



## **CEP-EuroPris expert group meeting on “Domestic violence in prison and probation”**

**7-8 March 2019**

***Vilnius, Lithuania***

The meeting started with a welcoming by Mrs. Gintarė Burokienė, Acting Head of Resocialization and Probation Unit, Prison Department, Lithuania, followed by a short introduction to the topic by Willem van der Brugge Secretary General CEP, Kirsten Hawlitschek Executive Director EuroPris and Dr. Vaidas Virsilas Chief specialist Lithuanian Probation service. They all stressed the importance of sharing and spreading knowledge and best practices on the important issue of domestic violence (DV).

Maria Lindström, CEP gave short background information and introduction to CEP/EuroPris expert groups, followed by a tour de table on the participant's expectations. In summary the expectation was about learning more about DV in general, learning more about evidence based programs, share and learn about risk assessment and tools, hear about good initiatives and practices, to find the best intervention there is on DV and how to inform and educate staff on the topic of DV.

### **Lithuania**

Domestic violence is an increasing problem in Lithuania. The prison and probation service gets more and more cases. Domestic violence represents about 20 % of all crimes, 87% of the offenders are men which are the same pattern as in other crimes in Lithuania

There are no evidenced based programs in the Lithuanian prisons but they provide some treatment like general anger management, sport arts etc. The Lithuanian Probation services works with evidence based programs. They use Motivational Interviewing and a treatment program based on the Duluth model for groups and the One-to One program as an individual concept. The programs are being used for both men and women. The Probation service can see some reduction in the recidivism rate.

Cooperation see slide

Regarding Risk assessments tools Lithuania uses OASys and they also have specific instruments for domestic violence both in prison and probation. Since alcohol/substance abuse affects the effectiveness of the treatment of domestic violence the Lithuanian Probation service addresses both. Their belief is that it is very hard to stick to a plan if you are misusing alcohol/drugs and it is also hard to really participate in treatment. The Lithuanian Probation service are doing some work with victims of domestic violence but that is typically done by women's centers. The probation service find it hard to establish cooperation with the women centers because they are not very interested in cooperation since one of their main interest is to keep the women separated from the men.

### **England**

In England statistics shows that 2 million adults between the age of 16-59 are victims of domestic violence abuse, and in average 2 persons, (mostly women) are killed every week from domestic violence. The numbers has raised with 25% during 2018. There are many explanations for that like some changes in the judicial system and in the data gathering but also the fact of greater awareness, more informed professionals like the police, health care staff etc. contributed to the



rise. There is also significant numbers of victims that don't report to the police or other authorities. Research shows that 4 out of 5 victims don't report at all.

England is working with a multi-agency approach and uses multi-agency risk assessment conferences to do a safety planning for the victims. They also have special courts for domestic violence with for example divided waiting areas to make the victim safer.

In England they use what is known as Clare's law, which means that a new partner can apply to the police for earlier convictions and the police can disclose the information to protect the new partner. They are also piloting polygraph testing in sexual abuse cases.

England just launched a new domestic violence bill with 9 complementary initiatives, see slides All programs are accredited and have moved from risk focus the future based planning, they talk about "the new me" The programs are provided by the CRC:s, the companies that been assigned to provide probation in England.

### **Czech Republic**

Statistics for the Czech Republic see slides.

In the Czech Republic there is no specific law on domestic violence or no specific data from prisons, which makes it hard to get a picture of the problems.

A specific risk assessment tool is used for all clients but not a specific one for domestic violence. The tool they use is based on risk-need-responsivity and developed in the Czech Republic. In the Czech Prison system activities like sport art etc. is not considered as treatment just as supportive activities. Offenders with special needs get 21 hours per week of treatment (drug abusers, mental disorders etc.) They have number of programs that covers domestic violence and sexual violence among other things is provided in prisons bit not specifically targeted to DV. The movie Angry man movie from Norway, which shows alternatives to violence, is used in some prisons as part of others programs. All treatment programs are voluntary. The Czech Republic have done some pilots on the effect of the programs that shows numbers on up till 50% reduced recidivism rate. The prison service has a close cooperation with the probation service PMS which includes victims impact training and empathy with the victims.

### **Ireland Prison**

One out of five women has experience domestic violence in Ireland and domestic violence is constantly understated and underreported

The number of reports of domestic violence is increasing but still the real figures are much higher, and there have been a few initiatives running in some social media to draw awareness to the subject.

Ireland have a national office called COSC who have launched a national strategy on domestic violence but the strategy say's very little about the work in prisons. The strategy is focused on victim's safety and support for victims and not on how to treat the offenders. The Irish prison organisation does not have a specific strategy for domestic violence. Regarding risk assessment tools, SARA is used and they work together with the probation service. There has been a greater focus the last years on domestic violence in the Irish Prison system but there is still no collection of and the sentences a very short.

