

REGIONAL GUIDANCE ON WORKING WITH PERPETRATORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND EARLY INTERVENTION

EASTERN PARTNERSHIP REGION



**TOGETHER AGAINST
GENDER STEREOTYPES AND
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**
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GLOSSARY

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Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence - Istanbul Convention (IC) is the first legally binding treaty that offers a comprehensive framework for fighting violence against women. Although it has not been ratified by all countries in the EaP region, it will be used as guidance for good practices and minimum standards in the field.

Domestic Violence (DV) shall mean 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 (CoE, 2011a).

Eastern Partnership Region (EaP) includes six Eastern European and South Caucasus countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) shall mean violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or violence that disproportionately affects women (CoE, 2011a).

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) shall mean any pattern of behaviour that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. It encompasses all physical, sexual, emotional, economic and psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. The focus of the guidance is primarily on IPV, unless indicated differently.

Perpetrator refers to person who commits acts of domestic violence or intimate partner violence. It is recognised that perpetrators of violence are mainly men, while survivors are mainly women, so the term “perpetrator” stands for men who use violence (unless indicated differently).

Perpetrator Programme is a term used to describe specialised programmes for perpetrators of intimate partner violence and domestic violence that can be run by state-run agencies or NGOs.

Survivor refers to any person who has experienced domestic violence or gender-based violence. It is similar in meaning to “victim”, but is generally preferred because it implies resilience. Within this document, “survivor” refers to women and children, unless indicated differently.

Survivor Support Services refer to specialised services for women and children who survived IPV or DV, which can be run by state agencies or NGOs.

Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) is defined as any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering of women and girls, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. VAWG encompasses, but is not limited to, physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family or within the general community, and perpetrated or condoned by the State.

THE CONTEXT

Gender-based violence is one of the most widespread violations of human rights worldwide. Research conducted by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights shows that 33% of women in the EU were exposed to physical or sexual violence since the age of 15 (FRA, 2014).¹ A recent research showed high prevalence of violence against women in Moldova and Ukraine (OSCE, 2019).² In Moldova, 25% of women were exposed to physical and/or sexual violence by their current partner, and 37% by a former partner, since the age of 15. In Ukraine, 15% of women were exposed to physical and/or sexual violence by their current partner, and 28% by a former partner, since the age of 15. According to the National Survey on violence against women in Azerbaijan, 24% of women aged 15-59 had been subjected to violence by either a non-partner or an intimate partner since the age of 15 (UNFPA, 2011).³ In Georgia, approximately 6% of women aged 15-64 who had ever been in a relationship reported experiencing physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner⁴ (UN Women, 2018). There is a similar situation in Armenia, where 9.5% of women who have ever been in a relationship have been sexually and physically abused by their intimate partner (UNFPA, 2011).⁵

In the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, the prevalence of violence against women increased, assuming the proportions of a shadow pandemic, as described by UN Women,⁶ while access to safety for many women was additionally challenged due to the restrictive measures.

The region is currently highly affected by the war in Ukraine. Ukraine is facing war on its territory, as well as an increase in all forms of violence, including sexual and gender-based violence. Many countries in the region are involved in supporting refugees. Women and children in these circumstances are at severe risk of GBV, and there is an increasing need for providing support to them. Women and children in Belarus are likely to be at additional risk, as essential survivor support services in the country have been shut down. There is a high demand for supporting survivors and combating GBV in the region.

Attitudes that support gender-based violence are widespread in the region, with Georgia, Belarus and Ukraine having more progressive views on the issue (UN Women, UNFPA, 2022).⁷ For instance, the majority of men and women in these countries expressed that beating a female family member was not acceptable and should always be punished by law (Georgia: 83% of women and 74% of men; Belarus: 82% of women and 58% of men; Ukraine: 81% of women and 73% of men). Citizens of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Moldova agree with the statement in a significantly lower percent (Moldova: 50% of women and 48% of men; Armenia: 52% of women and 31% of men; Azerbaijan: 48% of women and 36% of men). Knowing that gender-based beliefs and attitudes toward violence are one of the key underlying causes of violence, these results are particularly relevant.

To stop and prevent violence, a comprehensive and coordinated community response is needed, which should include supporting survivors, while holding perpetrators accountable. Perpetrator programmes focus on ensuring the safety of survivors, through working with perpetrators of violence and holding them accountable for their violent acts, and for making a change.

1 FRA (2019). *Violence against Women: An EU-wide Survey: Main Results*. Available at: https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2014-vaw-survey-main-results-apr14_en.pdf

2 OSCE (2019). *OSCE-Led Survey on Violence against Women: Well-Being and Safety of Women: Main Report*. Available at: https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/9/2/413237_0.pdf

3 UNFPA (2011). *National Survey Report on Violence against Women in Azerbaijan - 2008*, Baku: 237. cited by Ganna Gerasymenko, UNFPA / SCWFCA (2020) *The economic cost of violence against women in Azerbaijan*. Baku, Azerbaijan

4 UN Women (2018). *National Study on Violence against Women in Georgia*. Available at <https://georgia.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/national%20vaw%20study%20report%20eng.pdf>

5 UNFPA (2011). *Nationwide Survey on Domestic Violence against Women in Armenia*. Available at: https://armenia.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/DV_survey_eng.pdf

6 Issue-brief-COVID-19-and-ending-violence-against-women-and-girls-en.pdf (unwomen.org)

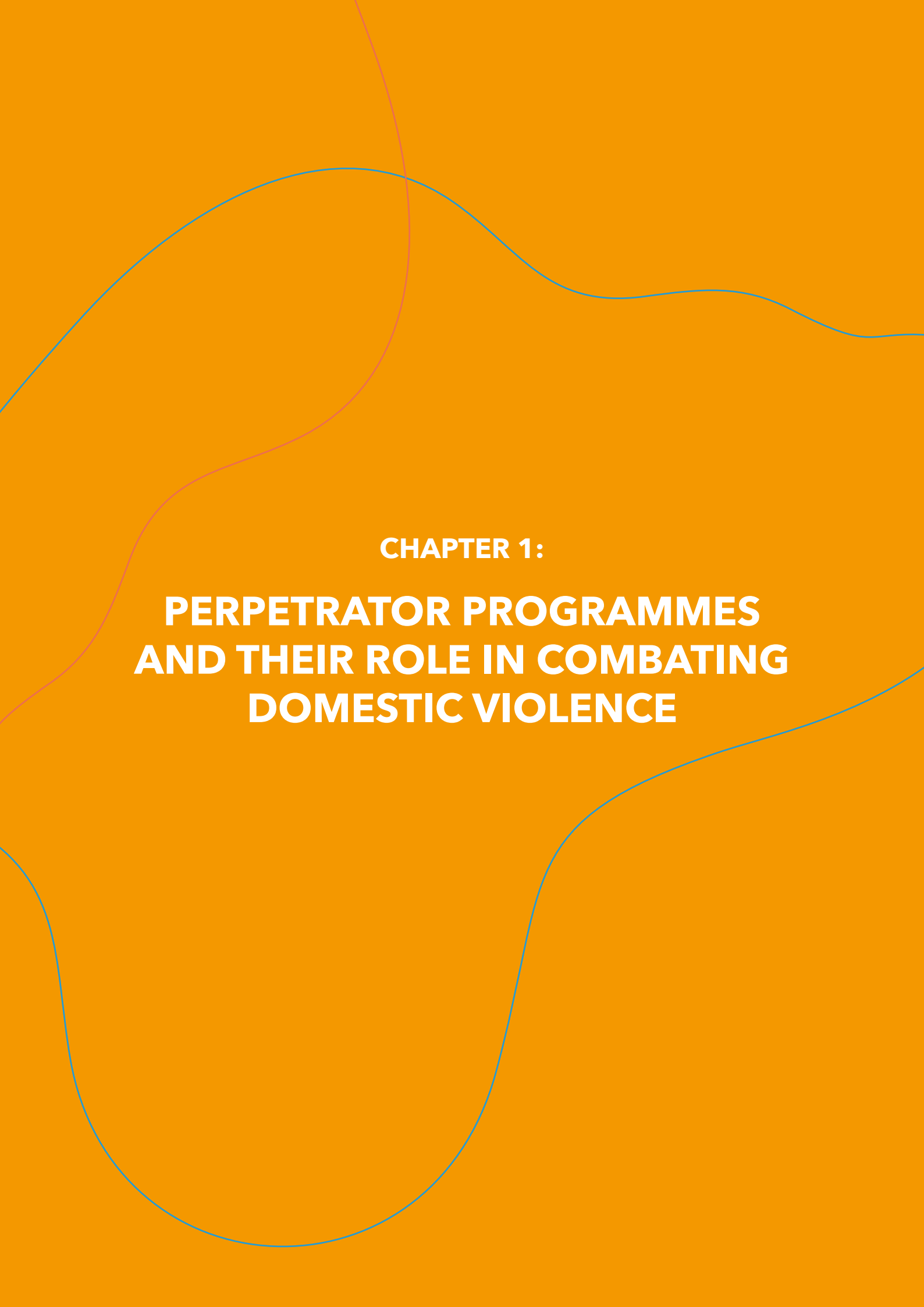
7 UN Women, UNFPA (2022). *Analytical Brief: Baseline Study on Stereotypes in Eastern Partnership Countries*. Available at: https://eeca.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/analytical_brief.pdf

The Guidance focuses on six countries in the EaP region, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. The data on perpetrators of domestic violence and interventions applied to hold them accountable are not available on the regional level. Likewise, there are no comprehensive data on the existing perpetrator programmes in the region, their characteristics and alignment with the European standards of good practice, or the potential to develop these programmes in countries where they do not exist.

This guidance provides a research-based analysis of perpetrator programmes in the region or potential to develop them, within the framework of minimum standards for practice outlined by the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence (2018), and the Istanbul Convention (CoE, 2011a;⁸ Hester & Lilley, 2016⁹). As the first analysis of this kind, the document outlines recommendations for (further) development of survivor safety-oriented perpetrator programmes, with the goal of ending violence against women in the region.

8 CoE (2011a). *Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence*. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/168008482e>

9 Hester, M., & Lilley, S. J. (2016). *Domestic and Sexual Violence Perpetrator Programmes: Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention: A collection of papers on the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence*. Available at: <https://edoc.coe.int/en/violence-against-women/7144-domestic-and-sexual-violence-perpetrator-programmes-article-16-of-the-istanbul-convention.html>



CHAPTER 1:

**PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES
AND THEIR ROLE IN COMBATING
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

CHAPTER 1: PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES AND THEIR ROLE IN COMBATING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

1.1. WHAT IS PREVENTION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND WHY FOCUS ON PERPETRATORS?

The work on perpetrator programmes is an important element of combating domestic violence, especially intimate partner violence. The goal of perpetrator programmes is to increase the safety and well-being of survivors by interrupting violent behaviour through working with those who commit violence, mainly men.

In order to focus on the safety of survivors, perpetrator programmes need to take into account the perspectives of survivors that should lead all interventions. The Guidelines of the European network for working with perpetrators of domestic violence (2018)¹⁰ outline the collaboration with survivor support services as one of the key principles of safe and accountable work with perpetrators, highlighting that this cooperation can take many forms. Likewise, Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention (CoE, 2011a)¹¹ states that these programmes must ensure the safety and support of victims and that specialist support services should be turned to for cooperation in this regard. Specifically, Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention states (CoE, 2011a):

- (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 support and safety of victims, as well as 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.

Preventing DV requires interdependent and mutually reinforcing interventions across three key levels, described below. All levels of prevention are important for a comprehensive approach. Perpetrator programmes fall into the area of secondary prevention.

Primary prevention refers to actions designed to reduce or stop violence before it starts, rather than intervening once an incident has already happened. For example, working with whole communities to address the underlying root causes of violence, and the attitudes, behaviours, norms, and practices that cause domestic violence and violence against women and girls to flourish. This prevention approach requires changing the social conditions that excuse, justify or even promote violence against women and girls, and as a result, it prevents violence in the first place.

¹⁰ WWP EN (2018). *Guidelines to Develop Standards for Programmes Working with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence*. Available at: https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/fileadmin/WWP_Network/redakteure/Guidelines/WWP_EN_Guidelines_for_Standards_v3_2018.pdf

¹¹ The Istanbul Convention is an international legally binding treaty, offering a comprehensive framework for combating and preventing violence against women and domestic violence, and perpetrator programmes as one of the interventions in the area of prevention. The Istanbul Convention has been ratified by Georgia (2017) and Moldova (2022) and signed but not ratified by Ukraine (2011) and Armenia (2018). As the Istanbul Convention and the Council of Europe documents that further elaborate on it are considered minimum standards for good practice in the field of perpetrator work, they are used as a framework for analysing perpetrator programmes in this document.

Secondary prevention refers to response services that aim to stop repeated experiences of violence after it has already happened. Examples of secondary prevention include police protection, perpetrator programmes and access to justice. These efforts aim to prevent violence from occurring again, by supporting survivors and holding perpetrators of violence to account. This also includes addressing the influence of social norms and stereotypes on culture and society.

Tertiary prevention this level refers to longer-term action after violence has occurred. For example, preventing long-term disability related to domestic violence.

Efforts should be made to hold perpetrators accountable. This is essential for ending violence against women. Providing safety, support, and responding to the needs of survivors is a priority. In addition, if there is no focus on perpetrators' accountability for what they have done and providing safety to the survivor by creating a system of accountability to the whole system (among which we also have perpetrator programmes that can create opportunity for them to change), violence will most probably continue, towards the same survivor, the perpetrator's future partners and children.

Many perpetrators repeat violence in their new relationships (Shortt, et al., 2012).¹² Even when women leave the relationship, violence does not necessarily stop, and it can even take more severe forms (Ornstein & Rickne, 2013;¹³ Statistics Canada,¹⁴ 1993: 26). Children exposed to IPV learn violent behaviour and repeat it in their adult relationships (Murrell, Christoff & Henning, 2007).¹⁵ Thus, changing violent behaviour is important for breaking the cycle of violence for the next generations. Likewise, many survivors want the perpetrators to change and violence to stop. Perpetrators also face consequences of the violence on a personal level, and some of them want to be able to have more meaningful relationships with their partners and children, and to stop using violence (Rollero, 2020).¹⁶

1.2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES

Domestic violence and intimate partner violence are complex phenomena and interventions for combating it require a comprehensive theoretical framework that informs practice. Providing a perpetrator programme is not a neutral endeavour. Each facilitator conducts a class within a community, a programme, and a personal philosophy framework that either supports a man's process of change toward nonviolence, or reinforces his dominance over the woman he perpetrates violence against (confirm the beliefs that perpetrator already has). Each statement, assignment, role-play, video, or story used in a perpetrator programme is grounded in theory. There are several theoretical approaches that are considered as basis of safe and accountable perpetrator work in IPV.

Programmes should work with **ecological models** that outline complex factors on societal, institutional, community and individual levels (Hester and Lilley, 2016; WWP EN, 2018). Although programmes will mainly contribute to interrupting violence on the individual level, through work with the perpetrator, it is important that they understand the complexity of violence and the factors that contribute to it on all levels. For instance, although perpetrator interventions will focus on the responsibility of the perpetrator and his beliefs, it is important to be aware of the general acceptance of violence against women in the society that intersects with how this is manifested on the individual level. Likewise, programmes should consider how to increase their impact on all levels, through supporting changes in

12 Shortt, J. W., Capaldi, D. M., Kim, H. K., Kerr, D. C., Owen, L. D., & Feingold, A. (2012). Stability of Intimate Partner Violence by Men across 12 Years in Young Adulthood: Effects of Relationship Transitions. *Prevention Science*, 13 (4), 360-369. Available at: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11121-011-0202-0>

13 Ornstein, P., & Rickne, J. (2013). When Does Intimate Partner Violence Continue after Separation? *Violence against Women*, 19 (5), 617-633.

14 Statistics Canada (1993). *The Violence against Women Survey*. The Daily.

15 Murrell, A. R., Christoff, K. A., & Henning, K. R. (2007). Characteristics of Domestic Violence Offenders: Associations with Childhood Exposure to Violence. *Journal of Family Violence*, 22(7), 523-532.

16 Rollero, C. (2020). The Social Dimensions of Intimate Partner Violence: A Qualitative Study with Male Perpetrators. *Sexuality & Culture*, 24(3), 749-763.

the community, institutions and the whole society through pushing for accountability of perpetrators and changing traditional narratives around violence.

Perpetrator programmes need to be **gender-informed** (Hester and Lilley, 2016; WWP EN, 2018; Respect, 2017).¹⁷ As violence against women is a result of inequalities and power imbalances between men and women, programmes need to work from this perspective and deconstruct it, to have a meaningful impact on changing violent behaviour. This is applied in many layers of intervention, from defining violence, ways that content is chosen and how it is addressed (for instance, it could focus on masculinities), choosing the target group of the programme (it could specifically be designed for men, or women who use violence and similar), choosing professionals who facilitate the programme (it could involve male-female co-facilitators that would model equal relations between genders and deconstruct traditional gender roles), and many more. Programmes should incorporate a framework that IPV stems from men's learned belief in entitlement which then justifies the use of certain abusive tactics. When we ignore the underlying beliefs of entitlement, we collude with violence and miss the opportunity to hold perpetrators accountable. This is also in line with **human-rights-based approaches**, which stress violence against women as a result of structural, deep-rooted discrimination, highlighting the obligation of the State to address it (UNFPA, 2020).¹⁸ The approach flags the importance of ensuring that services and interventions address patriarchal attitudes and stereotypes, social norms, and disregard for women's rights.

Programmes need to work with understanding of **power and control** and their relation to violence (Domestic Abuse Intervention Programmes, 2008).¹⁹ IPV is part of a pattern of behaviours rather than isolated incidents of abuse or cyclical explosions of pent-up anger, frustration or pain. Perpetrators may or may not frequently use physical assault, but tactics of power and control undermine the survivors' ability to act autonomously.

While many perpetrators experience being out of control or controlled by emotional outbursts when perpetrating domestic violence, their behaviours are not without purpose. Their actions may become almost automatic but, with a few exceptions, every abusive act has intent. For example, a perpetrator may use degrading names, calling his partner a whore or slut prior to grabbing, shaking, or slapping her. While he does not think, "First, I'm going to objectify her, then I'm going to hit her," objectifying his partner through degrading names allows him to hit the object that he has created rather than his partner. These patterns may be so ingrained in his history and cultural experience that it seems second nature to him. Most perpetrators are informed by cultural messages justifying dominance and vigorously defend their beliefs as absolute truths with statements such as "Someone has to be in charge," "You can't have two captains for one ship," "If I don't control my child/wife/partner, she will control me," "God made man first, which means he is supposed to rule over women," or "These are my children, it is my responsibility to control them."

Some programmes apply **trauma-informed approaches**, alongside with understanding of the complexity of DV and IPV (Scottish Government, 2022).²⁰ Many perpetrators need to find ways to heal from the sexual and physical abuse they experienced as children. Perpetrator programmes should not disregard their pain and scars. The professionals in these cases work with perpetrators in a way that acknowledges their trauma and its consequences, while at the same time acknowledging that they are adults, using patterns of behaviour that cause harm to their partners and children. This approach is also relevant when working with perpetrators who have been involved in armed conflicts. As many women

17 RESPECT (2017). *The RESPECT Standard, third edition*. Available at: https://hubble-live-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/respect/redactor2_assets/files/105/Respect_Standard_FINAL.pdf

18 UNFPA (2020). *Guidance Note for Applying a Human Rights-Based Approach to Programming in UNFPA*. Available at: <https://www.unfpa.org/publications/guidance-note-applying-human-rights-based-approach-programming-unfpa>

19 Domestic Abuse Intervention Programmes. (2008). *Wheel gallery*. Retrieved December 14, 2009, from www.theduluthmodel.org/wheelgallery.php

20 Scottish Government (2022). *Domestic abuse- and trauma-informed practice: companion document*. Available at: <https://education.gov.scot/media/kwilejb4/da-trauma-companion-pack.pdf>

who use IPV previously experienced severe and long-lasting violence from their partners, having a trauma-informed approach is relevant for working with this category as well.

It is important to flag that all perpetrator interventions need to be **survivor-centred**. Survivor-centred approaches place the rights, needs and desires of women and girls as the centre of focus of service delivery. The Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Subject to Violence (UN Women, UNFPA, WHO, UNDP & UNODC, 2015)²¹ highlights this perspective in working in the field of VAWG which applies on perpetrator programmes as well. This guiding document requires that all services also need to hold the perpetrators to account, especially while ensuring fairness in justice responses.

Programmes across Europe and the world use a variety of theoretical approaches such as cognitive-behavioural, strength-based, feminist, and similar. Many theoretical approaches can give valuable contributions to perpetrator work. However, the above listed approaches represent the core of the work, which needs to be integrated in other approaches applied, to achieve safe and effective perpetrator work.

1.3. WHAT KIND OF PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES EXIST

There are a variety of perpetrator programmes across Europe. For the purpose of the guidance, programmes are presented by several criteria: programme setting, type of service provider, types of referrals, and characteristics of perpetrators.

In terms of **setting**, perpetrator programmes can be placed in prison and probation setting, or in the community. Programmes for perpetrators in prison and on probation can be provided by those institutions themselves, or entrusted to some state-run agency or an NGO. For instance, the Swedish Prison and Probation Service runs two nationwide programmes for perpetrators (GREVIO Secretariat, 2017),²² while in Austria these services are entrusted to an NGO “Neustart” that works on behalf of the Ministry of Justice (GREVIO Secretariat, 2016).²³ Programmes can be placed in the community, again provided by state-run agencies or NGOs. It is recommended that programmes be available in all these settings, as they target different populations of perpetrators—those identified by the criminal justice system, and those identified by civil justice, by other stakeholders (like centres for social work), and those who come voluntarily.

Service providers can also be different. Perpetrator programmes can be provided by state-run agencies and/or NGOs (community-based programmes). NGOs that provide perpetrator programmes are often women support services that offer programmes as one of the services targeted for ensuring the safety of survivors. These practices can be found for example in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia (Jovanovic & Vall, 2022),²⁴ Croatia, Moldova, Georgia, Bulgaria. In many cases, perpetrator programmes are provided by NGOs that specialise in working with men who use violence, like in Italy, Spain, Ireland, Switzerland, and Norway.

In terms of **referrals**, programmes can work with court mandated clients, with voluntary clients (they can be recommended by a stakeholder, for example, the centre for social work, or be self-referred) and with both types of clients. The European mapping of perpetrator programmes (Geldschläger, et al., 2014)²⁵

21 UN Women, UNFPA, WHO, UNDP & UNODC (2015). *Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Subject to Violence*. Available at: <https://www.unfpa.org/essential-services-package-women-and-girls-subject-violence>

22 GREVIO Secretariat (2017). *Baseline report by the Government of Sweden on measures giving effect to the provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence*. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/state-report-on-sweden/168073fff6>

23 GREVIO Secretariat (2016). *First Country Report Austria*. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/16806ee8b2>

24 Jovanović, S. & Vall, B. (2022). *Perpetrator Programmes in the Western Balkans; Mapping the Existing Practices and Ways Forward*. Berlin: The European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence (WWP EN).

25 Geldschläger, H., Ginés, O., Nax, D., & Ponce, A. (2014). *Outcome Measurement in European Perpetrator Programmes: A Survey*. Available at: https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/fileadmin/WWP_Network/redakteure/IMPACT/Daphne_III_Impact_-_Working_paper_1_-_Outcome_Measurement_in_European_Perpetrator_Programmes_-_A_Survey.pdf

identified that 39.1% of existing programmes work mainly with court-mandated clients, 45.9% programmes work mainly with voluntary clients and 15% work with both categories. In order to ensure wide accessibility of programmes, it is important to ensure that all referral routes are available in one country (Hester & Lilley, 2016).

Programmes are tailored toward different **characteristics of perpetrators**. Most programmes are specialised for men who use violence in intimate partner relationships (Akoensi, et al., 2012).²⁶ Some programmes are tailored to specific groups of perpetrators (Stover, et al., 2009),²⁷ for example for high-risk perpetrators (Project Drive, 2021),²⁸ female perpetrators (Carney, et al., 2007),²⁹ working with perpetrators who have addiction problems,³⁰ working with fathers who use IPV³¹ and similar.

1.4. PERPETRATOR PROGRAMME PRACTICES THAT CAN JEOPARDISE THE SAFETY OF SURVIVORS

The goal of perpetrator programmes is to ensure the safety of survivors. However, there are a number of practices that perpetrator programmes can engage in that may jeopardise the safety of survivors.

One of them is **anger management groups**. Many perpetrators tend to believe that they need to control their anger in a better way, and that this will solve the problem with violence. However, poor anger management is usually not the cause of IPV, or the way to combat it (Jewkes, 2002).³²

Perpetrators of IPV usually do not have problems with managing their anger in other contexts, for example when frustrated at work. Likewise, perpetrators usually choose when and in what way to use violence, based on the circumstances they are in (for instance, waiting until they get home and are alone with a partner to start with physical abuse), or consequences they might face (like blows to parts of the body that do not leave marks). All this shows that use of violence in intimate partner relations is mainly intentional and perpetrators do choose and control their actions.

When analysing perpetrator practices across Europe, the GREVIO Committee highlighted that working on violence cannot be reduced to anger management (GREVIO Secretariat, 2021, para 199).³³ Although topics on anger management can be part of perpetrator programmes, they should be placed as one of the techniques that prevent escalation of violence in initial phases of the programme, not as the programme core, or its key element. Also, working on anger and other emotions will be more beneficial if looked through a gender lens, and exploring emotions through masculinity and gender roles.

Similarly, DV and IPV are not a relationship problem and **couple counselling** is not a safe or effective intervention (Rowe, et al., 2011).³⁴ While there can be benefits for couples who undergo couples therapy, there is a great risk for any person who is experiencing domestic violence to attend therapy with their

26 Akoensi, T. D., Koehler, J. A., Lösel, F., & Humphreys, D. K. (2013). Domestic violence perpetrator programmes in Europe, Part II: A systematic review of the state of evidence. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 57(10), 1206-1225.

27 Stover, C. S., Meadows, A. L., & Kaufman, J. (2009). Interventions for intimate partner violence: Review and implications for evidence-based practice. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 40(3), 223.

28 Project Drive in the UK. Find out more: <https://driveproject.org.uk/>

29 Carney, M., Buttell, F., & Dutton, D. (2007). Women who perpetrate intimate partner violence: A review of the literature with recommendations for treatment. *Aggression and Violent Behaviour*, 12(1), 108-115.

30 Project Advance in the UK. Find out more: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/advance>

31 Programme Caring Dads, applied internationally. Find out more here: <https://caringdads.org/>

32 Jewkes, R. (2002). Intimate partner violence: causes and prevention. *The Lancet*, 359(9315), 1423-1429.

33 GREVIO Secretariat (2021). Mid-term Horizontal Review of GREVIO baseline evaluation reports. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/prems-010522-gbr-grevio-mid-term-horizontal-review-rev-february-2022/1680a58499>

34 Rowe, L. S., Doss, B. D., Hsueh, A. C., Libet, J., & Mitchell, A. E. (2011). Coexisting Difficulties and Couple Therapy Outcomes: Psychopathology and Intimate Partner Violence. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 25, 455-458.

perpetrator. Relationship counselling cannot fix the unequal power structure that is characteristic of an abusive relationship. It can also impose additional risk to the survivor. A perpetrator may later use what is said in therapy against their partner. Therapy can make a person feel vulnerable. If the perpetrator is embarrassed or angered by something said in therapy, he may make their partner suffer to gain back the sense of control. Therapy is often considered a “safe space” for people to talk. For a survivor, that safety does not necessarily extend to their home.

Another reason that couples therapy or counselling is not recommended is that the facilitator may not know about the abuse, which would make the entire process ineffective. The perpetrator may make their partner seem responsible for the problems, and if the therapist does not realise that abuse is present, the therapist may believe the abuser.

Similarly, couples/family **mediation** is not a safe or effective intervention when working with DV and IPV (Ver Steegh, 2003).³⁵ Mediation cannot address the inherent power imbalances between the perpetrator and the survivor. Survivors are often unable to identify or express their needs in a safe way because of the violence they experienced. Survivors can capably bargain on their own behalf, but recognise that their abusers will neither value nor respect the outcome of mediation. For these reasons, full participation in mediation is not realistic for survivors. Mediator neutrality can prevent the mediator from correcting power imbalances and mediation might allow the perpetrator to continue to manipulate and exercise control. In this way, mediator neutrality often has the ironic effect of further empowering the perpetrator, thereby increasing rather than decreasing the already disproportionate power imbalance between the parties. This is recognised and prohibited by the article 48 of the Istanbul Convention (CoE, 2011a).

1.5. KEY PRINCIPLES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES

The development of perpetrator programmes for domestic violence in a country or community needs to be done in a responsible way. It is important to highlight that before setting up a perpetrator programme, there are certain prerequisites that need to be in place in the country:

- Domestic violence needs to be criminalised; this is the minimum of accountability of perpetrators in a country.
- Survivor support services need to be ensured; unless this aspect is in place, survivors are not protected, and this needs to be prioritised. Ideally, there should be independent Women’s NGO’s available for survivors to ensure the accountability of institutions working with survivors and with perpetrators.
- Procedures for assessing and managing risk need to be in place, especially in high-risk cases, ideally through multi-agency work.

The following principles are necessary to develop an effective evidence-based programme for working with perpetrators of domestic violence.

Prioritising the safety of survivors and doing no harm

The well-being of survivors must be prioritised by perpetrator programmes. The focus of the ‘do no harm’ principle is to take a survivor-centred approach in all activities to prevent and mitigate any negative impact of the intervention on survivors. A strong ‘do no harm’ approach needs to be based on a clear understanding of the context in the local culture, informed by women’s voices and experiences to ensure the risks of violence do not increase because of the intervention.

³⁵ Ver Steegh, N. (2003). Yes, No, and Maybe: Informed Decision Making about Divorce Mediation in the Presence of Domestic Violence. *William and Mary Journal of Women and the Law*, 9, 145-206.

Gender-informed and broadly informed perpetrator programmes

Perpetrator programmes must take a gendered view by examining the role and influence of power and control within the relationship. Men's entitlement to get their way is socialised and must be included in the content of the perpetrator programme. The programmes also need to work with a comprehensive understanding of violence through the ecological model.

Accountability of perpetrators

Perpetrator programmes need to keep perpetrators accountable for their behaviour. This means that the responsibility for violence is put solely on them, and that mechanisms of denial, minimisation, victim-blaming or externalising are challenged through a self-reflective process.

Accountability of perpetrator programmes

Perpetrator programmes must remain accountable to survivors, their families, survivor support services, organisations working in the field of GBV and DV, local community and society as a whole. Perpetrator programmes need to be a part of wide multi-agency system and ensure that accountability of perpetrators is highlighted and addressed.³⁶

Be grounded in a human-rights approach

Programmes need to understand DV and IPV as a violation of human rights and act accordingly.

Be part of a coordinated community response

Perpetrator programmes should not be run in isolation and need to be part of a coordinated community response to domestic violence.

Be evidence-based and evidence-building

Programmes need to incorporate evidence-based interventions in their work. Likewise, programmes should contribute to a wider understanding of perpetrator programmes through taking part in research, evaluations, and showing results of their work in a transparent way.

Be inclusive and intersectional

Perpetrator programmes should be tailored to meet the unique experiences and needs of communities affected by multiple forms of discrimination. Gender inequality must be addressed alongside other forms of oppression.

Be context-informed

Programmes must be culturally appropriate in the national and local context, while maintaining all core principles of safe work.

Ensure quality of work

Programmes need to set systems and procedures for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of their work. The evaluation of programmes needs to include the perspective of survivors, alongside information from other sources (perpetrators, official data, facilitators...).

1.6. STRUCTURES AROUND PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES

Coordinated community response

Perpetrator programmes need to be part of a coordinated community response to domestic violence in the country and in the community, to be able to ensure the safety of survivors (Hester & Lilley, 2016; Respect, 2017; WWP EN, 2018). Perpetrator programmes cannot be the only entity of accountability

³⁶ More about WWP EN accountability framework here: https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/fileadmin/WWP_Network/redakteure/Network_documents/WWP_EN_Accountability_Framework_final.pdf

in a perpetrator's life. This perspective needs to be shared by other actors within the coordinated response to violence who should closely collaborate.

Perpetrator programmes bring added value to all actors within the coordinated community response. Because perpetrator programmes engage with perpetrators on a weekly basis, and much more than any other stakeholder, they are in a unique position to provide information that is relevant for assessing risk to survivors and planning interventions. Perpetrator programmes can also support the impact of other imposed measures, as they can work with perpetrators on understanding and accepting them. For example, a perpetrator can perceive a protection order of eviction as an attack, putting survivors at additional risk of the perpetrator trying to obtain control through intensifying violence. Perpetrator programmes are in a position to explore this with the perpetrator and support him in adopting a different perspective, or initiating other measures to ensure the safety of survivors in cases of high risk.

Perpetrator programmes should be organised within a coordinated community response that focuses on two goals that inform the way systems respond when a man commits domestic violence: 1) improving the safety of women and children; and 2) holding men accountable for the violence they commit. Perpetrator programmes, along with other agencies in the community response, stress that the government must impose measures on the perpetrator to stop the violence, that the coercive power of the government should be restricted to the perpetrator's illegal activity, that survivors are limited in their ability to hold perpetrators accountable, and that domestic violence creates power differences that need to be accounted for in every intervention. Perpetrator programmes in a coordinated community response should share systemic information with the broader response and participate in the organisation within the response to meet the goals of survivor safety and perpetrator accountability.

National legislations should recognise perpetrator programmes as one of the key elements of multi-agency work in the country, defining their role and responsibilities. Furthermore, perpetrator programmes should initiate the development of protocols that will strengthen their cooperation in the community.

Legislative framework of perpetrator programmes

The legislative framework in a country outlines key elements of accountability of perpetrators, perpetrator programmes and their quality. Nevertheless, the sole existence of a legislative framework, even a good one, will not yield results unless it is applied in practice (Jovanovic & Vall, 2022). Measures for creating a comprehensive legal framework, for monitoring and improving its implementation need to be in place.

Legislative frameworks are different in countries across Europe. However, there are some key elements that ensure that perpetrator programmes are placed in the country's framework in a safe and effective way.

The accountability of perpetrators and zero tolerance for violence need to be outlined in the legislation and its implementation. IPV and DV need to be recognised as a criminal offence, in all their forms (not only limited to physical violence) and proper sanctions need to be available and imposed. Legislation also needs to develop measures for ensuring the safety of survivors that are imposed immediately when there is risk of harm to survivors (protection orders). It is important to flag that all involved stakeholders need to be sensitised, trained and prepared to apply the existing framework.

Furthermore, perpetrator programmes need to be defined within the legislative framework. Countries in Europe have found different solutions, but perpetrator programmes need to be embedded in existing legislative frameworks. There are several relevant points for legislative frameworks concerning perpetrator programmes:

- Legislative frameworks should envisage both mandatory and voluntary referrals to perpetrator programmes. This means that referral of perpetrators should be imposed by the court (as part of the criminal and/or civil proceedings). Most perpetrators do not see

their violence as a problem (they externalise it, minimise it...) and are reluctant to engage in programmes that are intensive and long (usually over 6 months, once a week). If they are obliged to participate, this will give programme facilitators an opportunity to support transformation of this external motivation into an internal one, which is important for achieving change (Sheehan, et al., 2012).³⁷ Besides that, the legislative framework should open and encourage voluntary participation in programmes.

- Legislative frameworks should ensure referrals to perpetrator programmes through criminal and civil laws. This is important as it ensures that a wider population of perpetrators can access programmes, those who are convicted of a crime, and those who are identified through civil laws. Good practice is adopting referral to a perpetrator programme as a protection measure (alongside eviction, restraining orders and similar...) as it ensures that perpetrators enrol in programmes in a timely manner (shortly after the violent incident) and supports the effectiveness of other applied measures.
- Legislative frameworks need to outline key elements of perpetrator programmes and quality standards for work. These standards should follow evidence-based practices and provide a framework for survivor-safety-oriented perpetrator work.

Referrals

As outlined in section 1.3, programmes can work with court mandated clients, with voluntary clients (they can be recommended by some stakeholder, for example the centre for social work or self-referred) and with both types of clients. The European mapping of perpetrator programmes (Geldschläger, et al., 2014) identified that 39.1% of existing programmes work mainly with court-mandated clients, 45.9% programmes work mainly with voluntary clients and 15% work with both categories. In order to ensure wide accessibility of programmes, it is important to ensure that all referral routes are available in one country (Hester & Lilley, 2016).

In the case of voluntary referrals, there needs to be careful implementation of all regulations linked to breach of privacy and confidentiality issues balanced with the protection of victims of violence and legal requirements for professionals dealing with criminal offences. Programmes that work with voluntary clients need to define strategies on how to reach and motivate them, which is a challenging task. Also, particular attention needs to be paid to how programmes advertise because they need a communication plan that addresses men in a non-threatening way.³⁸ Although some men enrol in programmes voluntarily, this does not mean that they are more motivated to change. Men often arrive on the verge of a crisis that threatens to break up their relationship, or some other crisis. The motivation is thus often quite external and consistent initial work needs to be done to ensure that the motivation for change becomes an authentic drive for completing the programme.

Funding for perpetrator programmes

Funding is one of the key elements of ensuring sustainability of perpetrator programmes in the country. Perpetrator programmes can be funded by the national government, local government, or through donor support, through stable, long-term funding streams or through short-term, project funds. It is strongly recommended that the core work of perpetrator programmes be funded in a stable manner.

If public funds are being sought or provided, it is important for perpetrator programmes to understand the impact of funding survivor support organisations, and ensure that funding is not taken from survivors' services. It is important to highlight that if there are no survivor support services in place, perpetrator programmes should not be set up.

37 Sheehan, K. A., Thakor, S., & Stewart, D. E. (2012). Turning points for perpetrators of intimate partner violence. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 13(1), 30-40.

38 Interesting examples can be found in Respect's Phonenumber: <https://respectphonenumber.org.uk/>

Perpetrators themselves can also be required to pay fees for attending; however, this practice is not widespread in Europe. It can also backfire on survivors, as these funds usually come from the family budget.

1.7. SERVICES THAT PROVIDE PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES

Perpetrator programmes can be provided by state-run agencies and/or NGOs (community-based programmes). In many countries there is a variety of service providers combining state-run programmes and NGOs.

The types of state-run agencies that provide perpetrator programmes are different across Europe. They can be institutions under the ministry in charge of justice (units in prisons or probation services), health institutions (like in parts of Italy,³⁹ Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina⁴⁰), social welfare services (for instance, in parts of Croatia, Estonia),⁴¹ or universities (like in parts of Spain or Finland).⁴² It is important to flag that perpetrator programmes need to be specialised services, not only additional workload for the already employed professionals in any state-run institution.

