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Tackling domestic violence in the EU – Policies & practices

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Tackling domestic violence in the EU – Policies & practices

Abstract

This thematic paper is a general introduction to the theme of domestic violence and violence against women. It is written in the framework of the fourth EUCPN Toolbox¹.

The paper builds on existing research and provides information on how legislative and policy measures are developed in the EU and its Member States to prevent and combat domestic violence against women. It includes the legislative and policy measures which set the framework in which national and local actors (NGOs, civil society, government administrations,...) need to work. At the same time, it wants to highlight the important work which is being done by other European organizations, such as the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), the European Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) and the Women against Violence Europe (WAVE).

The paper is primarily written for local policy-makers and practitioners who may be confronted with these issues in their daily work.

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¹ To read the toolbox on tackling domestic violence in the EU, see the library page of the EUCPN website:
<http://www.eucpn.org/library/results.asp?category=32&pubdate>



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Tackling domestic violence in the EU – policies & practices

Introduction

Despite the lack of reliable and comparable data, available figures generally show that women are often the prime victims of domestic violence. The historically rooted unequal relationship between men and women is considered to be at the basis of these regrettable figures. It is for this reason that the combat against (domestic) violence against women remains a high priority for the EU and its Member States. The aim of this thematic paper is to give a general introduction to domestic violence and how the EU and its Member States are working (together) to prevent and combat this issue. Its primary focus is on research and policy.

In the first paragraph, some issues related to defining domestic violence and its *asymmetrical* relationship with gender will be discussed. The second paragraph provides an overview of how policy and legislative measures have been – and continue to be – developed at the EU level, as well as some issues related to data collecting at the European level and EU funding provided to combat (domestic) violence against women. Also, the previous work of the EUCPN on the prevention of domestic violence will be addressed. In the last paragraph, the various legislative and policy measures of the 28 EU Member States will be shortly described.

Domestic violence and gender

Domestic violence is a complex phenomenon and, depending on which aspect one focuses on, it can refer to different forms of violence (e.g. physical, psychological, sexual) between different types of people (e.g. (ex-)partners, parents and children, people living in the same household). Hence, there seems to be no universally accepted definition of domestic violence (Al-Ali & Lazenbatt, 2012). Often other (broader) concepts, such as violence against women, gender-based violence or intimate partner violence, are used instead of – or interchangeably with – ‘domestic violence’, adding to the complexity of the phenomenon.

Both men and women can become the victim of domestic violence. Nevertheless, according to the figures most commonly cited, around 90% of the victims of domestic violence in the EU are women (see e.g., EIGE, 2012). This imbalance to the detriment of women has also influenced the (inter)national debates and political agendas, especially over the past two or three decades, and the numerous legislative and policy measures taken to prevent and combat (domestic) violence *against women*. For example, the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) reports in 2012 that women continue to be exposed to serious forms of violence including domestic violence which affects them disproportionately and it is, therefore, *“one of the most serious forms of gender-based violation of human rights in the EU”*.

It is important to note that the gender perspective goes beyond the mere biological differences between men and women, which are universal and invariable in time. As Decuyper (2010: 14) mentions: “[...] **‘gender’** is a cultural construction built by society around the two biological sexes. Thus, it denotes characteristics linked to the status of men and women which are not innate but are generated by society. Gender is therefore



*linked to a culture and to a time, and is often accompanied by stereotypes which are specific to the society concerned*². Various theories and perceived causes of (domestic) violence may lie at the basis of different explanatory models, but they are often associated with how men and women relate to one another in a given society and within the family or the intimate relationship (Dichter & Keller, 2012; Kishor & Johnson, 2004; Rodríguez-Menés & Safranoff, 2012). As the next paragraph on the development of policy and legislative measures in the EU will show, tackling (domestic) violence against women is considered to have its roots in unequal power relations between men and women as well as in gender inequality and is, therefore, considered a priority in the EU.

Despite a general acknowledgement of the '*gender asymmetry*' in domestic violence, some academic researchers tend to stay more cautious and refer to (a smaller number of) studies which show that women are as likely as men to be the perpetrator of domestic violence (see e.g., Gadd et al., 2003; Dobash & Dobash, 2004; Fox et al., 2013; Storey & Strand, 2012). They argue that much depends on how 'violence' is defined, the age of the sample, the type of methodological instrument used, etc.; all variables that might lead to the variety in prevalence rates and the ambiguous findings with respect to apparent gender differences.

