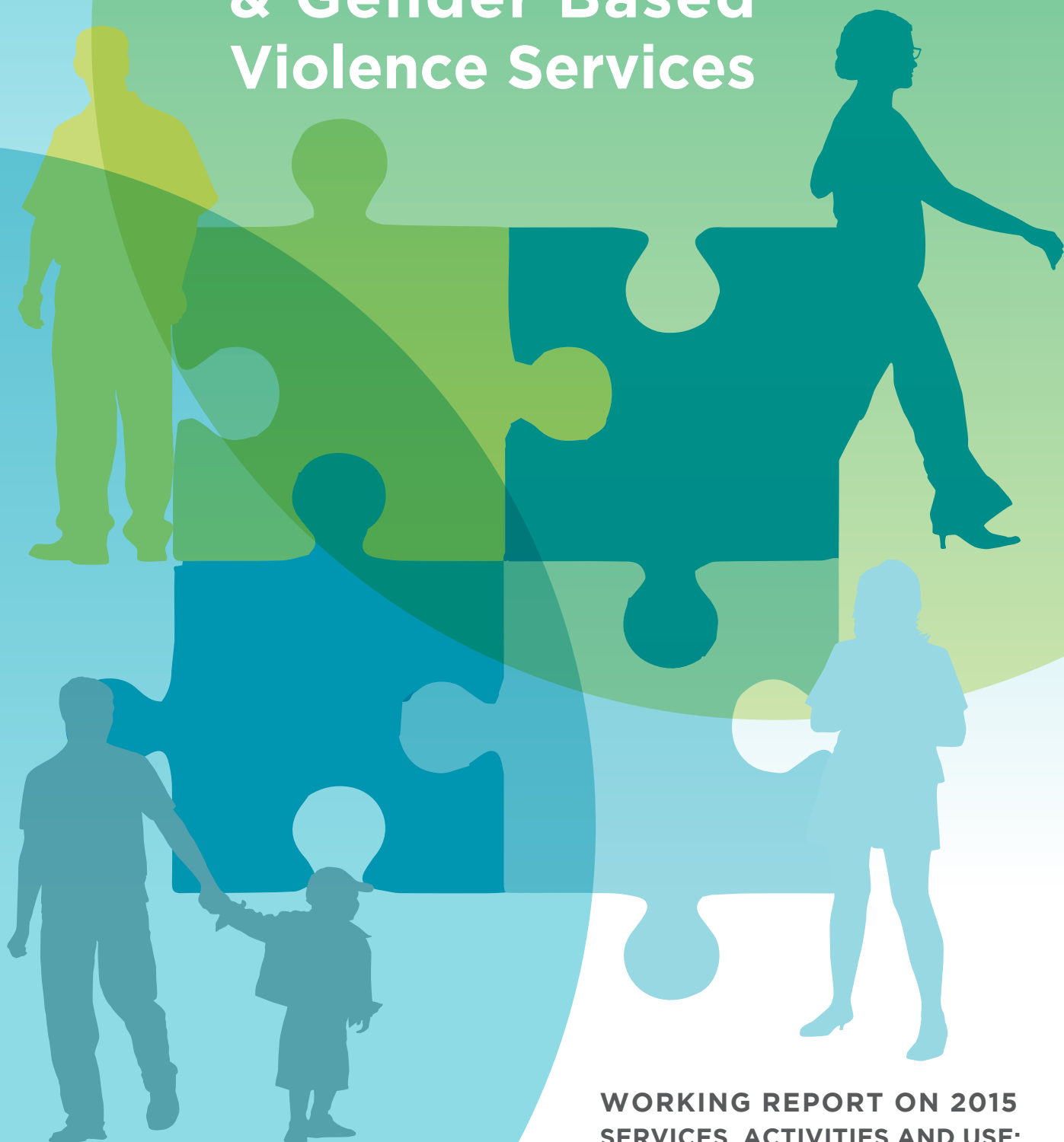


Domestic, Sexual & Gender Based Violence Services



**WORKING REPORT ON 2015
SERVICES, ACTIVITIES AND USE:
TOWARDS EVIDENCE
INFORMED SERVICES**

TÚSLA

An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

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OVERVIEW OF SERVICE USE IN 2015