NGOs that provide perpetrator programmes are often women support services that offer programmes as one of the services for ensuring survivor safety. These practices can be found for example in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia (Jovanovic & Vall, 2022), Moldova, Georgia. In many cases, perpetrator programmes are provided by NGOs which are specialised in working with men who use violence, like in Italy, Norway, and Ireland.⁴³

Regardless of the type of service providers, staff that run perpetrator programmes need to be competent for the work. In many countries there are requirements in terms of formal education of engaged staff and this depends on the national regulations. In terms of competences, WWP EN (2018) suggests the following:

Knowledge: (e.g. from written materials, workshops, lectures, presentations, webinars)

- Understand abusive behaviour patterns and underlying beliefs, the impacts of these on victims and the abuse of children in these dynamics.
- Understand the theoretical approach of the programme.
- Understand processes of change, and the factors which might support or inhibit this.
- Basic understanding of substance abuse and mental health issues.
- Understand legal responsibilities, confidentiality and all issues related to risk.

Skills: (e.g. from practice, skill-specific training)

- Ability to work in a way that is “gender informed”, for example, to use gender transformative approaches in work.
- Developing and maintaining relationships with clients, including the ability to motivate and work with resistance.

39 These are LDV (Liberi dalla violenza) in region Emilia Romagna, perpetrator programmes in health centres in Grosseto, Tuscany, Veneto.

40 Organisations that provide this kind of programme in Albania are Women to Women (<https://www.gruajatekgruaja.org/>), Counselling Line for Women and Girls (<https://hotlinealbania.org/>), In Bosnia and Herzegovina NGO Budućnost (<https://buducnost-md.org/>), Vive Zene (<https://vivezene.ba/>). The situation in Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina was explored in Jovanović, S. & Vall, B. (2022). *Perpetrator Programmes in the Western Balkans; Mapping the Existing Practices and Ways Forward*. Berlin: The European Network for the Work With Perpetrators of Domestic Violence (WWP EN)

41 Organisations that provide perpetrator programmes in Croatia are Dom Duga in Zagreb (<https://www.duga-zagreb.hr/en/home/>) or Uzor in Rijeka (<http://www.udruga-uzor-rijeka.hr/>), and in Estonia it is the Republic of Estonia Social Insurance Board (<https://www.sotsiaalkindlustusamet.ee/en>)

42 Organisations of this type that provide perpetrator programmes in Spain are Contexto (<https://www.programmeacontexto.org/>) and in Finland Jyväskylä Model for Male Batterers (<https://www.jyu.fi/edupsy/fi/laitokset/psykologia/en/research/research-areas/psychotherapy/violence-in-close-relationships>)

43 Examples of programmes of this kind are CAM Italy (<https://www.centrouominimaltrattanti.org/>), Alternative to Violence-ATV Norway (<https://atv-stiftelsen.no/english/>), MEND and MOVE in Ireland (<https://mensnetwork.ie/mend/>, <https://www.moveireland.ie/>)

- Ability to work respectfully, whilst not colluding with abuse or manipulation.
- Ability to use cultural and linguistic skills in work with different kinds of perpetrators with different kinds of cultural backgrounds
- Responding to verbal and nonverbal presentation, including emotional states.
- Managing group dynamics.
- Capacity to assess and monitor suitability.
- Responding to all aspects of risk and safety issues, including recognising severe depression, suicidal ideation and risks to partner and children.

Values: (e.g. from supervision, discussion, reflection, codes of professional values and ethics)

- A commitment to violence-free relationships and to gender equality.
- Recognise the importance of self-reflection, and show capacity for receiving and integrating feedback about their own work.
- Consideration of their own experiences with and understanding of violence.
- Accountability at different levels of the programme

Working in domestic violence perpetrator programmes is a challenging task. Therefore, there needs to be a support mechanism in place to address the negative effects of this type of work, and to continuously develop staff competences. Supervision needs to be available to all staff, and can include emotional support, consultation and professional development. Professionals also need to have proper training. In some countries, national training is developed and/or accredited, while in others training of staff is up to individual organisations. In recent research, Geldschläger and Ajduković (2021)⁴⁴ mapped 12 training programmes for perpetrator work in Europe, with 75% of them accredited by an external, usually government body. Training hours needed to complete the core training for perpetrator programmes are different from country to country, with 106 training hours as an average.

Perpetrator programmes need staff and programme facilitators to manage the programme. In general, it is preferable to have a male-female co-facilitation team. Because perpetrator programmes address gender inequality, it is important to promote gender equality through a male and female co-facilitation team.

Perpetrator programmes will need a number of resources, one of them being space for conducting the work (including group work).

In cases when survivor support services also provide perpetrator work, it is essential that each service has separate space that will ensure privacy, and that perpetrators and survivors do not meet. Likewise, it is important that interventions for perpetrators and support for survivors are not provided by the same professional, as it is the only way to ensure that survivors receive independent support, and to minimise service generated risks to survivors (if support is provided by the same professional, there is a high chance that the perpetrator will feel more intimidated knowing that the facilitator is in contact with his partner or ex-partner, which can result in increasing control toward the survivor).

44 Ajdukovic, D. & Geldschläger, H. (2021). *Guidance for developing the WWP EN Core Training for perpetrator programmes*. Berlin: The European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence (WWP EN). Unpublished manuscript.

1.8. PROGRAMMES AND PROGRAMME CURRICULA FOR THE WORK WITH PERPETRATORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Close cooperation with women support services and survivor contact and support

Perpetrator programmes should closely cooperate with women support services to ensure that the needs and interests of survivors are at the centre of all their interventions. This is also highlighted in the Istanbul Convention (CoE, 2011a) as one of the key aspects of the work. Perpetrator programmes are one part of a system of interventions for addressing domestic violence and should not be established in isolation or implemented where women's support services do not exist.

Cooperation with survivor support services can take many forms. As stated in WWP EN Guidelines for Standards (2018), it can be developed by including representatives from women's support services as experts in steering committees or advisory boards of perpetrator programmes. Cooperation can take the form of joint activities, advocacy and lobbying work, and also cooperation on joint cases. However, the development of this cooperation is not an easy task. As noted by GREVIO, although being the key element of perpetrator work, cooperation with women support services continuously faces challenges in its implementation across Europe (GREVIO Secretariat, 2021).

Enrolment of the perpetrator in a programme may give the survivor a false sense of security, influence her decision to leave or stay in a relationship, and therefore expose her to a higher risk (CoE, 2011b).⁴⁵ Therefore, it is essential to bear in mind the potential service-generated risks and address them while working with perpetrators. The core element of safe perpetrator work is the establishment of safe procedures for survivor contact and support. This is considered as a core element of survivor-safety-oriented perpetrator work by WWP EN (2018), Respect (2017)⁴⁶ and many others (for instance German⁴⁷ and Italian⁴⁸ standards for perpetrator work). For example, in the UK, programmes that do not have survivor contact and support in place cannot be accredited by Respect.

In the context of perpetrator work, services for survivors can be provided in three main ways: a) through close partnership between independent perpetrator programmes and women support services, b) perpetrator programmes setting up independent women support services, or c) women support services setting up perpetrator programmes (Pauncz, 2018).⁴⁹ Regardless of the model applied, there are several issues that survivor support needs to address in this context. Participation of survivors is voluntary, and they need to make informed decisions whether to take part or not. It is important that survivors be informed about the programme, its content and limitations. Survivors also need to have access to safety planning, risk assessment and management as well as assistance for them to assess their hopes and fears.

Risk assessment and management

Working in the field of violence means ongoing work with risk of harm, mainly for women and children. No intervention in the field is risk-free, although they are mainly targeted toward increasing survivor safety. Perpetrator programmes thus need to implement systematic risk assessment and management (Hester and Lilley, 2016; WWP EN, 2018; Respect, 2017).

45 CoE (2011b). Explanatory Report to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (p.26-65). Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/ic-and-explanatory-report/16808d24c6>

46 Respect is an NGO in the UK that focuses on perpetrators of domestic violence, male victims and young people who use violence. Respect has developed comprehensive standards for perpetrator work and provides accreditation in the UK. Learn more: <https://www.respect.uk.net/pages/about-us>

47 <https://www.bmfsfj.de/bmfsfj/service/publikationen/arbeit-mit-taetern-in-faellen-haeuslicher-gewalt-80734>

48 <https://www.associazionerelive.it/joomla/images/LineeGuidaRelivea.pdf>

49 Pauncz, A. (2018), *Who should provide victim support services? A review of documents and working papers on collaboration between perpetrator programmes and women's support*, European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence. Available at: https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/FINAL_WWP_EN_Paper_on_Collaboration_Between_DVPP_and_WSS.pdf

It is highlighted that this needs to be an ongoing process that starts in the intake phase and is monitored throughout the programme. It also needs to include information from different sources, survivors' perspective as one of them. Risk assessment should be based on a structured professional judgment approach, which is based on evidence-based risk factors, risk assessment tools, gathering information from various sources and an individual approach to every case (Newman 2010;⁵⁰ E-Maria Partnership 2013;⁵¹ Kropp & Hart, 2015⁵²). It is important to highlight that risk assessment cannot be reduced to psychological assessment. Although psychological assessment can bring additional value in understanding individual traits of the perpetrator, it is shown that even experienced clinicians fail to assess the risk of violence, and that psychological tests (personality, aggressiveness and similar) are not good measuring tools for violent behaviour and potential harm in the context of domestic violence (Newman, 2010).

Perpetrator programmes are in intensive contact with perpetrators. This puts them in a position of responsibility, as they are usually able to monitor risk factors (static and dynamic), and get more reliable information than other stakeholders (due to the building of trust, the perpetrators and/or survivors may be willing to share more information relevant to risk assessment).

Perpetrator programmes need to have procedures in place for managing risk, both internally and externally, in the context of multi-agency work.

Programme structure and programme format

The overall structure of perpetrator programmes usually includes three phases: intake (assessment), treatment, and programme completion with evaluation (Ajdukovic & Pauncz, 2015).⁵³ Some programmes also have a follow-up phase, in which they continue some monitoring and less intensive interventions after the treatment is finished.

The intake phase usually includes several individual sessions with a perpetrator with several goals: to conduct assessment and understand if the perpetrator meets programme intake criteria, to establish a relationship with the client and start working on his motivation, to explain the programme and address all questions and concerns that perpetrators might have, to inform about confidentiality, to conduct risk assessment and other. Partner contact should be established in this phase.

It is important that each programme has its intake criteria, which make up the framework of the target group that the programme is addressing. These criteria are different from programme to programme, as each can work with different target groups. For example, for some programmes, the intake criterion is that the client is a male perpetrator of IPV. For others, the intake criterion can be that the client is a female perpetrator of IPV, as they are specialised for this typology. Similarly, some programmes might be designed only for high-risk perpetrators, while for other programmes this can be an exclusion criterion. Most programmes in Europe that work with men who use IPV have similar intake criteria: absence of mental disorders (76.9% of programmes), absence of alcohol and drug abuse (75.4%), minimum motivation to take part in the programme (63.4%) and minimum accountability for the violence (52.2%) (Geldschläger, et al., 2014).

50 Newman, C. (2010). Expert Domestic Violence Risk Assessments in the Family Courts. Respect. Available at: http://bds-research.com/Assessments/DVI/Research/domestic_violence_risk_assessment_in_family_court.pdf

51 Albuquerque, M., Basinskaite, D., Martins, M. M., Mira, R., Pautasso, E., Polzin, I., (...) and Wiemann, S. (2013). European manual for risk assessment. Göttingen, Germany: E-Maria Partnership. Available at: <https://e-maria.eu/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Manual-latest-version-light-colours.pdf>

52 Kropp, P.R., & Hart, S.D. (2015). *SARA V-3. User guide for the Third Edition of the Spousal Assault Risk Assessment Guide*. ProActive ReSolutions Inc.

53 Ajdukovic, D. & Pauncz, A. (2015). *How to Start a Perpetrator Programme? Issues and Dilemmas of the "Start Up" Process*. Available at: https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/fileadmin/WWP_Network/redakteure/Expert%20Essays/WWP-EN%20Expert%20Essay%20-%20How%20to%20Start.pdf

The treatment phase is the core part of the programme which includes a number of sessions which are usually group interventions (open or closed groups), as it is considered more effective (Murphy, et al., 2020).⁵⁴ Working in a group is also more cost-effective in comparison to individual work. The contents of the sessions will depend on the theoretical background of the providers. The programme approach is often targeting the belief systems of perpetrators. Facilitators use dialogical tools that seek to help the participants examine their own behaviours.

The completion phase is usually focused on assessing the outcomes of the programme, giving feedback to the perpetrator and reporting (if perpetrators were referred by some institution). It is followed by evaluation. As stated by Hester and Lilley (2016), evaluation should focus on a wider definition of “success”, and on factors/variables that can be changed (not limited to the overall change in perpetrators’ behaviour). Having feedback from survivors in the process of evaluation is essential.

Programme content

Each programme designs its own content. However, it is important that the content tackles the complexity of individual factors that contribute to violence, while bearing in mind its intersection with factors on other levels, like the societal, institutional and community level. The content is strongly linked to the theoretical approach applied in the programme, and needs to be based on the ecological model, gender perspective, and power and control as core, while contributions from other theoretical approaches can bring added value (see section 1.2).

Individual factors that should be addressed in perpetrator programmes can be divided into several categories (Ajdukovic & Pauncz, 2015, p. 7):

- a. Cognitive factors include beliefs and attitudes about gender relations and roles, expectations from the relationship (e.g. romantic love), partner and children (e.g. entitlement to services), and from themselves (e.g. masculinity, identity).
- b. Emotional factors including the gender-based regulation (identification, understanding and expression) of feelings of anger, frustration, failure, shame, jealousy, fear, etc. and the experiential patterns they are based on (attachment styles, sense of identity, expectations, etc.).
- c. Behavioural factors including the substitution of violent and controlling gender-based behaviours with skills and abilities for respectful and equal relationships, like empathy, communication, conflict resolution, stress and anger management, etc.

It is important to highlight that cognitive factors (beliefs, mainly gender traditional) underpin emotional and behavioural factors. For instance, even if a person feels anger, in order to manifest it through violent behaviour, there is usually a belief system of entitlement that supports the violent act toward another person (usually toward a partner, and not someone else, for instance a colleague), in certain circumstances (for example, when they are at home, instead of in public). Challenging these beliefs should be the core of the content of perpetrator programmes.

If there is too much emphasis on emotional and behavioural factors (for example on managing emotions or building social skills), and work on cognitive factors is not prioritised, underlying causes of violence will remain intact. Also, if work on cognitive, emotional and behavioural factors is gender neutral (for example, work on anger as an emotion without considering how men feel and express anger), it will not be effective in stopping violence that is gender related.

54 Murphy, C. M., Eckhardt, C. I., Clifford, J. M., LaMotte, A. D., & Meis, L. A. (2017). Individual versus group cognitive-behavioural therapy for partner-violent men: A preliminary randomised trial. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 35, 2846-2868. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260517705666>

Perpetrator programmes should also include the perspective of children, both in direct work with men through programme content and at the level of integration with other agencies in the community (Hester & Lilley, 2016; WWP EN, 2018). There are many programmes being developed which integrate topics that include children, for several reasons, and more needs to be done in this field. As suggested by Alderson, Westmarland and Kelly (2012),⁵⁵ children are of paramount importance when it comes to domestic violence, but often not visible enough in perpetrator work. They found that the outcomes of perpetrator programmes that are positive for children have several dimensions: changes in the father that benefit children (through stopping or reducing IPV), changes in the child-father relationship (improved relationship through improved parenting skills) and changes in the child's functioning (emotional functioning, cognitive functioning etc.). Westmarland and Kelly (2015)⁵⁶ found that the parenting style of men in the programme improved, that there was more attention to and communication with children and more playtime with children, and increased awareness of the children's fears and anxiety related to IPV.

Programmes are incorporating a child-centred perspective in their work with perpetrators. Children and their wellbeing are often key internal motivation that supports men in making the change (Di Napoli, et al., 2019).⁵⁷ As described by Henderson and Areal (2004, page 13),⁵⁸ *“Many men appear to be more capable of developing empathy, acknowledging damage, and accepting responsibility for violence in relation to their children than in relation to their partners. If the men in BIPs come to understand the damaging effects of their violence on children, even if the children are not abused, this can be a powerful motivator for renouncing violent behaviour.”* Most programmes in Europe have specific topics that focus on children and fathering, while applying a child-centred approach throughout the treatment, like Alternative to Violence in Norway (Henning, 2020),⁵⁹ perpetrator programmes in the UK accredited by Respect (2018). Some programmes developed specialised courses for fathers who use IPV (like CAM Italy). Many of them were evaluated and showed significant positive outcomes, like Caring Dads (Henning, 2020). The Scottish Government Model, the Caledonian Model, envisages the existence of programmes for children, associated with their programmes for perpetrators and programmes for women.⁶⁰

1.9. PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES IN COVID-19 CIRCUMSTANCES

The prevalence of violence against women during the COVID-19 pandemic increased (UN Women, 2020), while access to safety for many women was additionally challenged due to restrictive measures. Keeping perpetrators accountable for their violence and running perpetrator programmes was also challenging. In the mapping conducted in 2021, different strategies of perpetrator programmes during the COVID-19 pandemic were identified (Pauncz, Vall and Jovanovic, 2021).⁶¹ Some programmes have moved online, continuing with group work or shifting to an individual setting. Some started applying “holding strategies”, which were usually limited to occasional phone calls with the goal of staying in contact and maintaining motivation until the situation allowed in person contact. There were programmes that managed to be recognised as essential services in their countries, which allowed them to work in person even during restrictions. And some programmes have applied a combination of all the described approaches.

55 Alderson, S., Westmarland, N., & Kelly, L. (2013). The need for accountability to, and support for, children of men on domestic violence perpetrator programmes. *Child Abuse Review*, 22(3), 182-193. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/car.2223>

56 Kelly, L., & Westmarland, N. (2015). Domestic violence perpetrator programmes: Steps towards change. Project Mirabal final report. <https://projectmirabal.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/ProjectMirabalfinalreport.pdf>

57 Di Napoli, I., Procentese, F., Carnevale, S., Esposito, C., & Arcidiacono, C. (2019). Ending intimate partner violence (IPV) and locating men at stake: An ecological approach. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 16(9), 1652.

58 Henderson, A. F., & Areal, J. C. (2004). *Fathering After Violence: Curriculum Guidelines and Tools for Batterer Intervention Programmes*. Available at: http://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/userfiles/file/Children_and_Families/FAV%20Guidelines%202011.pdf

59 Henning, M. (2020). Fathering in the context of family violence. Challenges, interventions and collaboration towards child protection. Available at: https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/fileadmin/WWP_Network/redakteure/Expert%20Essays/final_fathers_expert_paper.pdf

60 More in section 4 of this document

61 Pauncz, A., Vall, B., & Jovanovic, S. (2021). *COVID-19 Revision of Practice. European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence (WWP EN)*. Available at: https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/COVID-19_Revision_of_Practice_Toolkit.pdf

Online perpetrator work was and still is very intriguing (even after the pandemic has ended) as it obviously has some advantages like reaching those participants who would usually stay out of reach due to irregular working hours, or those who live in areas where perpetrator programmes are not active. However, we need to be aware that online programmes are more than just in-person work in different spaces (Khotckii, 2020).⁶² There is still not conclusive research on the outcomes of online programmes and the key elements of their safety. Some organisations have published guidelines for working during the COVID-19 pandemic (WWP EN, 2020; WWP EN, 2021; Respect, 2021)⁶³ that include points on online perpetrator work.

The preliminary findings from recent research (Bellini & Westmarland, 2022)⁶⁴ showed some advantages and some limitations of online perpetrator work:

1. Online perpetrator groups are second best, and only if assessed as safe.

At the moment there is no research that demonstrates that online perpetrator work is as effective and safe, authors recommend that any use of online perpetrator work for now remain a secondary option and only if deemed safe for that particular family, and only if no in-person alternatives are available.

2. Physical environment and digital possessions matter.

Each participant in a programme requires a tablet or a computer.⁶⁵ The mapped programmes faced many challenges in providing these technical aspects for work. Authors recommend that facilitators support participants in developing the necessary digital skills (for instance, organising an initial 'testing session') and/or providing access to devices (for example access to community centres, libraries or probation offices).

3. Participants tend to communicate less with each other and more with the facilitator when perpetrator programmes are online.

Researchers noted that interaction between participants is reduced, as participants tend to focus more on facilitators, which takes away an important element of group cohesion and learning in the group context. Authors suggest that the number of participants be reduced (to 6-8). Some programmes in Europe have also been using breakout rooms for participants, and leaving some space for participants to get to know each other and connect (Pauncz, Vall and Jovanovic, 2021).

4. Facilitating an online programme is very different to an in-person programme.

This refers to the programme content, but also facilitation skills of professionals. Programmes found that not all materials they use in-person can easily be applied online (for example role-plays, staging, or writing assignments). Also, it requires additional skills from facilitators (how to manage technical aspects).

5. Digital delivery should still be part of a Coordinated Community Response.

All key aspects of safe perpetrator work need to be in place in the online setting. This includes partner contacts and support, risk assessment and multi-agency work. It is important that all actors are informed that the perpetrator is undergoing an online programme, especially survivor support services/professionals, in order to monitor its impact on survivors and assess risks.

6. New challenges arise with the introduction of technology.

Authors have discussed that technology and online work provide some benefits, such as resolving problems of participation and coverage. However, they also create some ad-

62 Khotckii, S. (2020). *Online Counselling for Violent Men - Necessary preparations and reflections*. Available at: https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/fileadmin/WWP_Network/redakteure/Resources/COVID_19/M21_Article_final.pdf

63 Respect (2021). *Responding to the challenges of Covid-19. Guidance for domestic abuse & safeguarding practitioners working with domestic abuse perpetrators*. Available at: https://hubble-live-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/respect/redactor2_assets/files/678/Respect_Guidance_for_DA_Perpetrators_Practitioners_January_2021.pdf

64 Bellini, R. & Westmarland, N. (2022). *Initial Lessons Learned from using Video Conferencing Software to Deliver Interventions for Men using Violence in Intimate Relationships*. Available at: https://hubble-live-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/respect/file_asset/file/92/Initial_Lessons.pdf

65 Experiences from this research showed that this should be devices with a screen size of minimum 18cm. They found this relevant as it is important that facilitators see the face and surrounding of the participant.

ditional challenges. Both the benefits and the challenges need to be taken into account when working online.

Online perpetrator work shows potential, and some programmes have made it part of their offer (for example CAM in Italy is providing an online programme for fathers who use IPV, Counselling Line for Men and Boys in Albania has kept online work as an option for some clients). More research is needed to be able to set up evidence-based practice in this field.

1.10. USEFUL RESOURCES

Below is a list of useful resources for understanding perpetrator programmes. This is not a comprehensive list; however, it includes key documents that contain valuable information on how programmes should be set up, what their key principles are and what the outcomes of perpetrator programmes are.

Ajdukovic, D. & Pauncz, A. (2015). *How to Start a Perpetrator Programme? Issues and Dilemmas of the "Start Up" Process.*

Iwi, K. & Newman, C. (2011). *Picking up the Pieces after Domestic Violence: A Practical Resource for Supporting Parenting Skills.*


Hester, M., & Lilley, S. J. (2016). Domestic and sexual violence perpetrator programmes: Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention: A collection of papers on the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

Kelly, L., & Westmarland, N. (2015). Domestic violence perpetrator programmes: Steps towards change. Project Mirabal final report.

Pauncz, A. (2018). Who should provide victim support services? A review of documents and working papers on collaboration between perpetrator programmes and women's support, European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence.

Respect (2017). *The Respect Standard (Third edition).*

WWP EN [European Network for Work with Perpetrators] (2018). Guidelines to Develop Standards for Programmes Working with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence - Working Document.

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CHAPTER 2:
**PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES
IN THE EASTERN
PARTNERSHIP REGION**

CHAPTER 2: PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES IN THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP REGION

2.1. METHODOLOGY

This research mapped six countries in the Eastern Partnership Region (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine). The methodology was adjusted to the diversity in the region regarding perpetrator programmes, namely that some countries have perpetrator programmes set up, while others do not.

The research focuses on the regional level and the similarities between countries, but also takes into account the existing varieties and differences, in terms of the levels of development of perpetrator programmes, national frameworks and characteristics.

Aims and research questions

This research primarily focuses on understanding the level of implementation of perpetrator programmes in the region, as one of the elements of ensuring the safety and wellbeing of survivors. The framework is based on Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention, particularly point 1, which refers to programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence.⁶⁶

The research had the following aims:

Aim 1. To map the situation of perpetrator programmes in the region. It refers to the mapping of existing or potential programmes, including state-run and community-based programmes, in prison, probation, and community setting. It focuses on the following research questions:

- What is the legal, normative and policy framework in the countries in relation to perpetrator programmes?
- How many perpetrator programmes are there and where are they set up?
- What are the main characteristics of these programmes?
- What systems are in place and what are the existing gaps in countries where perpetrator programmes do not exist?

Aim 2. To assess the quality of perpetrator programmes in the region. After conducting the mapping of the situation of perpetrator programmes in the region, the quality of those programmes is assessed, also exploring similarities and differences among countries in the region. It is important to flag that programmes were not evaluated, their quality was assessed based on their alignment with the existing standards: Guidelines for Standards of the European Network for the Work with perpetrators of Domestic Violence (WWP EN, 2018), the Istanbul Convention (CoE, 2011) and the Council of Europe document that outlines perpetrator programmes (Hester and Lilley, 2016). The standards can be summarised as (Hester and Lilley, 2016, page 16-18):

- prioritise the safety of the women partners and their children by working in collaboration with victim support services and offering women partners support.
- include the perspective of children living in abusive relationships as a priority;

⁶⁶ CoE (2011), article 16, paragraph 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".

- work guided by a clear and comprehensive definition of violence against women and the explicit principle that violence against women and children is unacceptable and that perpetrators are accountable for their abusive behaviour;
- assist perpetrators in changing by recognising that their use of violence is a choice that they make and challenge any denial, justification or blaming of others (while treating the perpetrator with respect);
- use an ecological model to understand the complexity and different paths that may lead to violence and how perpetration factors may be disrupted at the societal, institutional, community and individual levels;
- be tailored to different groups or “types” of perpetrators
- be implemented as part of an integrated/multi-agency approach and delivered over a minimum of two years, and therefore require significant investment and long-term commitment in terms of financial resources;
- take measures to maximise programme retention and completion;
- accommodate different referral routes or paths of entry;
- take into account the different sources of motivation at the intake/initial assessment and monitor this throughout the programme to detect any possible changes in motivation over time;
- implement systematic risk assessment and management; risk assessment must include a variety of information sources, for example at a minimum, it should include the victim's / partner's perspective and any official data available (police and other agency data).
- ensure a high level of qualification and training for facilitators;
- monitor, document and evaluate both processes and outcomes

The following research questions guided the activities with this aim:

- Do perpetrator programmes follow standards for quality and safe perpetrator programmes?
- What are the existing resources for perpetrator programmes and how sustainable are the programmes?

Aim 3. To develop recommendations for improving perpetrator programmes in the region; finally, recommendations are developed based on the results of the two previous aims. The following research questions guided this aspect:

- How can the perpetrator programmes in the region be improved?
- Which aspects can be introduced to improve the quality of perpetrator programmes in the region?
- What are the country-specific recommendations?

Instruments and target groups

Methodology: A mixed-method approach was followed including quantitative and qualitative data analysis. The following instruments and data collection procedures were followed:

- **Desk research**, which allowed gathering information about the legal framework in each country, the situation of perpetrator programmes in the region and also, their quality. Within the desk research, national programme curricula from Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia and Belarus were translated and comprehensively analysed, which allowed a thorough understanding of

their characteristics. Programme curricula from Azerbaijan, Armenia and curricula applied in the community-based sector in Georgia were received, but they were not analysed in the scope of the research. This is due to the fact that researchers were not aware of the existence of some of them (this was discovered during the research) and their translation and comprehensive analysis were not possible due to financial and time limitations.

- **Questionnaires** were adapted from the Impact Questionnaires.⁶⁷ These questionnaires were adjusted to the regional context, in order to allow the gathering of quantitative data about the situation of perpetrator programmes in the region and also about the quality of existing programmes. Therefore, there were two versions of questionnaires: for countries that have perpetrator programmes, and for countries that do not. Some parts of the questionnaires are the same, in order to have comparable data within the region, and some other parts are different based on country. Questionnaires were translated into local languages.
- **Focus groups with service providers/stakeholders;** this includes professionals working on perpetrator programmes and professionals working in survivors' services in countries where perpetrator programmes exist, or key stakeholders in countries where programmes do not exist. During focus groups, the results obtained in the previous questionnaires were explored more in depth, through open qualitative questions. Simultaneous translation was available during these focus group sessions, to ensure equal participation among all attendances.
- **Interviews with survivors,** inputs and perspectives of survivors about perpetrator work were gathered. Interviews were held with survivors from Georgia and Azerbaijan.⁶⁸ The survivors' personal data were not collected. Simultaneous translation was available.
- **Interviews with perpetrators,** tended to gather inputs from perpetrators who have experience in perpetrator programmes. However, this was not possible to organise, as the perpetrators did not accept it.⁶⁹ In Moldova, interviews with female perpetrators on probation who enrolled in the programme were organised. All of them were actually survivors of domestic violence, so their contributions were analysed from that perspective. Personal data were not collected. Simultaneous translation was available.

Target groups/participants:

The data were triangulated from various sources of information, such as:

- Perpetrator programmes and survivors' services or other relevant stakeholders (who answered the questionnaires and participated in focus groups).
- Official documents, manuals and reports already published (obtained through desk research).
- Survivors from 3 countries (who participated in interviews).⁷⁰

67 Questionnaires were developed in the context of the project "Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence in Europe" funded by The Daphne II Programme to combat violence against children, young people and women in 2007. More information at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283805963_European_perpetrator_programmes_A_survey_on_day-to-day_outcome_measurement

68 Planned interviews with survivors from Ukraine could not be realised, due to the war in Ukraine. The contacted survivor support services in Moldova were unable to engage in this activity as they were overwhelmed with supporting refugees at the time. Survivor support services in Armenia reported that perpetrator programmes could not be safely implemented in the country at the moment, and did not want to contribute to it by engaging survivors in the research.

69 There was a possibility to organise interviews with perpetrators in Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova. In Ukraine, it could not be realised due to the start of the war. In Georgia and Moldova, professionals from perpetrator programmes initiated this activity. However, perpetrators did not accept it, mainly due to concerns around confidentiality.

70 As stated in the previous section, survivors from Moldova were contacted through the probation service, as they had committed IPV and were being treated as female perpetrators.

Procedure and data collection

The procedure corresponded to the diversities in the region. There were several options within the region:

- Armenia and Azerbaijan do not have specific perpetrator programmes in place. During the research, it was found that a curriculum had been developed (in Azerbaijan), but the implementation has not yet started. Armenia has a programme applied in prisons, but it is not specialised for domestic violence.
- Belarus has developed and piloted a perpetrator programme. However, perpetrator programmes and survivor services have been shut down, professionals are not available, and key stakeholders in the state-run agencies also could not be reached.
- Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine have perpetrator programmes in place.
- The outbreak of the war in Ukraine limited the possibilities for the full application of the planned methodology in that country (focus groups could not be conducted).

For each of these situations, different methodologies were followed. In order to ensure consistency and comparisons between countries, a similar structure was followed whenever possible. The procedure applied in each country is presented in the following table:

TABLE 1. RESEARCH PROCEDURE

Method	COUNTRY					
	Armenia	Azerbaijan	Belarus	Georgia	Moldova	Ukraine
Desk research-general	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
Desk research-curricula analysis	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes
Questionnaires for perpetrator programmes and survivor services	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes
Questionnaires for stakeholders	yes	yes	no	no	no	no
Focus groups for perpetrator programmes and survivor support services (2 groups)	no ⁷¹	no ⁷²	no	yes	yes	no
Focus groups for stakeholders (1 group)	yes	yes	no	no	no	no
Interviews with survivors	no	yes	no	yes	yes	no
Interviews with perpetrators	no	no	no	no	no	no

71 In Armenia, representatives of survivor support services were included in the focus group for stakeholders.

72 In Azerbaijan, representatives of survivor support services were included in the focus group for stakeholders.

Due to the described limitations in Belarus, questionnaires for perpetrator programmes and survivor support services were only delivered to 3 professionals in total. A focus group was held with the same number of participants. Information received in this way was used for a better understanding of the curriculum, not for its implementation in practice. The goal of the analysis in Belarus was limited to the programme curriculum and its quality.

Interviews with 7 survivors were organised in Georgia, Moldova and Azerbaijan. The survivors in Moldova were involved in perpetrator programmes as female perpetrators.

Data collection

Data were collected as follows: local experts⁷³ collected data in each country (except Belarus, where this process was coordinated by the UNFPA representative) through questionnaires and desk research. Then, the data were shared in the previously agreed format with the project coordinators in order to integrate and merge data from all countries and derive regional results and recommendations.

In order to ensure a harmonised data collection procedure, capacity-building sessions with local experts, in which project coordinators explained the tools and the format for data sharing, were held before the process started. Once the information from the questionnaires and the desk research was reviewed by the research team, focus groups were organised. After gathering all the information, the research team integrated it into the Regional Guidance.

Sample and presentation of results

Tables 2, 3 and 4 show the number of organisations (perpetrator programmes, survivors' services and stakeholders) contacted, number of answers (questionnaires) received, and final number of organisations (questionnaires) included in the research. Questionnaires were administered by local experts from January-February 2022.

TABLE 2. CONTACTED, RECEIVED AND ANALYSED PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES AND SURVIVOR SUPPORT SERVICES IN GEORGIA, MOLDOVA AND UKRAINE

Country	PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES				SURVIVOR SUPPORT SERVICES			
	Georgia	Moldova	Ukraine	Total	Georgia	Moldova	Ukraine	Total
Contacted	12	17	20	49	6	8	24	38
Received	12	17	19	48	4	8	22	34
Analysed	12	17	19	48	4	8	22	34

In total, 49 perpetrator programmes in the region were contacted. The respondents were selected from the comprehensive list of existing perpetrator programmes in the countries, which was compiled by local experts. The choice was made in a way to present a representative sample in terms of geographical distribution and type of programme (state-run or community-based, in prison, probation or community setting). Almost 100 % of the contacted organisations responded to the questionnaire. A detailed list of the participants is available in Appendix 1.

⁷³ Gayane Hovakimyan (Armenia), Gunel Mehdiyeva (Azerbaijan), Nino Tkeshelashvili (Georgia), Aneta Bejenar (Moldova) and Karina Ambartsumova (Ukraine). Local experts have been a tremendous support in conducting this research, bringing their extensive expertise and commitment to combat GBV in this work. We highly appreciate the professionalism and commitment of our colleagues in Ukraine, who were contributing to the work even during the war.

In total, 38 survivor support services in Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine were contacted. The respondents were selected from the comprehensive list of existing services in the countries, which was compiled by local experts. The choice was made in a way to present a representative sample in terms of geographical distribution and types of services they provide. It was also based on the information on whether perpetrator programmes existed in the local community they work in or not. The response rate was high, 90% of the contacted organisations responded to the questionnaire. A detailed list of the participants is available in Appendix 1. Survivor support services were contacted in other countries in the region (Armenia, Azerbaijan), but they are presented in the table below, as they responded to the questionnaire for stakeholders.

TABLE 3. CONTACTED, RECEIVED AND ANALYSED KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN ARMENIA AND AZERBAIJAN

Country	Armenia	Azerbaijan	Total
Contacted	18	11	29
Received	10	11	21
Analysed	10	11	21

In total, 29 stakeholders in Armenia and Azerbaijan were contacted, with a response rate of 72%. Participants were selected from the comprehensive list of relevant stakeholders in the countries, which was compiled by the local experts. The choice was made in a way to present a representative sample in terms of their jurisdictions and the types of services they provide. Stakeholders included representatives from social welfare, the justice system, police, international organisations, and local NGOs. Survivor support services in Armenia are strongly opposed to the implementation of perpetrator programmes in Armenia at the moment, due to the low accountability of perpetrators in the country and the concern that this would affect the funds for survivor services. Women NGOs did not want to participate in the research as they felt that they did not know enough about perpetrator programmes to provide justified recommendations. However, an interview with survivor support professionals was organised in order to understand their perspective, and a representative of survivor support was included in the focus group. A detailed list of the participants is available in Appendix 1.

Once questionnaires were reviewed, the main aspects to be discussed in the focus group sessions were selected by the authors, with the support of local experts. Focus group sessions were organised from 16 March until 8 April 2022. Two focus group sessions were organised in Moldova and Georgia, and one in Armenia and Azerbaijan. See Table 4 for the number of participants in each session.

TABLE 4. NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE FOCUS GROUPS SESSIONS IN THE REGION

Country	Professionals from survivor support services who participated in FG ⁷⁴	Professionals from perpetrator programmes who participated in FG ⁷⁵	Key stakeholders who participated in FG	Total per country
Armenia	1	n.a.	7	8
Azerbaijan	3	n.a.	3	6
Georgia	13	8	n.a.	21
Moldova	8	8	n.a.	16
Total	25	16	10	51

Presentation of results

The results are organised in such a way as to offer both the regional and the country-level perspective, as some readers might be interested in a particular country, while some are looking for a more comprehensive overview of the region. This means that some parts of the report are repeated, as key results are presented at the regional level, while more detailed information is included in sections describing the results for each country.

The practice varies between countries, however, there are many similarities. The key similarities at the regional level are presented as regional trends. Country-specific information is described in the separate country sections.

As mentioned above, the results are organised in three main clusters. The clusters are as follows:

- **Structures around perpetrator programmes;** refers to all elements that need to be in place in order to run perpetrator programmes in a community. It focuses on multi-agency work, the legislative background, referrals and funding.
- **Service providers;** defines the key characteristics of services providers - what types of organisations they represent, characteristics and competences of staff and their training, technical resources.
- **Programme and programme curriculum;** describes what the programme itself looks like. Is there survivor contact and support and in what way is it organised? Is there risk assessment and management, what are the programmes' target group, structure, format, approach applied, and curriculum content?

74 Survivor support professionals from Armenia and Azerbaijan took part in the focus group with other stakeholders in the countries.

75 In Armenia and Azerbaijan there were representatives of institutions that conduct perpetrator work. In Armenia this was a professional from the prison system. However, since the programme they are implementing is not specifically for domestic violence, he was considered as the key stakeholder for the purpose of this research, and this column is marked as n.a. In Azerbaijan, there was a professional from social services who has developed a programme and is planning its launch. As the programme has still not been implemented, she is considered as the key stakeholder in the mapping, and this column is marked as n.a.

2.2. PROGRAMMES FOR PERPETRATORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL

Many countries in the region have made significant steps in the process of setting up and rolling out perpetrator programmes, specifically Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia and Belarus.

The countries in the region have many differences when it comes to perpetrator programmes. In some countries these programmes exist (Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia), in some national curricula are developed, piloted and prepared for rollout, but put on hold (Belarus), and in others the development of programmes is in its initial phases—in Azerbaijan, a programme curriculum has been developed and is planned to be piloted; in Armenia, some legislative framework exists, however, it is not implemented in practice; in Ukraine, the existing perpetrator programmes and their implementation are affected by the war.