Little is known about the victimisation of men in domestic violence and their need for support. One study in Denmark, having conducted qualitative interviews with 12 abused men and 10 care workers at some men's shelters, mentions the taboo and shame associated with being abused by a woman; this may cause a barrier to reporting the violence (Plauborg & Helweg-Larsen, 2012)³. However, Danish police records, data from the Danish emergency department and various survey data (on self-reported violence exposure and dating violence) show that women more than men appear to be the victim of domestic violence. If one looks at the number of contacts with the emergency department following domestic violence from a partner in the past year, women are represented six times more than men. Based on the available data, it is however not always possible to distinguish whether the partner is male or female or whether indeed it is the partner (and not another relative living under the same roof) who committed the violence (Plauborg & Helweg-Larsen, 2012).

In a summary of the 2009 report of the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention, it is suggested that the context as well as the way in which the questions on violence are formulated may influence the results. According to this report, studies which focus on violence generally find that women are more often exposed than men, whereas, studies which focus on conflict report only small differences between women and men. Furthermore, the report mentions that "*[...] it appears to be a question of two different types of violence. Violence directed towards women is more often repeated, and also tends to be more serious, with more negative consequences for the victim. Partner violence that is carried out by men on women continues thus to be a major social problem*" (Hradilova-Selin, 2009: 5).

² See also the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence: <http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/convention-violence/convention/Convention%202010%20English.pdf>

³ The full report, which is published by the National Institute for Public Health, is only available in Danish and can be downloaded through the following link: http://www.sj-folkesundhed.dk/upload/partnervold_mod_m%C3%A6nd.pdf?utm_source=Nsfk+Newsletter&utm_campaign=b_aef7aff60-NSfk_Newsletter_January_2013&utm_medium=email

An English summary of the main results was provided by Mr. Bjarne Laursen, researcher at the Institute, and sent to the EUCPN Secretariat.



Similar results to the Danish and Swedish studies were found in a Belgian study in 2010 (Pieters et al.). In one part of the study, experts in the field of intimate partner violence and domestic violence were brought together in two focus groups with the purpose to gather in-depth information on the type of violence and the people involved and on the difficulties professionals are confronted with. Furthermore, they were invited to formulate some recommendations to prevent and to tackle the violence based on their experiences and expertise. These experts too indicated that men tend to have more difficulties to find their way to professional victim support services and to talk about the abuse they experience. Other figures in the Belgian study also showed that both men and women indicated to have been the victim of (a form of) abuse by a (ex-)partner the past year. Psychological or verbal abuse was mentioned the most, with little difference between male and female victimization. Two thirds of victims of physical abuse, on the other hand, were women and in case of sexual abuse, the victim is generally a woman (Pieters et al., 2010).

Despite the debate on gender differences and the general lack of reliable and comparable data, available figures show the seriousness of (domestic) violence, especially against women. For example, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), around 1 in 4 women in the European Region⁴ who ever had a partner, reported to have experienced intimate partner violence (physical and/or sexual) at some point in their lives (WHO, 2013). Generally, women seem to be victimised more (frequently), for a longer period of time, more seriously, more physically and more often with a fatal outcome than men. In the following paragraphs, an overview of the development of policy and legislative measures to prevent and tackle (domestic) violence against women in the EU and its Member States will be given.

Development of policy and legislative measures in the EU

Violence against women, including domestic violence against women, is considered to be *"a manifestation of historical unequal power relations between men and women and a cause and consequence of gender inequality"* (Council of the European Union, 2012; see also United Nations, 2013). Gender equality is an important issue on the EU agenda and tackling violence against women is considered a priority for the EU and its Member States.

Declaration nr.19 on Article 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)⁵ states that *"in its general efforts to eliminate inequalities between women and men, the Union will aim in its different policies to combat all kinds of domestic violence"* and that *"The Member States should take all necessary measures to prevent and punish these criminal acts and to support and protect the victims"*.

The EU institutions' commitments to a strengthened policy response to combat all forms of violence against women within and outside the EU territory are reflected in a series of instruments. For example, the European Commission's commitment is shown in the

⁴ The WHO European Region includes the following countries: (i) EU Member States: Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, The Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sweden, UK; and (ii) Non-member States: Albania, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iceland, Norway, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Serbia, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine

⁵ OJ 2012/C 326: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:326:FULL:EN:PDF>



Women's Charter (March 2010)⁶, the *Action Plan implementing the Stockholm Programme* (April 2010)⁷, and the *Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015* (September 2010)⁸.

The European Parliament's commitment to ending gender-based violence is shown in the *Resolution of 5 April 2011 on priorities and outline of a new EU policy framework to fight violence against women*⁹, the *Resolution of 6 February 2013 on the 57th session on UN CSW: Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls*¹⁰, the recent oral question 84/13 and the current discussion on a legislative own-initiative report by European Parliament Member (MEP) A. Parvanova¹¹.

