic violence committed in the presence of the child is considered as a mental and emotional abuse.*

*Any person affected from domestic violence can seek protection under this law when the violence is committed by:*

- 1. spouse or former spouse;*
- 2. a person, who is or has been a in de facto marital cohabitation;*
- 3. person with whom they have a child;*
- 4. ascending;*
- 5. descending;*
- 6. person, with whom there is kinship under lateral line up to the fourth degree included.;*
- 7. person, with whom there is or has been in affinity up to the third degree;*
- 8. guardian, trustee or adoptive parent;*
- 9. ascendant or descendant of the person, with whom they are in a de facto marital cohabitation;*
- 10. a person with whom a parent is or has been in a de facto marital cohabitation.*



The procedure for issuing the order for protection may be established at the request of: 1. the injured person, if above 14 years of age or placed under partial guardianship; 2. brother, sister or a person who is in kinship in a straight line with the victim; 3. guardian of the victim; 4. Director of Directorate "Social assistance " when the victim is a minor, is placed under guardianship or is with disabilities. The complaint is submitted in writing and contains a declaration/ affidavit by the victim on the violence committed, if he/she submits the action himself/herself. It is submitted within one month of the domestic violence act.

The judge may order one or more of the measures for protection against domestic violence provided in the LPDV, which are the following:

1. oblige the perpetrator to refrain from committing domestic violence;
2. the removal of the offender from the jointly occupied dwelling for a period determined by the court;
3. ban the offender from approaching the victim, housing, workplaces and places for social contacts and leisure of the victim under terms and conditions determined by the court
4. determining temporarily the domicile of the child at the parent who is victim or the parent who has not committed violence under terms and conditions determined by the court, if it does not contradict the interests of the child. This measure is not taken when there are pending legal cases between parents for custody, for determining the residence of the child or the regime of personal relationships.
5. **obliging the perpetrator of violence to attend specialized programs;**
6. **directing victims to rehabilitation programs.**

Measures under paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 are imposed for a period of three to up to 18 months.

According to the LPDV, **the NGOs which propose services for protection of victims of violence and/ or implement the specialized programmes for perpetrators inform the court in the region they provider services in about their programmes under the law.**

Protection orders are subject to immediate execution. The control over the execution of the prohibition for committing domestic violence, removing the perpetrator from the co-habited home and the prohibition of approaching the victim and the places he/she visits is entrusted with police authorities. In case of a violation, the police arrests the perpetrator and notifies immediately the prosecutor's office. **The violation of domestic violence protection orders is criminalized.**



**In conclusion, there is legislative basis for the services for treatment of perpetrators of violence in the three countries studied. The measure is prescribed by law and obligatory when mandated by the court in Croatia and Bulgaria. There are more explicit requirements for the professionals dealing with the programmes in Italy and Croatia, while in Bulgaria these services are entrusted predominantly within NGOs dealing with protection from DV. There are no clear protocols and methodological guidelines for these programmes in the three countries.**

**3. Practical implementation of the programmes for treatment of perpetrators- cooperation mechanisms, agreements, protocols. Professional requirements, funding. Relations with NGOs dealing with victims' protection. Monitoring.**

**In Italy**, according to the above- mentioned plans, *Cabina di regia nazionale* (a National Steering Committee in charge of political planning, coordination, monitoring and verification), appoints **to the Regions and Autonomous Provinces the task of implementing a territorial governance plan**, in order to guarantee the application of *a standardized and simplified system* and maintain *the coordination of all the entities involved in the relevant territory. The purpose is to create a network of the various entities that, in various ways, work to prevent and combat male violence against women: these networks are to be formalized through specific institutional memoranda of understanding: these protocols must be inspired by the principle of private-public partnership and, therefore, all relevant entities must be fully involved.*

**Territorial anti-violence networks** which must guarantee *"the operational connection and the collaboration between all the general and specialized services operating in the field of prevention, protection and combating of male violence against women (antiviolence centers, women's shelters, local social and health services, law enforcement agencies, judiciary, hospitals, other institutional subjects and qualified subjects of the third sector, labor services)"*.

*It is a positive trend that in Italy the objective of programmes for perpetrators encompasses male violence more broadly, it is about the role of man in the society. This has the aim to influence deeply-rooted cultural models based on patriarchy and the supremacy of a man over a woman.*

**The Centers / programmes for male perpetrators of violence are not specifically indicated as part of the "anti-violence territorial networks"** and, although it is clear the need for a connection / collaboration between the subjects operating in the field of prevention and combating violence, no specific references are made to any collaboration between anti-violence centers and / or services that operate with special programmes.