TABLE 5: TYPES OF PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES IN THE REGION

Country	Armenia	Azerbaijan ⁷⁶	Belarus ⁷⁷	Georgia	Moldova	Ukraine
Community programmes	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes
Probation programmes	no	no	no	yes	yes	no
Prison programmes	no	no	no	yes	yes	no

Community programmes exist in Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. However, in Georgia, they are represented by only two organisations (Antiviolence Network Georgia-AVNG and *Merkuri* NGO). In Moldova, community programmes are available in four centres (Artemida NGO, Drochia, Stimul NGO, Ocnîța, NGO "Raza încrederii" Centre of assistance and the CNFACEM NGO), which cover only a few regions in the country. In Ukraine, only programmes in the community exist and are provided mainly by state-run agencies (social welfare services) and in some cases NGOs. In Belarus, the one previously existing community programme is no longer active.

The existence of perpetrator programmes in various settings is an important way to ensure accessibility. If only prison and probation programmes are available, this will leave the majority of men who use violence excluded from the treatment process. Data show that violence is dramatically underreported. On average, only 40% of women who experience violence will ask for any kind of support. Out of those who do, only 10% report it to the police (United Nations, 2015).⁷⁸ Likewise, when violence is reported, prosecution and conviction rates are low across Europe (Shreeves & Prpic, 2019).⁷⁹

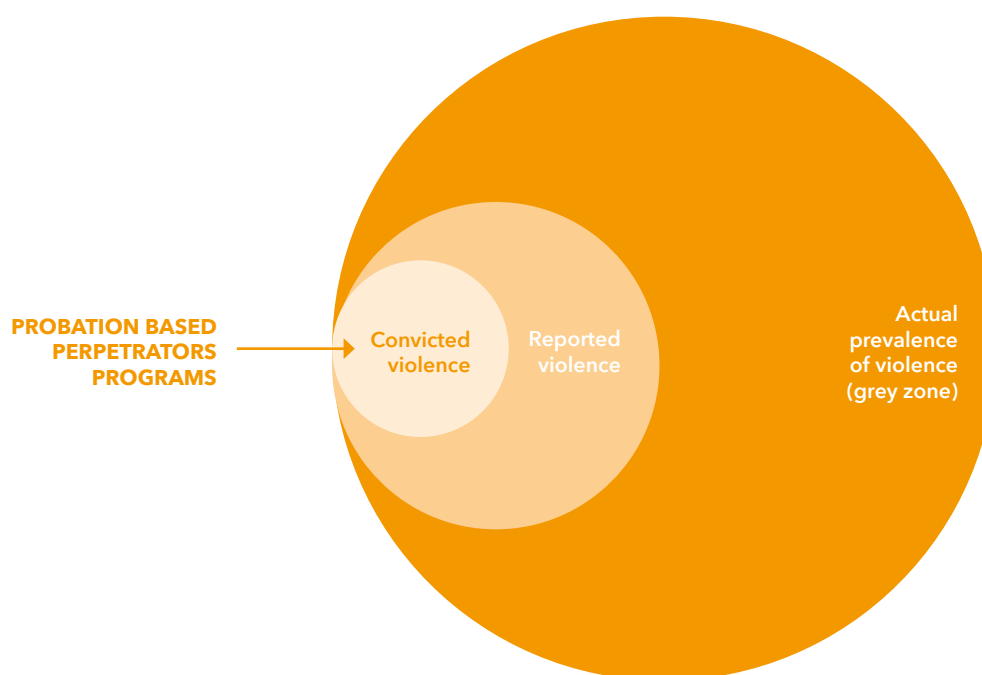
76 In Azerbaijan, a specific DV perpetrator programme is prepared for piloting, but has not been actively implemented.

77 In Belarus, programme curricula exist, however, no programme is active in the country.

78 United Nations (2015). *The World's Women 2015, Trends and Statistics*, United Nations Economic and Social Affairs, 2015.– chapter 6. Available at: https://unstats.un.org/unsd/gender/downloads/worldswomen2015_report.pdf

79 Shreeves, R., & Prpic, M. (2019). *Violence against women in the EU*, European Parliamentary Research Service. Available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/644190/EPRS_BRI\(2019\)644190_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/644190/EPRS_BRI(2019)644190_EN.pdf)

FIGURE 1



As shown in Figure 1⁸⁰, the prevalence of actual violence is much higher than reported violence, and even higher than the violence that gets convicted, which is actually targeted by perpetrator programmes in prison and probation.

We need to be aware of these proportions when designing country-wide perpetrator interventions. Alongside prison and probation programmes, community programmes are essential, because they support different referral routes, including voluntary participation.

Perpetrator programmes in probation and prison exist in Georgia and Moldova. In other countries (like Armenia, Moldova, Ukraine), prisons offer general correctional programmes that are not specifically for domestic violence, and thus cannot be considered as a perpetrator programme defined by WWP EN and the Istanbul Convention. Probation programmes do not exist in Ukraine, Belarus, Armenia and Azerbaijan.

In the course of the mapping, certain trends were identified at the regional level. These trends will be described as regional trends, with the goal of showing regional perspectives, identifying common gaps and fostering joint solutions. Some trends are present in several countries, while some are present in just a few. The trends were mainly formulated based on the analysis of existing programmes, so they focus mainly on Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. The trends are as follows:

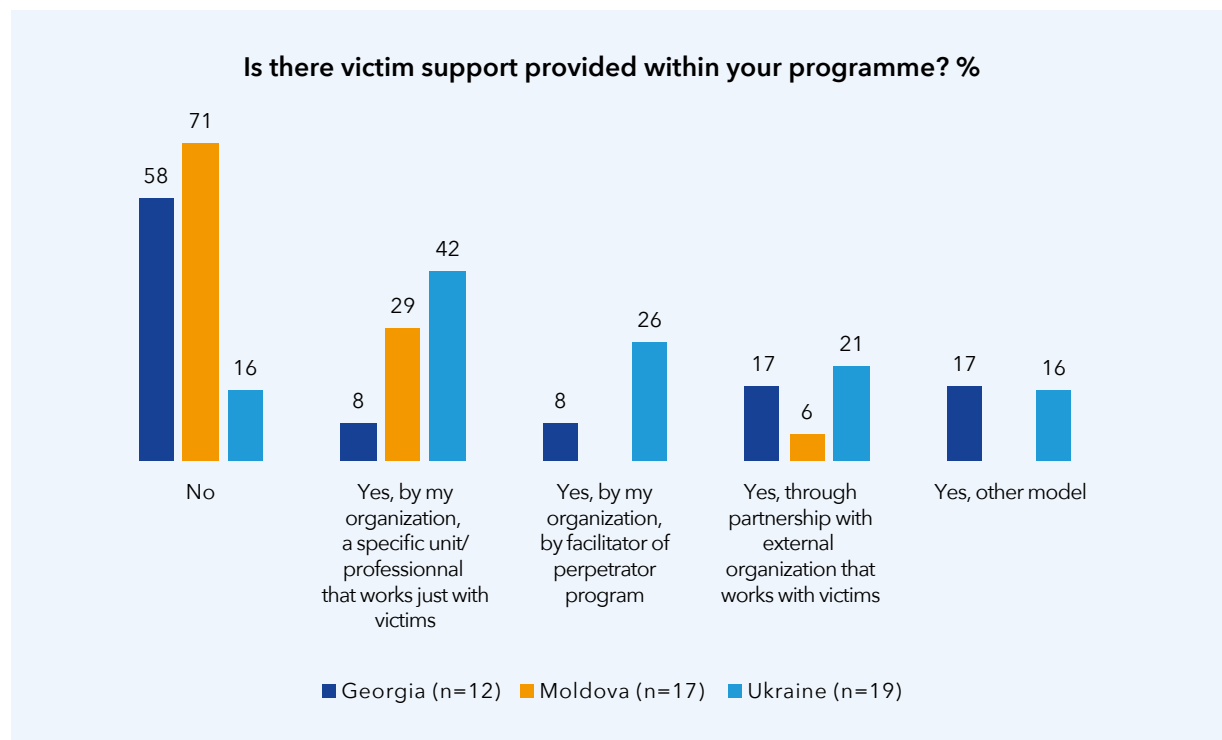
Regional trends: Lack of survivor safety-oriented interventions

Perpetrator programmes need to have the safety and well-being of survivors at the centre of all interventions. As noted by the Council of Europe (2011), the enrolment of the perpetrator in a programme may give the survivor a false sense of security, influence her decision to leave or stay in a relationship, and put her at greater risk. Likewise, perpetrators can manipulate the fact that they are in the programme and use it to continue the abuse or to give incorrect data about the severity of violence which is needed to properly assess the risk and ensure the safety of survivors. Close cooperation with

80 Picture taken from https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/fileadmin/WWP_Network/redakteure/Expert%20Essays/Expert_paper_prison_and_probation_final.pdf

survivor support services and the existence of survivor contact and support are essential elements of survivor safety-oriented programmes.

Survivor contact and support are not available in all existing programmes in the region:

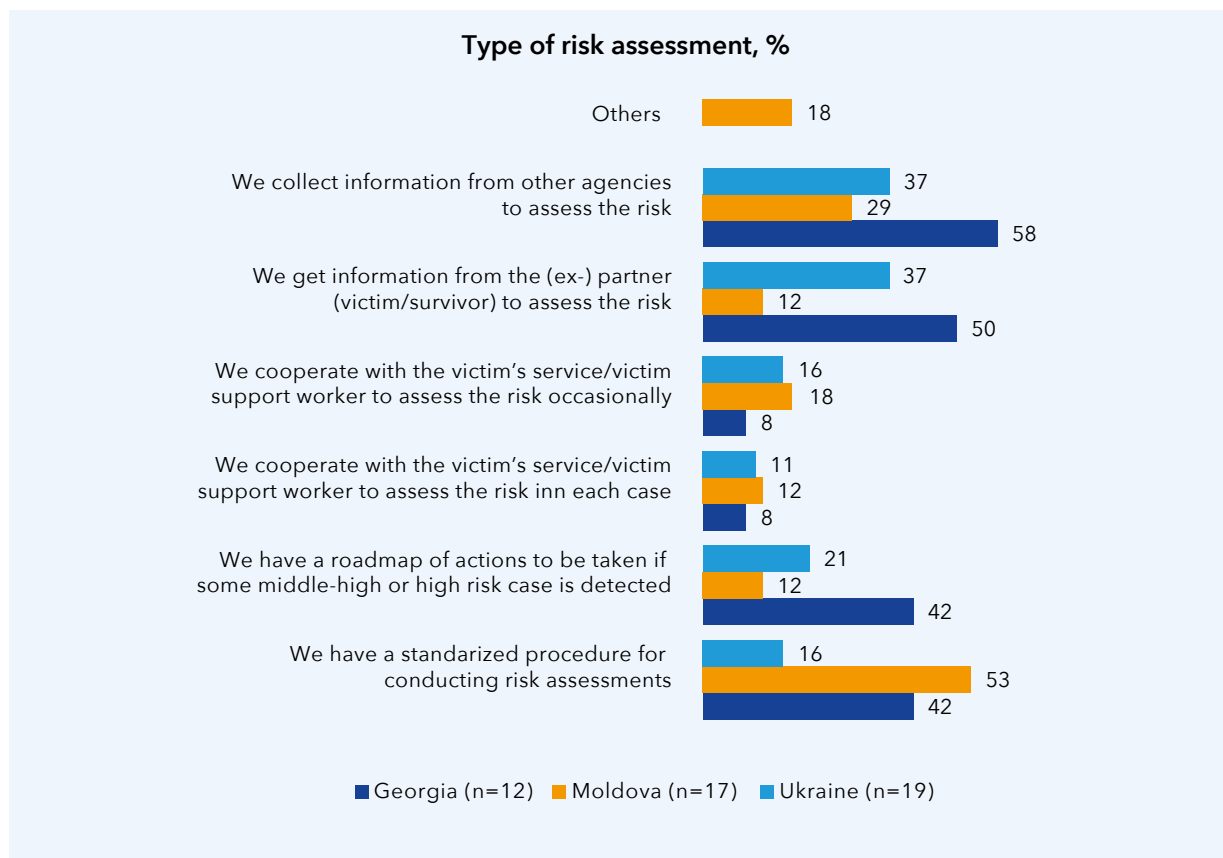


Most perpetrator programmes in Georgia and Moldova state that there is no survivor support associated with their programmes. These are predominantly programmes that are placed in the prison and probation system. The analysis of the curriculum in Georgia (Legislative Herald, 2019)⁸¹ used by the prison and probation institutions revealed that this aspect of the work is not clearly incorporated. The national curriculum in Moldova (Bodrug-Lungu et al, 2017) has this element defined, however, in practice it is applied only by NGOs, and not by the prison and probation institutions. In Ukraine, most organisations stated that there is survivor contact and support. However, the dominant curricula in the country, the Methodological Manual for Professionals Implementing the Standard Perpetrator Programme (Stepaniuk & Melnychenko, 2020), does not incorporate elements of survivor contact and support. The curricula of programmes in Belarus and Moldova present good practices in this aspect, while some procedures should be better elaborated.

Assessing and managing risk needs to be strengthened in the region. The importance of risk assessment in perpetrator programmes is highlighted in many strategic documents and research. Hester and Lilley (2016) highlight the importance of risk assessment, that it should be conducted as an ongoing process and that it should include a variety of information sources. As described in the Guidelines for standards (WWP EN, 2018), the perspective of the survivors needs to be taken into account, as it is usually the most accurate. Risk assessment should be based on a structural professional judgment approach, that includes evidence-based risk factors, evidence-based risk assessment tools, gathering information from various sources and an individual approach to every case (Newman 2010; E-Maria Partnership 2013; Kropp & Hart, 2015).

81 Legislative Herald of Georgia (2019). ძალადობრივი დამოკიდებულებისა და ქვევის შეცვლაზე ორიენტირებული სწავლების კურსი [Training course on the change of violent attitudes and behaviour].

Risk assessment procedures in existing programmes in the region are described as follows:



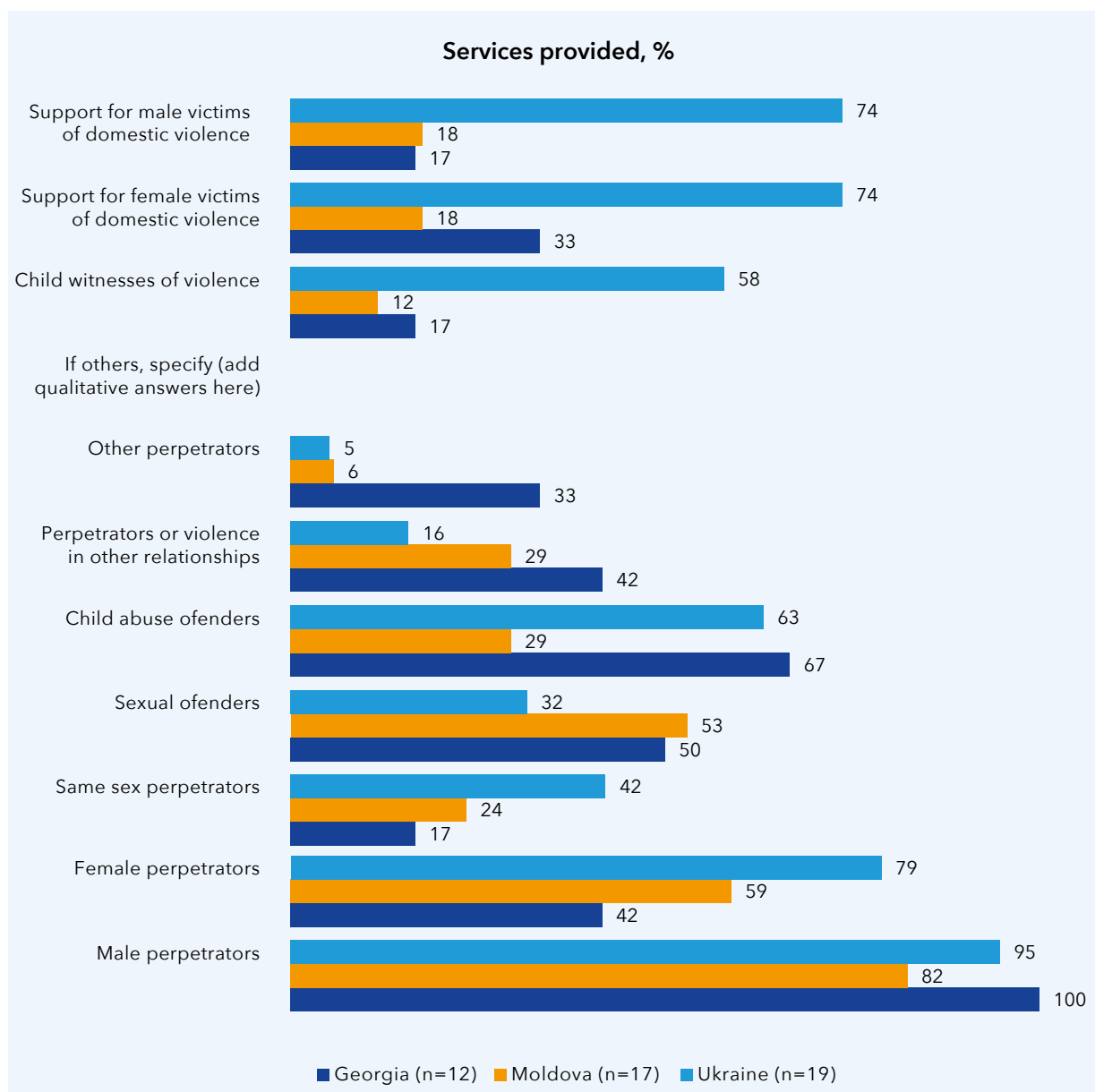
Half or less than half of the programmes in the region state that they collect information for risk assessment from the survivors (12% in Moldova, 37% in Ukraine and 50% in Georgia). Cooperation with survivor support services/professionals in each case is established in less than 12% of the programmes in the region. There is also a lack of standardised procedures for conducting risk assessment. Although some programmes state that they conduct risk assessment, tools and methods that some of them use need to be improved. For instance, risk assessment is conducted through psychological testing, which is not an appropriate way to assess risk in DV cases. Some programmes in Moldova and Georgia that are linked with prison and probation use a Risk Needs and Assessment-RNA or Risk, Needs and Response-RNR models that are not specific for DV. Probation programmes in Georgia invested in improving their practice and developed a new tool, SPAPRA, which should be scaled up to include all relevant risk factors. Solid examples of good risk assessment can be found in the Belarus curricula. The Belarus programme is risk-informed, from defining the target group of the programme (medium and high-risk perpetrators), to clear procedures in conducting risk assessment and using an evidence-based risk assessment tool (DASH).

Inspiration for survivor-safety-oriented interventions can be found in practices of DVIP UK, CAM Italy and the Caledonian model in Scotland (see Appendix I for more information). For instance, the Caledonian model has a service for women and a service for children, alongside a service for men. Procedures for cooperation are clearly defined and standardised across country. In the UK, DVIP implements clear procedures around risk assessment which is an ongoing process, includes inputs from survivors and is supported by evidence-based risk assessment tools (DASH).

Regional trends: Lack of specialised interventions for different target groups

Perpetrator programmes should be designed for different types of perpetrators. Knowing that domestic violence is a broad category, which includes men/women who perpetrate violence toward an intimate partner, or a child, or a parent, or some other family member, and that types of violence can be very different (for example sexual violence toward a child and psychological violence toward an intimate partner), it is clear that the nature and dynamics of these cases are different and require different approaches.

Perpetrator programmes seem to accept different kinds of clients:



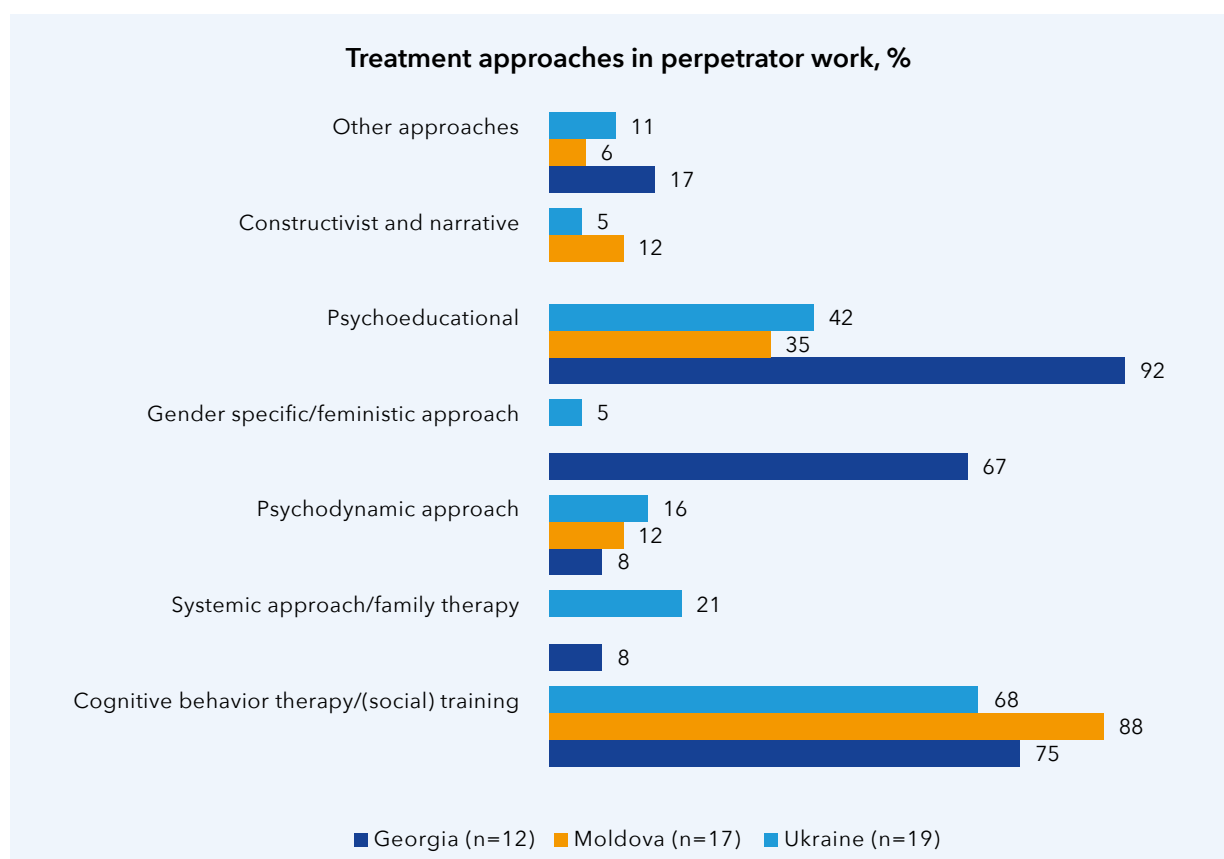
Most existing programmes work with male perpetrators. However, many programmes state to work with female perpetrators (42% of programmes in Georgia, 59% in Moldova and 79% in Ukraine), sexual offenders (32% of programmes in Ukraine, 50% in Georgia and 53% in Moldova) and child sexual offenders (29 of programmes in Moldova, 63% in Ukraine, and 67% in Georgia). Interestingly, no specific programme for any of these categories has been identified in any country, except specialised programmes for sexual offenders in prisons in Moldova. This probably means that the same programme and curriculum (probably with some adaptations as they go) are applied, which is a potentially risky practice.

Inspiration for tailoring programmes to different groups of perpetrators can be found in the practice of CAM Italy (see Appendix I for more information). The organisation structured several specialised programmes, some of them being: a psychoeducational group for gender-based violence perpetrators, a group for sexual offenders, a group for men who deny violence, and a group that deals with conscious fatherhood and improving parenting skills.

Regional trends: Weak gender-informed perspectives

In order to be effective and able to address underlying causes of violence, perpetrator programmes need to be gender-informed. A gender informed framework should inform accountable perpetrator work in many aspects and levels of programme implementation (for instance programme approach and the way violence is defined, the target group of the programmes, content and topics explored, choice of facilitators in terms of competences, gender...).

The existing programmes in the region defined their approach in the following way:



Most existing programmes use a multi-theoretical approach. Cognitive-behavioural and psychoeducational approaches are dominant in the region, which is in line with the trends and good practices in Europe. However, the gender specific/feminist approach, as a core element, is missing. No programme in Moldova (0%) and only 5% of programmes in Ukraine recognise a gender-specific approach as part of their core framework.

In Ukraine, this perspective is confirmed through the widely used curriculum (Stepaniuk & Melnychenko, 2020). While it provides analysis of a comprehensive framework for strengthening emotion management and conflict resolution skills, there is a lack of gender-informed focus in understanding the violence, and its causes in the content of the curriculum, which is gender-neutral. Most programmes

in Georgia (67%) recognise the gender approach as part of their framework. The analysis of the curriculum used in prison and probation confirms this (Legislative Herald, 2019) – the content of the programme is gender-informed with all key elements in place. However, a big part of the theoretical approach, that is later reflected in the programme curriculum, is focused on the low self-esteem of men as one of the key causes of violence, which needs to be reconsidered (elaborated in more detail in the country analysis of Georgia).

Examples of good practice in this area are the Moldova and Belarus curricula. In the Belarus curriculum, violence is clearly defined as a gendered phenomenon, and the programme is designed for men who use IPV. Gender inequalities and stereotypes are seen as underlying causes of violence, and it is highlighted that poor anger/emotion management, alcohol or drugs, or other factors (stress, loss of control, mental illness...) are not the root causes of violence. Gender dynamics are considered at the level of facilitators and their interaction. It is recommended to have a male and female facilitator team, and professionals should be aware of the potential for modelling equality in their relationship, as a tool for transforming stereotypical beliefs around gender that underline violence. On the level of programme content, power and control are explored as root causes of violence.

Although professionals in Moldova did not recognise the gender-informed approach as their core framework in this research, this perspective is widely represented in their national curriculum, as well as in responses to other questions in this research. Violence is understood through the perspective of power and control and these aspects are integrated in the training of professionals and the work with men. From the first session, there is a clear focus on violence in the programme content. All modules and sessions are highly gender focused, and explore each topic while keeping a gender lens. The topics include working on masculinities, fathering, and gender roles. Likewise, there is awareness of gender dynamics on the level of facilitator teams.

Inspiration for gender-informed perpetrator programmes can be found in practices of DVIP in the UK, CAM Italy, Caledonian model Scotland (see Appendix I for more information). For instance, in DVIP, the gender approach is an integral part of each session and is included throughout the programme. The focus is on power and control theory of domestic abuse, with a strong feminist approach, which is combined with the cognitive-behavioural approach.

Regional trends: Lack of quality assurance and evaluation of programmes

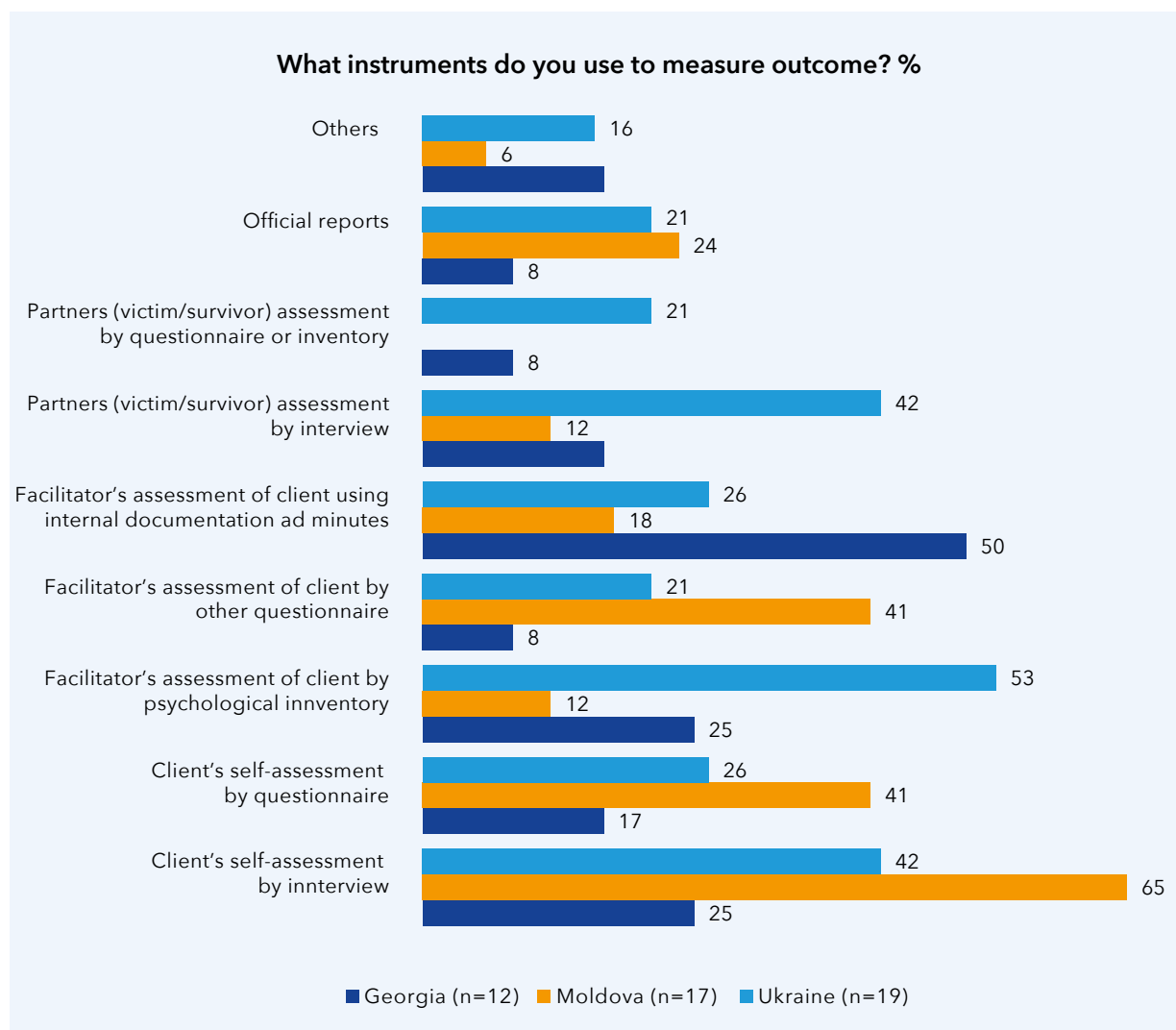
Both the Council of Europe (Hester and Lilley, 2014) and WWP EN (2018) highlight the importance of documenting and evaluating programme outcomes. It is flagged that proper evaluation needs to be a continuous process and needs to take into account the survivor's perspective whenever possible. Evaluation should be one of the elements of more comprehensive quality assurance within the country. National standards that outline framework and key elements of the work in the country are a good way of setting up this aspect at the country level.

National standards exist only in Moldova.⁸² Ukraine has an approved national programme.⁸³ Many countries have national curricula which to some extent harmonise practice between different service providers (Ukraine, Moldova, and Belarus).

Most organisations in the region stated that they do measure outcomes of their work (88% in Moldova, 74% in Ukraine, and 58% in Georgia). They mainly do it after clients finish the programmes. During the evaluation, they use the following sources of information:

82 https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=64111&lang=ro

83 Order of the Ministry of Social Policy № 1434 dated 01.10.2018 "About the approval of a model programme for perpetrators", available at: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z1222-18#Text>. Changes are introduced through Order № 588 of the Social Policy Ministry dated 13.10.2021, available at: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z1621-21#n97>



The dominant source of information seems to be the assessment of the perpetrator through an interview, which is a source with significant limitations. The perspective of survivors and their inputs, as usually more reliable sources of information, are included in the evaluation of programme outcomes in less than half of the programmes in the region. For example, assessment of the survivor through a questionnaire is included in 0% of programmes in Moldova, 8% in Georgia and 21% in Georgia. Also, some programmes use psychological inventories for outcome measurement (53% in Ukraine, 25% in Georgia and 12% in Moldova), which are usually not good indicators of changes in violent behaviour.

It seems that there is a lack of comprehensive and systematic evaluation and quality assurance in the region.

Inspiration for quality assurance and evaluation of perpetrator programmes can be found in practices of some organisations in Albania, DVIP in the UK, CAM Italy and the Caledonian model in Scotland (see Appendix I for more information). In Albania, Italy and in the UK, standards of perpetrator work are developed as a way to ensure minimum indicators of safe and quality practice. CAM and some organisations in Albania follow a very comprehensive outcome measurement procedure, with the use of the Impact Outcome Monitoring Toolkit. They analyse both the final outcome and the programme process by collecting information at different points in time.

Regional trends: Intersections between war and IPV

Many countries in the region have experienced war and armed conflict. While the war in Ukraine is ongoing, Armenia and Azerbaijan experienced armed conflict in 2020, Georgia in the 1990s and 2008, and Moldova in the 1990s. This brings many challenges to the socio-economic sphere—dealing with the consequences of the conflict on many levels, including survivors and veterans. Furthermore, countries in the region currently face waves of refugees or internally displaced people, men, women and children, many of them being survivors of gender-based violence, or at severe risk of it.

Wars and armed conflicts are followed by severe forms of violence, many of them being gender-based violence. As noted by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, the violence during and after the conflict is characterised by unimaginable brutality, while violence itself takes many forms (United Nations, 2001).⁸⁴

“... women and girls have been raped—vaginally, anally and orally—sometimes with burning wood, knives or other objects. They have been raped by government forces and non-State actors, by the police responsible for their protection, by refugee camp and border guards, by neighbours, local politicians, and sometimes family members under threat of death. They have been maimed or sexually mutilated, and often later killed or left to die. Women have been subjected to humiliating strip searches, forced to parade or dance naked in front of soldiers or in public, and forced to perform domestic chores while nude.”

United Nations, 2001, para 44.

Sexual violence in armed conflict is on the rise, taking huge proportions (United Nations, 2014).⁸⁵ It is estimated that 60,000 women were raped during the war in Sierra Leone, 40,000 in the Liberia conflict, 60,000 in the former Yugoslavia conflict, and at least 200,000 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is frequently used as a weapon of war, another tool for achieving military goals. The UN identified numerous cases in which systematic rapes have been taking place with the idea to humiliate and scare local communities, keep them suppressed, destroy families and in some ways change the “ethnic make-up of the next generation”, through forced impregnation, genital mutilation or intentional transmission of sexually transmitted diseases. In other cases, sexual violence can be random, as a consequence of the crash of the social, judiciary and moral system that follows war. It can be committed by combatants, but also men from local communities, who take advantage of the lack of accountability, punishment and rise of impunity (Ward & Marsh, 2006).⁸⁶ Women and girls are often abducted to be sexual slaves to armed combatants or entered into human trafficking routes. The risks are ongoing, and present in any option women and girls in conflict areas might have, even if they escape the armed conflict (in camps, shelters, or new communities), even when peace is restored.

The UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1820, on sexual violence as a weapon of war.⁸⁷ The resolution recognises sexual violence as a weapon and tactic of war, and notes that rape and other forms of sexual violence can constitute a war crime, a crime against humanity, or a constitutive act with respect to genocide.

84 United Nations (2001). *Violence against women perpetrated and/or condoned by the State during times of armed conflict (1997-2000)*. United Nations Economic and Social Council. Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-violence-against-women/annual-thematic-reports>

85 United Nations (2014). *Sexual Violence: a Tool of War*. Available at: <https://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/rwanda/assets/pdf/Backgrounder%20Sexual%20Violence%202014.pdf>

86 Ward, J. Marsh, M. (2006). *Sexual Violence against Women and Girls in War and Its Aftermath: Realities, Responses, and Required Resources*. UNFPA. Available at: <https://www.hhri.org/publication/sexual-violence-against-women-and-girls-in-war-and-its-aftermath-realities-responses-and-required-resources/>

87 <https://www.peacewomen.org/SCR-1820>

Many researchers and experts agree that there is a strong connection between armed conflict and the rise of intimate partner violence in the post-conflict period (Swaine et al, 2019;⁸⁸ Kelly et al., 2018;⁸⁹ Bradley, 2018⁹⁰). For instance, in their research of IPV in Liberia, Kelly et al. (2018) found that women living in a district that have experienced 4-5 cumulative years of conflict were almost 90% more likely to experience IPV than women living in other areas of the country with no conflict.

There are a variety of reasons that contribute to this correlation. As stated by the UN (2001), post-conflict society becomes more tolerant of violence, which is one of the factors that contribute to its increase.

“Evidence from around the world seems to suggest that armed conflict in a region leads to an increased tolerance of violence in the society. A growing body of evidence indicates that the militarisation process, including the ready availability of small weapons, that occurs leading up to and during conflicts, as well as the process of demobilisation of often frustrated and aggressive soldiers after a conflict, may also result in increased violence against women and girls. When a peace agreement has been reached and the conflict brought to an end, women often face an escalation in certain gender-based violence, including domestic violence, rape, and trafficking into forced prostitution.”

UN, 2001, para 57.

The complexity of factors that contribute to increased violence against women and girls in the armed conflict context (including IPV) is described by Swaine et al (2019), through adaptations of the Ecological model that outlines factors at the societal, community, institutional, interpersonal and individual level.