The Council of the EU reaffirmed its commitment to eliminating violence against women in the *conclusions on the Eradication of Violence Against Women in the European Union* (2010)¹², in the *European Pact for gender equality for the period 2011 – 2020* (2011)¹³ and, more recently, in the *conclusions on Combating Violence Against Women, and the Provision of Support Services for Victims of Domestic Violence* (2012a)¹⁴.

1. EU legislation, policy, data and funding

EU Legislative measures and policy

To ensure minimum standards on the recognition and respectful treatment, protection, support, access to justice and the compensation and restoration of victims of crime in all Member States, some legislative measures, first proposed in the European Commission's *Victims Package* in 2011¹⁵, have recently been adopted, including:

- The *Directive 2011/99/EU* on the European protection order in criminal matters¹⁶
- The *Directive 2012/29/EU* on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime¹⁷
- The *Regulation (EU) No 606/2013* on mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters¹⁸, complementing Directive 2011/99/EU

The European Protection orders (one for civil matters and one for criminal matters) ensure that victims of violence can still rely on restraint or protection orders issued against the perpetrator in their home country if they travel or move within the EU.

⁶ See: http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/news/documents/pdf/20100305_1_en.pdf

⁷ See: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0171:FIN:EN:PDF>

⁸ See: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0491:FIN:EN:PDF>

⁹ See: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P7-TA-2011-0127&language=EN>

¹⁰ See: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+MOTION+B7-2013-0049+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>

¹¹ See: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=COMPARL&mode=XML&language=EN&reference=PE522.850>

¹² See: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/113226.pdf

¹³ See: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/119628.pdf

¹⁴ See: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/134081.pdf

¹⁵ See: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0274:FIN:en:PDF>

¹⁶ See: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:338:0002:0018:en:PDF>

¹⁷ See: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:315:0057:0073:EN:PDF>

¹⁸ See: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:181:0004:0012:en:PDF>



Directive 2012/29/EU on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime aims at ensuring that victims of violence, and in particular domestic violence, can count on EU-wide protection and support even before reporting the crime; that they are treated with respect and dignity and have access to justice and compensation, whatever their nationality and wherever in the EU the crime took place (European Commission, 2011a).

In 2012, the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) published a report on the *Review of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States: Violence against Women – Victim Support* (EIGE, 2012) which supported the Council Conclusions on *Combating Violence Against Women, and the Provision of Support Services for Victims of Domestic Violence*¹⁹. In these Conclusions, the Council of the EU took note of the outcome of the *European Conference on Combating Violence Against Women in the EU* and the European Police College (CEPOL) Presidency Conference on *Overcoming Attrition in Domestic Violence through Policing*²⁰, both organized under the Cyprus Presidency, and the *EU Handbook of Best Police Practices in Overcoming Attrition in Domestic Violence Cases*, developed by the Cyprus Police (Council of the EU, 2012b)²¹. The Council called on the Member States to make use of this EU Handbook to "improve the registration and handling of complaints received [...] by police, judicial, health, social and other relevant authorities, agencies, institutions and NGOs, that work in the field of violence against women [...]. It has also called on the European Parliament, the European Commission and the Member States to designate 2015 the *European Year on Zero Tolerance for Violence against Women* (Council of the EU, 2012a).

The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) also published an opinion on *Eradicating domestic violence against women* in 2012, reaffirming its commitment to combating domestic gender-based violence and formulating a series of recommendations for the EU Institutions and Member States. For example, in the area of prevention, the EESC recommended "develop[ing] a domestic violence prevention policy by creating places where women can go for multidisciplinary support, with specialized staff and resources and through inter-ministerial action plans to engage men and young people in the elimination of domestic violence" (EESC, 2012: 21)²².

EU responses to initiatives undertaken at the Council of Europe and the United Nations level

The 2011 *Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence* seeks to:

- Protect women against all forms of violence, and prevent, prosecute and eliminate violence against women and domestic violence;
- Contribute to the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and promote substantive equality between women and men, including by empowering women;
- Design a comprehensive framework of policies and measures for the protection of and assistance to all victims of violence against women and domestic violence;

¹⁹ See: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/134081.pdf

²⁰ For more information, see: https://www.cepol.europa.eu/index.php?id=news-details&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=489&cHash=1f73ebf267e62db7f965fcd5eea29a2

²¹ To read the draft of the EU handbook of best police practices in overcoming attrition in domestic violence cases, click [here](#)

²² See: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:351:0021:0026:EN:PDF>



- Promote international cooperation with a view to eliminating violence against women and domestic violence;
- Provide support and assistance to organisations and law enforcement agencies enabling them to adopt an integrated approach to eliminating violence against women and domestic violence.