88,754

helpline calls
answered

3,205

adults who experienced
sexual violence
supported

24,934

adults who experienced
domestic violence
supported

5,459

Children affected
by domestic violence
received direct
or indirect
assistance

Services
provided to
6,405

family, friends and
other supporters
of victims

58

organisations provided
support to people
who experience
gender based
violence

Services
provided to
179

child survivors of
sexual abuse

23,562

first time referrals

FOREWORD

Tusla – Child and Family Agency has a statutory mandate around care and protection to victims of domestic, sexual and gender based violence. In fulfilling this mandate and in line with the Tusla Corporate Plan which sets out to *design and deliver supportive, coordinated and evidence-informed services that strive to ensure positive outcomes for children, families and communities*, we need to ensure that the Agency and its partners, have a shared and well-developed understanding of service user needs.

This Working Report is the first output from Tusla presenting data from Tusla-funded specialist services for victims of domestic, sexual and gender based violence in Ireland. The report sets this data in the context of some of the messages emerging from other sources of information.

Although the data here does not tell the full story of the adults, children and families who have experienced the trauma of violence in the home and sexual violence, the figures indicate the large number of victims and survivors who sought and received support in 2015 from specialist domestic, sexual and gender based violence services across the country.

The figures indicate the large number of victims and survivors who sought and received support in 2015 from specialist domestic, sexual and gender based violence services across the country. Although the data here does not tell the full story of the adults, children and families who have experienced the trauma of violence in the home and sexual violence.

Forthcoming international policy requirements such as the ‘EU Victims Directive’ and ‘Istanbul Convention’ (Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence) will place obligations for Tusla to be in a position to report on the quantum and quality of service provision. We are mindful that information gathering developments in Tusla, and those supported by Tusla in collaboration with others, are only part of the jigsaw of evidence required nationally to enable fuller understanding and better insights into statutory and other responses that will have the greatest positive impact for victims and preventing these forms of violence.

Engagement with service users and information about those who do not use funded specialist services are important additional sources of information not reflected in the current report.

Some of the data emerging prompt more questions about the stories that are of victims, and require further consideration – such as why certain groups are under or over-represented amongst service users and how we interpret different patterns of service use.

We hope that the valuable commentary and feedback arising from this report and the underlying data, will enable Tusla to work with service provider organisations to improve data quality and will help to translate this data into evidence that can underpin responses to adults, children and families affected by domestic, sexual and gender based violence.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Tusla is hugely grateful to the managers, staff and volunteers of funded domestic, sexual and gender based violence services for their efforts and commitment to gathering and providing data about their services and service users. We are very aware of the demands that data collection and data management place on frontline services. We also appreciate the enthusiastic and positive responses from frontline services around data developments and the willingness to support achievement of enhanced information across the sector. We want to note, in particular, the time and commitment of the organisations that participated in the pilot data collection process and gave feedback which was hugely valuable in shaping the final data tool.

The Working Report and direction of data collection build on work undertaken by non-governmental organisations in the domestic, sexual and gender based violence services sector, including the two national networks, Safe Ireland and Rape Crisis Network Ireland. Tusla recognises the valuable role played by the networks and appreciates advice and support provided by the networks around data to the service provider organisations and to Tusla.

Sincere thanks to the Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence Services' Information Project Manager, Dr. Niamh Flanagan, who has tirelessly lead work on the dataset to date and whose work has made a huge contribution around data and evidence for Tusla.

Thanks also to all of the Tusla Domestic Sexual and Gender based Violence Services team and to other Tusla colleagues who have provided support for this project.

INTRODUCTION

This report presents outputs from data returned by funded Domestic, Sexual and Gender based Violence Services (DSGBV) to Tusla – Child and Family Agency, pertaining to service activity and data collection/data management within funded services.