88 Swaine, A., Spearing, M., Murphy, M., & Contreras-Urbina, M. (2019). *Exploring the Intersection of Violence Against Women and Girls With Post-Conflict Statebuilding and Peacebuilding Processes: A New Analytical Framework*. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, 14(1), 3-21. Available at: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1542316619833877>

89 Kelly, J. T., Colantuoni, E., Robinson, C., & Decker, M. R. (2018). *From the battlefield to the bedroom: a multilevel analysis of the links between political conflict and intimate partner violence in Liberia*. *BMJ Global Health*. Available at: <https://gh.bmj.com/content/3/2/e000668>

90 Bradley, S. (2018). *Domestic and Family Violence in Post-Conflict Communities: International Human Rights Law and the State's Obligation to Protect Women and Children*. *Health Hum Rights*. Available at: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6293353/>

FIGURE 2: THE ECOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR ADDRESSING THE DRIVERS OF CONFLICT AND POST-CONFLICT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN



Individual

- Age, religious identity and ethnicity
- LGBTI and disability status
- Education level
- Employment
- Alcohol and drug abuse traditional masculine roles
- Displacement
- Separation from family/support structures
- Experiences as combatants or abductees
- Re-integration of combatants/abductees
- Acceptance of VAWG
- Experiences of VAWG in childhood

Interpersonal

- Household stressors
- Controlling behaviours
- Unequal decision making/ division of labour
- Men’s perception of their lack of ability to fulfill
- Choice in marriage/partner
- Re-integration of combatants into the household

Institutional

- Armed actors use rape as a weapon of war
- Forced enlistment and use of girls as soldiers or in other roles associated with armed groups
- Sexual exploitation and abuse
- Exclusion of female representation in security forces, armies, peace negotiations
- Lack of response services for survivors
- Suppressed independent civil society
- VAWG not addressed in peace agreements
- Statebuilding processes exclude governance mechanisms for addressing gender inequality and VAWG

Institutional

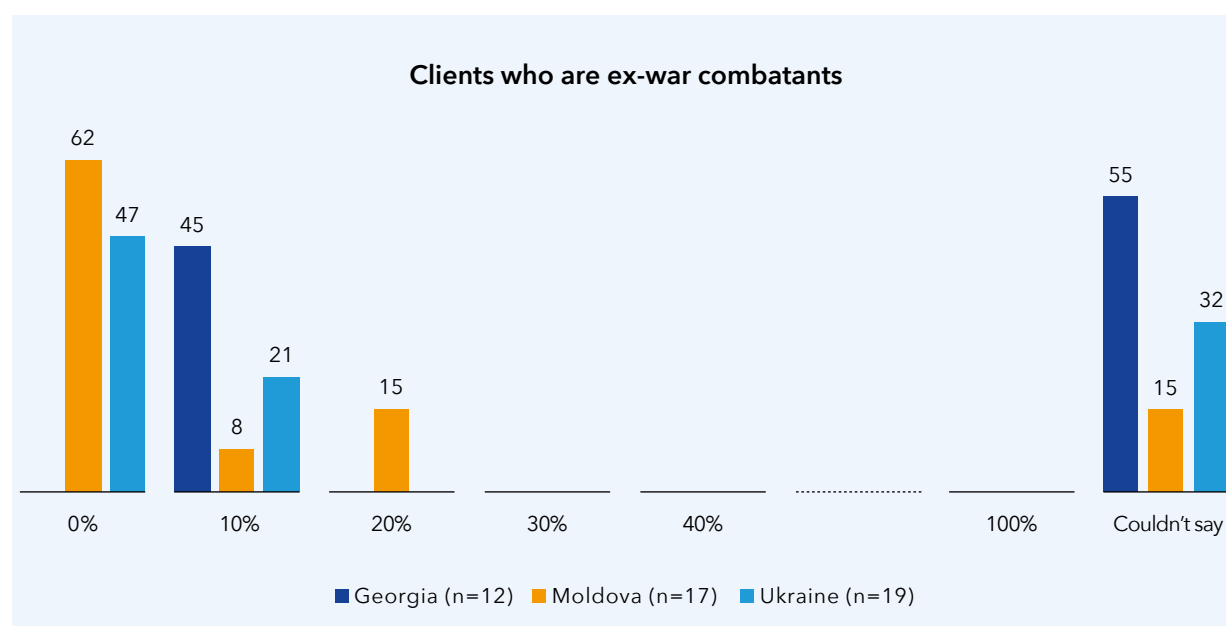
- Intra- and inter-communal violence
- Explicit targeting of women and girls for rape and killing to reduce reproductive capacity or de-humanize opposition groups
- Acceptance of discriminatory gender roles
- Lack of economic opportunities due to instability
- Normalisation of violence
- Stigma against former combatants or abductees
- Increase in female headed households

Societal

- Unequal gender dynamics
- Patriarchal norms and practices that discriminate against women
- Culture of impunity
- Lack of rule of law
- Poverty
- Emphasis on hyper masculinities as facets of warfare

When working on combating gender-based violence in armed conflict or post armed conflict territories, we need to be aware of all these factors and their complexity. Armed conflict changes society. It usually reinforces traditional gender norms and nurtures toxic masculinity, bringing more power to the hands of men, especially to men who fight. On the other hand, judicial and societal structures that were in place have crashed and have to be rebuilt, which takes time. When getting back into families, many men carry severe trauma as a consequence of armed experiences, some of them suffering from PTSD.⁹¹ They enter changed, also traumatised households, facing many socio-economic stressors, and need to integrate into their families, as well as into the whole community. There is usually high respect and acknowledgement toward ex-combatants in society, which can be beneficial for their recovery and integration. However, this might present a challenge when it comes to IPV, as there might be high impunity for their acts of violence, and survivors face additional challenges when asking for support.

The mapped perpetrator programmes identified some of the clients they are working with as veterans.



Many organisations are not aware of these characteristics of their clients (55% in Georgia, 32% in Ukraine, and 15% in Moldova), as they probably do not ask for this information. In 15% of the perpetrator programmes in Moldova, ex-combatants represent around 20% of their clients. For 21% of the programmes in Ukraine, ex-combatants represent around 10% of their clients. This situation will definitely change and more ex-combatants are expected to be in need of this kind of support in Ukraine. No specific approach or programme was identified for this category of clients. Furthermore, 73% of the mapped professionals in Azerbaijan and 60% in Armenia recognise the need to have specialised interventions for this target group.

The results indicate that although there is a need for working on IPV and DV with ex-combatants in the region, no specific approach is identified, and they represented a minor number of clients so far. It is not clear if this is the result of them not getting referred to programmes, or that programmes did not focus on this and did not identify these characteristics of men they work with. Having in mind the increasing needs, especially in Ukraine, this issue needs to be specifically addressed in the further development of programmes.

91 Posttraumatic stress disorder.

The practices that focus on the intersection between perpetration of IPV and war are not widely developed in Europe, and there is a need for addressing this gap. Some inspiration on the integration of trauma into perpetrator work can be found in the Caledonian model in Scotland. Although the Caledonian is not directly providing specific trauma services, its services are trauma-informed when working with men, women and children.

2.3. COUNTRY-SPECIFIC ANALYSIS OF PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES

ARMENIA

In Armenia, the applied methodology included desk research, questionnaires, a focus group with key stakeholders, and an interview with women's support service representatives. It is important to note that only 10 out of 18 institutions/organisations responded to the invitation to take full part in the research. The Women NGOs decided not to contribute to the research because they do not feel as if they have knowledge about perpetrator programmes and therefore the information they provide would not have been reliable. Organisations are also concerned that setting up perpetrator programmes in Armenia might minimise the funds of domestic violence support centres, and that the basic criteria for their implementation are not met in the country. However, they did provide their reflections through interviews and focus groups, and their perspective informs this research. The primary goal of the research was to provide recommendations if, when, and in what method perpetrator programmes should operate in Armenia.

Although programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence are recognised by several legislative documents in Armenia, specialised, active perpetrator programmes for DV perpetrators do not exist in the country,⁹² in the way they are defined by European standards (WWP EN, 2018) and the Istanbul Convention (CoE, 2011). Some practices exist in prisons, however they are not specific for domestic violence perpetrators (they are focused on all convicts)⁹³ and thus were not analysed in the scope of this research. This analysis focuses on perpetrator programmes in Armenia from this perspective, and reflects on the possibilities for scaling up the existing initiatives into specialised perpetrator interventions.

Structures around perpetrator programmes

The legal framework for providing the accountability of perpetrators of domestic violence is partially in place in Armenia.

Domestic violence is not criminalised, which presents a significant obstacle in ensuring the safety of survivors and the accountability of perpetrators.

The main legislative base for ensuring the safety of survivors is the law "on prevention of violence within the family, protection of victims of violence within the family and recovery of solidarity in the family"⁹⁴ which entered into force in 2018.

The key framework for perpetrator programmes in the country was defined by the Order of the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs -N 119-N on approving the "rehabilitation programme and organisation of the rehabilitation work with offenders" (2018)⁹⁵. The order places perpetrator programmes as an additional service of survivor support centres, without providing additional resources (human,

92 Information received from the local expert in Armenia, UN Women and UNFPA country offices in Armenia and professionals who took part in focus groups.

93 Information from the local expert in Armenia and focus group participants.

94 <https://cis-legislation.com/document.fwx?rgn=113919>

95 <https://www.mlsa.am/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/hraman-r.pdf>

special, and technical). It also focuses on the reconciliation of perpetrators and survivors (articles 10 and 19).⁹⁶

The defined framework is strongly criticised by many actors involved in the mapping. The concept of reconciliation in the field of domestic violence is not acceptable and imposes additional risks to survivors. By the testimonials gathered in this mapping, it seems that service providers are fully aware of these risks and do not apply it in their work. However, there are no data that confirms that the described legislative framework is not applied. Also, the experiences of some NGOs show that some stakeholders try to reconcile survivors and perpetrators when dealing with cases of domestic violence.⁹⁷

Likewise, there is a strong opposition to placing perpetrator programmes in survivor support services, as prescribed by the actual legal framework. There is no separate space, human resources or specialised knowledge to conduct this kind of work. In practice, this framework is not implemented, as service providers feel this would have negative implications toward survivors, and they are prioritising their needs.

There are many examples of perpetrator programmes run by survivor support services, and this is one of the potential models of providing survivor contact and support within perpetrator programmes (Pauncz, 2018).⁹⁸ These organisations usually advocate for, and initiate perpetrator programmes, as one of the services that can improve the safety of survivors and end violence. This model has advantages and disadvantages, as all other the models available. One of the advantages is that survivor support services usually have specific expertise in the field of domestic violence and gender-based understanding of violence, which is very relevant for perpetrator programmes. This was also recognised in the recent exploration of perpetrator programmes in the context of Armenia, stating that *“given the dearth of specialist women’s services and the fact that few agencies and organisations currently handle DV cases, it would make sense to have the Women’s Support Centre take the lead in developing a perpetrator programme as an offshoot of their existing programming”* (Jilozian, 2019, p.59).⁹⁹ Also, it is easier to establish cooperation and partner contact and support, as one of the key elements of survivor-safety-oriented perpetrator work, when both services are provided within the same organisation. However, in order for this model to be applied safely and effectively, several points need to be in place. Survivor services and perpetrator programmes need to be separate, in terms of their location and spaces they are using, so that they can work independently and ensure that their clients do not meet. Likewise, adopting a perpetrator programme by the already existing organisations requires additional human resources and funding, so that service providers working with victims on any case do not also work with perpetrators and vice-versa, so that support to survivors is not compromised. These preconditions are currently not met in Armenia.

The survivor services in Armenia are provided by NGOs, country-wide.¹⁰⁰ There is a lack of data on the accountability of perpetrators. As domestic violence is not criminalised, there are no segregated data that would provide insight on the number of DV cases and ways they are processed by institutions.

Specialised programmes for sexual offenders do not exist in Armenia.

96 <https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/5a6b2e274.pdf>

97 Information received in the focus group.

98 For instance organisations in Moldova (NGOs Artemida, CNFACEM, Raza of Confidence, Stimulus), Georgia (NGO Anti-violence network), Albania (NGOs Counselling line for men and boys, Woman to Woman, Vatra and Another Vision), Bosnia and Herzegovina (NGOs Vive Zene, Buducnost), Croatia (State-run Dom Duga) and many more.

99 Jilozian, A. (2019). Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programmes: A Review of Existing Programmes and Recommendations for Armenia. Women Support Centre, Yerevan. Available at: <https://www.womensupportcenter.org/assets/PDF%20publications/pdfresizer.com-pdf-resize%20engl.pdf>

100 Information received from the local expert and professional from survivor support service that took part in the focus group.

The protection of survivors and their support is an ongoing process in Armenia that has recently been developing more intensively. Accountability of perpetrators is in its initial stages. Domestic violence is not criminalised, which presents a significant obstacle for ensuring the accountability of perpetrators in the society, and for developing perpetrator programmes. Although some legislative framework for perpetrator programmes exists, it is not applied in practice due to the gaps in its design. Existing programmes in the prison context are not specialised for perpetrators of domestic violence, while programmes for sexual offenders do not exist.

Traditional gender beliefs as beliefs that support violence against women are widespread in Armenia. A recent research (UN Women, UNFPA, 2022) showed that 72% of women and 71% of men believe that conflicts between husband and wife, even if they lead to violence are a private matter and that others should not intervene. Similarly, only 52% of women and 31% of men believe that the beating of a female family member always needs to be punished. According to this research, the prevalence of gender-based beliefs, and beliefs that support gender based violence, is higher in Armenia than in most other countries in the region (Georgia, Belarus, Ukraine).

Reflections about introducing perpetrator programmes in the country

It seems that reflections about introducing perpetrator programmes in Armenia are divided between different key actors.

There is significant and coordinated opposition to the development and expansion of perpetrator programmes in Armenia by women's support organisations. A coalition of ten women's support service organisations passed a resolution to not support the development or expansion of perpetrator programmes at this time and upheld their position by not participating in this research. However, they did share their perspective through interviews and focus groups. Women's NGOs consider that the accountability of perpetrators is very low in the country, that services for survivors are underdeveloped and are worried that perpetrator programmes in this context would actually cause additional risks to survivors.

The women's support organisations support the following actions prior to supporting the development or expansion of perpetrator programmes:¹⁰¹

- Expand funding and support for women's support services
- Provide information and education to service providers about perpetrator programmes
- Establish criminal sanction for domestic violence in Armenia
- Establish accountability for domestic violence offences in Armenia
- Change the legal framework for perpetrator programmes
- Conduct focus groups with survivors in Armenia
- Establish a pilot project for a domestic violence perpetrator programme in Armenia, which should include the development of the curriculum, methodology and training of trainers by international experts.

The Women Support Centre in Yerevan prepared an extensive document on the development of perpetrator programmes in Armenia (Jilozian, 2019), which includes an overview of existing programmes in Europe and in the US, and recommendations for the implementation of programmes as short and long term steps. It also highlights that the ratification of the Istanbul Convention, criminalisation of domestic violence and strengthening the existing framework of coordinated community response to

101 Information shared during interviews with professionals from survivor support services.

domestic violence are key longer-term steps in the development of perpetrator programmes. The document looks at perpetrator programmes through a survivor-safety perspective.

Criminal justice agencies support the establishment of rehabilitation programmes within the probation service, as well as personnel training within the system for working with perpetrators.

All stakeholders involved in the focus group recognise the need for the criminalisation of DV, as a necessary step toward the accountability of perpetrators in the society. There is also agreement that, once perpetrator programmes are initiated in the country, there need to be mandatory referral routes (at the moment, only voluntarily, self-referrals are possible). It is argued that in Armenia, due to the wide social acceptance of violence, men would rarely come voluntarily to programmes (Jilozian, 2019).

There is an overall lack of information and knowledge about perpetrator programmes. This was expressed by all stakeholders involved in the mapping. It was also visible through the reflections of stakeholders about the goals of perpetrator programmes, many of them applying a clinical focus when thinking about goals (*"revealing personal disorders and treating them", "restoring the perpetrator's psychological state, personal growth and behaviour change by offering him alternative ways for self-expression"*). The understanding of programmes as survivor-oriented interventions that work on belief systems was present to a lesser extent (*"changing the perpetrator's violence stereotypes, changing his mindset"*).

There is a lack of information about perpetrator programmes by all key stakeholders. There is no consensus between key stakeholders around the decision on whether the country should implement perpetrator programmes in Armenia or not, and the process of discussing these topics should be supported.

AZERBAIJAN

In Azerbaijan, the applied methodology included desk research, questionnaires and a focus group with key stakeholders (state-run agencies and NGOs working in the GBV field). Interviews with two survivors were also conducted. The main goal of the research was to provide recommendations on whether and in what way perpetrator programmes should be set up in the country.

During the research, we received information that the Social Services Agency of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection had developed the first perpetrator programme in the country, trained the first group of professionals, and was planning to pilot it. Furthermore, the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs received training within the twinning project, which is based on the Duluth model.¹⁰² Unfortunately, we were not able to analyse the existing programmes during this mapping. We received the curriculum from the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs. Some parts of it were informally translated or touched upon with the support of the local expert, to be able to understand its structure and key topics. This represents a research limitation as we are not able to draw conclusions on the characteristics of the existing curricula and their compliance with international standards of safe practice.

¹⁰² The programme was developed within a twinning project between Azerbaijan and Lithuania, "Strengthening the capacity of State bodies and local referral mechanisms to ensure the safety and support to victims of domestic violence in Azerbaijan", funded by the EU. Training was held by Dr. Rokas Uscila (Adviser to the Minister of Justice of Lithuania) and Jolanta Sakalauskiene (Head of the Gender Equality Department at the Lithuanian Ministry of Labor and Social Security).

Structures around perpetrator programmes

This section looks at aspects around perpetrator programmes that need to be in place to ensure quality perpetrator work. The focus will be on the existing legal framework, coordinated community response, accountability of perpetrators in the country, and available funding.

Key documents that provide a framework for the implementation of perpetrator programmes are the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence (2010)¹⁰³ and the National Action Plan to Combat Domestic Violence (2020-2023).¹⁰⁴ The law defines the possibility of conducting preventive work with perpetrators, with the goal of preventing domestic violence, establishing normal relations in families, and eliminating cases of domestic violence and their negative legal, medical and social consequences. The provisions of the law in this aspect have not been implemented in the country. In accordance with the Rule No. 206 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan,¹⁰⁵ this issue has been assigned to local executive authorities. The National Action Plan defines the development of psychological rehabilitation programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence and foresees the State Committee on Family, Women and Children Affairs, Ministry of Health, State Agency for Compulsory Medical Insurance and local executive authorities as key actors for its implementation.

Domestic violence is not criminalised in Azerbaijan

Barriers in the legislation are recognised by 54% of stakeholders involved in the mapping when asked to identify potential obstacles to the implementation of perpetrator programmes. The descriptions of these barriers go in two main directions:

- Poor implementation of the existing legislation and lack of its monitoring; stakeholders described that the existing measures are not being applied (for example, protection orders are rarely issued), and key stakeholders (police, judges...) lack competences to support and protect survivors (they tend to support perpetrators instead);
- Inadequate solutions in the current legal framework; lack of capacities of specialists in the local executive authorities that oversee perpetrator programmes, programme referral is not mandatory (stays in the form of recommendation);

According to the available data, it seems that setting up procedures and practice around multi-agency work in the situations of DV are still under development. In line with the National Action Plan, Monitoring Committees on GBV and violence against children have been set up. They have a responsibility to coordinate the protection of high-risk cases. However, the mapped stakeholders express views that these bodies are still not in their optimal capacity and that inter-agency work is weak.

Domestic violence is not criminalised in Azerbaijan, which presents a significant obstacle for the accountability of perpetrators in the country, and for the development of perpetrator programmes. Although a legislative framework and multi-agency work in Azerbaijan exist to some extent, their implementation in practice seems underdeveloped and it is not providing the needed protection to survivors. This seems to be closely linked with the capacities of key stakeholders and a lack of accountability toward perpetrators from their side.

Survivor services exist but seem to be severely underdeveloped. In the NGO sector, there are currently 8 organisations that are accredited for the provision of support for survivors by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population.¹⁰⁶ Only 2 of these NGOs have a shelter for victims of domes-

103 <https://e-qanun.az/framework/20131>

104 <https://e-qanun.az/framework/46358>

105 <https://e-qanun.az/framework/22718>

106 <https://www.sosial.gov.az/akkreditasiya-olunmus-qeyri-dovlt-mrkzlrli>

tic violence,¹⁰⁷ each having the capacity for 25-30 survivors.¹⁰⁸ These NGOs are mainly dependent on funding from international donors, and unstable state funding on project basis. There is only one state-funded, state-run shelter for survivors, recently established in line with the NAP, however, this shelter is not specialised for GBV (it targets different vulnerable groups, like persons with disabilities, children, and survivors of GBV as one of them). This means that there are 3 active shelters for the population of around 10 million people.¹⁰⁹ A hotline for survivors has also recently been established (in 2020)¹¹⁰ and does not operate 24/7.

All mapped stakeholders highlight serious gaps in providing protection to survivors. They recognise the lack of available services (shelters, legal assistance, psychological support, economical support...) and lack of sustainable funding for its development and rollout. The mapped stakeholders flag that existing measures to protect survivors are not being implemented, and mainly connect it with the lack of competences of the professionals engaged, strong patriarchal beliefs and corruption.

Alongside that, the mapped stakeholders recognise high levels of impunity for perpetrators in society.

"In reality, no action is taken against perpetrators. Law enforcement agencies are not interested in complaints about domestic violence and treat them as family conflicts. In most cases, they try to return the woman to her family and often cover up the incidents of violence. They do not register complaints related to violence. They try to reconcile them and push the victim to withdraw the complaint."

Professional from the NGO sector.

This was confirmed in interviews with survivors who were placed in shelters in Azerbaijan. Both interviewed women described clearly high-risk situations with severe and immediate threats to their lives. They also described a lack of reaction from law enforcement professionals who sent them back home, or to their families of origin. No actions were taken toward perpetrators, even when they were in the shelter, and even though they had severe physical injuries (for instance multiple knife cuts).

The safety of survivors in Azerbaijan is not ensured. Support services are underdeveloped and unstable, and existing mechanisms for protection are not applied. The accountability of perpetrators seems to be very low.

Reflections about introducing perpetrator programmes in the country

The general impression is the stakeholders involved in the mapping approach the possibility of introducing a perpetrator programme with high interest and responsible considerations if, and in what way this could be done, to ensure that they actually contribute to the safety of survivors.

Most of them flagged the need to know more about perpetrator programmes, as this is a new field for them, and the need to build their capacities in this aspect.

As for the local specifics that should be taken into consideration when introducing the programme, professionals highlighted:

- The legacy of conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia; many men have experienced participating in the war; and war reinforces patriarchal gender roles and values. All the mapped professionals (100%) stated that there should be programmes that tackle DV specialised for ex-combatants. However, they are also pointing to the sensitivity of the

107 NGO Clean World in Baku, and NGO Ganja in the western region of the country.

108 reference.

109 Data retrieved from: Azerbaijan Population (2022) - Worldometer (worldometers.info).

110 Pilot project jointly implemented by SCFWCA, UNFPA, and the Ministry of Transport, Communication and High Technologies.

issue, as there is a high appreciation of veterans in society and the need to ensure that this image remains intact.

“The conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia (is relevant) as men are mostly the ones who die during wars or become veterans after that with strong consequences of post-traumatic disorder. Social beliefs and norms consider men as heroes and the main guarantees of family stability. Therefore it is not judged or publicly shamed if men commit domestic violence against women.”

Professional from the NGO sector.

- Strong patriarchal norms and beliefs; Azerbaijan has very strong traditional gender beliefs that are, among others, reflected in high rates of sex-selective abortions, among the highest in the world.¹¹¹

“In addition to those traditions, adages which are used in schools, national folklore, etc. undermine the role of women by comparing them with weaker representatives of humanity who always need to be controlled and managed by men. For example: “If you do not beat your daughters, you will regret it later” or “The burden of girls equals the burden of salt”, or some names which are given to girls reflect the unwillingness of parents to have them. Among those names we can mention “Bəsti”, “Kifayət”,...which literally mean “Enough” when translated from Azerbaijani.”

Professional from the NGO sector.

- The need to make programmes mandatory; some professionals flagged that, bearing in mind the cultural context and high acceptance of violence within society, programmes need to be mandatory in order to ensure that men attend.

Key stakeholders do not have enough information about perpetrator programmes and their characteristics. There is a tendency to ensure that the potential roll-out of perpetrator programmes does not hinder a still developing system for protecting survivors which faces many challenges. Post-conflict context and strong traditional gender norms are factors that should be taken into consideration when introducing the programmes.

Programme content and curriculum

As mentioned in the introduction, the existing pilot programme that will be rolled out by the Social Services Agency of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection was not received in the course of this mapping. The curriculum received by the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs was not comprehensively analysed within the scope of this research, thus we cannot draw firm conclusions. However, we will try to highlight some identified tendencies.

The pilot curriculum seems not to include elements of (ex-)partner contact and support, or procedures for cooperation with survivor support services/professionals. As stated, the curriculum is based on the Duluth model, which has these aspects of the work well integrated. It is not clear if this aspect may be covered by some other document or training.

Risk assessment, as another key element of survivor safety-oriented perpetrator work, is tackled in the manual, which seems to also provide a risk assessment instrument based on the risk factors. However,

¹¹¹ Sex selective abortions describe practices where female foetuses are aborted based on their gender. More information about the phenomenon and actions to combat it can be found here: https://azerbaijan.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/UNFPA_Azerbaijan_country_Profile_ENG.pdf

it is not clear if, and in which way the perspective of survivors informs this process, and how the exchange of information is taking place.

BELARUS

The political situation in Belarus that led to shutting down of essential services for survivors is an area of significant concern. Ensuring the safety and well-being of survivors needs to be prioritised. The analysis of perpetrator programmes in this context is focused solely on the recommendations for improvement of the developed curriculum, while bearing in mind that perpetrator programmes in current circumstances in the country cannot be safely implemented, until support for survivors is ensured. The perpetrator programme in Belarus is developed based on the Domestic Violence Intervention Programme-DVIP in the UK and adapted to the local context. A national programme has been developed and piloted in several cities, professionals were trained, and plans for a national rollout were set. However, due to the current situation in the country that led to shutting down NGOs across the country (including essential services for survivors), the existing programmes suspended their work, and plans were put on hold.

Bearing in mind these limitations alongside challenges in conducting extensive research that would require approval from the government and the involvement of currently inaccessible professionals, the research in Belarus focused solely on the analysis of the programme curriculum. The goal was to understand the Belarus programme and its compliance with international standards of safe and accountable perpetrator work, in order to form recommendations for its future development.

The analysis was conducted based on the programme manual, the National Model for the Work with Men who Use Violence.¹¹² The mapping of perpetrator programmes was conducted on a very low scale and included 1 perpetrator programme professional and 2 survivor support professionals, as well as a focus group. Insights from these professionals are used to understand the programme, but cannot be used to form conclusions about its application in the practice.

Programme and programme curriculum

Programme target groups

The programme is designed for men who use violence in intimate partner relationships. The target is clearly defined based on the following characteristics:

- Heterosexual men.
- Men with risk estimated violence as moderate to high.
- Men who have committed at least one act of violence against their intimate partners.
- Men with basic literacy and language competence, and comprehension skills.
- Men who are willing to sign consent forms that will include sharing information with their partner, police, social services, education authorities, etc.

Programmes for other target groups like female perpetrators, perpetrators of domestic violence, sexual offenders, and similar are still not developed in Belarus. As understood from conversations with professionals, they made some on-the-spot modifications when there was a need to work with female clients, however, they are aware that they need a specific programme for this category of clients.

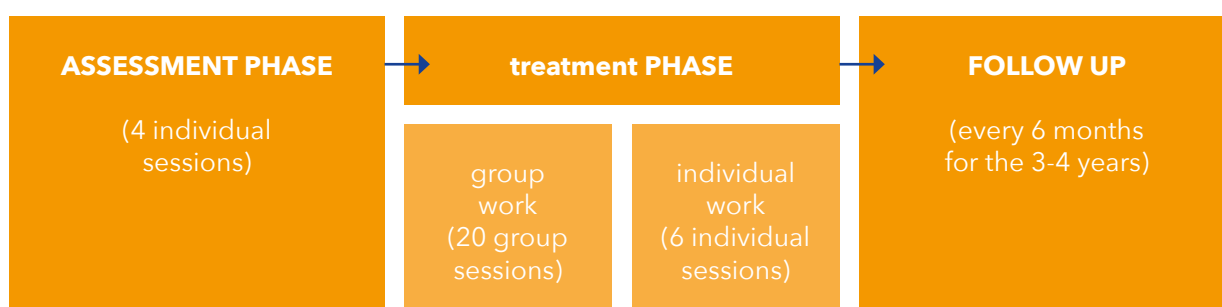
¹¹² Национальная модель комплексной работы с мужчинами-агрессорами в Беларуси: практическое руководство. Фонд ООН в области народонаселения в Республике Беларусь, 2015.

The target group of the national programme is defined in a clear and precise way, which is a good practice. The existing programme focuses on men who use IPV. Prioritising this group is in line with the needs in practice and the prevalence of this kind of violence. Programmes for other target groups should be developed in the future as specialised interventions.

Programme structure and programme format

The National Belarus programme is a group programme that also includes individual sessions both in the assessment and treatment phases. The structure of the programme is presented on the following graph:

GRAPH 1. THE STRUCTURE OF THE NATIONAL PERPETRATOR PROGRAMME IN BELARUS



The programme consists of 26 sessions, plus 4 individual sessions conducted in the assessment phase. This corresponds to the structure and duration of most programmes in Europe that follow standards of good practice. The treatment phase combines group work and individual sessions, in the way that the individual sessions follow the content of the programme and elaborate on certain topics on a more personal level. Follow-up interventions are also planned, although not elaborated in detail as in the other phases in the programme.

The structure and format of the programme in Belarus are in line with standards of good practice. There is room for structuring the follow-up phase in more detail.

Cooperation between perpetrator programmes and survivor contact and support

The programme manual describes in detail the cooperation between the perpetrator programme and survivor support professionals and demonstrates an understanding of the importance of putting survivors at the centre of all interventions.

The programme defines the position of the contact person who has the role to provide support to the survivor. The tasks of this professional are clearly defined and as a minimum cover:

- Assessing the risk of violence and the possibility of intervention.
- Security planning.
- Individual and/or group work to increase awareness and emotional resilience.
- Review of the risks of recurrence of DV and monitoring of the situation.

Survivor contact and support is recognised as an essential element of safe work. Service-generated risks that might follow the participation of the perpetrator in the programme are acknowledged and described, as well as measures for mitigating these risks. It is recognised that perpetrators might use participation in the programmes in potentially dangerous ways (as an instrument for further manipulation and control), that it may influence the survivors' feeling of safety and expose them to a higher risk.

The programme provides guidance for working with survivors in the context of perpetrator work. It is flagged that their participation is voluntary, that contact by support services is conducted proactively. The key activities are defined and include providing survivors with information about the perpetrator programme, its characteristics, and limitations, as well as support in terms of counselling, legal and other forms of support.

The exchange of information between the perpetrator programme and survivor support is also clearly defined. Confidentiality and exceptions from confidentiality are outlined and demonstrate that the safety of survivors is a priority. Information sharing is communicated to clients (perpetrators and survivors), while the manual offers standardised forms for informing clients and getting their consent.

The Belarus programme has survivor contact and support in place. The key elements of survivor-safety perpetrator work are identified in this aspect.

Risk assessment and management

Based on the programme curriculum, it seems that risk assessment and management are essential parts of the Belarus programme. All aspects of the work are risk-informed, from defining the target group of the programme (medium and high risk), looking at the service generated risks, and defining its potential increase as a consequence of programme enrolment as a contraindication for the admission to the programme, to safety planning and multi-agency work.

According to the programme, risk needs to be assessed in the assessment phase and include information from various sources (perpetrators, survivors, other). However, assessing risk during the treatment and follow up phase is done based on the decision of professionals, there are no precise procedures in this regard. The programme defines the position of a specialised professional, risk assessor, who has the role of coordinating the process of risk assessment and management. This can be a psychologist or a social worker with specialised training in this field.

Risk assessment is based on structural professional judgment that relies on evidence-based risk factors. As a risk assessment instrument, the programme uses the CAADA-DASH Risk Identification Checklist, a widely accepted evidence-based tool. A special advantage of the curriculum is that alongside the tool, it provides detailed guidance for its application with suggested ways for discussing different risk factors with clients and forms for documenting and describing information related to risk. There are no defined procedures that focus on the exchange of information about risk between the perpetrator programme and survivor support service (in the form of risk assessment meetings or some other form, what the frequency and structure of the meetings is).

The programme defines that high-risk cases need to be managed in the context of multi-agency work and sent to Inter-Agency Council (IAC). The main goal of the IAC is to reduce the risk of any serious harm or murder of the victim and her children and to increase their safety. Perpetrator programmes and survivor support services are part of these meetings.

The framework for risk assessment and management within perpetrator programmes is in place in Belarus and in line with good practices in the field. The programme on the whole is risk-informed.

Programme approach

The programme is a gender-informed intervention. Violence is clearly defined as a gendered phenomenon, and the programme is designed for men who use IPV. Gender inequalities and stereotypes are seen as underlying causes of violence, and it is flagged that poor anger/emotion management, alcohol or drugs, or other factors (stress, loss of control, mental illness...) are not root causes of violence. Gender dynamics are considered at the level of facilitators and their interaction. It is recommended to have a male and female facilitator team, and professionals should be aware of the potential for modelling equality in their relationship, as a tool to transform stereotypical beliefs around gender that underline violence. On the level of programme content, power and control are explored as root causes of violence. There is no specific topic that focuses on masculinities and their relation to violence. Although this is an integral part of many other topics (for example, many role-plays or examples used in the programme reflect traditional gender roles and stereotypes), it would be good to focus on the issue more intensively, to challenge traditional masculine identities and support their transformation into caring masculinities.¹¹³

The programme has also strongly upheld cognitive behavioural therapy and the motivational interviewing approach. Motivational interviewing is seen as an approach which has good potential and which can be applied throughout the programme, not only as an isolated intervention. The manual provides guidance on how to work around resistance and maximise results. Suggestions on how to work with strategies of minimisation, victim-blaming, placing responsibility on different external factors, and similar are described in detail, which presents an added value of the programme curriculum. Working around these strategies is essential for supporting accountability for the violence committed. It is good that the programme recognises it and builds competences of its staff around this aspect of the work.

The Belarus programme is based on a multi-theory approach. It is gender-informed in all its aspects, which is in line with standards of good practice and the provisions of the Istanbul Convention. There is room for improvement in working on masculinities at the level of programme content.

Programme content

The Belarus programme is a structured programme that defines the topics and structure of all sessions in the treatment phase (group and individual). The topics and key subtopics for each session are listed below:

113 This aspect is mainly tackled through the transformation of parental identity, not the overall identity as a man and other aspects.

TABLE X: CONTENT OF THE PERPETRATOR PROGRAMME IN BELARUS

Type and number	Key topic	Type and number	Key topic
Group 1	Goals and introductions	Group 12	Sexual respect
Group 2	What is abuse?	Group 13	Powerlessness
Group 3	Facing up	Group 14	Own parents feedback
Group 4	Basic anger management	Group 15	Loving relationships
Group 5	Basic cbt	Group 16	Emotional abuse
Individual 5 ¹¹⁴	Own iceberg	Group 17	Accountability
Group 6	Effects of dv	Individual 8	Own accountability
Group 7	Conflict resolution	Group 18	Impacts of dv on children
Group 8	Getting child-centred	Group 19	Loving parenting
Individual 6	Own parenting	Individual 9	Therapeutic parenting
Group 9	Behaviour management Children	Group 20	Letting go
Group 10	Parenting alternatives	Individual 10	Final individual assessment session
Group 11	Sexual respect		

The titles of sessions do not reflect the content in a clear way, which becomes understandable when looking at the structure of each session and session materials. The programme has a strong focus on parenting and the consequences of IPV on children, provoking motivation for change within perpetrators (Di Napoli, et al., 2019; Henderson and Arean, 2004). On the other hand, the programme supports the building of parental skills of men who use IPV, following data which show the correlation between IPV and harsh parental disciplining.¹¹⁵ The programme is psychoeducational, but also provides opportunities for experiential exploration and learning using many ways of interacting within the group (role-plays, discussions, exercises...). Explorations on the personal level are supported by individual sessions that follow the group process.

There is room for introducing topics that focus on masculinities in a more explicit and detailed way, as it is the root cause of violence, and challenging and transforming masculine identity supports non-violent behaviour in the future.

114 The numbering of individual sessions starts from 5, as the first 4 individual sessions were conducted in the assessment phase.

115 Rousson, A. N., Tajima, E. A., Herrenkohl, T. I., & Casey, E. A. (2022). Patterns of intimate partner violence and the harsh parenting of children. *Journal of interpersonal violence*, in press.

The programme content is relevant for supporting the change of violent behaviour and addressing the root causes of violence. There could be a more explicit focus on masculinities and the transformation of traditional masculine identity.

Programme evaluation

There is no data on the way in which the evaluation of the programme, its process and outcomes were planned in Belarus.

GEORGIA

In Georgia, the applied methodology included desk research, questionnaires and focus groups with perpetrator programmes and survivor support services. Within the desk research programme, the curriculum used in probation was translated and analysed (Training Course on Change of Violent Attitudes and Behaviour). The two mapped NGO services use their own curricula that were not analysed in the course of this research.¹¹⁶ The information about the practices of community-based programmes was nonetheless gathered through questionnaires and focus groups.

Structures around perpetrator programmes

In 2006, the Parliament of Georgia adopted the Law of Georgia on Prevention of Domestic Violence, Protection and Assistance to Victims of Domestic Violence.¹¹⁷ The same year, additional legal mechanisms were defined in the Administrative Procedure Code of Georgia - in the form of protective and restraining orders.¹¹⁸ One year after the law was passed, the government also approved the Action Plan (2007-2008)¹¹⁹ and drafted legal documents to promote women's rights, personal integrity, and protect from violence against women and domestic violence. The law also identified the need to establish rehabilitation centres for abusers and the corresponding commitment for the government. However, these centres have not yet been set up in the country. In 2012, domestic violence was criminalised, and amendments were made to the legislation.¹²⁰ Georgia signed and ratified the Istanbul Convention (2017) and committed to the harmonisation of its national legislation with the requirements of the Convention, including Article 16 that focuses on perpetrator programmes.¹²¹

Perpetrator programmes have been developed in the prison and probation system, and, to a lesser extent, in the community, in the NGO sector.

In the probation context, according to the Criminal Code, a judge has the right to oblige a perpetrator to participate in a perpetrator programme only in case of a conditional sentence. Interestingly, men who are identified as perpetrators of domestic violence in probation and prison are referred to programmes, regardless of whether they have been convicted of DV or some other criminal offence. This is considered a good practice, as it responds to the needs of survivors. However, stakeholders mentioned some challenges in practice, mainly related to the lack of human resources to work with all the convicts who need it.

116 Due to the limited resources, it was decided to invest in translation and analysis of the curriculum that is most commonly used.

117 <https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/26422?publication=18>

118 <https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/16492?publication=77>

119 https://ge.boell.org/sites/default/files/uploads/2014/01/georgia_enp_ap.pdf

120 <https://police.ge/en/projects/domestic-violence>

121 <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/3789678?publication=0>

With regard to community-based organisations, the Merkuri Association works mainly with voluntary clients, and, to a lesser extent, with court-referred clients, while the Anti Violence Network of Georgia works mainly with the court-referred clients.

Although the country has experience in conducting perpetrator programmes, and several programmes do exist, a single approved standard for working with perpetrators has not yet been developed.

Perpetrator programmes in prison and probation are not specifically funded, they are conducted as part of the workload of the already employed professionals. This poses some challenges to the practice, in terms of ensuring an adequate number of staff, as was brought to our attention by professionals. NGOs receive short-term, project-based funds, mainly from international organisations. The Merkuri Association also receives municipal funds.

The legislative framework on perpetrator programmes in Georgia is in place, and should be strengthened through the development of national standards for perpetrator work. The existing measures of imposing obligatory participation in perpetrator programmes are not imposed country-wide, and there is a lack of available programmes in the community.

Services that provide perpetrator programmes

Currently, the probation agency provides the Course on Change of Violent Attitudes and Behaviour for domestic violence perpetrators, which is available in eleven regions of Georgia. Programmes are available in 8 prisons (activities in prisons were put on hold for some time due to the Covid-19 restrictions).

Beyond government agencies, there are two organisations in the country that are working with abusers. The Anti-Violence Network of Georgia - AVNG, mainly serves perpetrators with protective orders in Tbilisi and Guria. The Merkuri Association provides the programme to the perpetrators only in the Samegrelo region, in particular in Zugdidi. Both organisations are survivor support organisations that provide various services to women and children.

The programme in prison and probation is run by psychologists and social workers. All new staff at the Probation Agency (psychologists, social workers, probation officers) go through a basic course, which includes topics like gender equality, gender-based violence and the specifics of working with the perpetrators. This course in probation is regulated by the Law on the Procedure for Enforcing Non-Custodial Sentences and Probation.¹²² In addition, training and workshops are planned with the assistance of international or non-governmental organisations and embassies, where, if necessary, staff qualifications are being increased.