Preventative measures the Convention calls upon are:

- Awareness raising campaigns or programmes among the general public in cooperation with various actors in society (human rights institutions and women's organizations, NGOs,...)
- Education on non-stereotyped gender roles, mutual respect, non-violent conflict resolution, gender-based violence,... both through formal and informal education, as well as in the media
- Training of professionals dealing with victims and/or perpetrators on the prevention and detection, including prevention of secondary victimization, on gender equality, the needs and rights of victims,... with focus on multi-agency cooperation
- Preventive intervention and treatment programmes to teach perpetrators to adopt non-violent behaviour in interpersonal relationships
- Participation of the private sector and the media in setting self-regulatory standards and in developing and promoting skills among children, parents and educators on how to deal with content of a sexual or violent nature

For the first time in Europe, the Convention sets legally binding standards to prevent violence against women and domestic violence, protect victims and punish perpetrators (EESC, 2012). The Convention is open for signature, not only by Council of Europe member states, including the 28 EU Member States, but also by the European Union. So far, only eight countries have ratified the Convention, three of which are EU Member States. 17 other Member States have signed the Convention but not yet ratified it²³. Last year, the Council, in its Conclusions, called on the Member States to ratify and implement the Convention (Council of the EU, 2012a).

At the international level, the 57th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, which took place in March 2013, focused on the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls²⁴. In the final report, the UN Commission (2013: 3) pointed, for example, to *"the persistence of obstacles that remain for the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, and that the prevention of and response to such violence require States to act, at all levels, at each and every opportunity in a comprehensive and holistic manner that recognizes the linkages between violence against women and girls and other issues, [among others] crime prevention"*²⁵. The UN Commission, therefore, called on all actors to ratify the international Conventions, to strengthen and implement national legal and policy measures and to address the structural and underlying causes and risk factors of violence against women. In addition, it urged them to strengthen multisectoral services, programmes and responses to violence against women and to improve the evidence-base

²³ See CoE website for overview:

<http://www.conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/ChercheSig.asp?NT=210&CM=8&DF=03/12/2013&CL=ENG>

²⁴ For more information, see: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/57sess.htm>

²⁵ See: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/2013/27



by focusing on qualitative and comparable data collection as well as on the exchange of best practices.

EU data collection on domestic violence

There is still a lack of international comparable administrative and survey data on violence against women and domestic violence, due to differences in definitions and types of violence covered, differences in methodologies, in time frame, sample characteristics, etc. Supported by the European Commission, important actors in the field of violence against women, such as the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) and Women against Violence Europe (WAVE), have been working hard to fill this gap²⁶.

At the request of the European Parliament, FRA started an EU-wide survey in 2010, interviewing 40.000 women across the 28 EU Member States, to collect comparable data on the extent, frequency and severity of violence against women in the EU, including data on women's experience and access to the police, healthcare and victim support services²⁷. The results will be presented in the first quarter of 2014 in order to provide reliable and comparable data on women's experiences of violence.

EIGE is also working more and more on violence against women. Since 2011, EIGE has been undertaking several studies mapping existing data and resources on several forms of violence against women, including sexual violence, domestic violence and female genital mutilation, as well as on the sources of administrative data at the national and international level²⁸.

As mentioned above, at the end of 2012, EIGE published a report which included the legislative and policy developments in the area of domestic violence against women in the context of the EU follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action, as well as an overview of the support services for victims of violence against women.

EIGE will present a long term work plan at the end of 2014 with the aim to improve data collection on violence against women at the EU level, for example, by looking at various possibilities to organize a follow-up of the survey FRA is currently undertaking, and through a close collaboration with Eurostat.

WAVE is a network of NGOs composed mainly of European women's non-governmental organizations working in the field of violence against women and children²⁹. Since 2008, WAVE has been publishing a yearly country report, collecting data from 46 European countries and focusing on different issues related to violence against women, such as the existence of and access to women support services, helplines, shelters, etc., the situation of migrant women, the analysis of research and administrative data.