For context some results are presented with reference to some of the available national and international data on relevant themes around domestic, sexual and gender based violence. However, this is not intended to represent a full analysis of the data.

Only headline data around key themes relating to use of services is presented here. An extensive dataset, and more detailed results underpin the headline data presented in this Working Report. Further analysis of data is being undertaken by Tusla to support and inform planning and decision making.

Overview of the data collection process

- A survey tool, using Survey Monkey was sent to funded DSGBV organisations in June 2016
- Prior to sending, Tusla had piloted the draft survey tool with seven services, using a cognitive interviewing approach, on-site in the services. Feedback from the pilot process was used to inform the final tool.
- Tusla telephone and email support was available to services to address any queries arising.
- Data presented here is based on returns from 56 organisations.
- Tusla, in gathering the data presented here, has taken account of Data Protection legislation and good practice in data management.

Limitations of the data

Due to the current stage of development of data in the DSGBV services sector, comprehensive and consistent data is not available around many aspects of service activity and service user details.

Whilst many funded DSGBV service provider organisations have good quality operational data for use within the individual organisations, frequently, variations in terms used, approaches to service delivery and conventions in collecting data mean that direct comparability is not possible across all items.

As the survey of 2015 data was undertaken retrospectively, returns reflect the information that was easily available and reliable in each category. This means that there are gaps in the completeness of data as not all organisations have returned data for all items. However, Tusla has used the process to gain an understanding of the areas of challenge in data collection.

Feedback from the data collection cycle in 2016 will be used to streamline and enable data requirements to be more clearly set out in advance in future years, working towards standard definitions and terms.

Context for the working report

There are 58 specialist frontline domestic violence (DV) and sexual violence (SV) services funded by Tusla, including 42 domestic violence services and 16 rape crisis centres located across the country.

Up to 2015, domestic, sexual and gender based violence services were within the remit of HSE and then Tusla local management at area level. Each area had different reporting requirements so standardised data collection/reporting was not in place to the primary funding agency.

Development of a national structure for DSGBV services within Tusla provides a unique opportunity to develop coherent and consistent approaches to data around services for victims.

Accordingly, a project was established in 2016 to address data and information needs around DSGBV. The goals of the Domestic, Sexual and Gender based Violence Services Information Project include:

- Improving data and knowledge systems and processes within Tusla relating to domestic, sexual and gender based violence services;
- Developing future-proofed data and knowledge management system(s) to enable reporting and analysis of data from domestic violence and sexual violence;
- Developing evidence-informed services based on use of high quality data from services;
- Enabling Tusla to meet its reporting obligations nationally and from forthcoming international obligations, along with demonstrated value for public money.

This report represents a first step to achieving a comprehensive dataset across DSGBV services. Following issue of this report, Tusla will be engaging with funded DSGBV services and other stakeholders to consider:

- Key messages and themes emerging from the data;
- Priority areas for development to achieve an enhanced dataset in 2017/2018;
- Future directions around data quality and data management around provision of services to victims of domestic, sexual and gender based violence.

THE PREVALENCE OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

Violence against women

The most recent life-time prevalence estimates of violence against women suggest that one in four women in Ireland have experienced some form of physical and/or sexual assault since the age of 15 (FRA, 2014). This is equivalent to over 400,000 Irish women. Moreover, the rate of physical or sexual violence perpetrated against Irish girls under the age of 15 is the same: one in four (FRA, 2014) equivalent to nearly 120,000 Irish girls.