Non-governmental organisations provide staff training with their resources and donor support. Their staff are also psychologists and social workers.

Perpetrator programmes in Georgia are available in prison and probation settings, and as community-based programmes. However, only two community-based programmes operate in the country.

122 <https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/21610?publication=26>

Programme and programme curriculum

The perpetrator programme in prison and in probation was established by the Ministry of Justice of Georgia and was developed in cooperation with the representatives of UN Women and local non-governmental organisations. After reviewing and evaluating the perpetrator intervention programmes in Europe, the Ministry of Justice considered that the “Batterer Intervention Programme” (PRIA 2010) developed by the Ministry of the Interior Affairs of Spain within the General Penitentiary System Administration was the most suitable for implementation in Georgia.

The existing community-based organisations in the country have developed their own curricula. The Merkuri Association is implementing a “behaviour correction and psycho-educational programme for perpetrators of domestic violence”, while the AVNG is running an “intervention programme focused on changing the behaviour and attitudes of perpetrators of violence”. Both organisations have written a manual that describes their work curricula, however they were not analysed in the scope of this mapping.

Programmes in Georgia describe work with the following categories of clients:

TABLE 6: CATEGORIES OF CLIENTS IN PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES IN GEORGIA (N=12)
(MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION)

Male perpetrators	Female perpetrators	Sexual offenders	Child abuse offenders	Violence in other relationships
100%	42%	50%	67%	42%

All programmes in Georgia work with male perpetrators. Some of them also accept female perpetrators as clients, particularly both existing NGOs and some probation services. Work with female perpetrators is not present in prisons. Programmes in all sectors work with child-abuse offenders, while some programmes in prisons and probation also work with sexual offenders. Although some programmes claim to work with all the mentioned categories of clients, no specific programme or approach has been identified for any of the described category of clients.

Programmes in Georgia work with male clients. Work with other types of clients (female clients, child sexual offenders...) is present in some programmes, while no specific approaches or curricula have been identified.

Cooperation with survivor support services, survivor contact and support

Programmes in Georgia describe this aspect of their work as follows:

TABLE 7: PROVISION OF SURVIVOR SUPPORT DURING PERPETRATOR PROGRAMME IN GEORGIA (N=12)
(MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION)

No support	Yes, by the same organisation, specific unit/professional that works with survivors only	Yes, by the same organisation, by the facilitator of the perpetrator programme	Yes, through partnership with an external organisation that works with survivors	Other
58%	8%	8%	17%	17%

Most mapped programmes do not have survivor contact and support in place. Contact and support of survivors is not present in any prison. Practice varies within the probation system. Professionals who stated that this element of the work is present, described that this is conducted through referral of survivors to some women support services in the community. This key element of survivor-safety-oriented work is not recognised in any of the probation training curriculum sections. Although some participants in the focus group and the local expert explained that there is survivor contact in practice, it seems that this practice is not clearly defined and implemented in a standardised way. Programmes in the NGOs state that they do contact survivors (for example, the AVNG stated they do it in the intake phase and during the programme, once a month). However, they recognise the lack of structured procedures in this regard.

When a survivor is contacted, it is mainly done for the purpose of risk assessment (in 100% of programmes that have partner contact), informing her about the available services and measures (80-100%), while issues that are related to perpetrator programmes are present in a much lower percent. For example, only community-based programmes inform the survivor about programme characteristics, content and specific working methods. Only community-based programmes and one mapped probation programme inform survivors about the limitations of perpetrator programmes.

Cooperation with survivor support services takes place in community-based programmes and some probation programmes. It seems that this aspect of the work should be additionally developed and standardised.

Risk assessment and management

Most mapped programmes in Georgia state that they assess risk and use risk assessment tools (92%). Programmes in prisons state they use SPAPRA,¹²³ and professionals in probation describe they use RNA¹²⁴ and SPAPRA. The use of risk assessment instruments in community-based programmes is variable, the3 Merkuri Association claims it does not use it, while the AVNG applies risk assessment tools in their work.

TABLE 8: RISK ASSESSMENT IN PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES IN GEORGIA (N=12)
(MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION)

Standardised risk assessment procedure	Roadmap of actions in cases of medium-high or high risk	Cooperation with survivor support service/ worker in each case	Cooperation with survivor support service/ worker occasionally	Getting information from survivor to assess risk	Getting information from other agencies to assess risk
42%	42%	8%	8%	50%	58%

As it can be seen from the data obtained in the mapping, the survivors' perspective is not taken into consideration in half or more than half of the programmes in Georgia (most of them are in prisons, as they do not contact survivors). In the probation context, professionals integrate information received from the Ministry of Interior and try to compensate for the lack of direct information from survivors.¹²⁵ Most perpetrator programmes recognise that they do not have standardised procedures when it comes to risk (some programmes in prison and probation, and all programmes in the NGO sector).

123 Spousal/Partner Assault Perpetrator Risk Assessment-SPAPRA.

124 Risk and Needs Assessment Questionnaire-RNA.

125 Information received from a local expert in Georgia.

The existing tools, the RNA and SPARA, have some gaps in conducting a proper risk assessment. The RNA is a general tool, not specific for intimate partner violence, and does not include the survivors' perspective. SPARA contains a list of some evidence-based risk factors specific for DV and IPV, however, it should be more comprehensive (for example, some important risk factors are not mentioned, like violence that included strangulation, or some survivor vulnerability factors - pregnancy, having children with disabilities, or that she is frightened of him). As described in the manual for prison and probation, in the intake phase, there are some elements of risk assessment (it is mentioned that risk assessment questionnaires could be one of the tools applied, and there is a list of issues around violence that should be discussed). However, this aspect could be improved, particularly in incorporating educational content around risk in DV cases and defining procedures in a more detailed way. Also, the ways of incorporating the survivors' perspective in this process should be defined.

Perpetrator programmes in the NGOs state that they do not have structured and standardised procedures when it comes to risk assessment, as, at the moment, they are conducting it in an intuitive, not evidence-based way.

The aspect of risk assessment and management in perpetrator programmes has been intensively developed and improved in Georgia. Further developments should be focused on defining clear procedures (specifically in the community-based programmes), improving the existing tools and defining ways of incorporating the survivors' perspective in all programmes.

Programme approach

The mapped programmes describe their approach in the following way:

TABLE 9: APPROACH APPLIED IN PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES IN GEORGIA (N=12)
(MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION)

Cognitive behavioural	Systemic approach/family therapy	Psychodynamic approach	Gender specific/feminist	Psychoeducational	Constructivistic and narrative
75%	8%	8%	67%	92%	0%

Professionals describe their programmes as mainly psychoeducational, based on the cognitive behavioural approach, with a strong focus on gender specific/feminist approach.

The incorporation of the gender perspective is visible in the prison and probation manual programme content (Legislative Herald, 2019), the makeup of the facilitator teams (comprising men and women) and in the understanding of violence. The core framework for understanding the root causes of violence incorporates the understanding of gender stereotypes and power and control. Module 3 focusing on gender and new masculinity is described as the programme's core module, while a gender lens is incorporated in most of the other topics. Gender inequalities are seen as the root causes of violence:

"The patriarchal system generates social, political and economic structures, which justify and perpetuate violent attitudes to women, as an admissible form of interaction with them. From this perspective, traditional hegemonic masculinity leads to the reinforcement of discriminatory attitudes to women and all issues related to them."

Legislative Herald (2019), page 73.

However, there is a strong emphasis on men's self-esteem, as a root cause of violence.

"In case of low self-esteem, people feel insecure and resort to violence in order to feel superior to their partner. This situation leads to the intimidation of the partner, which creates a satisfactory sense of power, leads to a sense of authority, and in turn raises their level of self-esteem (Hirigowen, 2005). As a result of reinforcing this feeling (both positively and negatively) the aggressor will repeat this behaviour."

Legislative Herald (2019), page 56.

Research that focuses on intersections between self-esteem and IPV does not provide consistent results. Several studies show that there is a link between self-esteem and intimate partner violence perpetration, most of them pointing to a negative correlation (i.e., lower levels of self-esteem coexist with higher levels of violence) (Lila, et al., 2013; Murphy, et al., 2005; Papadakaki, et al., 2009). However, there are also studies that claim that there is a reverse relationship between self-esteem and violence perpetration, i.e., increased self-esteem is related to increased violence. For instance, Loinaz, et al. (2021) explored these issues in convicted sexual offenders and partner-violent men in prison and found high levels of self-esteem among men incarcerated for violence.

It is more plausible to assert that low self-esteem may play an indirect role in violence or be a consequence of it (Anderson, 2002; Burke et al., 1988; Stith & Farley, 1993). This assumption is also supported by studies that found that increases in self-esteem during treatment did not predict future violence (Murphy, et al., 2005), meaning reduction in violence associated with self-esteem was not maintained after treatment.

Working on self-esteem is not recognised as key element of any widely accepted guidance on perpetrator work (CoE, 2011; Hester & Lilley, 2016; WWP EN, 2018; Respect, 2017). Many men who use violence do not have low self-esteem. On the contrary, they feel empowered, and tend to put more value on themselves than on their partners - there are significant power imbalances in the relationship. Many men who have low self-esteem are not violent, there needs to be a sense of entitlement that you have a right to control the actions of another person. Although this might be one of the relevant contributing factors (not the cause) for some men, making it a comprehensive part of the programme designed for all men can lead to even higher empowerment of perpetrators in an already unbalanced power dynamic of the relationship.

The existing prison and probation curricula touch on violence, types and dynamic of violence. However, they are explored in a very cautious way. Violence is directly touched upon only in module 4 (after 2 months of work), and it is rarely placed on a personal level. It seems that there is intention to balance with possible resistance of participants, so focus on violence is introduced very cautiously, through neutral, not personal content.

"When participants are asked to cite specific examples from their own past, the likelihood of resistance to participate in the programme may arise. It is therefore important to start with general topics and approach specific issues slowly."

Legislative Herald (2019), page 66.

Men who are in perpetrator programmes do have resistance toward openly discussing violence they have committed. They use minimisation, denial and victim blaming to protect themselves from being fully aware of their behaviour, and working with resistance is a challenging task. However, perpetrator programmes need to find a balance between challenging these strategies and resistances, and supporting them. It seems that existing curricula should be better balanced in this aspect.

The perspective of interviewed survivors from Georgia highlighted the prevalence of sexual violence in the country. Knowing the general prevalence of sexual violence, it is very important that this topic be also included in the existing perpetrator programme. The curriculum used in prison and probation should be expanded in this aspect.

Programmes in Georgia apply psychoeducational and cognitive behavioural approach in their work, while maintaining a gender perspective. The curriculum for prison and probation should be revised in aspects that understand low self-esteem as one of the root causes of intimate partner violence, as it can pose additional risks to survivors. The curriculum should be strengthened in aspects of working on resistance, and direct work on violence, including working on its specific forms, like sexualised violence.

Programmes structure and format

There are no data on the structure of perpetrator programmes in the NGO sector obtained in this research. The Georgian programme for prison and probation lasts for 6.5 months and comprises the following phases:

The evaluation and motivation phase that lasts for 2 weeks and includes 2 individual sessions:

- Obtain the general information available prior to the assessment;
- Interview for assessment purposes;
- Use of questionnaires and tests;
- Motivation for group involvement (recommendations for specialists).

The intervention phase that lasts for 6 months and includes 25 group sessions.

The intervention completion and observation phase that lasts for a week and includes the last session and the observation session. The observation session is held individually in the same week after the end of the group work (last session). The main purpose is to evaluate the strategies and skills developed during the programme.

There is no information about the follow up phase (where perpetrators are followed up after the completion of the programme) in the manual for prison and probation.

Most programmes operate as group programmes, with the possibility of conducting individual work. Group work is not available in several prisons and in the Merkuri Association.

The duration and the structure of the perpetrator programme in prison and probation is in line with good international practices. There is not enough information on the structure of community-based programmes.

Programme content

The programmes described core topics of their work in the following way:

TABLE 10: CORE ELEMENTS OF PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES IN GEORGIA (SELECTION OF ANSWERS, N=12) (MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION)

Gender roles and stereotypes	Gender specific power and control	Anger management	Self-awareness, self-reflection and emotional expression	Fathering and effects of DV on children	Definition of violence/ types of abuse
100%	92%	92%	92%	75%	67%

Most programmes address many topics, with core topics on gender and emotions management. The topics of fathering and definition of violence are mentioned as core by most programmes, but to a lesser extent compared to previously mentioned topics.

The curricula of NGOs that provide perpetrator programmes were not analysed. The analysis of the curriculum for prison and probation shows that it includes ten topics (Legislative Herald, 2019):

The programme curriculum for probation includes ten topics:

- Emotional intelligence (3 sessions)
- Positive thinking and mood (3 sessions)
- Modern definition of gender and masculinity (2 sessions)
- Self-control skills and anger management (3 sessions)
- Ability of putting oneself in another's shoes: Empathy (3 sessions)
- When we are afraid of losing someone: Jealousy (3 sessions)
- Antidotes against psychological violence (3 sessions)
- Dealing with distance and building a healthy relationship with others (2 sessions)
- Thinking about minors (1 session)
- Dealing with future relationships (2 sessions)

The curriculum of prison and probation (Legislative Herald, 2019) has been strongly upheld in increasing the understanding and management of emotions through psycho-education, fostering techniques for emotion management, and, finally, focusing on beliefs that underlie the violence. Gender is an overarching topic in most of the existing modules, with one module specifically focusing on that aspect. Exploring and supporting the self-esteem of perpetrators is an integral part of the curriculum. There are theoretical and practical implications to this that should be considered, as it provides the understanding that violence is caused by low self-esteem. Increasing the self-esteem could actually lead to intensifying the existing gaps in power relations and expose survivors to additional risks. The existing prison and probation curriculum has focused on children and their perspective, but to a very limited extent, only through one session.

Perpetrator programmes should also include the perspective of children, both in direct work with men through programme content and at the level of integration with other agencies in the community (Hester & Lilley, 2016; WWP EN, 2018; Respect, 2017). Many programmes are being developed to integrate topics that include children, for several reasons, and more needs to be done in this field.

As suggested by Alderson, Westmarland and Kelly (2012)¹²⁶ children are central when it comes to domestic violence, but often not visible enough in perpetrator work. They found that positive outcomes of perpetrator programmes on children have several dimensions: changes in the father that benefit children (through stopping or reducing IPV), changes in child-father relationship (improved relationship through improved parenting skills) and changes in the child's functioning (emotional functioning, cognitive functioning etc.). Alderson, Westmarland and Kelly (2015) found that the parenting style of men in the programme improved, that there was more attention to and communication with children and more time playing with children, and an increased awareness of children's fears and anxiety related to IPV.

Children and their well-being are often the key internal motivation that supports men in making the change (Di Napoli, et al., 2019).¹²⁷ As described by Henderson and Arean (2004, page 13),¹²⁸ *“Many men appear to be more capable of developing empathy, acknowledging damage, and accepting responsibility for violence in relation to their children than in relation to their partners. If the men in BIPs come to understand the damaging effects of their violence on children, even if the children are not abused, this can be a powerful motivator for renouncing violent behaviour”*.

Most programmes in Europe have specific topics that focus on children and fathering, while applying a child-centred approach throughout the treatment, like Alternative to Violence in Norway (Henning, 2020), perpetrator programmes in the UK accredited by Respect (2018). Some programmes developed specialised courses for fathering that use IPV (like CAM in Italy, or Addressing Fatherhood with Men who Batter in the US), many of which are being evaluated and showing significant positive outcomes, like Caring Dads (Henning, 2020). The Model of the Scotland Government, the Caledonian Model, envisages the existence of a programme for children associated with their programme for perpetrators and programme for women¹²⁹.

The curriculum of prison and probation in Georgia seems to incorporate many key elements of the work. However, some topics should be balanced in a better way, so that direct work on violence, the children's perspective and a child-centred approach have more weight, while focus on the self-esteem of perpetrators should be shifted. The curricula of NGOs should be analysed in more detail.

MOLDOVA

The research in Moldova included desk research, questionnaires and focus groups for perpetrator programmes and survivor support services, as well as interviews with female perpetrators-survivors.¹³⁰ In the course of the research, the curriculum of the programme for specialists working with perpetrators of domestic violence was translated and analysed (Bodrug-Lungu et al., 2017).¹³¹ This programme is applied country-wide.

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127 Di Napoli, I., Procentese, F., Carnevale, S., Esposito, C., & Arcidiacono, C. (2019). Ending intimate partner violence (IPV) and locating men at stake: An ecological approach. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 16(9), 1652.

128 Henderson, A. F., & Arean, J. C. (2004). *Fathering After Violence: Curriculum Guidelines and Tools for Batterer Intervention Programmes*. Available at: http://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/userfiles/file/Children_and_Families/FAV%20Guidelines%202011.pdf

129 More in section 4 of this document.

130 Survivors of domestic violence who were committing violence against their partners, and were admitted to programmes as female perpetrators.

131 Bodrug-Lungu Valentina, Grădinaru Ina, Gorceag Lilia, Sîrbu Simion, Bojenco Diana, Triboi Ina. Training manual for specialists in working with family aggressors. Developed within the project funded by the OAK Foundation, 2017.

Structures around perpetrator programmes

The legislative framework on perpetrator programmes in Moldova is in place. Domestic violence is criminalised,¹³² and the Istanbul Convention has been ratified.¹³³ The Law No. 45 on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence, in Article 15, provides that one of the protection measures that can be imposed by the court is the obligation for the perpetrator to undergo a special treatment or counselling programme in order to end violent behaviour.¹³⁴ Furthermore, Government Decision No. 496 approved Framework Regulation for the Counselling Centres for Family Aggressors and the minimum quality standards.¹³⁵ Further development of perpetrator programmes is recognised by the National Strategy for Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (2018-2023).¹³⁶ There is no information about how frequently the measures of referral to perpetrator programmes are imposed by the courts.

In Moldova, perpetrator programmes are provided by the NGOs and the probation and prison system. Most programmes work with court mandated perpetrators (65% according to this mapping). Perpetrators can also be recommended to attend the programme by some other institution, such as the police welfare agency, victim services, and child protection services. Programmes accept clients who come voluntarily, however, they represent a small percentage of the overall clients (around 10% in this research).

The programmes in prison and probation are covered by stable government funds. As per information gathered in this research, the NGOs rely on short-term, project funding, that is raised through international donors, not the state.

The legislative framework around perpetrator programmes in Moldova is in place. However, there is no information on how frequently the measures of referring to perpetrator programmes are imposed by the courts.

Services that provide perpetrator programmes

Perpetrator programmes in Moldova are provided in probation (in 38 offices across countries), in prisons (18 units across country) and in the community, by NGOs. Currently, there are four NGOs that have started perpetrator programmes, through Centres for Family Aggressors. They are: Artemida NGO, CNFACEM, Raza of Confidence and Stimulus, mainly survivor support organisations that have set perpetrator programmes as a separate service.

Perpetrator programmes in Moldova are mainly provided in prison and probation. Community-based programmes are present to a less extent, in four NGOs in the country.

132 Criminal Code of the Republic of Moldova, article 201/1, https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=130983&lang=ro#

133 <https://www.coe.int/fr/web/conventions/full-list?module=signatures-by-treaty&treaty=210>

134 Law no. 45 (2007) "On preventing and combating domestic violence", Art. 15, paragraph (1) item h) access link https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=122822&lang=ro#

135 Annex 2 of the Government Decision no. 496 regarding the minimum quality standards for services provided within the Assistance and Counselling Centre for Family Aggressors from June 30, 2014, Chapter II, Section 2, Standard II - Admission, access link: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=64111&lang=ro#

136 https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=128809&lang=ro#

Programme and programme curriculum

Perpetrator programmes in Moldova in probation, prison and in the community all use the same curriculum in their work (Bodrug-Lungu et al., 2017).

Programme target groups

The existing curriculum in Moldova is designed for men, perpetrators of violence in intimate partner relationships. Programmes involved in the mapping stated that they worked with different categories of clients.

TABLE 11: CATEGORIES OF CLIENTS IN PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES IN MOLDOVA (N=17) (MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION)

Male perpetrators	Female perpetrators	Sexual offenders	Child abuse offenders	Violence in other relationships
82%	59%	53%	29%	29%

Most programmes state that they work with male perpetrators of violence. Also, many of them work with female perpetrators, although there are no specialised programmes for this category of clients. Professionals stated that this presented a challenge in their practice, as female perpetrators were referred to them. Half of the mapped programmes stated that they worked with sexual offenders. Prisons in Moldova have a programme entitled “Programme for changing behaviour following sexual assault” which is the only identified specialised programme for the target group of sexual offenders in the region. No further details about this programme have been gathered within this research.

The existing programme is designed for men who use violence in family relations. In Moldova, there is a specialised programme for sexual offenders that is applied in prisons. This is the only identified programme of this kind in the region. Work with other types of clients (such as female perpetrators) is conducted without a specific approach or curriculum.

Programme structure and programme format

The programme is structured in three stages:

1. Individual work - assessment phase (5 sessions);
2. Group work;
3. Evaluation.

The duration of the treatment is different from programme to programme. Most programmes stated that they worked with perpetrators up to 13 weeks (59%), some of them from 14 to 26 weeks (24%) and a few of them from 27 to 52 weeks or more (17%). As informed by a local expert in Moldova, the reason for this discrepancy in the duration of the treatment lies in the specifics of the probation service. Perpetrators in probation often refuse to take part in the programme, or drop out of it, so they are referred to other, shorter programmes, that are not specific to domestic violence. This is an area that requires improvement, as **most probation services deliver short, non DV-specific interventions to perpetrators**. It should be noted that probably all perpetrators would prefer going through a short programme if given a choice, however, they will probably not benefit from it, and survivors will not be protected.

All mapped programmes state that they provide group treatment, which is in line with the national curriculum, that allows both open and closed groups, and individual work (100%).

The structure and format of the existing perpetrator programme in Moldova is in place. However, the identified practices in probation, in which perpetrators are referred to shorter and not domestic violence-specific interventions, is an area of concern, and should be improved.

Cooperation between perpetrator programmes, survivor contact and support

The national curriculum clearly states that perpetrator programmes need to closely cooperate with survivor support services and prioritise safety of survivors. It is described as an ongoing activity that is taking place in all stages of the programme (assessment, group, evaluation). The curriculum does not offer a structure on what this cooperation should look like and what the procedures around it are.

However, most mapped perpetrator programmes in Moldova do not have survivor contact and support in place.

TABLE 12: PROVISION OF SURVIVOR SUPPORT DURING PERPETRATOR PROGRAMME IN MOLDOVA (N=17) (MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION)

No support	Yes, by the same organisation, specific unit/ professional that works with survivors only	Yes, by the same organisation, by the facilitator of the perpetrator programme	Yes, through partnership with an external organisation that works with survivors	Other
71%	29%	0%	6%	0%

Programmes in prison and probation do not include this component. Although this element is an integral part of the curriculum applied in these institutions, there are no procedures that would support its implementation in practice. All programmes in the NGO sector have partner contact and support, mainly provided by the specialised unit of the same organisation that provides the perpetrator programme. The purpose of contacting the survivor is to provide her with relevant information and support, but also information about the programme and its limitations.

The survivor support services involved in the mapping stated that they did not cooperate with perpetrator programmes (50%), or that they had cooperation on a more general level, on issues related to domestic violence (25%). Cooperation that is taking place in the context of perpetrator work is identified by 25% of mapped survivor support services.

Although defined in the national curricula, survivor contact and support is not in place in the context of prison and probation, and this is an area requiring improvement. This key aspect of survivor-safety-oriented work seems to be in place in the community-based programmes.

Risk assessment and management

Risk assessment and management are not specifically addressed in the national curriculum. This aspect has not been described on the theoretical level, neither have the indications for its implementation in practice been outlined. For instance, when describing the assessment phase (stage of the individual work), points on how to motivate the perpetrator, prepare him for group work and similar are presented, while aspects of risk are not covered.

It seems that procedures around risk assessment are not fully standardised in the context of perpetrator work.

TABLE 13: RISK ASSESSMENT IN PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES IN MOLDOVA (N=17)
(MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION)

Standardised risk assessment procedure	Roadmap of actions in cases of medium-high or high risk	Cooperation with survivor support service/ worker in each case	Cooperation with survivor support service/ worker occasionally	Getting information from survivor to assess risk	Getting information from other agencies to assess risk
53%	12%	12%	18%	12%	29%

Most programmes state they have standardised procedures for conducting risk assessment. Inputs from survivors are collected only by 18% or less of the mapped programmes, in each case, occasionally or directly. Most programmes state that they do use risk assessment instruments, while 44% do not apply them. Most NGOs state that they use risk assessment tools (3 out of 4 NGOs), as well as half of the prison and probation services (6 out of 12).

Professionals in prison and probation described that they used the Risk Needs Response-RNR model, which is not specific to perpetrators of DV or IPV (it focuses on offenders in general). They also state that they use *“psychological testing of aggression”*, *“psychological evaluation”*, and *“complex evaluation questionnaire. Level identification test aggression”*. It seems that standardised risk assessment tools are not applied in the prison and probation context. The programmes in the NGO sector use a comprehensive risk assessment tool, specific for this category of clients, that incorporates important risk factors.¹³⁷

Risk assessment and management in the context of perpetrator programmes is an area of improvement in the country, particularly in the context of prison and probation. The existing curriculum for perpetrator work that is applied country-wide could be upgraded in this aspect.

Programme approach

The curriculum applied countrywide has originated from the Duluth model. It outlines that safety and wellbeing of survivors are a priority in perpetrator work.

“We shall remain flexible about how the intervention is organised while keeping our focus on how it affects women who are abused rather than how it helps men change.”

Bodrug-Lungu et al. (2017), page 37.

Violence is understood through the perspective of power and control and these aspects are integrated in the training of professionals and the work with men. It is also flagged that the goal is not building skills, but changing beliefs that support violence:

¹³⁷ Chestionar de identificare a cazului de violență în familie was analysed. It is important to note that there was no official translation of the document in English, an unofficial translation was used and this might have implications on the full understanding of the document.

“During the intervention, we focus on helping men to change their beliefs, rather than learn some skills, because their partners may be exposed to danger when the new skills do not work as ‘they should’. For example, when a man tells his partner that she spends too much money, he does so because he thinks he is always right, that she does not know how to manage the money, and that he is the one who decides how their income should be spent. A man who maintains these beliefs cannot exercise the new skills offered by the facilitator until he changes his basic beliefs.”

Bodrug-Lungu et al. (2017), page 37.

The professionals involved in the mapping describe their core approach in the following way:

**TABLE 14: APPROACH APPLIED IN PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES IN MOLDOVA (N=17)
(MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION)**

Cognitive behavioural	Systemic approach/family therapy	Psychodynamic approach	Gender specific/feminist	Psychoeducational	Constructivistic and narrative
88%	0%	12%	0%	35%	12%

Professionals describe their programme mainly as cognitive-behavioural and psychoeducational. Interestingly, not a single programme understands their work as gender-specific/feminist, although many elements of gender informed work are identified in the curriculum (the way that violence is understood, having a male-female facilitator team, working on masculinities with perpetrators...).

Programmes in Moldova are focused on survivor safety and are gender-informed, while applying strong cognitive-behavioural approach in their work.

Programme content

Programmes in Moldova cover a wide range of topics in their work. The adopted national standards¹³⁸ define several key elements that should be covered in perpetrator work: understanding the phenomenon of domestic violence, masculinity-femininity, anger management, self-control and responsibility, the process of an act of violence, communication and conflict resolution and building healthy relationships in the family.

The mapped programmes describe the content of their work in the following way:

**TABLE 15: CORE ELEMENTS OF PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES IN MOLDOVA (SELECTION OF ANSWERS, N=17)
(MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION)**

Accountability for violent behaviour	Effects of domestic violence/empathy for survivors	Definitions of violence	Fathering	Reconstruction of violent acts	Anger management
100%	94%	94%	65%	65%	76%

¹³⁸ Government Decision no. 496 regarding the minimum quality standards for services provided within the Assistance and Counselling Centre for Family Aggressors Admission, access link: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=64111&lang=ro

Most programmes touch upon many topics, including accountability, the effects of violence, working on fathering, and focus on violent acts. There is a strong focus on violence itself, which is also visible in the existing curriculum.

The curriculum used in Moldova defines ten modules (Bodrug-Lungu et al., 2017):

- Module I. Nonviolence
- Module II. Non-threatening behaviour
- Module III. Respect
- Module IV. Trust and support
- Module V. Honesty and responsibility
- Module VI. Parental responsibility
- Module VII. Shared responsibility
- Module VIII. Economic partnership
- Module IX. Sexual respect
- Module X. Negotiation and fairness

Modules are titled in a positive way, however, they focus on violence from the first session and work on it directly throughout the programme. All types of violence are covered and explored in detail, including exploration on a personal level. Cyber violence is not addressed through the programme. All modules and sessions have a strong gender focus, and explore each topic while maintaining a gender lens.

The content of perpetrator programmes covers all the key elements of the work, it is gender-informed, there is a clear focus on violence, motivation of perpetrators and changing gender stereotypes. The content could be upgraded to include new and rising forms of violence, like cyber violence.

UKRAINE

The invasion of Ukraine drastically changed the circumstances in the country. As we receive reports of an increase in all forms of violence, including sexual and gender-based violence, the structures that were in place to ensure safety, protection of survivors, and accountability of perpetrators have limited capacity to provide their services, or remain blocked in the occupied areas. The situation will also have severe and long-lasting consequences on society, including the aspect of gender-based violence and domestic violence. The analysis of programmes in Ukraine is thus focused on understanding the strengths and gaps around perpetrator programmes with the idea that recommendations can be implemented after the war. Bearing in mind the increased risks of DV and GBV in the country as a consequence of war, special focus will be placed on this particular context.

The analysis of perpetrator programmes in Ukraine is based on desk research and gathering information from perpetrator programmes and survivor support services through questionnaires. Focus groups with professionals and interviews with survivors and perpetrators could not be conducted due to the invasion by the Russian Federation that started during the research. This might have an impact on drawing conclusions on how certain aspects of perpetrator programmes are applied in practice.

Structures around perpetrator programmes

Legal framework and referrals

The Istanbul Convention was ratified by Ukraine in June 2022.¹³⁹ The framework for the implementation of perpetrator programmes in Ukraine is comprehensive and defined in the context of civil and criminal laws. The Law on Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence (Article 28) defines referral to the perpetrator programme as one of the protection measures imposed by the court.¹⁴⁰ Perpetrators could be referred to programmes lasting from 3-12 months, while local state administrations and local authorities are responsible for programme implementation. By the Order №1434 of the Social Policy Ministry of October 2018, the national programme was approved¹⁴¹. The amendments to the programme were made in accordance with Order № 588 of the Social Policy Ministry.¹⁴²

The Criminal Code of Ukraine (Article 91.1) and the Criminal Procedure Code of Ukraine (Article 194) define that convicted persons, as well as suspects, can be referred to programmes for perpetrators by a court decision.¹⁴³

The majority of programmes mapped within this research (74%) work with clients referred by the courts, who represent most of the overall clients they work with. The programmes state that they also receive clients under other referrals (37%), mainly from Centres for Social Work. The participation of these clients is not mandatory. The majority of mapped programmes also work with voluntary clients (74%), however, they make up a lower percentage of their clients (around 20% on average). As Hester and Lilley (2016) described in the recommendations for implementation of Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention, programmes should diversify referral pathways, and encourage both mandatory and voluntary routes. The programmes in Ukraine seem to be open to different entry routes.

Including perpetrator programmes as part of both criminal and civil proceedings ensures that perpetrators who get in touch with different parts of the system are held accountable and referred to the programmes. Defining referral to the perpetrator programme as one of the protection measures enables perpetrators to be referred to programmes timely, shortly after the violent act (or risk of it), which is good as it contributes to a timely protection of the survivors. However, the duration of the imposed protection measure (3-12 months) does not correspond to the duration of the programme, as well as the time needed to support meaningful change. Instead of giving such a wide scope of duration of the measure, defining it as a 12-month period for all perpetrators would ensure a higher quality of the work and effects of the applied measure. A similar issue is identified in the course of criminal proceedings. Although there are some discrepancies in the duration of sentences between different laws (Amirejibi et al, 2021),¹⁴⁴ durations in both laws are too short to provide the desired effect of the sentence and should be extended to 12 months.

The existing legal framework in Ukraine is comprehensive. Nonetheless, there is a need to improve the implementation of the existing legislative framework in practice. In the recent evaluation of perpetrators' response mechanism in Ukraine (Amirejibi et al, 2021) it was concluded that there are problems in the implementation of the Law on Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence, particularly in notifying perpetrators about a referral to the programme (the timeframe and methods are not defined). Also, the referral rates are different across the country, so there are some regions faced with a lack of referrals. According to the data gathered within this research, higher levels of referrals were identified in Kharkiv, Luhansk Oblast, Mykolaiv, Darnitsky and Svyatoshinsky districts of Kyiv, Netyshin in Khmel-

139 <https://www.coe.int/fr/web/kyiv/-/combatting-violence-against-women-in-ukraine-ratification-of-the-istanbul-convention-and-beyond>

140 <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2229-19#Text>

141 Order of the Ministry of Social Policy № 1434 dated 01/10/2018 "on approval of a model programme for perpetrators", available at: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z1222-18#Text>.

142 Order № 588 of the Social Policy Ministry dated 13/10/2021, available at: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z1621-21#n97>

143 <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2341-14#Text>, <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2227-19/#Text>

144 Amirejibi et al. (2021). *Assessment of the National Perpetrators' Response Mechanism in Ukraine*. Koroliuk Consulting.

nytskyi Oblast. It is interesting that the existing number of referrals by courts varies, even within Kyiv: in some districts, courts seem active in making the relevant decisions, not so in others.

The lack of referrals might also be connected with the overall number of perpetrators who are covered by the programmes. There are no comprehensive data on the number of issued protection measures of mandatory perpetrator programmes or criminal sanctions with the same content. According to the data gathered within this research, most programmes (79%) are rather small programmes, working with less than 25 perpetrators per year.

The legislative framework around perpetrator programmes in Ukraine is in place and encompasses civil and criminal context. Further development of the legislative framework should focus on initiating changes that will support better effects of the measures applied (duration of measures and sentences, defining time-frame for enrolling in the programme after the measure...) and ensuring their broad implementation in practice.

Funding

Perpetrator programmes gathered within the mapping state that they are mainly funded by the government (84%), on the state, regional or local level. Most of them (74%), state that these funds are permanent. Stable funding is one of the key pillars of sustainable perpetrator programmes and their country-wide implementation.

However, there are some indications that the existing funding is not sufficient and should be expanded and planned more carefully. In many cases, perpetrator programmes are provided by the social services already existing in the country, by simply adding the programmes to their existing scope of work (without additional allocation of resources). This leads to the practice in which perpetrator programmes are provided by the same organisations, facilities, and by the same professionals working with other clients, like survivors of violence (Amirejibi et al, 2021), which is a worrying practice.

Likewise, a recent evaluation identified a high turnover of specialists (Amirejibi et al, 2021) which presents an obstacle for the sustainable provision of the service. The same was mentioned by professionals involved in this research, who linked it with the low salaries in the social welfare sector.

Within the mapping, one promising practice was identified in the Lviv region, where regional state administration supported the local NGO to provide the perpetrator programme as a specialised service, by enabling the allocation of a separate spatial, human and technical resources for this activity.

Most perpetrator programmes are part of existing services in the country. In most cases, there are no specific funds for perpetrator programmes, so perpetrator programmes are implemented as add-ons to the existing activities of the social services. This practice leads to severe limitations in the implementation of perpetrator programmes in accordance with international standards and safe practice (like providing services for perpetrators and survivors in the same facilities).

Services that provide perpetrator programmes

According to the data gathered within this research, perpetrator programmes exist only in the community, provided by state-run agencies or NGOs. Specific programmes for perpetrators of domestic

violence do not exist in the prison or probation context, although their representatives have expressed interest in developing this kind of programmes.¹⁴⁵

Potential providers of perpetrator programmes are not specifically defined by any act. The Law on Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence defines general and special service providers, which can also be applied to services for perpetrators. They can be enterprises, institutions, organisations, public associations, entrepreneurs, and individuals who provide social services, and who have adequate training.

Ukraine has a broad network of perpetrator programmes. This mapping identified 19 active perpetrator programmes. The majority of service providers are state social services (79%) that also work on other activities within their scope of work (for example providing support to survivors), while there are several NGOs (21%).

Perpetrator programmes exist in the community, mainly provided by social services already engaged in other activities. Specialised programmes in prison and probation contexts do not exist.

The Methodological Manual (Stepaniuk & Melnychenko, 2020) defines that professionals who engage in perpetrator programmes can be psychologists, social workers, social pedagogues or psychiatrists and other professionals who have experience in working with perpetrators and are trained for implementation of the programmes. Skills and competences for the work are also listed, and include awareness about domestic violence, skills for conducting assessment and interviews, skills for the implementation of perpetrator programmes, awareness of child protection issues and auxiliary skills. As mapped within this research, the majority of professionals are psychologists, followed by social workers. Interestingly, 58% of the mapped programmes stated that 100% of their staff have other duties apart from working in perpetrator programmes. This is probably connected to the fact that in many cases perpetrator programmes are only add-ons to existing social services, instead of being specialised services.

In Ukraine, there are no national standards for perpetrator programmes that would define the core framework for its implementation. However, there is a national programme that defines some elements of the work and tries to ensure harmonised implementation of programmes in the practice.¹⁴⁶ Most perpetrator programmes involved in the research state that they measure outcomes of their work (74%), mainly when the client finishes the programme. As instruments to measure outcomes, most of them use the facilitator's assessment of clients by psychological inventory (53%), the client's self-assessment by interview (42%), and the survivor's assessment by interview (42%). Questionnaires or inventories for perpetrators or survivors are present in fewer cases (up to 26% of mapped programmes).

Although there are no national standards for perpetrator work in Ukraine, significant steps toward their standardisation have been made, in terms of designing and approving a national perpetrator programme. According to the available data, it seems that there is no ongoing, structured evaluation of outcomes in perpetrator programmes in Ukraine.

145 The "Probation Centre" State Institution and the Department for the Execution of Criminal Punishments of the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine were contacted in the course of the mapping.

146 The standard programme for perpetrators was recommended and approved by the Order №1434 of the Social Policy Ministry dated 01/10/2018 (<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z1222-18#Text>). Changes in the programme were made in accordance with the Order № 588 of the Social Policy Ministry dated 13/10/2021 (<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z1621-21#n97>).