In the framework of the Daphne programme (see below), WAVE conducted the *PROTECT II* project in 2011-2012 which resulted, amongst others, in some guidelines for

²⁶ For an overview of international activities in the field of data collection on gender-based violence in the EU, see also EIGE (2013): <http://eige.europa.eu/content/document/international-activities-on-data-collection-on-gender-based-violence-across-the-EU>

²⁷ See: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2012/fra-survey-gender-based-violence-against-women>

²⁸ See also EIGE's contribution to the EUCPN's European Crime Prevention Monitor Report (2013/2): Measuring and tackling domestic violence in the EU - forthcoming

²⁹ For more information, see: <http://www.wave-network.org/content/woman-against-violence-europe-wave>



systematic and reliable data generation³⁰. They also collected the data for EIGE's 2012 report on the progress of EU member States in the provision of support services for women victims of intimate partner violence to meet their commitments to the Beijing platform for Action³¹.

EU funding programmes

Through the Daphne³² and Progress³³ programmes, national administrations and organizations active in the field of violence against women can receive operating grants from the European Commission. In 2013, the Commission awarded 3,7 million euro to support Member States' activities to raise awareness on violence against women. A further 11,4 million euro will be awarded to NGOs working with victims. In the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020, both programmes will be merged into the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme. The Justice Programme will supplement these funds, especially in the area of victims' rights.

EUCPN and domestic violence

Since its establishment in 2001, the EUCPN has also considered the prevention of domestic violence as an important part of its work. Over the years, the EUCPN website has gradually expanded, becoming a major source of information on research, Member States' strategies & policies and good practices related to crime prevention, amongst others domestic violence.

Also during the subsequent EU Presidencies, domestic violence was often chosen within the EUCPN as an important topic to work on. In fact, since 2004 domestic violence has been continually on the EUCPN agenda through various workshops and knowledge exchange sessions, but also by regularly selecting it as the (main or sub) theme of the Best Practice Conference which is held annually and brings together policy-makers and practitioners from all EU Member States to share their experiences³⁴. Table 1 gives a short overview of the work done on domestic violence within the EUCPN since 2004.

Year	Initiator	Activity
2004	The Netherlands	Domestic Violence as one of three topics chosen for the Best Practice Conference.
2005	Luxembourg	Organisation of a seminar on domestic violence.

³⁰ For more information, see: <http://wave-network.org/content/protect-ii-capacity-building-risk-assessment-and-safety-management-protect-high-risk-victims>

³¹ For more information, see: <http://www.wave-network.org/content/eige-%E2%80%93-review-implementation-beijing-platform-action-eu-member-states-violence-against-women>

³² For more information on the Daphne programme, see: <http://ec.europa.eu/justice/grants/programmes/daphne/>

³³ For more information on the Progress programme, see: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=327>

³⁴ Part 2 of this toolbox will go more into detail about the Best Practice Conference.



2006	Austria	Organisation of a seminar on domestic violence and development of a compilation on domestic violence legislation frameworks in several Member States. The report is available on the EUCPN library page on the website (http://www.eucpn.org/download/ReportDomesticViolenceWorkshop(Vienna_May2006).pdf)
	United Kingdom	Development of a good practice and crime prevention policy page on the EUCPN website with information on domestic violence.
2007	Portugal	<p>Domestic Violence as the main topic of the Best Practice Conference. The Swedish project "An integrated domestic violence programme in Malmö" won the 2007 European Crime Prevention Award.</p> <p>More information on the winning project and all other projects which competed for the 2007 European Crime Prevention Award can be found on the EUCPN website (http://www.eucpn.org/eucpn-award/entries.asp?year=2007)</p> <p>A final state of the art report "Understanding and challenging the domestic violence phenomena within EU countries. Towards the development of an European consciousness." was published in 2009 and can be downloaded on the library page of the EUCPN website (http://www.eucpn.org/download/EUCPN_DV_report_En_Final.pdf)</p> <p>This report also covers the main conclusions regarding domestic violence of the 2007 Best Practice Conference.</p>
2008 – 2009	Belgium	<p>The start-up of a new EU project "Domestic violence tackled in partnership", led by Belgium and in collaboration with Sweden, Hungary, Spain and the Netherlands.</p> <p>The project aimed to optimize the qualitative integral approach developed in the Belgian province of Limburg, and involved an thorough evaluation and optimization of this approach. Planning of a European conference at the beginning of 2011 to share the final results.</p>
2009	EUCPN Board	<p>A part-time Research Officer was appointed to conduct some research activity on domestic violence.</p> <p>At the request of the European Commission, the Research Officer completed a report on ongoing projects and instruments at the national and EU level to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence.</p> <p>A short version of the report can be downloaded on the library page of the EUCPN website (http://www.eucpn.org/download/ECOverviewVAW.pdf)</p>
	Czech	Members of the EUCPN consider the EUCPN as a useful and quick