**There are good practices at regional level** in Italy, like the **Region of Emilia-Romagna, Puglia, Campania, Lazio, Tuscany.**

In the *Regional Law of Emilia –Romagna No. 6 of 27 June 2014* (“*Framework law to support gender quality and combat gender discriminations*”) it is stated: “*The Region, in order to promote the achievement of gender equality as a tool to prevent violence against women, promotes, also in cooperation with local health districts, specific and experimental projects and services for men perpetrators, with the aim to give them different ways to act in their close relationships without using violence*”. The document goes into detail about intervention goals, preconditions to work with perpetrators, risk assessment, staff training and methodology. **Cooperation with services specialized in the support of women and children is identified as a necessary precondition to work with perpetrators.**

**The role of anti- violence centres** in Italy is a very good practice, these centres representing the first entity that historically started dealing with the phenomenon of male violence against women in a structured and organized manner. The centres initiated and lead by women’s organizations make an important part of territorial coordination mechanisms and provide information for shadow reports to international and regional mechanisms, namely the recent Shadow Report to GREVIO. The latter identifies also gaps in the implementation, monitoring and control of efficiency of the programmes for perpetrators.

**The anti- violence centres share the ideology and objectives of the specialized centres for treatment of perpetrators of domestic and gender- based violence. C.A.M. is the first Italian Center** that considered the implementation of specialized programs. It was established in 2009 in

the city of Florence and its local branches in Ferrara, Rome, Monteleone, Olbia, Sassari, Cremona, Pistoia and Montecatini. It works through first telephone contact, individual assessment, psycho-educational and follow-up groups, phone contacts with partners victims of violence. It also carries out training and raising-awareness activities, clinical supervision, consultations, and publications on the theme. The Mission of C.A.M., as provided by its Charter, is “...to foster the counter, actions and prevention concerning violence against women and children, through the implementation of treatment programs addressing men perpetrators of violence in close relationships, with a particular focus on fatherhood”.

***RELIVE – Relazioni Libere dalle Violenze*** [Relationships free from violence, Ed.] is a national association born in 2014, which formalized the collaboration between the first 9 Italian Centers for perpetrators of domestic violence, in order to “create and promote a national network to combat gender violence, particularly violence against women”. In particular, Relive has the aim to “foster and implement programmes to prevent domestic violence and to support and treat perpetrators, working in close cooperation and collaboration with victims services. Relive association has currently 21 Centers across various Italian regions.

There are **“National Guidelines for treatment programmes for men perpetrators of violence against women in close relationships”**, which are written by founding Centers and entirely recall the previous Guidelines of Italian Coordination of Treatment Centers for Perpetrators, inspired in turn by European Guidelines of “Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence in Europe – WWP”. As a methodological suggestion to be noted- ***inclusion, as experts, of representatives from women support services in the executive and advisory boards of perpetrators’ programmes.***

**Concerning statistics**, in the period September - November 2018, the IRPPS-CNR (National Research Council-Institute for Research on Population and Social Policies) carried out **a survey on centers and services against violence, including centers for perpetrators operating in Italy.**

The survey reached a total of 59 centers, which altogether provide 76 "access points" (branches) in Italy.

In 2017, a total of 726 men joined the programmes: 56% of them were in a stable relationship; 72% were fathers to minor children; 76% of them had a stable employment ; 71% were Italian. Furthermore, only 39% of them were detainees, 7% were in the care of mental health services and 13% of addiction services.

The majority of the centers offer free services, including telephone helpline, individual and group psychotherapy, parenting support, orientation to local services.

Similar practices of connection between the services for protection of victims and programmes for perpetrators are followed in other EU countries:

In *Austria*, where the *Domestic Violence Intervention Center* works in partnership and close cooperation with the Men's Centre, the work of the PP and the women's specialised support services (WSS) is always presented together which reflects the accountable way of their cooperation making WSS more visible. The following three clusters are addressed in an integrated way and make the system effective:

- men's risks and strengths – through men's PP to assess and address men's risks and to build on their strengths;
- women's and children's vulnerabilities and strengths – through women and children services to aim to understand and address women's and children's vulnerabilities and increase their strengths; and
- service-generated risks – through effective protocols for multi-agency working.