Programme and curriculum for work with the perpetrators

In Ukraine there are several developed programme curricula. A widely applied programme is the Standard Perpetrator Programme that is approved by the Ministry of Social Policy.¹⁴⁷ The curriculum for this programme was developed by OSCE and the Ministry of Social Policy, and included a comprehensive manual¹⁴⁸ for practitioners and training. There is another programme entitled “Complex programme of corrective work with men who committed violence or at risk of committing it” developed by the Ukrainian Foundation for Public Health under UN Women support, UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Policy (2014).¹⁴⁹ However, this curriculum is not widely applied, so the analysis was conducted only for the Methodological Manual (Stepaniuk & Melnychenko, 2020). This presents one of the limitations in this research, as some of the mapped programmes do use the other curriculum. Also, as there was no possibility to conduct focus groups due to the war, some information on how curricula are applied in the practice are missing.

Programme target groups refer to the types of clients who are accepted in the programme. The mapped perpetrator programmes state that they work with the following groups of clients.

**TABLE 16: CATEGORIES OF CLIENTS IN PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES IN UKRAINE (N=19)
(MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION)**

Male perpetrators	Female perpetrators	Sexual offenders	Child abuse offenders	Violence in other relationships
95%	79%	31%	63%	16%

Programmes mainly work with male perpetrators of violence, which corresponds to the needs in practice, as most perpetrators are men. However, a high percentages of programmes state that they work with female perpetrators (79%) and child abuse offenders (63%). According to the data gathered within this mapping, there are no specialised programmes for these categories of clients, which is necessary for conducting good quality work. Working with female perpetrators, for example, requires a specific approach and programme design that also takes into account potential victimisation prior to the committed violence. Similarly, one in three programme states that it works with sexual offenders (31%), although no specific programme for this target group has been identified within the mapping. We assume that professionals make some on-the-spot adjustments to the existing programme to make it suitable for different clients.

The Methodological Manual (Stepaniuk & Melnychenko, 2020) does not clearly define target groups of perpetrators that the programme is designed for. Looking at the content of the programme (see Programme content section), most of it can be applied to any category of perpetrators, as it is general, not specific to any category (focus is on emotions management and communication skills). However, there is a risk that described generalisation will face challenges in addressing the root causes of violence and supporting a longer-term change.

147 The standard programme for perpetrators was recommended and approved by the Order №1434 of the Social Policy Ministry dated 01/10/2018 (<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z1222-18#Text>). Changes in the programme were made in accordance with the Order № 588 of the Social Policy Ministry dated 13/10/2021 (<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z1621-21#n97>).

148 Stepaniuk, O. & Melnychenko, O. (2020). *Methodological Manual for Professionals Implementing the Standard Perpetrator Programme*. Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe and Ministry of Social Policy in Ukraine. Available at: <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/9/6/471033.pdf>

149 <http://www.healthright.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Choloviku-----pdf>

The research mapped the number of clients who are ex-combatants in perpetrator programmes in Ukraine. At the time of the research, that was before the war started, most programmes did not have clients with this profile (47%), while some of them did not have information about this (32%). For 21% of the mapped programmes, ex-combatants made up around 10% of the overall clients they work with. Bearing in mind the current situation in Ukraine, these numbers will dramatically increase after the war. At the time of the mapping, most programmes (80%) did not have any specific programme or approach to working with this category of clients. Programmes that stated to use a specific approach described that they tried to adapt the existing curriculum to this target group. Professionals recognised that difficulties of working with this category of clients were high levels of anger, alcohol and drug addiction, and PTSD.¹⁵⁰

“The main difficulty in working with this category of people is that the participants are not too involved in the correction process. This is due to the fact that in the past anger was perceived as a useful feeling that often helped in the short term, as well as the fact that people were referred to the programme because someone else (family members or the court) thought they had anger problems. This is a common problem for this category of people.”

Perpetrator programme professional, Ukraine.

A recent evaluation of the perpetrators’ response mechanism identified the need to develop a country-wide mechanism that will deal with DV and IPV within the community of ex-combatants (Amirejibi et al, 2021). This was rightly recognised by the Standard Perpetrator Programme (Stepaniuk & Melnychenko, 2020) as well, and a trauma-informed approach to DV is described within the curriculum. In order to ensure implementation of this approach in practice, this aspect should be developed in more detail in the future.

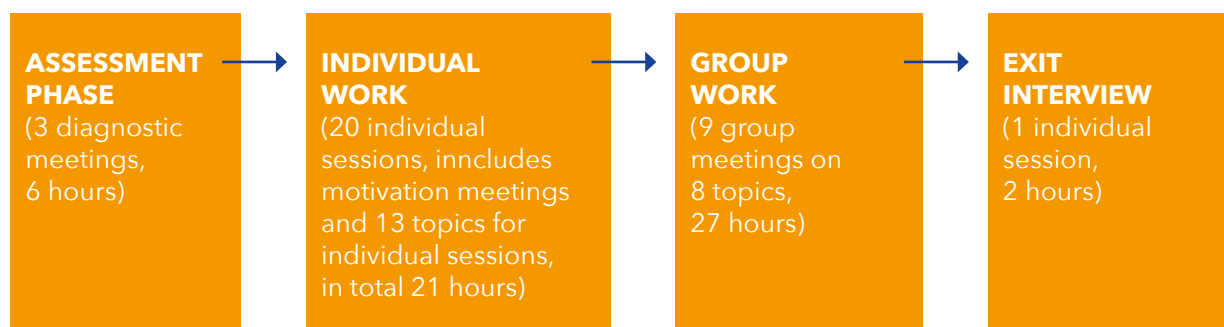
The programmes in Ukraine accept different categories of perpetrators (men, women, sexual offenders, child offenders...). A further development of the programmes should support the development of specialised programmes for these target groups.

There will be a demanding need for working with ex-combatants on IPV and DV after the war is over. Although the trauma-informed approach is recognised as relevant in the widely used curriculum, specific programmes for this category of clients seem not to exist in the country and need to be developed.

Programme structure and programme format

According to the Order № 588 of the Social Policy Ministry dating from 2021, perpetrator programmes should last for 56 hours.¹⁵¹ The programme has the following structure:

CHART 2. STRUCTURE OF THE PERPETRATOR PROGRAMME IN UKRAINE



150 Posttraumatic stress disorder.

151 <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z1621-21#n97>

The duration of the programme is adequate in terms of the overall number of hours, and can support a longer-term change. The structure of the programme is interesting, as it combines individual and group work with perpetrators. Group sessions are quite demanding in terms of time (3 hours each). This might present a challenge for perpetrators (spending 3 hours in a group each week, plus the time needed for travel). On the other hand, it should be considered whether the existing number of group sessions (9 group sessions) is sufficient to form a good group dynamic that can support change, and to maximise a positive impact of the group work.

The programme format refers to whether programmes are conducted in the group or the individual format. The Methodological Manual for Professionals Implementing the Standard Perpetrator Programme (Stepaniuk & Melnychenko, 2020) in section 4 provides options for individual work, group work, and a combination of the two.

All mapped programmes state that they provide individual work, while 42% of perpetrator programmes also provide group work. This is probably due to the lack of men in the programmes which limits the possibilities of forming a group, due to the low numbers of referred men.¹⁵²

Perpetrator programmes in Ukraine are structured programmes that combine individual and group work. The duration and the structure of the programmes follow good international practices. Some improvements are needed in areas of group session duration and group work length.

Cooperation between perpetrator programmes, survivor contact and support

In the course of this mapping, most perpetrator programmes responded that survivors received support (84%), in most cases from specific units or professionals who worked with survivors only. Some programmes indicated that survivor support was provided by the facilitator of the perpetrator programme (in 26% of programmes) or through partnership with external organisations (in 21% of the mapped programmes).

TABLE 17: PROVISION OF SURVIVOR SUPPORT DURING PERPETRATOR PROGRAMME IN UKRAINE (N=19)
(MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION)

No support	Yes, by the same organisation, specific unit/professional who works with survivors only	Yes, by the same organisation, by facilitator of the perpetrator programme	Yes, through partnership with an external organisation that works with survivors	Other
16%	42%	26%	21%	16%

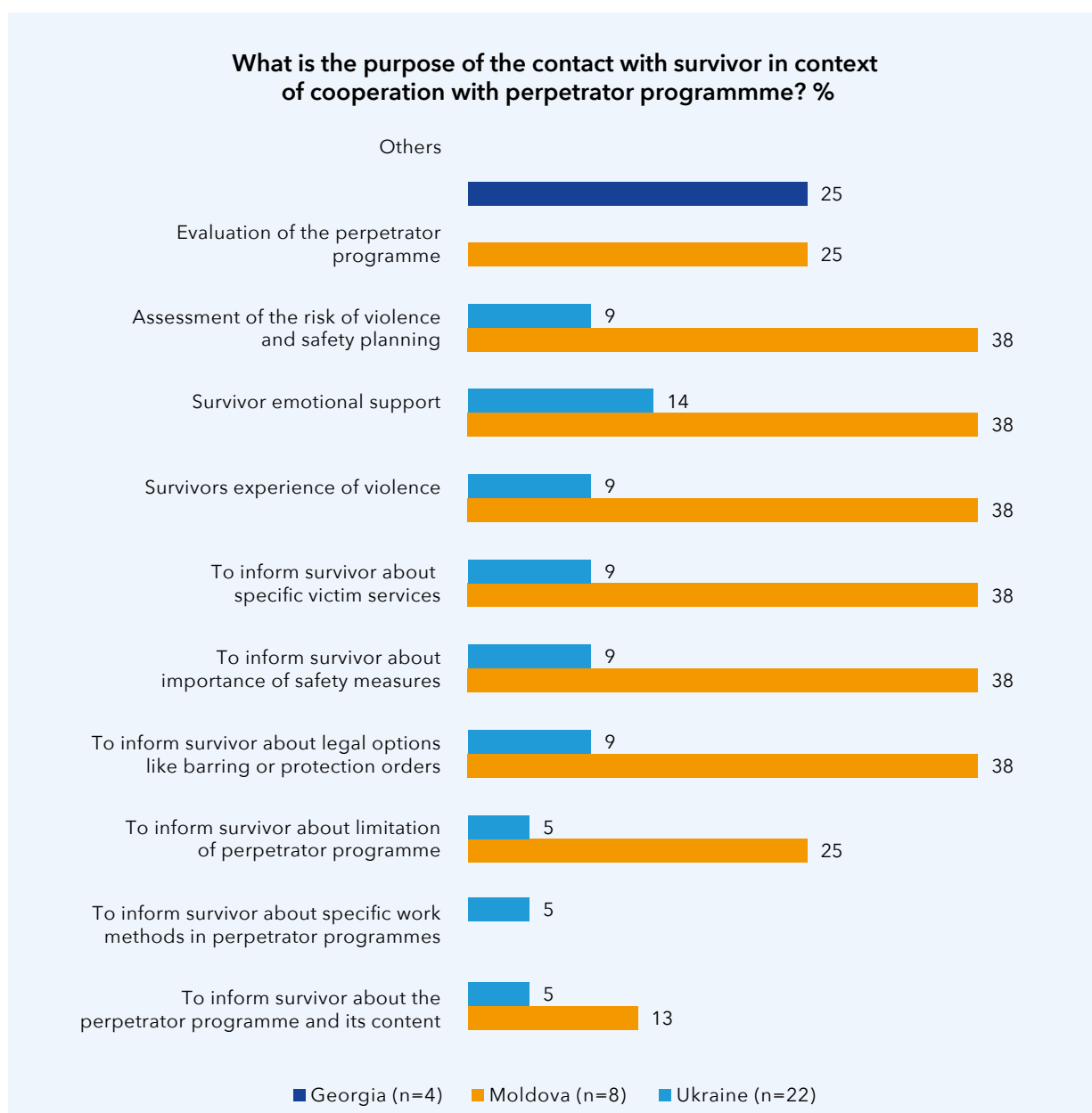
The aspect of partner contact and support is not described in the Methodological Manual for Professionals Implementing the Standard Perpetrator Programme (Stepaniuk & Melnychenko, 2020). Curricula predominantly focus on perpetrators and their change. Some elements of survivor –safety-oriented work are outlined, like prioritising the needs of survivors through highlighting that professionals cannot work with survivors and perpetrators at the same time due to the conflict of interest. In the recent evaluation of the national perpetrators’ response mechanism in Ukraine (Amirejibi et al, 2021) it has been flagged that these aspects of the recommendations by the Council of Europe are not met, spe-

152 as indicated by the local expert in Ukraine who conducted the country-level research.

cifically that there is no coordination between perpetrator programmes and survivor support services, that survivors are not offered support and are not informed about the limitations and potential manipulations by perpetrators while in programmes.

According to the results of this mapping, it seems that some forms of survivor support in the context of perpetrator work do exist. It is not clear if these answers reflect the actual existence of survivor contact and support that is associated with perpetrator programmes, or general services for survivors that exist and cooperation with them (for example, cooperation with a shelter, or a counselling service that is not related to perpetrator work). As indicated in the evaluation of the national perpetrators’ response mechanism in Ukraine (Amirejibi et al, 2021), in many cases perpetrator programmes are run by the same entity, social service centres, and in the same facility as programmes for survivors of domestic violence. Unfortunately, we were not able to check this directly with professionals in focus groups.

The main purpose of survivor contact, as described by perpetrator programmes is providing survivor support, information about legal options, emotional support. The information related to perpetrator programmes themselves, like what their limitations and characteristics are and the evaluation of programmes is present in less than half of the mapped programmes.



From the perspective of survivor support services, half of the mapped survivor services stated they did not have any cooperation with perpetrator programmes.¹⁵³ Half of them stated they had cooperation, only 13% cooperated with perpetrator programmes on the case level (working with survivors whose perpetrators were in programmes), while others (37%) cooperated on a more general level, on issues that were related to domestic violence in the country. These results support the understanding that the aspect of survivor support is a point that requires improvements in the future development of programmes in Ukraine.

Cooperation between perpetrator programmes and survivor support services in Ukraine exists to some extent. Partner contact and support are present in some programmes, however, additional efforts should be made to make it an obligatory element of perpetrator work countrywide. It is important that clear procedures around partner contact and support are outlined, and included in all relevant documents. The existing practice in which perpetrator programmes are provided in the same facilities as survivor support services bears multiple risks, and needs to be addressed.

Risk assessment and management

Approximately half of the perpetrator programmes involved in the research state that they use risk assessment instruments (47%). When asked to describe the instruments they applied, the programmes stated that *“the assessment is provided by the social services centre competent for such assessment”*, that they apply *“The Order of the Social Policy Ministry, Internal Affairs Ministry 369/180 (March 13, 2020)”*, or *“methods from the manual for professionals who implement the perpetrator programme”*. The Order of the Social Policy Ministry, Internal Affairs Ministry 369/180¹⁵⁴ describes the procedure for conducting risk assessment by the police. It is not clear if it is also applied in the context of perpetrator programmes (that programmes use the same tools as the police), or whether the answers reflect the practice in which there is no specific risk assessment within the programmes (as they rely on the initial assessment by the police).

The programmes described the way they did the risk assessment as follows:

TABLE 18: RISK ASSESSMENT IN PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES IN UKRAINE (N=19)
(MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION)

Standardised risk assessment procedure	Roadmap of actions in cases of medium-high or high risk	Cooperation with survivor support service/ worker in each case	Cooperation with survivor support service/ worker occasionally	Getting information from survivor to assess risk	Getting information from other agencies to assess risk
16%	21%	10%	16%	37%	37%

Most mapped programmes state that there is no standardised risk assessment procedure. The perpetrator programmes' answers highlight the lack of cooperation with survivor support services in each case (taking place in only 10% of programmes), lack of information from survivors (received in only 37% of programmes), and no roadmap of actions in high risk cases. It seems that this is an area that requires improvement in perpetrator programmes in Ukraine.

153 Please note that 9 of the 22 mapped survivor support services are placed in communities where there are no active perpetrator programmes.

154 On approval of the Procedure for... | on May 13, 2019 No 369/180 (rada.gov.ua).

A recent research (Amirejibi et al. 2021), concluded that there is a lack of comprehensive risk assessment procedures within perpetrator programmes in Ukraine, as well as risk assessment procedures that involve various agencies. Methodological Manual (Stepaniuk & Melnychenko, 2020), touches upon risks by defining risk assessment as one of the key competences of the staff. However, comprehensive understanding of risks and risk-informed perpetrator work are still to be developed.

In the assessment phase, the programme defines diagnostic assessment that is dominantly focused on psychological assessment, but lacking focus on the violence itself. There is no information if and in which way the information from the survivor is collected for the purpose of risk assessment. According to the programme, the assessment takes six hours, and includes comprehensive psychodiagnostic assessment and projective techniques.¹⁵⁵ Two key perpetrator characteristics should be identified: their aggressiveness and their propensity to conflict. Although psychological assessment can be a valuable support in the assessment process, defining it as a core element in the field of intimate partner violence, or the only assessment approach as in this case, is unsafe practice. It is shown that even experienced clinicians fail to assess the risk of violence, and that psychological tests (personality, aggressiveness and similar...) are not good measures of violent behaviour in the context of domestic violence (Newman, 2010). The very fact that someone has high scores on aggressiveness, for instance, does not tell if and how hard his partner can be hurt.

Perpetrator programmes in Ukraine need to incorporate risk-informed perpetrator work in the existing framework and in the practice of all the existing programmes. This is an area that requires immediate improvement.

The programme approach refers to the theoretical framework that underpins the work and understanding of domestic violence itself. It is closely connected with the overall work and reflected in the programme goals, its content, and it is central to all the interventions undertaken.

The mapped perpetrator programmes described the framework of their work in the following way:

TABLE 19: THE APPROACH APPLIED IN PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES IN UKRAINE (N=19)
(MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION)

Cognitive behavioural	Systemic approach/family therapy	Psychodynamic approach	Gender specific/feminist	Psychoeducational	Constructivist and narrative
68%	21%	16%	5%	42%	5%

The majority of perpetrator programmes describe their approach as cognitive behavioural (68%) or psychoeducational (42%). Only 5% of programmes (1 programme out of 19) recognise gender-informed, feminist perspectives as part of their framework.

Recent evaluation of perpetrator programmes (Amirejibi et al, 2021) identifies a gap in the gender focus on violence, it describes it mainly in terms of content (recognising that there are no specific sessions working on gender stereotypes and power).

¹⁵⁵ Hand test and Rosenzweig Picture-Frustration test, for example. Some practices that are recommended for conducting diagnostic assessments are problematic and unethical. For instance, in the explanation of the implementation of projective techniques and the interpretation of results, it is stated that "there is a lot of detailed information on the procedure of such tests and interpretation of their results, which is freely accessible on the Internet" (Stepaniuk & Melnychenko, 2020, pg.126-127).

Gender perspective is touched on in one of the objectives of the Methodological Manual: *“to promote the adoption by perpetrators of the model of family life based on gender equality, mutual understanding, mutual respect and respect for the rights of all family members”* (Stepaniuk & Melnychenko, 2020, p. 50). However, the transformed gender beliefs are not recognised in any of the seven planned outcomes of the programme that look at the skills acquired by perpetrators (all are connected to emotion management and conflict resolution). Power imbalances that are connected with gender and its relation to violence are not tackled in any part of the manual.

Some theoretical approaches presented in the Standard Perpetrator Programme are not widely accepted as relevant in the DV field. An example is Karpman’s drama triangle,¹⁵⁶ that could lead to survivor blaming, while neglecting intersections between masculinities and violence. The theory describes a model of interaction between people, and introduces the roles of the victim, the perpetrator and the rescuer, each of them contributing to the scenarios in which one of them is being hurt.

“A portrait of the victims. Victims are often perceived by others as defenceless and helpless persons... A characteristic feature of victims is ignoring the conventional signals of “danger” or “tension” from the environment.....The intelligence of victims is characterised by a lack of ability to think independently; they are easily influenced by other people.”

(Stepaniuk & Melnychenko, 2020, p. 79-81).

Although the authors state that professionals working in the field need to abandon the ideas that survivors provoke violence through their behaviour or personal traits, the way that the theory is presented could lead to exactly that conclusion. The position of “the victim” in this model is not intended to represent an actual victim, but rather someone feeling or acting like one. This position alone is confusing, attributing to unconscious biases regarding the alleged position of the victim, not recognising the different responsibility of the person who perpetrates the violence and the person who is subjected to physical and psychological violence.

There are two very critical elements that are in sharp contradiction with sound and safe perpetrator work. The first is that there is no actual victim and that not leaving a violent situation is the victim’s responsibility due to the unconscious payoffs that this situation gives them. The second issue is that the perpetrator is not held accountable for his actions but is put in a position of acting out some unconscious game with his partner. Violence is shifted from a series of acts that intentionally do harm and damage to a psychological interaction in which both parties hold the same responsibility. Also, the “portrait of the perpetrator” describes psychological traits, intelligence and emotional state in a very simplified way, neglecting the fact that perpetrators of violence are also a diverse category, lacking a gender-informed perspective.

Perpetrator programmes in Ukraine are mainly based on the cognitive-behavioural approach, which is one of the dominant approaches in Europe. However, there seems to be a lack of gender-informed focus when it comes to understanding the violence itself, as well as in interventions toward the perpetrators.

The programme content refers to the topics that are covered and methodology of its implementation.

¹⁵⁶ The Karpman drama triangle is a social model of human interaction proposed by Stephen B. Karpman. The triangle maps a type of destructive interaction that can occur among people in conflict. The drama triangle model is a tool used in psychotherapy, specifically transactional analysis. The triangle of actors in the drama are persecutors, victims, and rescuers. Karpman described how in some cases these roles were not undertaken in an “honest” manner to resolve the presenting problem, but were rather used fluidly and were switched between by the actors in a way that achieved unconscious goals and agendas. The outcome in such cases was that the actors would be left feeling justified and entrenched, but there would often be little or no change to the presenting problem, and other more fundamental problems giving rise to the situation remaining unaddressed.

The mapped perpetrator programmes described the core elements of their work in the following way:

**TABLE 20: CORE ELEMENTS OF PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES IN UKRAINE (SELECTION OF ANSWERS, N=19)
(MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION)**

Social skills	Anger management	Gender roles and stereotypes	Fathering	Reconstruction of violent acts	Confrontation with justification and minimisation strategies
84%	79%	74%	74%	26%	26%

All programmes declare that they cover numerous topics in their work. The development of social skills, anger management, gender roles and stereotypes and fathering are the most prominent topics. The least frequent topics are the reconstruction of violent acts and confrontation with justification and minimisation strategies.

Working on social skills and anger (or emotion) management are dominant topics of the Methodological Manual (Stepaniuk & Melnychenko, 2020). Provided below is the list of topics covered in the individual and group part of the work:

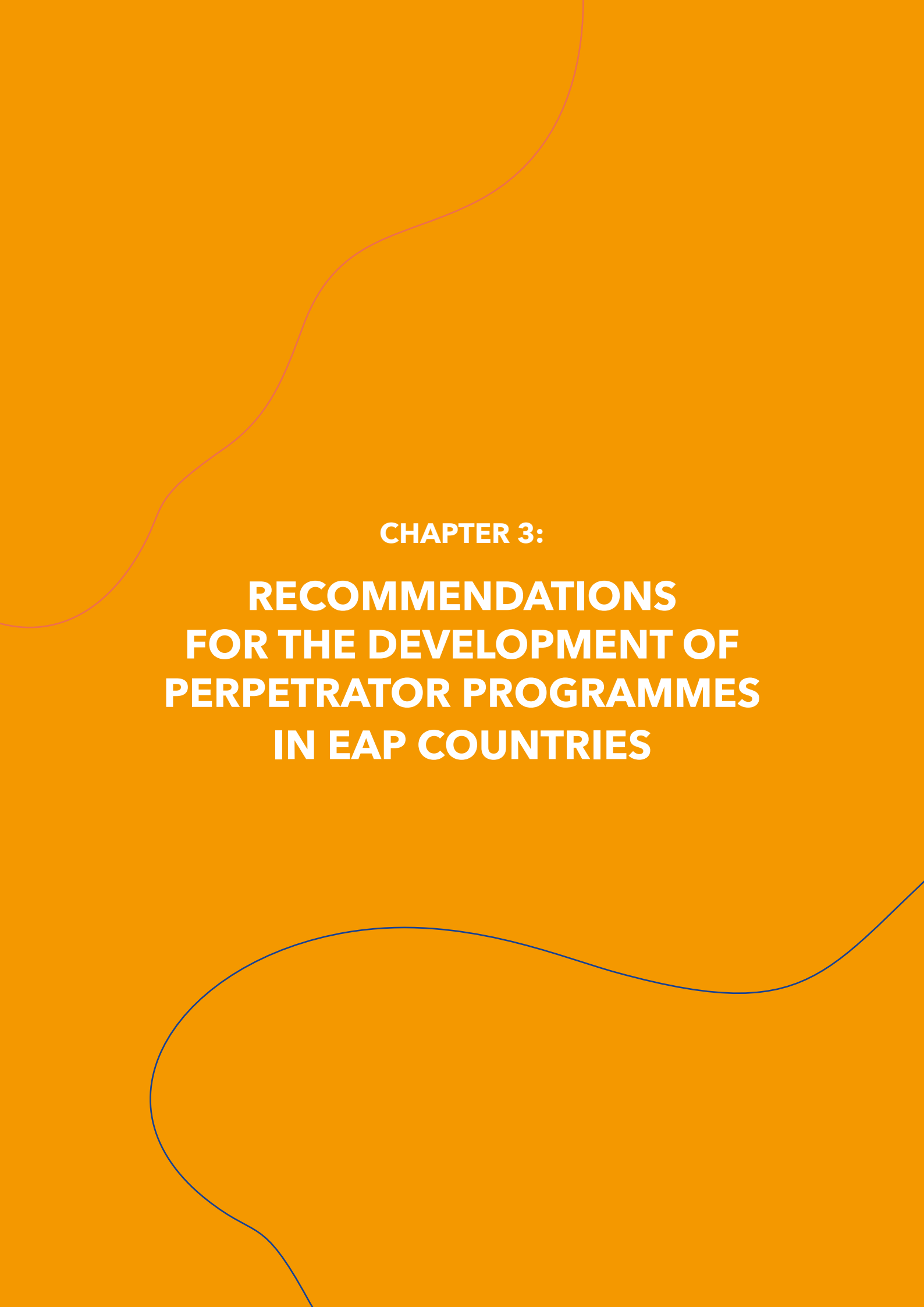
	TOPICS
INDIVIDUAL CORRECTIVE WORK (Stepaniuk & Melnychenko, 2020)	Manifestations of aggressive behaviour and personal responsibility for own words and actions (one session)
	Emotional balance (one session)
	Awareness of feelings (one session)
	Anger and self-aggression management (two sessions)
	Formation of self-control and self-regulation skills (one session)
	Awareness of own personal boundaries for constructive communication (two sessions)
	Overcoming fears (two sessions)
	Awareness of own needs and finding ways to meet them (one session)
	Constructive conflict resolution (one session)
	Partner interaction (one session)

GROUP INTERVENTION (Amirejibi et al, 2021)	INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAMME
	Setting individual goals and building long-term plans for aggression.
	Triggers of aggressive behaviour
	The essence of violence and domestic violence. Types of violence and actions to be considered violence. The violence cycle. The consequences of violence.
	Practice skills to control anger and aggression.
	Practice skills to control anger and aggression.
	Effective communication is an effective solution for conflict management.
	Formation of goals and long-term life plans.
	Summarising the results of participation in the Programme

Understanding and management of emotions alongside conflict resolution/communication skills are clearly the core of the programme in Ukraine. Although these topics can be relevant for the perpetrator programme, if they are the basis of its work, the programme will most likely not be effective, and the practice may be at risk of not addressing the core elements essential for change. Poor emotion management and social skills are not causes of intimate partner violence. Many perpetrators have solid social skills and do not have problems with adequate expression of their anger or resolving conflicts in other aspects of their lives, for instance in their work. Experience shows that perpetrators can control themselves until they are in the position to “safely” act in a violent way, so that they are not at risk (for example, wait until they get back home to act violently, instead of doing it in public). GREVIO has been criticising practices that reduce perpetrator programmes to anger management and self-control, instead of focusing on responsibility and beliefs toward women (Council of Europe, 2021). This also includes the need for confronting minimisation and justification strategies around violence that are present, which is described as a core element by only 26% of programmes in this mapping.

The Methodological Manual (Stepaniuk & Melnychenko, 2020) has only one topic that explicitly focuses on violence: The essence of violence and domestic violence. Types of violence and actions to be considered violence. The violence cycle. The consequences of violence. Beliefs that underlie violent behaviour and work on masculinities seem not to be part of the programme curriculum. As mentioned by Amirejibi et al. (2021), the programme does not clearly include topics on gender, power and other underlying aspects of violence. The same applies to topics of fathering and children. However, perpetrator programmes involved in the mapping did highlight the topics of gender roles, stereotypes and fathering as their core elements. It is not clear what the explanation for this discrepancy is. A possible answer could be that they use a different curriculum that was not analysed within this mapping, or that they adapt the existing content based on their expertise.

Perpetrator programmes in Ukraine cover various topics. The existing curricula should be revised to focus more on gender-based beliefs and masculinity and IPV, children and fathering and less on addressing emotions and conflict resolution.



CHAPTER 3:

**RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF
PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES
IN EAP COUNTRIES**

CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES IN EAP COUNTRIES

In many countries, significant efforts are being made in setting up and developing perpetrator programmes, in terms of defining the legislative framework, developing services, curricula and training of staff. Perpetrator programmes in EaP countries vary a great deal in terms of the stage in the process of their development, characteristics, content of work and structures around them (like development of a coordinated community response, network of service providers, funding, and similar). The practices in Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine are advanced in terms of the number of existing programmes and some key aspects of the work being defined and implemented. However, there is room for improvement in all countries in the region, in order to fully reach the standards of safe and accountable perpetrator work. Several trends in the region have been identified:

- Lack of survivor safety-oriented interventions
- Lack of specialised interventions for different target groups
- Weak gender-informed perspectives
- Intersections between war conflict and IPV
- Lack of quality assurance and evaluation of programmes
- No criminalisation of domestic violence in Armenia and Azerbaijan

Several existing programmes in the region face challenges in ensuring survivor-safety-oriented work. Survivor contact and support is underdeveloped. Although a number of perpetrator programmes in the region work with different types of perpetrators (men, women who use force, sexual offenders, child offenders) no specific approach or programme has been identified, except for a programme for sexual offenders (applied in prisons in Moldova). Accountability of perpetrators should be strengthened in the region, with Armenia and Azerbaijan being priorities in this regard. The region has an increasing need to address IPV and DV that are connected with the war and armed conflict, since there are no established practices in this regard. Finally, there is a lack of data about perpetrators, their accountability, perpetrator programmes and their outcomes in the region.

Recommendations take into account these common trends, with the goal of fostering initiatives on the regional level. Following regional recommendations, specific recommendations for each country will be outlined, to guide country-level activities.

Regional recommendations are as follows:

- **Criminalisation of domestic violence in Armenia and Azerbaijan and support to women's support services** to provide support to survivors, amend legislation and increase awareness of the extent and severity of domestic violence in the respective countries.
- **Raising awareness of perpetrator programmes as survivor-centred interventions, rather than as behaviour change interventions.** There is a knowledge gap about perpetrator programmes, in particular about safe and accountable perpetrator programmes. Alongside that, there is expertise in the region that could be used and disseminated. Awareness-raising activities (campaigns, events) and information exchange events should be supported regionally. The following points should be taken into consideration:
 - These activities should target decision makers, professionals involved in coordinated community response (particularly professionals in the judiciary system), perpetrator programme professionals and survivor support services, as well as the general public. It is essential that survivor support services be included in this process, as they could be potential service providers in many

countries, and monitoring entities that will make sure that the needs and the wellbeing of survivors are at the centre.

- The existing good practices in Moldova and Belarus¹⁵⁷ should be disseminated.
 - International good practices should be shared. When choosing practices, it is important to make sure that they are in line with the best practice standards. Likewise, practices that demonstrate the active role of survivor support services in perpetrator work should be presented, in order to start shifting the perspective that survivor services cannot provide perpetrator programmes, or have an active role in it, as identified in some parts of the region. Also, it is important that the running of perpetrator programmes in different contexts is presented, so that a variety of applied approaches is observed and learned from.
- **Advocating for an increased accountability of perpetrators at the regional level.** The accountability of perpetrators should be one of the key aspects of ensuring the safety of survivors. It should be fostered on the country level, especially for Armenia and Azerbaijan. However, addressing the issue on the regional level can maximise results:
 - Monitor key indicators at the regional level and use them for advocating purposes. Key indicators should be drafted (number of reported acts of violence in relation to the number of population, number of pressed charges, number of issued measures/imposed sanctions...) and their monitoring set on a yearly basis. This should be done in close cooperation with state institutions. It would be good if methodology could include measuring attitudes toward DV and IPV in populations of key stakeholders (police, justice, social well fare). It should be a process that could track changes over time, but also allow positioning of the countries in the region in these aspects.
 - These data should be promoted, made public, and used for advocating purposes.
 - Empower the survivor NGOs to advocate for increasing the accountability of perpetrators. NGOs can be strong partners in this process. As NGO sector is not equally developed in all countries in the region, this will probably be a longer-term process for some countries, nonetheless, it should start.
 - **Foster regional capacity building and exchange.** A solid knowledge capital has been developed over the years around perpetrator programmes in the region. Exchange of experiences should be organised and fostered.
 - **Supporting the development of perpetrator programmes for different types of perpetrators and different backgrounds and sharing it regionally.** Programmes for different types of perpetrators (female perpetrators, sexual offenders, child offenders, perpetrators of domestic violence) are lacking in the region. Likewise, specialised interventions for perpetrators who have addiction history (alcohol and drug abuse) and participation in armed conflicts have not been developed, and are needed across the region.

Although these kinds of programmes should be developed on the country level, regional activities could support knowledge sharing and learning from the best international practices. While doing that, it is important to bear in mind that programmes for different types of perpetrators should be initiated only when programmes for men who commit IPV are set in the country, and aligned with international standards.

157 Refers to the programme curriculum only, not the implementation of perpetrator programmes.

The only exception are programmes for veterans that address IPV in countries with urgent need (Ukraine), that should be set simultaneously with improvements of existing perpetrator practices.

- **Engaging men, boys and early prevention work.** Synchronised activities in all countries that engage men and boys and prevent GBV and IPV should be fostered across the region. This can take forms of working with youth on transforming gender stereotypes and dating violence, using workshops, social media campaigns, and peer education. Working with men who will become fathers on GBV is beneficial as there is data that risk of violence increases during the period of pregnancy and having a small baby, or that actually starts during this period. The idea of integrating these topics in Fathers' Schools¹⁵⁸ in Ukraine is in line with the needs in practice.

ARMENIA

Combating violence against women and ensuring protection and support to survivors are ongoing processes in Armenia. Although significant steps have been made in terms of legislation and ensuring accessibility of survivor support services, these are recent developments that still need improvements in their implementation in practice.

There is a wide acceptance of violence against women in the society. Domestic violence is not criminalised. The accountability of perpetrators is in the initial stages of development. Some steps toward the implementation of perpetrator programmes in the country have been made on the legislative level. However, these legal solutions are not implemented in practice (due to the gaps in the existing framework). The existing interventions in prisons have not been made specifically for domestic violence and cannot be considered perpetrator programmes as per Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention and the WWP EN.

The implementation of perpetrator programmes in Armenia should be a longer-term process, with some steps that need to be taken immediately. Recommendations for the development of perpetrator programmes in the country are as follows:

- **Strengthening protection and support to survivors.** Support to survivors should be continuously strengthened, as well as the NGO sector, as one of the pillars of ensuring the safety of survivors. Multi-agency work needs to be strengthened and procedures for coordinated work of key stakeholders need to be in place on the national and local levels.
- **Criminalising domestic violence.** Domestic violence needs to be recognised as a criminal offence, as it is a violation of human rights. This will contribute to changing social norms that justify violence.
- **Fostering accountability of perpetrators.** While survivors need to be protected, perpetrators need to be held accountable. The development of accountability for violence in one society is a process that has many levels, from how DV is recognised by the law, and the attitudes of responsible professionals, to the individual accountability of the perpetrators. Actions to foster accountability should be comprehensive and include all the existing levels. Recommendations for fostering accountability in Armenia are as follows:
 - **Research and advocacy on accountability.** Conduct comprehensive research that will identify the existing gaps in holding perpetrators to account, and how perpetrators slip through these gaps. Monitor the application of the existing measures and show discrepancies between legislation and its implementation in practice. Develop national campaigns that will raise awareness of the problem

158 Fathers' Schools - are safe spaces for men to explore and challenge restrictive gender norms and practice skills and actions that will help them become more engaged fathers and supportive partners, and contribute to gender transformation and the prevention of violence against women and children.

of violence and the impunity of perpetrators as a country-wide problem. Present the existing good international practices. Survivor support NGOs should be strengthened to advocate for increased accountability of perpetrators.

- **Building capacities of all key stakeholders to hold perpetrators to account.** All stakeholders within the coordinated community response (police, prosecutors, judges, social welfare...) need to have the right attitudes and skills to support survivors, while holding perpetrators to account. If this is not in place, even the best legislation framework will fail in its implementation in practice. Their capacity building should be done through extensive and ongoing training, that needs to include working on personal beliefs and transforming typical traditional gender narratives, while providing training in implementing the existing procedures. The work of all professionals in this field should be monitored, and they also need to be held accountable for their work. The involvement of more female professionals in this field can also be beneficial.
- **Raising awareness and increasing knowledge around survivor safety-oriented perpetrator work.** Information about perpetrator programmes should be presented to key stakeholders and the public, as one of the elements of ensuring accountability of perpetrators. Most of the mapped professionals lacked information in this regard. The existing capacities of the women NGOs should be actively included in this process. They should be encouraged to reflect on their role in the process of setting up and running perpetrator programmes, as potential service providers, or partners.
- **Amending the existing legislative framework that defines perpetrator programmes.** The existing legislative framework around perpetrator programmes is clearly not functioning.
 - **Reconciliation.** Understanding perpetrator work as a reconciliation between partners needs to be changed. The goal of perpetrator interventions is to ensure the safety of survivors, not staying in a relationship that is dangerous for them.
 - **Service providers.** The existing placement of perpetrator programmes in survivor support services, without additional human, spatial and technical resources is not in line with the possibility to provide safe and good quality work.

However, it is important to re-think the possibility that perpetrator programmes are provided by survivor support services in the future. Survivor support service professionals are usually experts in understanding violence and its roots, they have competences that are needed in perpetrator work, and the experience that often ensures that perpetrator interventions hold the perspective of survivors as central. In that case, perpetrator services would need to be provided through a separate organisational unit, in different places, and with staff that is not simultaneously engaged in the work with survivors and the work with perpetrators.

Regardless of the type of service providers that will be defined, perpetrator programmes need to be specialised services, not only add-ons to activities of the already existing services.

 - **Mandatory referrals.** The legislation needs to provide the possibility of mandatory referral to perpetrator programmes.
- **Development of the national curriculum for men who use intimate partner violence (in the prison and in the community).** This activity should be conducted with high caution, only if the following points can be met:
 - The goal is limited to the development of the national curriculum for perpetrator programmes, not the development of programmes per se. As the development of a good national curriculum is also a process that takes time, it could be done

as a preparatory activity that will be followed by programmes set up in the future.