	Republic	<p>tool to receive direct information, for example, by launching a call on a concrete topic.</p> <p>In 2009, the Czech Republic launched a call to gain information on existing programmes for domestic violence perpetrators in other Member States.</p>
2010	Belgium	<p>Domestic Violence as one of five topics chosen for the Best Practice Conference. Participants had the opportunity to discuss these topics in plenary sessions and interactive workshops.</p> <p>Based on these discussions, some key conclusions were drawn regarding domestic violence and shared with the EUCPN Members. They were also reported to the appropriate EU Working Groups.</p> <p>An overview of these conclusions can be found in the annex of the EUCPN's 2010 Annual Report, downloadable from the website (http://www.eucpn.org/download/AnnualReport2010_Adopted.pdf)</p>
2011	EU Trio – Spain, Belgium & Hungary	<p>Under the common theme of the Trio of the Spanish, Belgian and Hungarian Presidencies “A secure home in a safe community through prevention, policing and restoration” in the first half of the year, a comprehensive publication about the outcomes of discussions on the prevention of domestic violence as well as some other topics was presented and disseminated to the crime prevention audience.</p>
	Belgium	<p>Progress on the EU project “Domestic violence tackled in partnership”, led by Belgium and in collaboration with Sweden, Hungary, Spain and the Netherlands.</p> <p>A scientific evaluation of the integrated approach of domestic violence in the Belgian province of Limburg was carried out; a description of different EU multi-agency approaches of domestic violence and a literature review on European best practices were conducted; research visits to the Netherlands, Sweden and Spain were organized.</p>
2012	Cyprus	<p>Domestic Violence as one of three sub-themes chosen for the Best Practice Conference.</p> <p>A knowledge exchange session on domestic violence was organized with the EUCPN Members. Some of the results of this session are discussed in the EUCPN toolbox (p.37-38).</p> <p>The toolbox can be downloaded on the library page of the EUCPN website. (http://www.eucpn.org/download/?file=Toolbox_4.web.pdf&type=8)</p>
	Belgium	<p>Final EU seminar on the EU project “Domestic violence tackled in partnership”, led by Belgium and in collaboration with Sweden,</p>



		Hungary, Spain and the Netherlands.
2013	Ireland	<p>A knowledge exchange session on domestic violence was organized with EUCPN Members. Some of the results of this session are discussed further in the EUCPN toolbox (p.37-38).</p> <p>The toolbox can be downloaded on the library page of the EUCPN website. http://www.eucpn.org/download/?file=Toolbox_4.web.pdf&type=8</p>
	Lithuania	<p>Domestic Violence as the main topic of the Best Practice Conference. The Swedish project "the Relationship Violence Centre (RVC)" won the 2013 European Crime Prevention Award, honourable mentions were made for the Belgian and Croatian projects. The conclusions of the Best Practice Conference and the winning projects, as well as all other projects which competed for the 2013 Award, are discussed in far more detail in part 2 and 3 of this toolbox.</p> <p>A handbook including the main conclusions of the Best Practice Conference and an overview of good practices is forthcoming and will be circulated through the EUCPN website.</p>

Table 1: EUCPN activities related to domestic violence since 2004.

Source: EUCPN Work Programmes and Annual Reports.

2. Legislative and policy measures in the EU Member States

As mentioned in the 2012 report of EIGE, currently almost all Member States have implemented a National Action Plan (NAP) with measures to combat domestic violence against women³⁵. Table 2 gives an overview of the NAPs addressing violence against women in the EU Member States.

MS ³⁶	National Action Plan	Period
AT ³⁷	No real NAP on VAW; legal basis is the Austrian Federal Act on the Protection against Domestic Violence from 2003 respectively 2009, which are amended when necessary (last time in 2013) which helped to continue the rethinking process with respect to the issue of domestic violence.	
	Action Plan to Fight Human Trafficking	2012-14
	NAP for the prevention and elimination of female genital mutilation	2009-11
BE	National Action Plan to combat intimate partner violence and other	2010-14

³⁵ For more information, also see EIGE's contribution to the EUCPN's European Crime Prevention Monitor Report (2013/2): Measuring and tackling domestic violence in the EU - forthcoming.