Besides carrying out the Anti-Violence Programme, the Domestic Violence Intervention Center also works in a victim safety -oriented cooperation with the Austrian probation service, ensuring that in every case of probation ordered by the court, the victims' human rights and safety are given central priority. This victim safety-oriented cooperation is based on a written cooperation agreement. It is important to mention that all survivors can turn to the service whenever they need, no matter whether perpetrators are enrolled in PPs or if they have dropped out. If the perpetrator is going through the PP, the Domestic Violence Intervention Center offers the following service to the (ex)partner:

- regular contact with the (ex)partner;
- information about the objectives and the contents of the programme;

- assessment of the perpetrator;
- risk assessment and safety planning, including ongoing safety planning;
- legal and social counselling and support;
- conversations on progress, improvements, deterioration;
- crisis intervention in the event of repeated violence;
- continued support after the programme is over (if necessary);
- follow-ups;
- the programme, the rules of the training for perpetrators and the procedures are fully transparent to the survivor.

***In the Caledonian System*** the funding of the different services all comes from the Scottish Government; (ii) the workers are managed through the same line management structure; (iii) in most areas women's workers share an office space with men's workers; (iv) men's workers and women's workers meet formally to discuss all families they are working with on a regular basis; (v) information given by women informs the work with men based on a very clear practice in relation to confidentiality and safety. The WSS provides safety-planning, support and advocacy services to women being subjected to violence that the man has been convicted of and also subsequent partners. Women's feedback on progress made by the men or absence of any progress, as well as on the developments in their own lives, especially in terms of their access to justice, autonomy, rehabilitation/recovery and safety.

Cooperation between the two types of programmes is expressed through exchange of information and feedback between them, like in **Finland**:

The ***Crises Center Mobile in co-operation with Psychotherapy Training and Research Centre, University of Jyväskylä (Finland)*** underlines, the flow of information between PPs and VSS, particularly information from victims, is essential for the perpetrator work and, as a result, for victim safety as *“there might be major differences in what the victim and the offender report on violence and other issues”*.

They see the main results of the *“when you see empowerment and recovery of the client; when she manages to leave the violent relationship and moves to a new apartment or shelter; when she starts to live with less fear; when she starts doing things she previously was afraid to do; when she trusts in herself and respects herself”*.



**Despite the benefit of follow- up to victim safety, there are limitations** faced by the NGOs dealing with th two types of programmes. Some point at three - month follow-up as the maximum amount of time offered once the man has finished the programme”. Lack of financial resources for that is indicated by European NGOs as limitation to follow- up on women’s and children’s safety.

**Some tips indicated by NGOs with the purpose to counter these tendencies and limitations:**

Established cooperation with police is very important in order to protect women and children subjected to men’s violence and guarantee their safety.

Victims are essential informants both in the beginning, during and after PPs, so running a PP without a systematic feedback system from victims is not effective.

Physical violence may decrease but psychological violence increases in some cases. During PPs it is important to focus on different kinds of violence – physical, psychological, sexualized, economic, etc.

Work with perpetrators often causes feelings as fear and anxiety among psychologists, so they need support and supervision after PP sessions.

Children of perpetrators undergoing PPs do also need therapy.

Support given to victims cannot guarantee their safety as they often go back to perpetrators due to economic difficulties, lack of support by state services, etc.

Timely and professional intervention in crisis situations is vital in order to protect women’s and children’s lives.

**In Croatia**

The Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the ***Rules of procedure in cases of Domestic Violence (2008)***. The Protocol contains a set of precise measures on the treatment and co-operation of competent authorities (police, social welfare centers, educational and health institutions and judicial bodies) involved in the detection and suppression of violence and the provision of assistance and protection to a person exposed to any form of violence in the families. The Protocol pays special attention to the procedure of the competent authorities towards children victims of violence or witnesses of domestic violence.

The Government of the Republic of Croatia passed also the ***Rules of procedure in case of Sexual Violence in 2012***, and this Protocol was implemented in the year 2018. The protocol has been



developed to provide immediate, sympathetic, gender and culturally sensitive comprehensive assistance and support from all competent institutions.

**Psycho- social treatment of perpetrators** is carried out with legal or natural persons with whom the ministry responsible for judicial affairs has concluded a contract on the implementation of protective measures for compulsory psycho-social treatment. Psycho- social treatment provided by legal and physical persons is carried out by a psychiatrist, psychologist, social pedagogist and social worker with at least three years of working experience in the profession and additional training for working with perpetrators of violence, in accordance with the *Standards for the Implementation of the Mandatory Psycho- social Treatment Measures*. The legal entity with which the ministry responsible for judicial affairs shall enter into contract has to have adequate space (individual and group work room, waiting room and sanitary node), which must meet the minimum sanitary-technical and hygienic conditions.