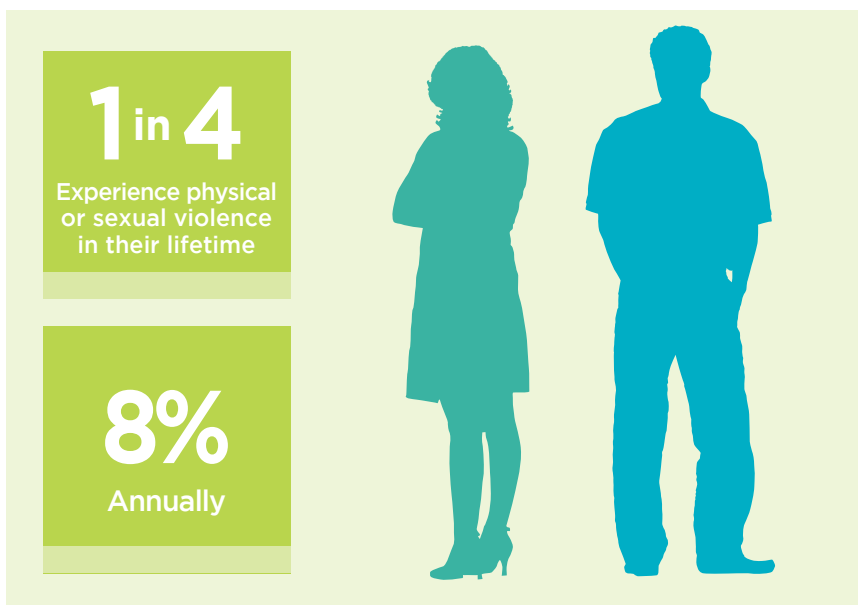
Violence against women, in particular domestic violence, is rarely a one-off event, and is more typically characterised by a pattern of ongoing events (Watson & Parsons, 2005; INASC, 2016). The annual rate of violence against women suggests that 8%, or one in 12 Irish women aged 18-74 experience physical and/or sexual violence each year (FRA, 2014). This corresponds to 129,410 Irish women annually.

Violence against men

While much of the discourse and data on domestic, sexual and gender based violence has been framed with respect to violence against women, it is now widely accepted in Ireland that both men and women can be victims and perpetrators of violence in the home (COSC, 2016). A review of literature on men's experiences of domestic violence concluded that, apart from sexual violence which is almost always perpetrated by men against women, women and men are generally similar in terms of their experience of and use of violent behaviour. However, the review concluded that "the outcomes of domestic violence in terms of physical and psychological injuries tend to be considerably more negative for women victims than for men victims" (McKeown and Kidd, 2002). This is supported by data from the 'National Study of Domestic Abuse' (Watson & Parsons, 2005) which found

that men have a higher risk of minor domestic violence incidents, but a lower risk of severe abuse incidents (2005).

Although available data is somewhat dated, studies suggest that approximately one in four men experience domestic and/or sexual violence in their lifetime (Watson & Parsons, 2005; SAVI, 2002).



¹ Estimate of 404,405 based on Census 2011 report that 1,617,623 women in Ireland are aged 18-74 (CSO).

² Estimate of 119,600 based on Census 2011 report that 478,401 girls in Ireland are aged under 15 (CSO).

³ Estimate of 129,410 based on Census 2011 report that 1,617,625 women in Ireland are aged 18-74 (CSO).

THE NATURE OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

The term gender based violence is generally used collectively to refer to forms of violence such as forced marriage, female genital mutilation, forced prostitution, in addition to domestic and sexual violence. In this report the term is used to refer predominantly to domestic violence and sexual violence, the principal focus of Tusla-funded services in the sector.

Gender based violence takes a number of forms including physical, sexual and psychological violence; in addition to verbal, economic and social abuse.

While little data is available on male victims, FRA data suggests that nearly half of Irish women experience sexual harassment at some point; one in three Irish women experience psychological violence during a relationship; one in four experience controlling behaviour during a relationship; one in four experience

physical violence after the age of 15; one in eight experience stalking which is often a precursor to violence (Churcher & Nesca, 2013); one in ten experience economic violence; and one in 12 experience some form of sexual violence (FRA, 2014).