³⁶ 'MS' = Member State

³⁷ AT = Austria; BE = Belgium; BG = Bulgaria; CY = Cyprus; CZ = Czech Republic; DE = Germany; DK = Denmark; EE = Estonia; EL = Greece; ES = Spain; FR = France; FI = Finland; HR = Croatia; HU = Hungary; IE = Ireland; IT = Italy; LT = Lithuania; LU = Luxembourg; LV = Latvia; MT = Malta; NL = The Netherlands; PL = Poland; PT = Portugal; RO = Romania; SE = Sweden; SI = Slovenia; SK = Slovakia; UK = United Kingdom

	forms of domestic violence To read the action plan (Eng.): http://iqvm-iefh.belgium.be/nl/binaries/NAP_Engels_tcm336-133536.pdf	
BG	Yearly national programme for prevention and protection from domestic violence adopted by Council of Ministers Decision N° 207/29.03.2013 To read more info (Bulgarian only): http://www.mvr.bg/Prevenia/prevenia_domashno_nasilie.htm	2013
CY	National Action Plan for preventing and combating violence in the family To read the action plan (Greek only): http://www.familyviolence.gov.cy/upload/downloads/actionplan_2010-2013.pdf No new (post-2013) action plan announced yet	2010-13
CZ	National Action Plan for the Prevention of Domestic Violence To read the action plan (Eng.): http://www.mpsv.cz/files/clanky/12194/5_material_NAP_15-04-2011_en.pdf	2011-14
DE	Second Action Plan of the Federal Government to Combat Violence against Women, with the establishment of a free national hotline To read the action plan (Eng.): http://www.bmfsfj.de/RedaktionBMFSFJ/Broschuerenstelle/Pdf-Anlagen/aktionsplan-II-gewalt-gegen-frauen-englisch.property=pdf,bereich=bmfsfj,rwb=true.pdf	2007-ongoing
DK	New National Action Plan on domestic violence, including new elements such as help to male victims and dating violence among young people To read more info (Danish only): http://www.miliki.dk/	2014-17
EE	Development plan for reducing violence To read the action plan (Eng.): http://sqdatabase.unwomen.org/uploads/Development%20Plan%20for%20Reducing%20Violence%20for%20Years%202010-2014.pdf	2010-14
EL	National programme for prevention and combating of violence against women (implementation period extends to 2014) To read the action plan (Eng.): http://www.isotita.gr/en/var/uploads/english/NATIONAL%20PROGRAMME%20ON%20PREVENTING%20AND%20COMBATING%20VIOLENCE%20AGAINST%20WOMEN%202009-2013.pdf	2009-13
ES	National strategy for the eradication of violence against women, including a part on gender-based violence in the immigrant population To read the action plan (Eng.): http://www.msssi.gob.es/ssi/violenciaGenero/EstrategiaNacional/pdf/Estrategia_Nacional_Ingles.pdf	2013-16
FR	Interministerial plan for the fight against violence against women To read the action plan (French only): http://sqdatabase.unwomen.org/uploads/Plan%20Interministeriel%20de%20Lutte%20contre%20les%20violences%20faites%20aux%20femmes%202011-2013.pdf A new plan has been presented, d.d. 22 November 2013, for the next 3 years To read the action plan (French only): <a 849="" 884="" 924="" 942"="" data-label="Page-Footer" href="http://www.prevention-</td> <td>2011-13

2014-16</td> </tr> </table> </div> <div data-bbox=">15	

	delinquance.interieur.gouv.fr/fileadmin/user_upload/03-Champs_d_action/Aide_aux_victimes/4e-planVFF_22112013.pdf	
FI	Action plan to reduce violence against women To read the action plan (Finnish only): http://www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=1087414&name=DLFE-12304.pdf	2010-15
HR	National security strategy of family violence To read the action plan (Croatian only): http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2011_02_20_422.html	2011-16
HU	National gender strategy - National strategy promoting the equality of men and women – directions and targets To read the action plan (Eng.): http://www.szmm.gov.hu/download.php?ctag=download&docID=21986	2010-21
IE	National strategy on domestic, sexual and gender-based violence To read the action plan (Eng.): http://www.szmm.gov.hu/download.php?ctag=download&docID=21986	2010-14
IT	National action plan against sexual and gender violence. To read the action plan (Eng.): http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/index.php/primo-piano/2684-piano-dazione-straordinario-contro-la-violenza-sessuale-e-di-genere Financing of new action plan is awaiting approval	2010-13
LT	National strategy for combating violence against women (2010-12) and a plan of implementing measures (2013) To read the action plan (Lithuanian only): http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=351089&p_query=&p_tr2=2 New draft of National Programme of Prevention of Domestic Violence and Assistance to Victims, currently being prepared	2010-13 2014-20
LU	National action plan for equality of women and men To read the action plan (French only): http://www.eucpn.org/poldocs/NAP_LU.pdf	2009-14
LV	National family policy guidelines To read the guidelines (Latvian only): http://polsis.mk.gov.lv/view.do?id=3583 Action plan for National family policy guidelines for the implementation of the guidelines To read the action plan (Latvian only): http://polsis.mk.gov.lv/view.do?id=4167	2011-17 2012-14
MT	No real national action plan yet but domestic violence issues are mentioned in the national action plan on poverty and social exclusion Annual reports by the Commission on Domestic Violence. To read the reports: https://secure3.gov.mt/socialpolicy/family/domestic_violence/dom_violence_annual_reports For more information on Malta's efforts regarding violence against	2008-10 2006-11