- Specialised curricula for perpetrators of domestic violence should be developed, with the support of international experts. The curricula need to be survivor-safety-oriented and to incorporate all elements outlined in Chapter 1. It is recommended that one curriculum for the prison context and one for the community context be developed.
- Training of professionals for conducting perpetrator work, following a new specialised curriculum. The training should be followed by a mentoring process, that will support its proper implementation in practice.
- The curricula should be piloted in several prisons and in one community, over a longer period (1-2 years). **The chosen communities need to have a strong survivor support service in place that would work in partnership with the pilot programmes, and also be trained for this task.** The role of women NGOs in perpetrator programmes should be considered from the perspective of service providers.
- The curriculum in the community should be piloted only with low or medium risk perpetrators.
- The curriculum in the prison setting needs to be specialised for domestic violence. It is recommended that all convicts be screened for domestic violence, and those who are identified be referred in the perpetrator programme.
- There should be ongoing monitoring and external evaluation of the roll-out, that will inform the process. It is recommended that piloting be monitored by international experts.

Only if these conditions are met, the piloting of the curricula can be done in a safe way. If these conditions are not met, they should be set up prior to the piloting. Based on the conclusions from the piloting process, a national curriculum should be developed. However, the rollout of the programme is possible only if domestic violence is criminalised and measures to support survivors are in place.

- **Engaging men and transforming gender roles.** In Armenia, primary preventive activities should be developed and rolled out. They should include working with youth on transforming the existing gender roles and beliefs. Preventive work within the in Fathers' Schools that have been set up regionally is also encouraged, in a way to tackle intimate partner violence.
- **Setting up perpetrator programmes.** As mentioned, it is recommended that this be a longer-term activity for Armenia, that can take place only when the protection of survivors and overall accountability of perpetrators are improved. It is hard to specify the criteria that would determine whether these processes are advanced enough to be in a position to set up a safe perpetrator programme. However, as a minimum, domestic violence should be criminalised, essential services for survivors should be available country-wide and running in a stable way, and professionals should be trained.

AZERBAIJAN

Azerbaijan is still in the process of setting up protection and support for survivors of domestic violence and ensuring accountability of perpetrators. While patriarchal norms are strong, domestic violence is still not criminalised, the existing measures are not applied, the coordinated-community response is in its initial phases, and the services for survivors are underdeveloped and underfunded. Although there is some legislative framework that defines perpetrator programmes and some steps have been made towards its development (training a few professionals, programme piloting plan), it seems that this will need to be a much longer process.

The implementation of perpetrator programmes in Azerbaijan at this moment would bear many risks to the safety of survivors. In a system with high impunity for perpetrators, their enrolment in programmes would probably only contribute to further manipulation of and harm to survivors, that would not get the support they need to reach safety and recover.

Setting up perpetrator programmes in the country should be a longer-term process (probably 5 and more years). This process should start immediately and incorporate activities that combine the development of a protection system for survivors, alongside fostering the accountability of perpetrators. The recommendations in this aspect are as follows:

- **Strengthening protection and support to survivors.** This should include amendments to the legislation, further development of coordinated community response, building capacities of relevant professionals, development of sustainable services for survivors (24/7 hotline, shelters, free legal support, free psychological support, economic empowerment...) so that they are available countrywide. The NGO sector needs to be strengthened as well, as it is one of the pillars of ensuring the safety of survivors, and in many cases these organisations are providers or partners in perpetrator work.
- **Criminalising domestic violence.** Domestic violence needs to be recognised as a criminal offence, as it is a violation of human rights. This will contribute to changing social norms that justify violence.
- **Fostering accountability of the perpetrators.** Those who commit violence need to be held accountable by the society, all stakeholders, and the community as a whole. It is a part of social change, that shifts the perspective from survivor-blaming and justifying the perpetrators, to the accountability of those who do harm. The development of accountability for violence in one society is a process that has many levels, from how DV is recognised by the law, and the attitudes of responsible professionals, to the individual accountability of the perpetrators. Actions to foster accountability should be comprehensive and include all existing levels. The recommendations for fostering accountability in Azerbaijan are as follows:
 - **Research and advocacy on accountability.** Conduct a comprehensive research that will identify the existing gaps in holding perpetrators to account, and how perpetrators slip through those gaps. Monitor the application of the existing measures and show discrepancies between legislation and its implementation in practice. Develop national campaigns that will raise awareness of the problem of violence and impunity of perpetrators as a country-wide problem. Present the existing good international practices. Survivor support NGOs should be strengthened to advocate for increased accountability of perpetrators.
 - **Building capacities of all key stakeholders to hold perpetrators to account.** All stakeholders within the coordinated community response (police, prosecutors, judges, social welfare...) need to have the right attitudes and skills to support survivors, while holding perpetrators to account. If this is not in place, even the best legislation framework will collapse in its implementation in practice. Building their capacities should be done through extensive and ongoing training, that needs to include working on personal beliefs and transforming typical traditional gender narratives, along with training in implementing the

existing procedures. It could be considered having professionals appointed in each sector who will work on DV cases, who are carefully selected based on their sensibilisation and skills for this topic. The work of all professionals in this field should be monitored, and they also need to be held accountable for their work. The involvement of more female professionals in this field can also be beneficial.

- **Raising awareness and increasing knowledge around survivor safety-oriented perpetrator work.** Information about perpetrator programmes should be presented to key stakeholders and the public, as one of the elements of ensuring the accountability of perpetrators. Most of the mapped professionals lacked information in this regard.
 - **Setting the ground for future development of perpetrator programmes.** The development of programmes in Azerbaijan should be part of a broader debate that should identify when it is time to start, who the service providers would be, what standards of work they should follow, and how it will be funded. It is very important that it is clear from the beginning that perpetrator programmes need to be specialised services, not only add-ons to activities of the already existing services.
- **Development of the national programme for men who use violence in intimate partner relations.** This activity should be conducted with extreme caution, only if the following points can be met:
 - The goal is limited to the development of the national curriculum for perpetrator programmes, not the development of the programmes per se. As the development of a good national curriculum is also a process that takes time, it could be done as a preparatory activity that will be followed by the programmes set up in future.
 - The curricula that exist and are planned to be piloted should be externally analysed, in terms of their alignment with the international standards of safe practice. They should be modified in accordance with the results of the analysis, or a new curriculum should be created if needed.
 - Training of professionals in conducting perpetrator work, following a new or revised curriculum. The training should be followed by a mentoring process that will support its proper implementation in practice.
 - The curriculum should be piloted in one community for a longer period of time (1-2 years). This community needs to have a strong survivor support service in place that would work in partnership with the pilot programme, and also be trained for this task. The community should ensure solid multi-agency work and a multi-agency body that deals with high-risk cases.
 - The curriculum should be piloted only with low- or medium-risk perpetrators.
 - There should be ongoing monitoring and external evaluation of the roll-out, that will inform the process.

Only if these conditions are met, the curriculum piloting could be carried out in a safe way. If these conditions are not met, they should be set up prior to the piloting. Based on the conclusions from the piloting process, a national curriculum should be developed. However, the roll-out of the programme is possible only if domestic violence is criminalised and measures to support survivors are in place.

- **Engaging men and transforming the gender roles.** In Azerbaijan, primary preventive activities should be developed and rolled out. They should include working with youth on transforming the existing gender roles and beliefs. Preventive work within the in Fathers'

Schools that have been set up regionally is also encouraged, in a way to tackle intimate partner violence.

- **Setting up perpetrator programmes.** As mentioned, it is recommended that this be a longer-term activity for Azerbaijan, that can take place only when the protection of survivors and overall accountability of perpetrators is improved. It is hard to specify the criteria that would determine whether these processes are advanced enough to allow setting up of a safe perpetrator programme. However, as a minimum, domestic violence should be criminalised, essential services for survivors should be available at least in every region in the country, and professionals should be trained.

BELARUS

Safety and well-being of survivors in Belarus is an area of significant concern. In a situation in which essential survivor support services are shutting down, survivors cannot be protected, and no perpetrator programme can be safely implemented. When considering future development of perpetrator programmes in the country, it is important to prioritise the support for survivors.

This research in Belarus focused solely on the analysis of the existing curriculum, with the goal to provide recommendations for its further development, not on the implementation of programmes in practice. The curriculum for perpetrator programmes in Belarus is comprehensive, survivor-safety-oriented, and complies with standards of good practice in many of its aspects. It targets men who use violence in intimate partner relationships. The curriculum is gender-informed and risk-informed and represents a solid basis for further development of perpetrator programmes in the country.

Some room for improvement has been identified, namely:

- **Defining clearer procedures for exchanging information between perpetrator programmes and survivor support services.** The curriculum defines the need for information exchange and includes the survivors' perspective. However, it has not been defined how this exchange of information should take place, which is especially relevant for exchanging information around risk. Risk assessment is defined in the assessment phase, and further risk monitoring is left to the estimation and decisions of individual professionals. The procedures that define regular meetings (risk/case management meetings) support ensuring the safety of survivors and should be established. Guidance on good practice in this regard can be found in Respect's standards (2017).¹⁵⁹
- **Follow-up phase procedures should be elaborated in more detail.** This aspect of the work has not been developed in the existing curriculum. There should be information about the relevance of this phase, and its essential elements (how the survivor is included, how the risk assessment is conducted, and what the structure of the meetings is). The evaluation of the programme outcomes should be also incorporated in this phase.
- **Integrating issues on cyber violence in the curriculum.** Cyber violence is on the rise and is becoming one of the key elements of working with perpetrators. Knowledge about cyber violence, its forms, but also ways of its identification and addressing it with survivors and perpetrators should be added to the curriculum of the programme. Guidance for integrating cyber violence can be found in the manual published by the WWP EN (Baroncelli, 2020).¹⁶⁰
- **Integrating sessions that explicitly focus on masculinities.** The existing curriculum does not incorporate the topic of exploring and transforming traditional masculinities. Although the topic is indirectly tackled (mainly through shifts in the parental role), knowing that gender

159 Standards A4 and B3. Available at: [Respect_Standard_FINAL.pdf \(hubble-live-assets.s3.amazonaws.com\)](#)

160 Baroncelli (2020). Same Violence, New Tools. How to work with violent men on cyber violence. Available at: https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/fileadmin/WWP_Network/redakteure/Campaign/2020/How_To_Cyber_Violence.pdf

stereotypes and power imbalance are the underlying causes of violence, more emphasis should be on this topic. This should be done by developing 2-3 sessions on the topic, but also integrating it in the existing sessions that have other topics. For example, when talking about anger, consider what the gender-specific manifestations of anger are. When talking about parenting, consider the specifics of fathering, and the like.

- **Rethinking timings for each session.** The content of many sessions seems ambitious in terms of timing its roll-out. Most sessions have 3-4 exercises planned, which seems demanding in terms of time to conduct them properly, in a way that all group members can participate.
- **Incorporating check-ins as a regular part of each session.** The existing sessions are topic-focused, and structured in a way to go straight to the topic. This might limit the information about the recent experiences of participants, including potential violence or risk of it. Incorporating regular check-ins of all participants at the beginning of the sessions, in which they would describe their previous week, the situation at home, and the like, should be considered.
- **Incorporation evaluation of programme outcomes.** There should be a structured way as to how the outcomes of the programme are measured. This should include information from the survivor as well. The procedure and tools for the evaluation should be developed, or some of the existing ones incorporated (for instance, the IMPACT Toolkit developed by the WWP EN¹⁶¹).

GEORGIA

Perpetrator programmes in Georgia have been extensively growing in the country, with many important steps taking place. They exist mainly in the prison and probation sector, as well as in the community to some extent, as run by two NGOs. Legislative framework for perpetrator work has been developed. Georgia has developed a curriculum applied in prison and probation and has invested in enabling the delivery of the programmes and training of professionals. The existing NGOs provide services in the community, based on project funds. The main identified gaps are focused in the area of survivor safety-oriented work, as some programmes face challenges in ensuring partner contact and support and structured risk assessment and management, while further steps should be made to ensure the quality of perpetrator programmes country-wide.

The recommendations for improvement of the programmes in the country are as follows:

- **Ensure country-wide programmes, especially in the community.** Perpetrator programmes should be available at least in every region of the country, in the prison and probation context, but also in the community. This will require financial, human and technical investments, in all sectors, as programmes should operate in a sustainable way.
- **Establishing quality assurance mechanisms-standards, monitoring and evaluation of the service.** Georgia is one of the countries with advanced practice around perpetrator work in the region. As more programmes are being developed, it is important that mechanisms for ensuring their quality are set by the state. This includes the development of national standards for perpetrator work, which should define the core framework regardless of the sector the programmes are implemented in, and based on good practices (such as the element of partner contact and support). Standards should also define how the quality of programmes will be monitored and evaluated. It is recommended to set up a national system for evaluation of perpetrator programmes, that is based on proven evaluation methods, such as the WWP EN Impact toolkit.
- **Ensuring the implementation of the existing legislative framework.** The framework for perpetrator work exists in Georgia, however, it should be implemented countrywide. The existing measures of mandatory referral to perpetrator programmes should be imposed in all communities (and services for their implementation set up).

161 <https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/impact>

- **Further development of programmes in prison and probation.** Prison and probation have an extensive experience and structure for providing perpetrator programmes. Further development of programmes in these sectors should incorporate the following elements:
 - **Ensuring human resources for the wide roll-out of programmes.** The programmes should be available in all prison and probation services in Georgia. The existing practice in which the perpetrators are involved in programmes even if they have not been convicted of DV offences (they have been convicted of some other criminal offences) is in line with best practice, as it proactively works on the identification of violence and preventing its repetition. However, there need to be enough professionals to provide the service to all who need it, which requires stable financial investments.
 - **Improve the existing curriculum in aspects of partner contact and support, risk assessment and management and programme content.** The existing programmes applied in probation contain many elements of good quality work. The duration of the programme is adequate to support a more profound change, group work is a modality of choice, the programme has a strong gender focus and structure that ensures its implementation in a standardised way. However, several gaps have been identified.

The improvement of programmes should include partner contact and support as one of its key elements and the existing challenges in ensuring it need to be overcome. Examples for developing this kind of practice can be found in the Swedish prison and probation service that incorporates partner contact and support,¹⁶² the Caledonian model in Scotland, or England and Wales, which structures the position of the Women's Safety Worker.¹⁶³ The safety of survivors needs to be prioritised in all contexts. As described by the National Offender Management Service in England and Wales (2016, page 12):

“There should not be an assumption that, just because the offender is in custody, the risk to a partner or ex-partner in the community is low. Perpetrators of domestic abuse may still try to contact victims directly or indirectly through a third party. Coercive and controlling behaviour in particular can continue from prison. Prisoners may also use child contact in custody as a means to maintain contact and continue to abuse a partner or ex-partner... Offenders may also form relationships whilst in prison, either with a new partner in the community or with another prisoner. In either case staff should be alert to the possibility of abuse.”

The existing and well-developed practices around risk assessment and management should be strengthened through the adaptation of the existing instruments, so that they are inclusive of all important risk factors.

The existing content should be strengthened with more focus on the child perspective in DV cases and fathering, as elements of improving the motivation of perpetrators, accelerating the process of change and contributing to the well-being of children.¹⁶⁴ Content that focuses on improving self-esteem should be revised, in a way that it is not presented as a cause of violence and one of the core aspects of the work. Contribution of improving self-esteem to further unbalancing the power dynamics in a relationship should be carefully considered. The programme should be strengthened in the aspect of working on the resistance of perpetrators while challenging the defence mechanisms (with direct work on violence), and in the aspect of sexualised violence.

162 <https://rm.coe.int/grevio-inf-2018-15-eng-final/168091e686>

163 NOMS Guidance for Working with Domestic Abuse, National Offender Management Service, 2016.

164 https://www.amazon.it/Picking-Pieces-After-Domestic-Violence/dp/184905021X/ref=sr_1_3?__mk_it_IT=%C3%85M%C3%85%C5%B-D%C3%95%C3%91&crd=3H3MZPTU2KPYM&keywords=kate+iwi&qid=1654090565&s=books&sprefix=kate+iwi+%2Cstrip-books%2C64&sr=1-3

- **Further development of programmes in the community.** The existing programmes should be strengthened and country-wide application of programmes assured. It is recommended that curricula of the existing community-based programmes be externally analysed and that suggestions for their potential improvement be outlined. The existing programmes need to be strengthened in the area of risk assessment and management, through training, mentoring and development of procedures and applied instruments.
- **Development of specialised programmes for different target groups.** Specialised programmes for female perpetrators, sexual offenders and child abuse offenders need to be developed. Each category requires a specialised approach, programme, and training. An example of a programme for working with female perpetrators is “Turning Points: A Non Violence Curriculum for Women” (Pence et al., 2011)¹⁶⁵.

MOLDOVA

Moldova has many years of experience and an extensive expertise around perpetrator work and has developed standards for perpetrator programmes. Curriculum used at the country level is grounded in standards of good practice, however, its implementation in practice is unbalanced, especially when it comes to the practice of probation and the NGOs. The recommendations are as follows:

- Define clear procedures for survivor contact and support and ensure its implementation across the country. Clear procedures for collaboration between perpetrator programmes and survivor support services/professionals need to be drafted. They should include guidance for both services. It is especially important that this be implemented by all programmes, including the prison and probation context.

Examples for developing this kind of practice can be found in the Swedish prison and probation service that incorporates partner contact and support¹⁶⁶, the Caledonian model in Scotland, or England and Wales, which structures the position of the Women’s Safety Worker¹⁶⁷.

The safety of survivors needs to be prioritised in all contexts. As described in the previous section of this document, the National Offender Management Service in England and Wales highlights that risks should be assessed and managed even if the perpetrator is in prison.

- Define clear procedures for risk assessment and management. The current practice around risk assessment has not been standardised. Procedures and tools for assessing risk need to be in place, including the perspective of survivors in each case, and define how the information is exchanged between services/professionals. Programmes should apply specific risk tools. The existing tool used by the NGOs could be used by all programmes.
- Upgrading the existing curriculum. The existing curriculum is grounded in best practices and contains all key elements of the work. With the goal of further development of the programmes, the following points are recommended:
 - The curriculum should be upgraded to include additional procedures described above (on risk assessment and management and on cooperation between perpetrator programmes and survivor support services).
 - Knowledge about cyber violence, its forms, but also ways of its identification and addressing it with survivors and perpetrators should be added to the curriculum of the programme. Guidance for integrating cyber violence can be found in the manual published by the WWP EN (Baroncelli, 2020).

165 Pence, E., Connelly, L., & Scaia, M. (2011). Turning Points. A Nonviolence Curriculum for Women. Available at: <https://www.theduluthmodel.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Turning-Points-Curricula-for-Women-Who-Use-Violence-Preview.pdf>

166 <https://rm.coe.int/grevio-inf-2018-15-eng-final/168091e686>

167 NOMS Guidance for Working with Domestic Abuse, National Offender Management Service, 2016.

- The implementation of the programme in probation, which indicates that many perpetrators are shifted to shorter, non-DV specialised programmes, needs to be immediately improved.
- **Ensuring the sustainability of community-based programmes and their country-wide implementation.** Perpetrator programmes in the community should be available at least in every region in the country. In order to be able to provide sustainable service, they need stable funding by the state.
- **An external analysis of the existing programme for sexual offenders.** The existing programme implemented in Moldovan prisons should be analysed by external experts, in order to understand the alignment with standards of good practice in the field. As it is the only specialised programme for this target group in the region, it has the potential to be disseminated regionally.
- **Development of programmes for other categories of clients.** Specialised programmes for female perpetrators, child abuse offenders and perpetrators of violence in other relationships (like child-to-parent violence) need to be developed. Each category requires a specialised approach, programme and training. An example of programme for working with female perpetrators is “Turning Points: A Non Violence Curriculum for Women” (Pence et al., 2011).

UKRAINE

The invasion of Ukraine drastically changed the circumstances in the country. As we receive reports of an increase in all forms of violence, including sexual and gender-based violence, the structures that were in place to ensure safety, protection of survivors, and accountability of perpetrators have limited capacity to provide their services, or remain blocked in the occupied areas. The situation will also have severe and long-lasting consequences on society, including the aspect of gender-based violence and domestic violence. The analysis of programmes in Ukraine is thus focused on understanding the strengths and gaps around perpetrator programmes with the idea that recommendations can be implemented after the war. Bearing in mind the increased risks of DV and GBV in the country as a consequence of war, special focus will be placed on this particular context.

Perpetrator programmes in Ukraine have been developed over the past decade, resulting in the setting up of a comprehensive legislative framework and service providers in several regions of the country. Ukraine has made significant steps in the process, through establishing a legislative framework, strengthening the network of service providers, developing several programme curricula and ensuring competences of professionals. Perpetrator programmes are placed in the community and are provided by state-run agencies and NGOs. In most cases, there are no specific funds for perpetrator programmes that are implemented as add-ons to the existing social services’ activities, which leads to severe limitations (like providing services for perpetrators and survivors in the same facilities). Specialised programmes in prison and probation contexts do not exist.

The research mapped the existing good practices and challenges in the implementation of perpetrator programmes. Due to the current situation in Ukraine, the identified gaps cannot be addressed until the war has ended. The recommendations for further development of perpetrator programmes in Ukraine are as follows:

- **Further harmonisation of the legislative framework and its implementation.** The existing legislative framework should be strengthened, particularly in the aspects listed below:

- **Harmonising the duration of imposed measures** as per the Law on Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence. Currently, the measures of referring perpetrators to the programme lasting 3-12 months can be imposed. This does not match the duration of the programme and the time needed to achieve meaningful change. The duration of the measure should be 12 months in all cases.
 - **Setting up a deadline for a perpetrator to check in the programme after measure has been imposed.** There should be a deadline until which perpetrator needs to establish contact with the programme, after the measure has been imposed. This should be 7-10 days.
 - **Monitoring the implementation of the existing measures and taking steps towards their improvement when needed.** There should be a national mechanism in place that will monitor how measures of referral a perpetrator to a programme are applied in order to ensure its country-wide implementation.
 - Order № 588 of the Social Policy Ministry form 2021 should be amended to include the necessary changes in the curriculum (see the part on the development of a survivor-safety-oriented curriculum).
- **Strengthening service providers.** It should be clearly defined who can set up a perpetrator programme. When defining service providers, it is important to:
 - Understand that perpetrator programmes need to be a specialised service, with dedicated staff and resources.
 - It should be funded (additional funding is needed), and funding should include the workload of survivor support services as well. Specific funding streams should be dedicated both when service providers are state-run agencies and NGOs.
 - Service providers should be organisations (in the state-run or NGO sector), but not individual professionals.
 - Perpetrator programmes can be provided by survivor support organisations. However, they should organise this through a separate organisational unit that will have its own space (in a different place than the space for survivor support) and different staff.
 - Setting up of perpetrator programmes in the whole country.
- **Further development of survivor safety-oriented perpetrator interventions.** Ukraine has made significant steps in the development of perpetrator programmes. The existing practices should be strengthened in several aspects, to ensure safe and accountable work. This needs to include revisions of the widely-used Methodological Manual (Stepaniuk & Melnychenko, 2020), or creation of a new programme.
 - Ensuring that partner contact and support are integral parts of all programmes in Ukraine. Clear procedures on partner contact and support need to be outlined and included in all the existing curricula.
 - Setting up clear risk assessment and management procedures for all programmes in the country. Risk assessment should be evidence-based, applied as an ongoing activity of perpetrator programmes using standardised tools, and it needs to incorporate the survivors' perspective.
 - Ensuring that perpetrator programmes are gender-informed, at all levels of their implementation. It is especially important that curricula are focusing specifically on men who use IPV (while for other types of perpetrators there should be specific, specialised programmes).

- Revision of the programmes' content in a way to prioritise transforming beliefs that underlie violence, give opportunity to challenge masculine identities, denial, minimisation and victim blaming, and focus on fathering¹⁶⁸. The existing content should be strengthened through the incorporation of growing forms of violence, such as cyber violence¹⁶⁹ and sexualised violence¹⁷⁰.
 - Revision of the existing curriculum or development of a new curriculum need to incorporate all the above mentioned points.
- **Development of programmes in the prison and probation setting.** Perpetrator programmes in Ukraine are available in the community.
 - Programmes in prison and probation should also be developed. This can be done in two ways. The existing organisations in the community can be contracted to work with perpetrators in these contexts, or the programme can be implemented in the prison and probation setting, by their staff. In that case, a new or revised curriculum for men who use IPV can be adapted for the work in this context.
 - Programmes in prison and probation should also have survivor contact and support and specific risk assessment and management procedures.
 - Programmes in prison and probation should cooperate closely with programmes in the community, especially in the post-penal period (in order to facilitate the transition in the community, as it bears the risk of the repetition of violence).
 - **Development of specialised programmes for other categories of perpetrators (female perpetrators, sexual offenders, perpetrators of child-parent violence...).** Each category requires a specialised approach, programme and training. An example of a good programme for working with female perpetrators is "Turning points: A Non Violence Curriculum for Women" (Pence et al., 2011).
 - **Establishing links with addiction services.** Although alcohol and drug abuse often go hand in hand with IPV and DV, these are two separate problems that need to be treated differently. However, it is extremely important that addiction services and perpetrator programmes cooperate closely.
 - Minimum cooperation is ensuring mutual referrals (that perpetrator programmes can refer perpetrators to addiction centres, and vice versa).
 - It is recommended that addiction services screen for IPV and DV, and take appropriate actions.
 - Specialised programmes for perpetrators who use alcohol or drugs can be designed and rolled out. There should be criteria set for when they can start the perpetrator programme, depending on the stage of the addiction treatment reached. An example of specialised intervention as described can be found in the ADVANCE project in the UK that focuses on treatment approaches for men in substance abuse treatment that also use IPV¹⁷¹.

168 Examples can be found at: https://www.amazon.it/Picking-Pieces-After-Domestic-Violence/dp/184905021X/ref=sr_1_3?__mk_it_IT=%C3%85M%C3%85%C5%BD%C3%95%C3%91&crd=3H3MZPTU2KPYM&keywords=kate+iwi&qid=1654090565&s=books&sprefix=kate+iwi+%2Cstripbooks%2C64&sr=1-3

169 Guidance can be found in the WWP EN document Same Violence, New Tools: How to work with violent men on cyber violence: [How_To_Cyber_Violence.pdf](https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/fileadmin/WWP_Network/redakteure/Resources/sexual_violence_guidelines_final.pdf) (work-with-perpetrators.eu).

170 Guidance can be found in the WWP EN document Good practice in addressing sexualised violence: https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/fileadmin/WWP_Network/redakteure/Resources/sexual_violence_guidelines_final.pdf

171 ADVANCE (kcl.ac.uk)

- **Developing specialised interventions for veterans who use IPV or DV, or are at the risk of it.** As the experience from other wars and armed conflicts showed, war is always followed by high levels of sexual and gender-based violence, including IPV. These trends usually remain even when the war is over. Ukraine should prepare for this scenario as much as possible. The recommendations are as follows:
 - Ensure psychological and psychiatric support to veterans that focuses on trauma and their mental health.
 - Set up centres for veterans in the community that will support them in their re-integration into society. It is important that this is perceived as a sign of gratitude and respect for their contributions to society.
 - Develop preventive activities that focus on IPV and DV that would be rolled out in the veteran centres, for men. The goal would be to prevent these forms of violence, but also to identify those who are already committing them. It is recommended that these preventive workshops be conducted in the form of peer education (that one of the veterans with appropriate attitudes, respect, and training conducts the programme).
 - Set up a family support workers in veteran centres (or partner with an external organisation), who would have a role to reach out to families and offer them support. Issues around GBV and DV should be raised, offering appropriate support.
 - Develop and conduct training for professionals who work in the existing perpetrator programmes on trauma-informed perpetrator work.
 - Set up a programme for perpetrators of IPV for veterans. This should be a specialised programme for this category that focuses on intersections between war experiences and IPV, while also exploring social constructs that contribute to violence. These programmes need to cooperate closely with the health sector.
- **Establishing national quality assurance mechanisms for perpetrator programmes.** The state is responsible for ensuring the quality of perpetrator work and needs to develop mechanisms for its monitoring.
 - Development of national standards. Comprehensive national standards should be developed. Guidelines for their development are offered by WWP EN (2018)¹⁷².
 - Evaluation of perpetrator programmes. This aspect should be an integral part of standards and rolled out at the country level. It is recommended that all programmes in the country use the same methodology and tools, so that information received is standardised and that conclusions on the country level can be made. An example of a comprehensive tool for measuring the outcomes of perpetrator programmes is the IMPACT Toolkit, developed by the WWP EN¹⁷³.

172 WWP_EN_Guidelines_for_Standards_v3_2018.pdf (work-with-perpetrators.eu)

173 IMPACT | WWP European Network (work-with-perpetrators.eu)

APPENDIX

APPENDIX I: INTERNATIONAL GOOD PRACTICES

This section describes good practices in perpetrator work that are in line with the provisions of the Istanbul Convention and good practice standards as defined in the Guidelines for Standards of the European Network for the Work with perpetrators of Domestic Violence (WWP EN, 2018).

The practices have been selected because they are relevant for the Eastern Europe context, or because they have some innovative element (for instance a trauma-informed approach, or a focus on child protection within the perpetrator work).

The information about practices is gathered in the scope of work of the WWP EN that collects information about the existing programmes in Europe. The information collection about the programmes presented within this report has been carried out by Vall (2022)¹⁷⁴ in the course of working on activities supported by the Irish government, and by Belotic & Vall (2022) as part of the activities on the STOPP project¹⁷⁵. The methodology included desk research, questionnaires and interviews/focus groups with programme representatives.

The following programmes will be described in the context of this report:

- Perpetrator programmes in Albania
- Domestic Violence Intervention Programme-DVIP in the UK
- Centre for Abusive Men/Centro Uomini Maltrattanti (CAM); Italy
- Caledonian system in Scotland

The characteristics of these programmes will be presented so as to follow the overall structure of the report, to ensure consistency throughout the document (structures around perpetrator programmes, service providers, programme and programme curriculum). However, some sections will not be covered due to the lack of information or its irrelevance for this context.

PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES IN ALBANIA

Perpetrator programmes in Albania have been set up and run by survivor support NGOs. Well-established NGOs in the country recognised the need to support survivors through working with those who do harm, and started their programmes. There are currently 5 active programmes in the country.

As a developing country, with strong patriarchal beliefs and a system of protection of survivors that is still under development, Albania is a great example of how dedicated, pro-feminist organisations and professionals can bring changes even in challenging circumstances.

SPECIFICS:

- Survivor support NGOs that offer many services to survivors;
- One programme per municipality;
- Intensive cooperation between units that work with perpetrators and units that work with survivors;

ADDED VALUES:

- Strong experience in advocacy work (successfully pushed for some legislative amendments);
- Working in the field of primary prevention (young boys and girls, boys at risk)

174 Vall, B. (Coord.) (2021). Domestic Violence Intervention Programmes (DVIP) - An International Rapid Evidence Review. Berlin: The European Network for the Work With Perpetrators (WWP EN).

175 STOPP | WWP European Network (work-with-perpetrators.eu)

Structures around perpetrator programmes

Perpetrator programmes in Albania are legislatively grounded in the Law on Measures Against Violence in Domestic Relations, and include a referral to a perpetrator programme as one of the potential applications of the protection order. These orders can be implemented both in the public and the private sector. The law mandates participation in perpetrator programmes and further foresees penalties for failure to comply with this provision, with the exception of cases when the perpetrator cannot participate in these programmes for objective reasons.

The programmes in Albania are characterised by the dedication of professionals and efforts of organisations to improve their service and they are supported by donor funds. However, there are no countrywide initiatives supported by the government that would ensure a broad availability of the programmes and their sustainable operation. Further delivery of perpetrator programmes will be regulated by the standards of perpetrator work, drafted at the initiative of the NGO sector. These standards, which are currently in the process of adoption, present an important step in the future development of programmes at the national level which should be strengthened by specific operational protocols.

Service provider characteristics, staff and staff training

Programmes started through the initiatives of women support services, which indicated that working with survivors alone was not enough in combating domestic violence. Initiatives started with awareness-raising campaigns addressing community and institutions, including workshops and trainings in schools, courts, the police and prisons, and followed by active lobbying activities. Following that, the Counselling Centre for Women and Girls in Tirana established the Counselling Helpline for Men and Boys (2012-2013). One year later, Woman to Woman NGO in Shkodra started a perpetrator programme and established the Office for Men and Boys-ZDB. These are the two leading organisations in the country providing perpetrator programmes, which were followed by a few other organisations in the years that followed.

Perpetrator programmes in Albania are provided by the NGOs and one municipality and they are placed in the biggest cities in the country.

TABLE 21: ORGANISATIONS THAT PROVIDE PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES IN ALBANIA

ORGANISATION	TYPE	CITY
Woman to Woman (Gruaja tek Gruaja) - Office for Men and Boys (Zyra per djem dhe burra-ZDB)	NGO	Shkodra
Counselling Helpline for Men and Boys-CLMB	NGO	Tirana
Vatra	NGO	Vlora
Another Vision (Tjeter Vision)	NGO	Elbasan
Municipality of Pogradec	State-run	Pogradec

The Tirana Counselling Helpline for Men and Boys offers counselling to perpetrators, as well as prevention and educational activities to help create a community in which violence is not tolerated. This organisation deals with violence prevention, including young boys in schools and in the local community.

Woman to Woman Shkodra works in the field of protection of human rights, focusing on the rights of women and girls. In 2014, WtW established the Office for Men and Boys (ZDB) to contribute to the safety of survivors and reduction of domestic violence, offering specialised services to perpetrators.

The Vatra Psycho-Social Centre in Vlora provides services and expertise for the prevention and protection of survivors of trafficking and survivors of gender-based violence. The organisation incorporated perpetrator work from 2010, however, structured work with perpetrators started in 2019, followed by trainings and the appointment of dedicated staff (one social worker).

Another Vision was established in 2002 and it offers various social services in the local community in Elbasan, including survivor support services and perpetrator work. The municipality of Pogradec organised a perpetrator programme as one of the social services they offer in the community. The programme is run by one trained professional, as a pilot initiative. This is a unique practice in the country, delivered through the enthusiasm and efforts of one hired professional.

Programme and programme curriculum

All programmes in Albania provide individual work with perpetrators of violence, while all the engaged professionals are men. This is explained by a strong patriarchal beliefs system in the country and experiences that men will have severe resistances to engage in groups (exposing themselves and sharing with others), as well as with women professionals.

Two organisations (WtW and CLMB) initiated changes in the practice and started group work in 2021, which is run by a male-female co-facilitation team. This is considered as a very good practice that should be further strengthened and applied countrywide. However, the group programme is rather short and comprises only 12 group sessions. The content of the group programme was not analysed. Perpetrator programmes in Albania use a multi-theoretical approach, mainly based on cognitive behavioural therapy/social training and a psychoeducational approach. The gender-informed perspective of the work should be strengthened.

The Domestic Violence Intervention Programme (DVIP), UK

The Domestic Violence Intervention Programme (DVIP)¹⁷⁶ is a community-based integrated intervention approach which aims to increase the safety of women and children, empower women to make safer choices, help perpetrators stop their violent and controlling behaviour, provide increased referral options to child protection services and reduce repeat victimisation.

SPECIFICS:

- NGO
- Accredited within the national accreditation system in the UK
- Close cooperation with child protection services
- Has integrated survivor support service

ADDED VALUES:

- regular external supervision for staff

176 <https://dvip.org/>

Structures around perpetrator programme

Coordinated community response

The DVIP has strong focus on multi-agency work. They cooperate with children's services, family courts (CAFCAS) and women's support organisations, such as "violence against women and girls (VAWG)". DVIP works in different areas of London, and, depending on the areas in which they are located, they are more or less connected with some of these services. For example, in West London, the Angelou Network, of which they are members, consists mainly of survivor support services, has a very strong presence and delivers a coordinated community response.

Therefore, depending on the areas and the contracts/commissioning, there may be a different level of embedding in the local networks, but always a minimum of quarterly meetings with commissioners and engagement with the local multi-agency teams. Cooperation with children's services will depend on the contracts, which are often commissioned by children's services in a specific area. When no contract is in place, children's services frequently purchase the service for one particular perpetrator and his victims (it is very relevant that the service for the victim is also covered). Then, communication and cooperation take place through collaboration with the social worker in charge of that case. When they have a contract with the local authority, they are embedded in the system – co-located in their services, sitting alongside social workers, sharing trainings and capacity building actions, etc.

Quality assurance and evaluation

As accredited organisation, the DVIP needs to comply with national standards in the UK,¹⁷⁷ which is a good example of ensuring quality of perpetrator work across the country.

In order to assess the programme outcome, they use some T-forms for assessing attitudinal change. These forms are used with the men in the programme and their (ex-) partners. They are slightly different and are used at different points of time; for men, they are used at the beginning (session 1; T1), in the middle (session 12; T2) and at the end of the programme (session 26; T3). For the (ex-) partners, they are used at the beginning and the end of the men's engagement with the programme and at the six-month follow-up.

Some of the research conducted about this programme shows positive outcomes for women partners of perpetrators, with 70% reporting no further violence since their partners involvement with DVIP and the remainder reporting less severe or less frequent violence. 65% reported feeling safer or much safer and 93% reported an improvement in their quality of life.

Service provider characteristics, staff and staff training

DVIP is an NGO that works in the community.

Across all teams, the service works with 1,500 men, women and children each year and takes referrals from approximately 30 London boroughs and eight neighbouring communities. The first referral is always done for the perpetrator, and then they contact the (ex-) partner. Most men come referred either from children's services (they are mostly still in the relationship) and CAFCAS (after separation); a few men come voluntarily to the programme (around 20%).

Staff are recruited with a reasonable level of training and experience in domestic abuse and group work (common backgrounds of staff are probation services, substance misuse services, victim support, counselling and social work) and undergo an onboarding process upon joining, which includes mandatory training for everyone in the organisation as well as specific domestic abuse intervention training. In the first few weeks upon starting, new staff members undergo intense on-the-job training, shadowing other colleagues' assessment sessions, individual sessions and group sessions. The

177 Respect Standard | Respect.

new staff members are then shadowed in their first few sessions until confident in delivering the programme independently.

In terms of continuous training, all staff undergo clinical supervision led by an external qualified clinical supervisor, without the presence of managers; this happens once a month and is just for practitioners' professional development. Then, there are intervention management sessions where an experienced staff member reviews a video recording of a group session (all sessions are recorded), and using a form that contains the specific dimensions to be observed, they give feedback to the practitioners about their performance.

Programme and curriculum for work with the perpetrators

Survivor contact and support and cooperation with survivor support services

The programme defines itself as having a partner-centred approach in which the success of the intervention is connected to the partners' feelings of safety. There is a strong feeling that serving women is at the core of the programme work. Therefore, the women's support services they offer, which are linked to the perpetrator programme, are not only about information sharing, risk assessment, or checking the validity of a perpetrator's account of his violence or abuse, but also about being a woman-focused intervention service, supporting a victim of violence and abuse as she is empowered to make safer choices for herself.