In the Republic of Croatia, the courts imposed a total of 14,932 protective measures in the period from January 2012 - June 2016. Most of them were protective measures of compulsory treatment against addiction and the prohibition of approaching the victim of violence, then come the protective measures of compulsory psycho-social treatment, and protective measures of removal from the apartment. Despite the fact the measure of treatment of perpetrators is imposed often, the problem is the lack of physical and legal persons involved in the implementation of the above mentioned treatment.

**In 2018, the total number of treatment providers was 45, of which legal person who provided the treatment were 9 and physical persons were 36.** It is worrying that some counties still do not have treatment providers. *Since May 2009, Home "Duga-Zagreb" has been approved* for the implementation of psycho- social treatment of domestic violence offenders. This institution carries out the psychosocial treatment of the perpetrator of domestic violence at a separate location of the institution, with the financial support of the City of Zagreb (City Office for Social Welfare and Persons with Disabilities) and in cooperation with the State Attorney's Office and the competent courts.

The situation with **women's NGOs in Croatia** is reported to be not so favourable, the organisations being with limited financial resources, limited number of functioning NGOs and capacity to provide services for victims. Regular state support is missing, as well as cooperation with institutions. of stereotypes by feminist and women's is a lack of political expression and the lack of will to recognize the role and importance of NGOs in combating violence against women. Therefore they **are not regarded as reliable current partners of those providing specialized treatment of perpetrators.**

In terms of statistics from the Criminal Directorate of the year 2017, psycho-social treatment was conducted with 474 persons, out of which 103 were women. In *the organization Dom Duga- Zagreb*“ from 2009 till 15 March 2019 the number of perpetrators involved in the treatment has been 1272. The average age of the perpetrators was 38.96, of which the oldest was 81, and the youngest 15 years.

**Regarding the effectiveness of the treatment, 11.4% of perpetrators successfully completed the treatment and completely adopted non-violent patterns, 22.1% successfully completed the treatment and partially adopted non-violent forms, while 2.9% regularly attended, but did not sufficiently adopt non-violent patterns of behavior.**

### *In Bulgaria*

**The new regulation of social services is in process** and it will affect in a short term also the specialized services for victims of violence, also in relation to programmes for treatment of perpetrators. According to the existing principles which will be confirmed also in the near future, in order for the services to have support from the state budget, they have to be planned and claimed by the municipalities from the state budget as needed for the community. If allocated, they are called “delegated social services delivered in the community”.

The women's *NGOs from the Alliance for Protection from GBV* are among the major providers of services for victims of violence – integrated counseling services for victims and their children, crises centres for victims of violence and their children, the latter being supported through the state budget, to the extent possible. **The programmes for perpetrators are not mentioned explicitly as a social service but can be comprised, where existent, into the counseling centres managed by respective organizations.** They are regulated in the civil legislation

**related to protection against domestic violence as one of the mandatory measures for protection against domestic violence, as mentioned above.**

In spite of all services of NGOs available to victims of violence, there is still lack of coherent policies and commitment to regular and adequate funding of activities aimed at prevention and protection from violence. The NGOs bear the burden of providing services and other activities for prevention and protection without having the regular support of the state and municipalities. Therefore services are missing in many places and they have been under-funded.

The women's NGOs are **initiators and the most reliable elements of the mechanisms for coordinated response to DV and GBV**, which are not existing formally in most places but are based on the existing relations and cooperation with institutions. The coordination mechanisms have not been formalized and followed in practice. In different towns and cities the coordination is at different level and this is reflected also in the implementation of programmes for perpetrators.

The women's NGOs from the Alliance are working on **harmonization of the concept, methodology and protocols for the programmes for perpetrators of DV**. A special telephone number for first contact and consultation is under way.

The programmes for perpetrators of DV are mentioned as a priority in the National programmes for prevention and protection from DV and are **supported partially and on a project basis by the State budget through the Ministry of Justice**.