	women, including domestic violence: http://www.coe.int/t/dg2/equality/domesticviolencecampaign/countryinformationpages/malta/NationalReport_en.asp#TopOfPage	
NL	No real national action plan but a nation-wide approach on violence in dependency relationships with a progress report every semester. To read the last progress report (Dutch only): http://www.huiselijkgeweld.nl/beleid/landelijk/kamerbrief-juli-2013-over-voortgangsrapportage-geweld-in-afhankelijkheidsrelaties Specific action plans on forced marriage and elderly abuse.	Ongoing
PL	National action plan for counteracting domestic violence To read the action plan (Eng.): http://sqdatabase.unwomen.org/uploads/Poland%20-%20National%20Action%20Plan%20for%20Counteracting%20Domestic%20Violence.pdf	2006-16
PT	IV National plan to fight domestic violence To read the national plan (Portuguese only): http://dre.pt/pdf1s/2010/12/24300/0576305773.pdf New National Plan for Prevention and Combat of Domestic and Gender Violence, currently under public consultation	2011-13 2014-17
RO	National strategy for the protection and promotion of the rights of children To read the national strategy (Romanian only): http://www.copii.ro/Files/Strategia%20Nationala%20in%20domeniul%20protecciei%20dreptu.pdf No new (post-2013) action plan announced yet but the law on domestic violence has recently changed.	2008-13
SE	Action plan of 2007 for combating men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships – measures For more information (Eng.): http://www.government.se/sb/d/14974/a/171721 To read the full 2007 action plan (Eng.): http://www.government.se/content/1/c6/09/87/69/6138ac76.pdf	2011-14
SI	Resolution on the national programme on the prevention of family violence To read the action plan (Eng.): http://www.mddsz.gov.si/fileadmin/mddsz.gov.si/pageuploads/dokumenti_pdf/resolution_prevention_family_violence_09_14.pdf	2009-14
SK	National action plan for the prevention and elimination of violence against women To read the action plan (Slovak only): https://lt.justice.gov.sk/Attachment/Materi%C3%A1l_doc.pdf?instEID=53&attEID=7567&docEID=46239&matEID=1201&langEID=1&tStamp=20090309132717543 New national action plan in the process of approval	2009-12 2014-19
UK	Call to end violence against women and girls – Action plan	2011-15



	To read the action plan (Eng.): http://sqdatabase.unwomen.org/uploads/Action%20Plan%20on%20VAW%20-%202011.pdf	
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Table 2: NAPs in EU-Member States addressing violence against women

Source: EIGE (2012) – Updated with information from EUCPN National Representatives

As EIGE (2012) already mentioned, there is a great variety in the focus, content and implementation of national action plans. Sometimes, an explicit link between VAW and discrimination and human rights is made, like for example in the NAPs of Belgium, Germany or Ireland. The focus can be on violence between partners or within the wider family, whether or not including child maltreatment or a gender perspective. Sometimes domestic violence (DV) includes forced marriage, honour-based crimes and/or pays specific attention to vulnerable groups like migrant women or women with disabilities. The content often varies, covering training and awareness raising, prevention and violent behaviour modification, and victim support³⁸.

Most EU Member States criminalize domestic violence against women but again, a wide variety of approaches can be observed. This goes from including DVAW into existing general criminal laws, to turning violence against an intimate partner into a public interest crime, to considering violence between family members as an aggravated offence or even explicitly introducing DV as an offence in criminal law (EIGE, 2012). The consequence of these differences is that prosecution is not uniform across the EU and DVAW is still perpetrated with impunity.

Other measures which are mentioned in EIGE's report (2012) are protection orders, perpetrator programmes and training for professionals. However, similarly to the NAPs and criminal laws, great differences exist between the Member States and reliable, comparable data is practically non-existent. Nevertheless, it is clear that gaps remain in combating (domestic) violence against women. There is often no uniform and systematic approach. Existing measures also suffer from a lack of sustainable funding, and in many countries there is hardly any knowledge on their effectiveness.

³⁸ For more details, see EIGE (2012: 22): <http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/Violence-against-Women-Victim-Support-Report.pdf> and EIGE's contribution to the EUCPN's European Crime Prevention Monitor Report (2013/2): Measuring and tackling domestic violence in the EU - forthcoming



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