It is worth noting that prevalence estimates can vary significantly for sexual violence, even in large scale studies. For example, the *Sexual Abuse and Violence in Ireland* study (SAVI, 2002) reports a prevalence rate of over two in five women having experienced sexual abuse and assault, which is notably higher than the one in 12 reported by FRA (2014). Differences may be a result of definitions of sexual abuse, assault and violence e.g. SAVI includes non-contact abuse such as indecent exposure while FRA does not.



UNMET NEEDS AMONG IRISH SURVIVORS

1 in 10

receive direct support

Research suggests that one in five Irish victims of physical or sexual violence report the abuse to police (FRA, 2014). Similar numbers of victims report the abuse

to legal services and medical services (FRA, 2014). The numbers availing of support services however, is significantly lower with less than one in ten Irish women availing of services such as victim support or refuges (FRA, 2014).

Self-reliance

cited as principal reason for not availing of services support

In the majority of cases Irish victims indicate that they chose not to seek outside assistance because they felt they could deal with the situation themselves or with the help of friends or family members (FRA, 2014). It is noteworthy that this self-reliance among Irish women is among the highest in Europe, substantially higher than the European average.

8 in 10

have unmet needs

While less than one in ten Irish women receive direct services, as many as eight in ten Irish women who have been subject to physical or sexual violence indicate

that they have unmet needs for assistance. These unmet needs include needs for practical, financial medical and moral support; information from and help reporting to police; protection from revictimisation; and the need for someone to talk to (FRA, 2014). Of most concern is the fact that the levels of unmet needs among Irish women are consistently higher than the European average across all types of needs.

Unmet Needs

of female Irish victims consistently higher than the European average

SERVICES SUPPORTING SURVIVORS IN IRELAND

In 2015, the 58 Tusla-funded organisations, spread across 24 counties, offered support to victims of domestic, sexual and gender based violence. These included 16 Rape Crisis Centres and 42 domestic violence victims' support services, 22 of which provided crisis accommodation services.

Throughout the year these services reported provision of support to nearly 30,000 people via face-to-face services, outreach services, accommodation and helpline services.

In addition, over 5,000 children who experienced sexual abuse or were directly or indirectly affected by domestic violence were provided with services.

The impact of gender based violence can reach far beyond the victim themselves, affecting family and friends. In 2015 over 6,000 people who provided unpaid support, enablement or accompaniment to victims also availed of support services to deal with the impact on themselves.

Over and above providing support to those affected by gender based violence, organisations represent an important information resource to other professionals working within the area such as social workers and medical personnel. In 2015, organisations handled over 1,000 such queries.

58 organisations

42 domestic violence services & 16 sexual violence services

[with further support from six sexual assault treatment units not funded by Tusla]