Contact with (ex-) partners happens at several different moments during and after the men's programme:

1. The first contact with the (ex-) partner happens at the moment of referral acceptance, at which time a senior women's worker contacts her to explain what the programme is, what it does and the type of support that will be offered to her. The (ex-) partners are proactively contacted by the programme.
2. Once the initial intake assessment of the male participant is completed, the (ex-) partner is contacted again about the outcome of the assessment. At this stage, the programme offers her support if she wants. If she asks for further help, the programme can refer her to other services for any needs that she might have.
3. When the programme begins, she is allocated a person of reference from the women support service,¹⁷⁸ which will be the same person throughout the programme. This person of reference will keep her informed about risk-related aspects or programme follow-up issues (for example, if he misses sessions, discloses high-risk information during sessions, etc.). The woman is given information about what his attendance, completion or failure to complete the programme might mean for her. Moreover, her hopes and fears are also discussed in order to promote realistic expectations about his possibility to change. The level of relationship that the woman will establish with the programme support service will depend on each woman's needs and will. They could meet weekly, they could be referred to somewhere else (mental health services or advocacy services), or they could participate in the women's group that is offered in the programme. The women's group is a 10-week group that focuses on topics related to women's vulnerability and on understanding domestic violence. This group is open to any women whose partner or ex-partner is enrolled in the men's group.
4. After the men complete the programme, their (ex-) partners get additional support for four months (the experience of the programme is that some women engage more once the programme is finished than while it is ongoing). Therefore, in total, women receive support for a longer period of time than men; women have the possibility of a 10-month intervention whereas the men's programme lasts six months (see section on programme roll-out).

¹⁷⁸ Women only speak with women support service (WSS) workers and perpetrators only speak with violence prevention practitioners (VPP). The practitioners then share information as needed and a manager overseeing both can also get involved. Women do not usually speak with VPPs directly.

In case the woman prefers not to be contacted by the programme regularly, the programme would only contact her in case of a high-risk situation.

The programme has an integrated women's service. Within this context, they hold monthly case-management meetings in which the perpetrator programme worker and the women's support service worker review the intervention process. In these meetings, there is a strong focus on the situation of the children, together with an assessment and management of the risk and a general programme follow-up.

Professionals from both services are both in charge of the same couple, so they can discuss the case from both perspectives. Sometimes the men have more than one woman identified as a victim (previous partners with whom they might share children, current partners, etc.). In these cases, each woman has a different support worker in order to prevent any possible risks.

Apart from this integrated support service in which they work with women whose partners or ex-partners are referred to the programme, in some areas they also work with external victim support services instead of their own. This is due to local commissioning requirements. The DVIP does not serve women unless their (ex-) partner is in their programme, so they do not extend into the area of work of women's support services.

Risk assessment and management

Risk is initially assessed during the assessment phase based on the referral information and the assessment interview and formulated into static risks, dynamic risks, and particular issues to address during the programme. Should there be certain risks, such as mental health crises or untreated substance misuse, the practitioner will suggest to the perpetrator to address those prior to engaging with the programme.

The Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment and 'Honour'-based violence Risk Indicator Checklist (DASH RIC) mirror version for use with perpetrators is used occasionally, in particular with family court referrals. Throughout the attendance of the programme, facilitators continue addressing and assessing risk oscillations, communicating with the women's support staff about risks, and also incorporating risk identified through work with the victims discretely into the programme sessions.

At midway and completion, the original static and dynamic risks (and the mirror DASH/RIC when used) are reviewed, new risks are added and any changes observed are commented on. Should there be a commissioned completion report, it will be the focus of the reporting.

When cases are in court proceedings at point of referral, or particularly high risk, the service recommends a formal robust specialist risk assessment, which can be separately commissioned from the Family Courts Team, as well as a final formal risk assessment after the completion of the programme. If needed, they constitute specialist court reports and can be presented in court.

Programme structure, approach and content

DVIP focuses on a combination of social learning theories, CBT, and humanistic approach, with strong roots in the ecological model. They also focus on the power and control theory of domestic abuse, with a strong feminist approach.

Some of the main topics include understanding the model of power and control underlying an abusive relationship (originated from Duluth), partner blame and minimisation, effects on women, effects on children, effects on parenting, conflict resolution, gender and masculinity, sexual respect and sexual violence, emotional abuse, and accountability, with also a spotlight on women's anger, jealousy, end of a relationship and post-separation abuse, and being child centred, in addition to specific sessions to break down and discuss previous acts of violence (using icebergs, violence logs, re-enactment, etc.).

The group work with perpetrators aims at challenging men’s attitudes and behaviours within a peer setting – challenging stereotypes, myths and peer approval and support for negative attitudes and violence towards women.

At the individual level, the programme works to reduce the perpetrators’ propensity to violence by directly addressing the individual factors that contribute to their attitudes and violent behaviour, such as childhood exposure to violence in the home, cognitive distortions and/or stimulus abuse.

The gender approach is an integral part of each session and is included throughout the programme.

The full programme has a duration of six months, which includes 26 sessions of 2.5 hours each¹⁷⁹. Sessions are led by male and female facilitators and include between 10 and 12 men. Groups meet weekly with rolling admission and include a mix of referrals from different agencies. Groups with rolling admission work better than closed groups, especially for men who are reluctant at the beginning and get the benefit from sharing the space with more motivated men.

The sessions are semi-structured. They start with a check-in with the men, then they focus on the topic of discussion for that day. Next, there is a small-group work and/or role-plays, and it finishes with a check out.

Centro Uomini Maltrattanti (CAM), Italy

Centro Uomini Maltrattanti - CAM (Centre for men who abuse) is an NGO founded in Florence in 2009 as an experimental project, promoted by the Artemisia Association (Women’s support service and refuge) and the local health unit. CAM was the first centre in Italy that has dealt with men who have used violent behaviours in relationships. Since 2014, four other offices have been opened: in Ferrara, Northern Sardinia, Rome and Cremona.

SPECIFICS:

- NGO
- Working in the community and within prisons
- Follows national standards for the work

ADDED VALUES:

- having a therapeutical group that follows regular perpetrator programmes that last from 6 months to 2 years, for fostering longer-term effects and profound change
- having specific programmes for different types of clients (for instance, fathers who use violence)
- specific programme for sexual offenders
- comprehensive evaluation of the programme

Structures around perpetrator programme

Coordinated community response

In 2014, CAM expanded very rapidly thanks to the creation of local branches in different areas. It currently has offices in Ferrara, Cremona and North Sardinia. In the Florence area, the Centre was part of the working group of the Prosecutor General for good practices in the field of gender-related violence. The Centre held periodic meeting sessions with general practitioners and held an active discussion with paediatricians in order to promote multidisciplinary awareness-raising initiatives. To this end, the Centre collaborates with the Professional Association of Psychologists of Tuscany to coordinate a working group on gender-related health. Working in a network is of paramount importance for the Centre and is one of their founding pillars. Therefore, they created a protocol of collaboration with

the Probation Service (UEPE, Ufficio di Esecuzione Penale Esterna) to carry out activities with prisoners serving sentences as well as during their reintegration into society. In 2014, CAM, the local health authority (ASL) of Florence and the Tuscany Regional Administration, in collaboration with the Florence city council, worked on a proposal to implement a new integration system between the public and the private services, which led to the project *“Contrasto alla violenza alle donne, accoglienza, situazioni di maltrattamento, abuso minori ed attenzione agli uomini autori di violenza anche con azioni di formazione”* (Tackling violence against women, reception, situations of abuse, child abuse and attention to male perpetrators of violence with training activities).

CAM also collaborates with the “Codice Rosa” network (an emergency services for female victims of violence) and is part of the pact of understanding of the Province of Pistoia. CAM participates in the multidimensional teams that are part of the Codice Rosa Network. The teams are made up of key local players in the fight against violence. The goal of the teams is the development of good practices at the network level (Region, Health Services and territorial Associations) of intervention in cases of domestic violence.

CAM is the founding member of the National Network Relive and of the European Network of the Work with Perpetrators (WWP EN).

Quality assurance and evaluation

In Italy, national standards for perpetrator work have been developed by Relive, which is a national network of perpetrator programmes.¹⁸⁰ CAM follows those standards.

CAM follows a very comprehensive outcome measurement procedure, with the use of the Impact Outcome Monitoring Toolkit.¹⁸¹ They analyse both the final outcome and the programme process by collecting information at different points in time. Moreover, they obtain information from several different outcome aspects other than behaviour change. Their results show that at the end of the programme, there is a decrease in the use and impact of violent behaviours on the (ex-) partners, from the perspective of both the men in the programme and their (ex-) partners. Moreover, the level of fear of the (ex-) partner decreases and her level of well-being increases. Furthermore, the children’s situation improves by the end of the programme. Finally, the motivation of the men towards the programme is also assessed throughout the programme.

The outcome analysis uses a variety of dimensions of outcome, including behaviour change, impact of this behaviour, (ex-) partner’s well-being and safety, men’s motivation towards the programme, men’s attitudes towards violence, children’s well-being, etc. Moreover, these outcomes are analysed throughout the programme, gathering information on the process of change. Finally, the tools used to analyse outcomes are the same for the men and their (ex-) partners, so their answers are directly comparable. They do not use a control or comparison group in their outcome assessment (they do, nonetheless, gather data on participants who drop out of the programme).

180 <https://www.associazionerelive.it/joomla/images/LineeGuidaRelivea.pdf>

181 IMPACT | WWP European Network (work-with-perpetrators.eu).

Service provider characteristics

CAM is an NGO that provides perpetrator programmes in the community and within the prison system. CAM provides training for their facilitators, which takes nine months and includes information on gender-based violence, gender stereotypes and working with perpetrators. It is recommended that facilitators who work with men have previous experience working with survivors and have a personal path and personal values connected to gender equality. All CAM staff receive regular and continuous training (for example, the previous training included topics were related to online violence, programme for sexual offenders, the use of expressive techniques, etc.). Finally, CAM regularly participates in funded projects through which the staff acquire new competences and skills. CAM staff also have regular team supervision meetings (monthly/bimonthly).

Programme and curriculum for work with the perpetrators

Survivor contact and support and cooperation with survivor support services

At CAM, the (ex-) partners are contacted at the beginning, halfway and at the end of the man's journey through the programme. The process starts with the man having an initial interview with a CAM staff member. In this meeting, sharing the contact details of his partner is a mandatory condition to start the programme.

The (ex-) partner is then contacted by a staff member who works primarily with partner contact and support and does not work with perpetrators. The partner is contacted at pre-established moments (beginning, middle and end of the programme), as well as if a high-risk situation develops during the programme or if the man drops out. Reaching out to the partners is part of a functional strategy complementary to the risk assessment. It helps service providers understand the men's motivation to attend the programme (or their attempt to exploit it) and define the perpetrator's accountability, as victims often tend to blame themselves for the violent behaviours.

The objectives of the partner contact are the following in each stage:

First contact with the (ex-) partner:

- Define violence and put it into context (contrasted with generic couple conflict issues);
- Inform the partner that the man has started the programme and define the criteria for the man's change;
- Explain to her the existing and available support services in the area and suggest that she get in contact with them;
- Collect information about the relationship, the history of violence, her experiences, etc.;
- Discuss her expectations for the programme and behavioural changes in her partner.

Midway contact with the (ex-) partner:

- Gather information about any changes in the relationship, including whether there has been any recidivism, and monitor possible manipulation attempts by the male partner;
- Collect suggestions on topics to work on;
- Determine if she accessed support service;
- Monitor the man's progress and discuss her expectations for the changes the man has gone through.

Contact with the (ex-) partner at the end of the programme:

- Inform her that the man is going to end the programme (or that he has dropped out);
- Solicit her feedback about the situation;
- Give her some feedback on the process that the men have gone through.

The staff member working with perpetrators and the one working with victims have regular monthly meetings to discuss the cases. There are continuous exchanges between these two colleagues, which are especially relevant at the beginning, middle and end of the programme after the partner contact has been made. In addition, they have other discussions and meetings whenever necessary, especially a risk situation has been detected (for example, if the man explains during the psychoeducational group that there have been violent episodes).

In terms of cooperating with survivor support services, there are some challenges in the region. Despite this, within the context of an experimental project, some cooperation started in the context that the contact with the partner was made by and through the victim service provider. The project also included meetings with the staff of each service in which they discussed the cases. This was a valued experience where the viewpoints of both service providers could benefit from the case management process. Efforts are being made to maintain this cooperation once the project has finished.

In relation to adding the children's perspective, CAM includes topics related to fathering in their programmes. Moreover, CAM is in the process of finishing their Child Protection Policy, and all staff have received training on child abuse. Finally, all cases are discussed with a special focus on children.

Risk assessment and management

Risk assessment and management is carried out by the perpetrator service provider together with the survivor service provider. The information collected about dynamic and static risk factors is assessed and discussed together with both staff members. SARA served as a guideline for the risk-assessment checklist they have created. If a high-risk situation is detected during the initial interview with the perpetrator, ODARA is administered and a safety plan is also implemented: the services working on domestic violence within the territory are activated, and if it is considered necessary, they report to the police. For the woman, on the other hand, during the interview, the risk factors indicated in the literature are identified. If a high-risk assessment is made, a safety plan is activated. The same procedure is carried out each time the partner is contacted; the risk factors are thus detected with the support of a checklist during the interview.

Programme structure, approach and content

The model is based on the ecological model and strongly relies on WWP EN standards.

A gender approach is integrated throughout the programme, and men are considered solely accountable for their violence. Gender dynamics between partners and the management of power and control are crucial parts of the programme. Within the programme, gender stereotypes and beliefs are revisited, for example using videos to reflect with the men.

The motivation of the men towards the programme is critical. This is assessed during the individual phase at the beginning of the programme and is the minimum criterion to start the programme. However, this motivation is often external; a very small number of men demonstrate internal motivation. To assess this, the Prochaska and DiClemente stages of change model is followed.

The psychoeducational programme lasts for at least 36 two-hour sessions (around nine months) held on a weekly basis. Sessions are co-led by a male and a female facilitator. Following that programme, if the men have acquired a high level of responsibility, motivation towards the programme and self-ob-

ervation skills, they move to the follow-up/therapeutic group, which might take up to two years. Within the psychoeducational group, each session features a topic accompanied by practical and written exercises to be done in groups. The psycho-educational group deals with the following topics: definition of violence and its forms, criminal offences related to abuse, the social and cultural aspects of violence, the continuum of controlling behaviours, time out, the diary of opinions, elements of emotional literacy, communication strategies (assertive, passive, aggressive), the effects and impact of violence on women and children, parenting styles and areas for improvement in parenting, the defences against the assumption of responsibility (minimisation, victim denial and blame), short and long term solutions, relationships and authenticity, manipulation and lies, maintaining positive sexual relationships and alcohol and drugs and their correlation with violence.

CAM services are structured as follows:

- a. Advice and initial telephone reception.
- b. Individual assessment interviews (3 to 5 initial interviews).
Within these interviews, a first survey on violence, risk assessment, assessment of motivation are carried out. The (ex-) partner is also contacted.
- c. Meetings in a structured psychoeducational group.
36 sessions are conducted that address a series of predetermined topics with the aim of stopping men's violence and increasing the level of awareness of men's own behaviours. At the end of the programme, it is decided whether the man should repeat this type of group or move to the follow-up/therapeutic semi-structured groups.
- d. Semi-structured groups (follow-up/therapeutic group)

At the end of one or more cycles of the structured psychoeducational group, men are invited to continue their progress in a semi-structured group, which is less structured and more flexible, while maintaining the focus on violence. The duration of the psychoeducational group is around nine months; the follow-up/therapeutic group can take up to two years (depending on the man).

The groups are led by two facilitators, a man and a woman, trained specifically on issues of domestic violence. Participants join groups on a rolling basis, with 8-12 participants in each, and the group requires a commitment of at least six months.

Added values - Specific programmes tailored for different types of clients

The CAM programme is tailored to different "profiles" of men who use violence. CAM provides the following groups:

1. Psychoeducational group for gender-based violence perpetrators: these men present from low to high motivation and can attend the group either on a voluntary or mandated basis.
2. Group on the therapeutic model: at the end of the psychoeducational group, the facilitators and the man decide whether to repeat the psycho-educational group, conclude or move on to the therapeutic group. The therapeutic group has no pre-determined sessions but remains focused on the relationship, violence and the consequences of this on women and children. There is a stronger focus on psychological violence, as physical violence tends to be interrupted at this stage of the process.
3. Group for sexual offenders: the participants in this group are mandated to attend.
4. Group for men who deny violence: the men in this group are mandated from the UEPE services and/or the Juvenile Court. This group presents highly complex situations in which there is a minimum assumption of responsibility and strong minimisation and denial. The group meets every week for 2 hours. It does not have a pre-determined end and is led by

the staff member who carries out interviews and group sessions in prison contexts, as well as by a psychiatrist.

5. Group on the topic of conscious fatherhood and improving parenting skills: this group may include men who have already participated in one of the previous groups described above or those who attend this group exclusively. This programme entails 10 monthly meetings, each lasting three hours, led by a female and a male facilitator.
6. Groups in prisons: They are held both with sexual offenders and perpetrators of gender-based violence.

Resources for more information:

Pauncz, A. (2019). *Implementation of the Istanbul Convention in Italy Shadow Report on Perpetrator Programmes.* Firenze: Relive.

Amazzoni, S., Baroncelli, L., Bisciglia, R., Cutini, S., De Maglie, M., Pauncz, A., Levell, J., Harvey, O., Healy, J., Cole, T., Pritchard, C. (2021). Country Report: Italy. Other Side of the Story: Perpetrators in Change. (REC-RDAP-GBV-AG-2019 - 881684).

Centro di Ascolto Uomini Maltrattanti (CAM). Impact Report. Valutazione dell'efficacia dei Programmi per uomini autori di violenza.

The Caledonian System, Scotland

The Caledonian System is an integrated approach to addressing domestic abuse. It combines a court-ordered programme for men, aimed at changing their behaviour, with support services for women and children.

The Caledonian System was developed in 2007, drawing on the experience of Scottish programmes that had been delivering services since 1990. The Caledonian Men's Programme was accredited by the Scottish Accreditation Panel for Offender Programmes in August 2009. The Caledonian System is currently operating in 19 out of 32 Scottish local authorities, covering 75% of the population.

SPECIFICS:

- National programme, rolled out almost country wide
- Placed within the probation
- Long programme (2 years)

ADDED VALUES:

- Women programme and Child programme as integral part of the Caledonian model
- Trauma-informed approach
- Comprehensive evaluation

Structures around perpetrator programme

Coordinated community response

The Caledonian System is part of a coordinated community response that includes:

- A two-year intervention programme with men.
- A women's service, which provides safety planning, information, advice and emotional support to women partners and ex-partners of men referred to the men's programme. In contrast with the men's programme, the women's service is voluntary; women are not obliged to accept the support they are offered.
- A children's service, which aims to ensure that the needs of children (whose father, or mother's (ex) partner, is in the men's programme) are met and their rights upheld. It is supported by the Caledonian children's staff, who do not necessarily work with children directly but rather ensure their rights and needs are being considered both within the Caledonian System and by wider services.
- The development of interagency protocols coupled with training are designed to maximise women's and children's safety and reduce the likelihood of men's re-offending. These protocols are agreed locally with all agencies involved including the use of Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPAs). The National Strategy for the Management of Offenders invokes sections 10 and 11 of the Management of Offenders etc. (Scotland) Act, 2005, which introduce a statutory function for the police, local authorities and the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) to establish joint arrangements to assess and manage the risk posed by sexual and violent offenders.

The whole system is based on a risk- and needs-assessment and a management approach which integrates the services designed to deal with the various risks and needs associated with the possible harm to women and children. The man's risk of future domestic abuse is the focus of the men's programme and supervision. The women's and children's physical safety and psychological well-being are the focus of the women's and children's services, in liaison with social work, other services and the voluntary sector. Intra- and inter-agency protocols are designed, among other things, to manage service-generated risks.

Funding

Although sustainable financing is provided by the government for the men's programme (Department of Community Justice) and women's and children's services (Violence against Women fund of the Scottish Government), until now funding has not been sufficient to enable complete national roll-out. The Government has now committed to a final roll-out.

Quality assurance and evaluation

The Caledonian System has been evaluated quite systematically following a mixed-methods approach (including quantitative data, such as: level of attrition, changes in risk, etc. and qualitative data, such as: perception of the delivery and impact of the Caledonian System). The main sources of information considered for evaluation were participants in the men's programme, users of the women's service, and staff involved in delivering the Caledonian System, plus stakeholders from other services connected to the Caledonian System. Therefore, a varied number of sources of information were used.

Service provider characteristics, staff and staff training

The men's programme is delivered by case managers (who deliver the one-to-one sessions and manage individual men throughout their time in the programme) and group workers (who deliver the group work stage).

All Caledonian workers have to undergo a three-day online training course (or a two-day face-to-face course) about the general approach and system functioning.

Moreover, all men's support staff have to complete a two-day SARA training (three days if online), but other staff (women's and children's staff) are encouraged to do it as well.

Men's support staff who will be case managers have to undergo a four-day training course. Finally, those who will deliver the group work take a five-day training course. Women's staff take a three-day course and the children's staff take a two-day course.

Continuous training is provided, for example, through feedback to staff by session recordings reviewed by managers. This is also a way to maintain programme integrity.

Programme and curriculum for work with the perpetrators

Survivor contact and support and cooperation with survivor support services

The Caledonian System simultaneously reduces harm, assists men to change their abusive behaviour, addresses women's vulnerabilities, and attends to the external factors which influence all of these. This cannot be done effectively without the integration of men's and women's services. The women's and men's service providers work together to create a coherent and consistent strategy to reduce men's offending and increase the safety of women and children. In this system, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

The scope of work of each service (men's programme, women's service, and children's service) is carefully planned, as is their cooperation. This model is unique, having in mind that it contains guidelines and resources focusing exclusively on children, who are often overlooked in the process of providing victim support.

Services for women and children

While the range of activities may differ across agencies (for example, Caledonian System support, refuge, advocacy, children's services), services for women and children tend to share the following features:

- Providing information about adult and child service users' rights, opinions and experiences.
- Safety planning: which should include both strategies to reduce immediate risk and longer-term measures to escape violence as well as risk reduction strategies such as applying for legal orders.
- Developing skills to enhance self-efficacy.
- Offering encouragement, empathy and respect: empowering women through supporting them to recognise their skills and strengths.
- Support and supportive counselling.
- Increasing access to community resources and opportunities.
- Increasing social support and community connections.
- Community and systems change work: Women's and children's safety and wellbeing is a community issue, and, therefore, staff need to engage with communities in a variety of ways to raise awareness of domestic abuse, hold abusers to account for their behaviour and promote justice and equality of opportunity.

In a system like this, it is of special relevance to consider the service-generated risks. The Caledonian System does so by developing effective protocols for multi-agency cooperation. The integration of these services occurs on many levels: (i) the funding of the different services all comes from the

Scottish Government; (ii) the staff are managed through the same line management structure; (iii) in most areas, women's support staff share an office space with men's support staff; (vi) men's and women's support staff meet formally and regularly to discuss all the families they are working with; (v) information given by women informs the work with men based on very clear procedures related to confidentiality and safety. The WSS provides safety-planning, support and advocacy services to women subjected to violence. Moreover, it provides feedback to women on men's attendance or absence and any risk-related information about the men that it is judged necessary for the women to know. The main focus of the work with women focusses on their access to justice, autonomy, rehabilitation/recovery and safety.

The central structure that maintains the integration are the client liaison meetings (CLM); Caledonian staff meet once every four weeks to exchange information among the staff working with men, the staff working with women, and the staff working with children. Both the men and women know about this principle of cooperation and integration, although the man does not know if the woman has chosen to engage in the service.

Procedure for partner support

The (ex-) partner is referred to the service when the man is convicted in court. Information on how to contact her is shared by the police under an information-sharing agreement between the Caledonian System and the police. This agreement specifies how the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) allows for the sharing of the contact details of the (ex-) partner. The process is as follows: the court informs the Caledonian team about the man and sends the complaint (the offence for which the man has been convicted), which usually names the victim. The Caledonian team contacts the police to confirm her contact details, and they also get any further needed information. According to the information-sharing protocol with the police, the information to be given about the women is limited to name, address and phone number; no additional information is permitted to be shared. When the Caledonian team contacts the woman, they inform her that she will have the opportunity to influence the report that the Caledonian team will share with the courts. Female partners usually want to collaborate and give their perspective. The Caledonian team reassures her that this information will never be shared with the man or the judge (the Caledonian team never uses information that comes directly from her). Her decision to meet with the Caledonian team or access any available support services is entirely voluntary.

The first meeting with the woman is normally held with both the man's support staff and a women's support staff member. If the man is required by court to complete the programme, his support staff will offer to meet the woman at regular intervals, even if she has said that she does not want to actively engage with the support service.

Children support

There is close cooperation between the Caledonian staff and children's social services as well as education and health services. These services are informed when children are present in the house during any police domestic abuse call-outs. There are local protocols and processes for this information to be shared with the Caledonian System.

When a child is on the child protection register and a lead professional has been appointed, a child's plan is developed. Relevant professionals and family members are involved as the 'core group' in the process of 'getting it right' for those children. Men who have perpetrated domestic abuse may be involved, and it is common for children's plans to include an expectation that men undertake the men's programme. Women's support staff help women to engage with the child's plan; they also aim to recognise and minimise any risks to child protection generated by the Caledonian System programme.

Risk assessment and management

In the Caledonian System, the SARA version 3 is used to assess risk. This version 3 has been chosen because it differs from version 2 in that there is much more emphasis on formulation and scenario planning; for example, it includes analysis of: the nature of abusive behaviour, factors relating to the perpetrator, and a new section on women's vulnerabilities. SARA version 3 also includes scenario planning, so it can be planned which risks could unfold in certain situations. This scenario planning allows for planning for risk management; moreover, it also helps to devise what kind of intervention would be most valuable for each specific case.

After the man is referred (once he has been found guilty in court), the Caledonian staff member has to write an assessment on the man (in terms of suitability for the programme and level of risk) within the next 4-6 weeks. For this assessment, the SARA version 3 is used, and a meeting with the (ex-) partner is proposed, which is voluntary. Therefore, SARA is administered before the man is sentenced and is re-administered every few months depending on the risk level (but at least every three months). On a regular basis, SARA is applied before the man begins group sessions and when he completes them.

Therefore, risk is evaluated with SARA version 3 utilising answers from the men and the (ex-) partners. Moreover, the information shared by the police and the child protection services also help to develop this risk assessment.

Staff from the women's and men's services will review the SARA together and make a joint risk assessment and management plan.

Programme and programme curriculum

The Caledonian System has its origins in various Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programmes developed in Scotland in the 1980s and 1990s, including CHANGE, based in Central Region, and the Lothian DVPP.

Key principles:

- A 'systems approach': the combination of services for men, women and children. Working together with the whole family is central to the Caledonian System's ultimate aim of reducing the risk of harm to women and children. The systems approach also encompasses being embedded in a wider system of multi-agency working as a pre-requisite for successful intervention.
- Working towards 'good lives': in working with men, the focus is not only on their deficits, but also on their personal goals for a 'good life' and how they could achieve these, as a means of motivating them towards positive change.
- An 'ecological model' of behaviour: this model influences how the programme works with men - for example, examining social stereotypes about gender roles as well as exploring the specific factors in individual men's lives that may have contributed to their propensity to abuse.

The Caledonian System is supported by a series of detailed manuals, the most detailed and structured being the men's programme. The men's programme manual includes detailed plans for each of 14 pre-group activities and for 22 group work sessions covering five themed modules (responsibility for and to self, responsibility within relationships, sexual respect, men and women, and children and fathering). The men's programme is grounded in pro-feminist sociological theory and informed by the good lives model, social-learning theory, cognitive behavioural psychology and the 'risk, needs and responsibility' approach to programmed interventions. It is trauma-sensitive. It incorporates intervention techniques from cognitive-behavioural therapy, including personal construct theory, motivational interviewing, and adult learning.

Drawing on developments over the past 15 years, the Caledonian System takes a trauma-informed approach. Although not directly providing specific trauma services, its services are trauma-informed when working with men, women and children. This is most relevant in the women's service where service users have, by definition, experienced trauma. A significant minority of the men on the programme have experienced 'complex' trauma.

The Caledonian System approaches trauma with an understanding that manifestations of trauma vary between individuals and are often gendered. In the Caledonian trauma-informed service, it is important to be aware that many responses that may seem ineffective and unhealthy in the present represent adaptive responses to past traumatic experiences. Moreover, interventions should focus on strengthening a sense of autonomy, while being aware that (healthy and safe) relationships are crucial to healing trauma, and so the programme should establish a safe physical and emotional environment and emphasise the idea that recovery is possible for everyone. The one-to-one sessions of the men's programme are the most suitable moments to work with trauma and build safety. For example, in those sessions, self-calming exercises are taught (every group-work session starts with these exercises), which are especially helpful for traumatised men. In group work there is always a balance among activities that may evoke feelings of shame (and which are important components of the work), those designed to promote empathy and accountability, and the activities to avoid re-traumatisation.

The understanding of the impact of trauma and attachment theory are crucial to all elements of the Caledonian System in the services provided for women, children and men. When working with children, although not delivering a structured specialist trauma service, this understanding is crucial. In this context, play is used as a resource to support children to articulate their story, thoughts and feelings; therefore, the children's staff spend roughly half their time in direct trauma sensitive work with children or their fathers.

Programme roll-out

Participation in the men's programme is mandatory; men are referred by court order if they have been convicted of offences involving domestic abuse and are assessed as suitable candidates in terms of risk and readiness to change.

Once the assessment process is complete and the court order is made, it takes a minimum of two years to complete the three stages of the Caledonian System men's programme. For some men, it may take longer, but it is never shorter. The men's programme comprises:

- a.** A minimum of 14 one-to-one preparation and motivation sessions, which last roughly six months (Pre-Group stage). During this stage it is assessed if according to the man's risk and needs, additional individual sessions need to be added between group sessions or if referral to other agencies should be made.
- b.** A group-work stage of at least 22 weekly three-hour sessions with added individual sessions as required according to need. Group work is delivered (wherever possible) by pairs of co-gendered workers. These groups are held on a rolling basis, so the men start at the beginning of the next available module.
- c.** Further post-group one-to-one or group work as required for each individual (maintenance stage). This stage continues until completion of their order or licence. Maintenance sessions are run with men in a group context by pairs of co-gendered group workers, although they could be run as individual sessions by single or co-gendered pairs of men's case managers. In this phase, men are assisted to develop and keep their focus on their personal plans and implement strategies for staying non-abusive.

Individual intervention

As a response to Covid-19, an individual intervention was developed. For men who are considered unable or unsuitable to participate in the group-work section, individual work may be offered. The Caledonian System developed a manual for one-to-one work, which was accredited by SAPOR in September 2020. In some parts of Scotland, individual work may be the only feasible option if scattered populations make group-work unviable. This is a quite similar situation to that of Ireland.

The individual programme is developed from the mainstream programme, and most of the sessions map directly onto modules from the group-work stage, so much of the above applies equally to one-to-one delivery. The aspects of the group that involve scaffolding, challenging and providing a context for men to try out new ways of thinking is obviously missing in one-to-one delivery. This can be replicated by a skilled staff member who has developed a good therapeutic and collaborative relationship with the man. One-to-one work can provide a secure base in which the man can establish a positive attachment relationship and can explore his abusive behaviour in an individualised, trauma-sensitive manner. By working in the invitational, collaborative and reflective style which characterises Caledonian delivery, the staff member can 'scaffold' the man's change and assist him in developing an identity that includes him being a safe, responsible and accountable man, partner and father - the kind of man he wants to be. If men complete the programme on a one-to-one basis, it should also be as part of an order of a programme with at least two years' duration.

Additional values

Type of men referred and programme flexibility

The programme that is funded by the Scottish Government is court mandated and follows a conviction in a criminal court. It can also be delivered on a non-court mandated basis, which happens in a limited number of local authorities. The model integrates both mandated and voluntary perpetrators (either self-referred or referred by child protection services) within the same groups.

The programme is somewhat tailored to each man's needs; the individual stage is more flexible than the group-work phase and has a much more therapeutic focus involving active listening and understanding of the man, his decision-making process on how he wants to be as a man and his feelings around the impact of his behaviour. When this process is finished, if men are not suitable for group-work, they might be referred to the individual group, and thus continue the programme on a one-to-one basis (with 10 sessions adapted from the group programme). The group programme is a bit more standardised, including exercises that allow men to reflect on themselves. It is more psychoeducational and includes CBT, personal construct psychology, skills practice, and empathy exercises.

Certain elements in each module contribute to programme integrity and continuity such as: (a) individual personal plans are developed to structure the updates that feature in each session, focusing on all domains and also specific criminogenic needs identified for each man; (b) to enhance motivation, each plan promotes the notion of a life that is not only offence-free but also 'good' (good lives model); (c) core exercises, concepts or tools are repeated regularly, such as 'listening to the voices' of women and children who have experienced abuse (through role-play and DVD), the power pyramid, iceberg, self-talk, self-calming, the alcohol and substance abuse and its relation with domestic abuse; (d) opportunities for the men to consider and evaluate the influences of culture; and (e) activities between sessions for men to observe themselves and/or others, practice new skills and/or develop and rehearse.

APPENDIX II: LIST OF CONSULTED ENTITIES

ARMENIA

- Probation Service of the Ministry of Justice of Armenia
- Women's Support Center NGO
- *Arevamanuk* foundation
- Martuni women community council NGO
- Criminal-executive service of the Ministry of Justice of Armenia
- Police of Armenia
- Unified State Social Service of Armenia
- "Centre for Legal Education and Implementation of Rehabilitation Programmes" State non-commercial Organisation

AZERBAIJAN

- Clean World NGO
- Social Services Agency under MLSP (Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population)
- Lawyer/Bar Association
- State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs (SCFWCA)
- UNFPA Azerbaijan
- Azerbaijan Children Public Union (ACU)
- Gender Hub Azerbaijan
- Women's Empowerment for Sustainable Development (WESD) NGO
- *Temas* NGO
- Assistance to Women Initiatives and Social Problems PU (AWISP)

GEORGIA

- Tbilisi Crisis Centre-LEPL Agency for State Care and Assistance for the Victims of Human Trafficking
- Crime Prevention, non-custodial execution and probation National Agency
- Merkuri NGO
- Anti-Violence Network of Georgia - AVNG NGO
- Special Penitentiary Service
- GYLA -Georgian Young Lawyers NGO
- *Femina* NGO Fund
- Kutaisi Violence Victims Service Establishment (Shelter and Crisis Centre)

MOLDOVA

- NGO Centre for Development and Support of the *Resonance* Initiative Tiraspol
- Maternal Centre PRO FAMILIA NGO Căușeni
- Assistance and counselling Centre for victims of domestic violence *Ariadna* NGO Drochia
- SOTIS Family Crisis Centre NGO
- PRO-Femina Maternal Centre NGO, Hîncești
- Stimul Women and Family Welfare Centre NGO, Ocnita
- Women's Law Centre - WLC NGO
- Public Institution Cahul Maternal Centre
- Aremida NGO
- CNFACEM NGO
- Stimulus NGO
- Raza of Confidence NGO
- National Probation Inspectorate
- Orhei Probation Office
- Hîncești Probation office
- Ceadîr-Lunga Probation office
- Centre for Family Aggressors Drochia
- Centre for Family Aggressors Ocnita
- Penitentiary No. 11 Bălți
- Penitentiary No.6 - Soroca
- Penitentiary No.18 - Brănești
- Penitentiary No.15 - Cricova
- Penitentiary No.17 Rezina
- Penitentiary No.7 Rusca
- Penitentiary No. 4 Cricova
- Penitentiary No. 3 Leova
- Penitentiary No. 8 Bender

UKRAINE

- Family and youth division, Family, youth and sport department, Kharkiv City Council, Kharkiv, Kharkiv Oblast
- Centre for correction of aggressive behaviour of persons who committed domestic violence, Odesa, Odesa Oblast
- Community entity Social services Centre of Kreminna Town Council, Kreminna, Luhansk Oblast
- Complex programme of correctional work with persons committing violence or belonging to the risk group of its committing, community entity social services centre of the Novoaydar village council, Novoaydar, Luhansk Oblast

- Community support centre, NGO and Social protection division of Novopskov village council, Novopskov, Luhansk Oblast
- Community entity social services centre of Troitske village council, Troitske, Luhansk Oblast
- Osonnya NGO, Lviv, Lviv Oblast
- Mykolaiv city centre of social services, Mykolaiv, Mykolaiv Oblast
- Recovery resource centre of reconciliation and correctional programmes, Community entity Kryvyi Rih City centre of social services for family, children and youth, Kryvyi Rih, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast
- Family centre of Darnyts'kyi District, Kyiv City, Kyiv Oblast
- Perpetrator programme, centre for families and women of Desnyans'kyi District, Kyiv City, Kyiv Oblast
- Centre for families and women of Holosiivs'kyi District "Rodynny Dim" ("Family House"), Kyiv City, Kyiv Oblast
- Centre for families and women of Svyatoshyns'kyi District, "Rodynny Dim" ("Family House"), Kyiv City, Kyiv Oblast
- Impulse Club NGO, Pavlohrad, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast
- Posmishka UA (Childsmile UA), Charitable Organisation, NGO, Zaporizhzhia, Zaporizhia Oblast
- Probation centre state institution, Kyiv City, Kyiv Oblast
- Starokostiantyniv city crisis centre, Starokostiantyniv, Khmelnytskyi Oblast
- Communal Entity social service centre of Yarmolyntsi village council, Yarmolyntsi, Khmelnytskyi Oblast
- Correctional programme for persons who commit domestic violence, Social protection of population division of the executive committee of Netishyn town council, Netishyn, Khmelnytskyi Oblast
- Pani Patronesa NGO, Dnipro, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast
- Chayka, public initiatives support centre, NGO, Rivne, Rivne Oblast
- Convictus Ukraine charitable foundation, NGO, Kyiv City, Kyiv region
- Eleos-Ukraine, NGO, Kyiv City, Kyiv Oblast
- Merezhka women crisis centre, 100% Life Cherkasy, charitable organisation, NGO, Cherkasy, Cherkasy Oblast
- Nehemiah NGO, Uzhgorod, Zakarpattia Oblast
- Svitlo Nadii (Light of Hope) charitable organisation, Poltava, Poltava Oblast
- Nathnennya NGO, Shepetivka, Khmelnytskyi Oblast
- Day centre for social-psychological work with victims of DV and/or GBV, Mykolaiv city centre of social services, Mykolaiv, Mykolaiv Oblast
- Communal entity social services centre, Popasna, Luhansk Oblast
- Shelter for women and children, Social-psychological aid centre in Lviv Region, Truskavets, Lviv Oblast
- Ivano-Frankivsk region centre of social-psychological aid, Verkhovyna, Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast

- My poruch (We are close) crisis centre, NGO, Vinnyts'ky Hutory, Vinnytsia Oblast
- Women's Perspectives non-governmental centre, NGO, Lviv Oblast
- Communal entity Chernivtsi regional Centre of social-psychological aid, Chernivtsi, Chernivtsi Oblast
- Department of population social protection of Zhytomyr regional state administration, Zhytomyr, Zhytomyr Oblast
- Special support division for persons whoG survived DV and GBV - shelter, Rubizhne Centre of social services, Rubizhne town council, Rubizhne, Luhansk Oblast

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