Treatment programs for men are offered in the community by a NGO called MOVE Men overcoming Violence

The Prison service cooperates with the Garda Síochána (police), the Probations service and MOVE and through this they developed a special model for interventions.

### **Finland**

In Finland the prison and probation service is one joint organization, CSA (RISE) The last years Finland have seen have increase in severe domestic violence cases the last years. In many cases



violence and abuse of alcohol is strongly connected to each other. The female prisoner who has been sentenced for domestic violence are often both offenders and victims of DV.

Finland has regional assessment centers within CSA which also provides the sentence planning. In cases of domestic violence it is often the physical violence that is being reported but when they look closer to the case there is often also a mentally and economical violence.

CSA have a close cooperation with NGOs and other agencies, for example Maria Akatemia, who works especially with young women who are afraid they will use violence and Jussi- who works with men to predict and prevent violence. The intervention can start in prison and continue afterwards under supervision or be provided during probation.

Finland has a couple of different telephone support Hotlines both for men and women provided by NGO's. The Finnish prisons do not have a specific program for domestic violence but general programs for violence see slide. Regarding sexual offenders the program STEP is used for high risk offenders.

CSA have a new project in one prison on what to do when recognizing domestic violence. One example is teaching the staff to react if someone is calling home from prison and shouts and barks to his/her family.

### **Slovakia**

It is hard to find data on domestic violence in Slovakia. They recently had a campaign called 'Every fifth women' which showed that every fifth women had experienced domestic violence. Statistics see presentation. The experience in the Prison service is that domestic violence is very common among offenders and present in all groups.

Slovakia have a national action plan for prevention of violence against women 2014-2019 and since domestic violence became a priority of the general prosecution office an increasing number of convictions can be seen. In the national strategy 63 concrete tasks are listed.

The prosecutor's office has a telephone help line for persons who want to report domestic violence. The numbers of reported cases and convictions are increasing.

Slovakia has a methodical center that coordinates initiatives for preventing domestic violence.

Offender sentenced for domestic violence goes through psychological assessment and is then offered treatment program and specialist interventions. There is an evaluation of the program during sentence execution and then recommendations for conditional release are provided to the court. The programme is based on the Duluth model. They are not evidence based, and have a lack of minimal standard. There are individual tailored interventions but uniformity is missing and they don't know if its effective and what happens with the recidivism rate.

The Slovakian prison service has very little cooperation with the probation service.

### **Malta**

Malta is a small country with small numbers 450.000 inhabitants which affects how they work. For definition of domestic violence, see presentation. Malta has had a commission on domestic violence which raised a lot of awareness to the topic. Their experience is that children often cover up for their parents so it's extra important to raise awareness. They have NGO's working with domestic violence and also telephone help lines.

The numbers of cases of domestic violence is increasing and is now 8.4 % of all reported crimes. The police have had special training lately and have been thought how to react and now domestic violence is not acceptable in the same way as it used to be. In prison there is 22 inmates convicted for domestic violence. (660 total prison population)

The main interventions are provided via forensic psychologists working in mental health hospitals and in prisons. There is a good cooperation between prisons, probations, NGO's and mental health services. More training is needed for more groups like lawyers, teachers, judges, etc.

### **Catalonia**



The problems of domestic violence have been more visible the last years, with more awareness and increasing number of cases. Last year 8 women were killed by their partner and 6 of them hadn't reported any violence before. In Catalonia gender based violence is only considered violence against women made by men. Offender can get sentenced both to prison and community sanctions and participating in treatment programmes is compulsive.

The prisons and the probation service cooperates with many stakeholders for example NGO's like SUARA/ACPI/IRES, and OAV. Offenders can start their treatment in prison and continue in probation and Virtual Reality (VR) is used in the programmes for offenders.

There is a need for improvement when it comes to individualization, effectiveness, motivation work etc. There is also a lack of knowledge and sometimes or a lack of language skills that fits the offender. The probation service in Catalonia does not work with victims of crime.

### **Belgium**

The prison service in Belgium does not have specific programs for domestic violence but in the probation service specific programs are provided. Research shows that in average there have been 35 incidents before a victim reports domestic violence. The numbers of people being murdered in domestic violence cases are very high in Belgium and especially in Flanders (119) out of 152 in 2018.

Belgium uses a broad definition of domestic violence and domestic violence requires a specific approach.

To combat the problems they started the Family Justice Center – bringing multidisciplinary teams together in one location (20 organisations). They also developed a specific chain approach to roll out to all into the 20 organisations. The police training in Belgium is using VR to learn more about domestic violence. The Family justice center has grown from 25 to 40 staff in a couple of years and is growing all the time, more or less 100 families are taken care of every month. There is a big need for more funding to cover the costs.

### **Slovenia**

Slovenia is the youngest probation service in Europe and started in April 2017. See presentation about statistics

Slovenia implemented a domestic violence act 2008 which was updated 2016. Since they are such a young organisation there is a big need for education and to develop assessment tools. The existing interventions are individual treatments and referrals to NGO's who provide interventions. The probation service wants to develop group programs for violent and sex offenders. They have 12 national coordinators working with offender sentenced for domestic violence. The probation service in Slovenia does not work with victims.