The main **positive trends** in the field are:- **The programmes for work with perpetrators in Bulgaria are closely connected with the services for protection of victims of DV and GBV. The main operators of the programme are women's NGOs dealing with these services. - The Ministry of Justice supports financially partially the programmes for perpetrators of violence on a project basis.- The methodology and the services provided for perpetrators of violence make part of the programme for training of different specialists under the Academy for Prevention of Violence, established by the Alliance.**

The case of Bulgaria is the one when different programmes exist in the same organisations dealing with protection of victims. **There are in fact several possible versions of establishing programmes for perpetrators and partnerships:**

- PPs established through the initiative of women's organisations.
- Different programs exist within the same organisation.
- Established partnership between VSS/ victim support services/ and organisations providing PPs
- Separate programmes cooperating through the referral of the cases.
- Joint Cooperation with other services for a coordinated intervention in cases of DV

An example of an integrated model of services is ***the Caledonian System (Scotland)***, which fully integrates services for men, women and children. The three parts of the services are managed within the same structure. ***SPAVO (Cyprus)*** and ***The Association NAIA (Bulgaria)***, as well as ***other NGOs from the Alliance for protection from GBV*** are also examples of the integrated approach that offers parallel services for victims and individual counselling for perpetrators.

***In the Domestic Violence Intervention Centre (Austria) the Anti-Violence programme*** is carried out in partnership and together with the Men's Centre that means that the programme is managed together by both centres and both decide together on admission to – and termination of – the programme. As it was mentioned in Part 1, the programme is presented together by the Domestic Violence Intervention Centre and Men's Centre in order to make the partnership approach visible and avoid the devaluation of women's work. However, the two centres do not always have the same interests: ***“Conflicting interests are inherent to victim-oriented work with perpetrators and the challenge is how to find solutions which do not jeopardize the rights and the safety of victims”***.

Broader cooperation is illustrated by the example of ***Cyprus***, where the ***Association for Prevention & Handling of Violence in the Family, SPAVO***, emphasizes the cooperation with statutory service providers and NGOs in order to provide support to victims and perpetrators of DV. SPAVO highlights cooperation with the Cyprus Police throughout the handling and managing of DV-incidents as well as one of the main sources for the referral of the cases of violence. Another successful cooperation is the one with the Social Welfare Services for management of the cases as well as support for humanitarian assistance, victim counselling, mediation to enable parent-child communication in a safe environment and support to families at home after rehabilitation. Furthermore, SPAVO's cooperation on a more central level, with the Ministry of Education and Culture is evaluated highly. One of the good practices is also the financial support received from the Ministry of Justice and Public Order aiming to strengthen the work of SPAVO and the operation of the 24-hour Domestic Violence Helpline.

**MOVE (Ireland)**, as a national network providing PPs in 11 locations in Ireland, works on the same line, and describes cooperation through a range of specialised and additional support services.

To sum up, the above described practices show how cooperation is developed on different levels and throughout a wide range of services. This cooperation, first and foremost, aims at addressing the needs of women and children subjected to men's violence and guaranteeing their safety.

**Main conclusions from the summary of this part of the mapping of the situation in the three countries:**

The work in Italy is at an advanced stage of cooperation with women's NGOs providing services as part of territorial agreements and protocols. There is clear involvement of the State and local government in the regions. The NGOs proposing the treatment programmes are among the first ones and are organized in active networks.

Croatia has very clear regulatory requirements for the agencies and persons dealing with programmes for perpetrators and strong regulation of the measures for perpetrators in civil and penal law. There is not sufficient coverage in the country with programmes for perpetrators of violence. The women's NGOs and connections of the programmes for WWP with their work for protection of victims of violence are not an important factor for the development of the programmes.

In Bulgaria we observe the strong link of the programmes for treatment of perpetrators with the work of women's NGOs dealing with victims' protection, and with their educational activities. The Ministry of Justice is involved in financial support for the programmes at project basis.

There is monitoring and statistics kept in relation to programmes for WWP in Italy and Croatia. The ratification of the Istanbul Convention and monitoring by GREVIO will bring further positive results, including driving ahead the work with perpetrators of violence.

The main opportunities and challenges resulting from the mapping in the three countries and through analysis of good practices through the WWP EN are as follows and will be challenged through the current proposal:





Ensuring:

- Safety of women and children – development of services;**
- Cooperation and coordinated interventions;**
- Establishment of institutional agreements;**
- Capacity building of professionals on domestic violence related issues;**
- Improved interventions and follow up of the cases of domestic violence;**
- Greater understanding of Male VAW/DV**

Tackling challenges:

- limitations were related to time, financial and human resources available*
- lack of standardised protocols of cooperation between the services.*
- mistrust and difference of opinions in relation to the value of working with perpetrators*
- the need to increase lobbying and cooperation between services for the referral of perpetrators to voluntary treatment and of exchanging best practices between professionals*

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