### **Sweden**

Sweden has a small trend of increasing cases of domestic violence; fatal violence has declined to 13 women a year in average.

The Swedish Prison and Probations service (SPPS) is one joint organisation and have been working with the Duluth based programme IDAP in domestic violence cases since early 2000.

The prisons sentences in Sweden are short in general, so interventions that start in prison need to be continued under conditional release or be provided under probation. That also has an impact on the design of the treatment programmes.

Sweden has developed a risk assessment tool based on the RNR-principles. All clients are being assessed by that tool called RBM-B and a sentence plan is made for every individual. IDAP and the RVP-program are used for high risk offenders and since 2019 a new programme called PREDOV for medium risk offenders is being piloted. The probation service uses KrimStics as a method for probation which gives a clear focus on the criminogenic needs in every case.



SPPS works in cooperation with other stakeholder but has a challenge with privacy issues. SPPS do not work with victims of crime.

### **Ireland Probation**

Ireland have had a number of campaigns on raising awareness to domestic violence the last years but still the reported cases is just the tip of the iceberg. The Irish probation service coordinates the cooperation between different stakeholders, their main focus is on offenders, but they also work with victims of crime. That can sometimes be hard for the staff. In the work with victims the main thing is to refer them to NGO's that provide support. For statistics see presentation. The probation service has one programme for domestic violence in house and they have developed their own strategy of out of Ireland's national strategy on domestic violence.

SARA is used as risk assessment tool in domestic violence cases and they also have a screening tool for non-index cases. The probation service tries to gather data from other sources than the perpetrator and strongly encourage cooperation with other stakeholders as for example NGO's. But there have been some obstacle in working with women organisation since they definitely want to keep the women separated from the men. Child protection and security for victims is very important and therefore they do not offer mediation on domestic violence cases.

### **Development of CBT program on DOMESTIC VIOLENCE and the Action Grant application, Fredrik Olausson Sweden**

The Swedish Director General Nils Öberg was appointed to lead a state commission on domestic violence. The report from the commission was delivered to the Swedish government during 2018. One conclusion from the report was the clear need to have a multidisciplinary approach. Another conclusion was that the treatment programme IDAP couldn't be proved to be effective enough.

Therefore two new programmes are being developed in Sweden, one called RVP and one called PREDOV. RVP, Relational Violence Program is an individual program for high risk offenders in prison and probation, that can be used for all types of violence in relationships and that are gender inclusive. The programme has 40 sessions. PREDOV have a similar set up but less high educated facilitators are required and it has max 20 sessions. In PREDOV there is a continuous focus on alcohol and drugs program.

Sweden submitted an application for an Action Grant to the European commission to develop RVP and PREDOV together with Belgium, Portugal, CEP, EuroPris and the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence (WWP-EN) and Victim Support Europe (VSE). The expert group will be important as a reference group if the project is granted.

Sweden is also implementing a new sex offender programme since the one that has been in use couldn't be proven to be effective. The new sex offender programme is developed by SPPS and has more focus on criminogenic need. The programme was evaluated and accredited during 2018.

### **Towards effective cooperation, Dr. Ilona Michailovič Law Institute of Lithuania and Dr. Ruta Vaiciuniene.**

Dr. Michailovič and Dr. Vaiciuniene are doing research on identification, support and prevention of domestic violence and have been interviewing different stakeholders on their approach to tackling this problem. They could see that the different focuses for different stakeholder victim/perpetrators causes obstacles in cooperation. The results will be published later this year.

### **Summary of the meeting**

During this first meeting for the expert group on domestic violence the group has been given national presentations that provided a good picture on what's going on in this field. Domestic violence stands for at least 1/5 of all crimes in many countries and there is a common belief that



domestic violence still is underreported. Many cases of domestic violence include very serious crimes like murder and the minor ones seem to be forgotten or neglected. It is important to remember that victims of domestic violence can be both men and women and also children. There is also a cultural dimension on how acceptable domestic violence is and what is considered domestic violence. Economic factors and opportunities that are offered to victims of domestic violence have a strong influence on the possibility to leave a violent relationship. Many NGO's in this field focus on the victims and distrust the prison and probation sector. They tend to forget that working with offender is a way to protect future victims. The Prison and Probation service in some countries works with victims of crimes but in many countries there are other services for victims. There is lack of programmes for treatment of domestic violence in prison in many countries. The Istanbul convention gives some direction for the work with perpetrators but is in general strongly victim oriented. Close cooperation with different services is very important in domestic violence cases. Common tools provide for a common language which is important when many stakeholders are involved. SARA is a good example of that. There is lot of good working already running in prison and probation organisations. But still there is a lot to be learned and developed. The first meeting of this expert group was a good start for further learning and development in this important field.