24,934

adults who experienced domestic violence supported

3,205

adults who experienced sexual violence supported

179

child survivors of sexual abuse supported

6,405

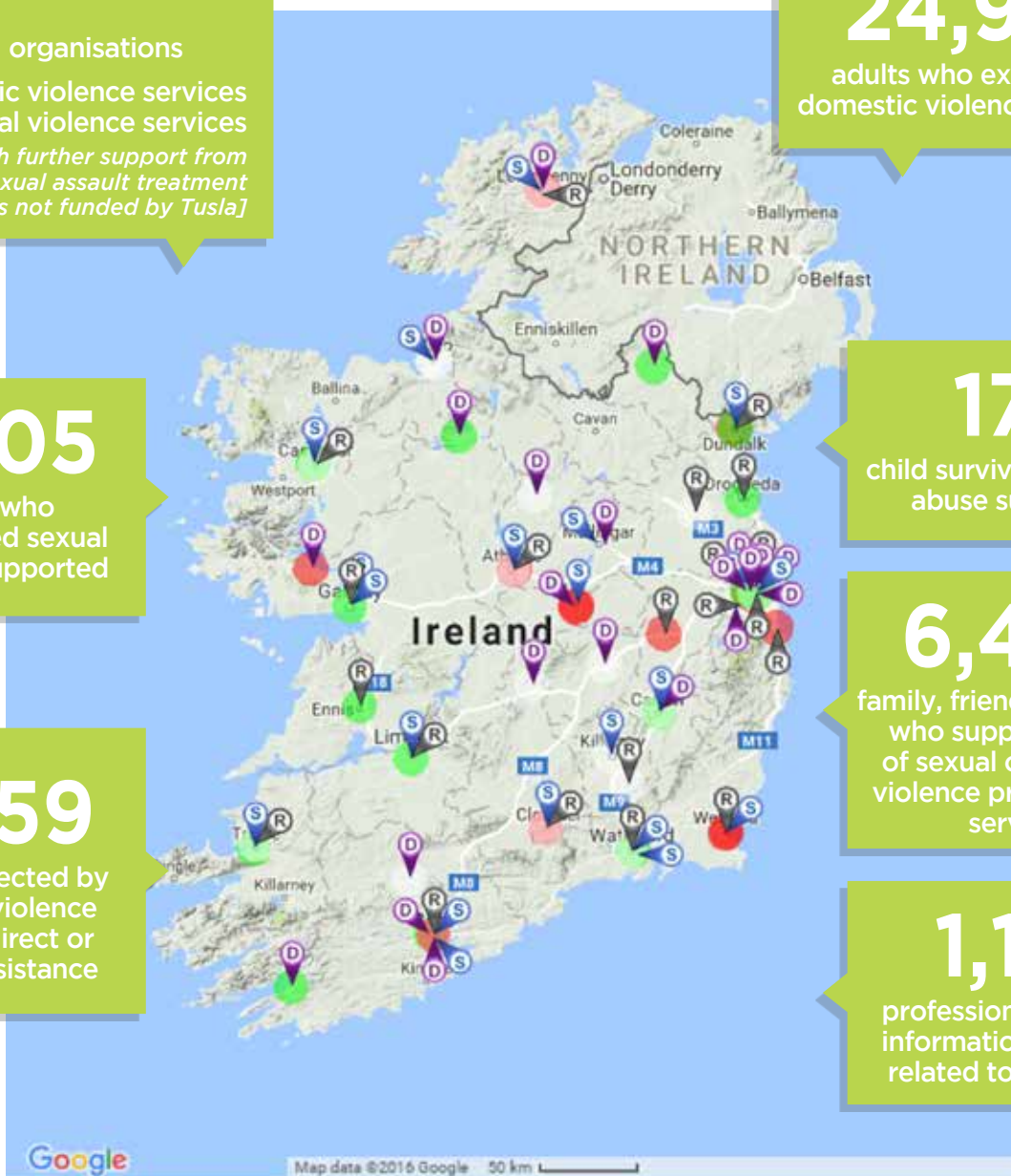
family, friends and others who support victims of sexual or domestic violence provided with services

5,459

children affected by domestic violence received direct or indirect assistance

1,117

professionals seeking information or advice related to their work



Google

Map data ©2016 Google 50 km

S Sexual D Domestic R Refuge and Domestic

HELPLINE SERVICES AND SERVICE USERS

The first point of contact for many victims of gender based violence is a support organisation's helpline or phone facility. The value of such a service is particularly pertinent in light of the finding that Irish women abused by a partner are more likely than any other European counterparts to report unmet needs for someone to talk to or provide moral support (FRA, 2014 ⁴).

In 2015, 52 organisations in the gender based violence sector offered a helpline or phone line facility. Twenty organisations provided 24/7 helplines in 2015 – 18 from the domestic violence sector and two from the sexual violence sector. A further 25 services provided 'office hours' cover – 14 from the domestic violence sector and 11 from the sexual violence sector. Outside helpline hours many services refer callers to the larger 24/7 helplines such as the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre Helpline, the Women's Aid Helpline, or the Gardaí.

Relevant phone numbers for these 24/7 helplines are typically supplied in an answer machine message.

Half of the helplines offer callsave features and approximately a third of helplines have the capacity to enable specialised access to deaf/hearing impaired callers and those using other languages.

All services report supervision and training for helpline staff/volunteers, although the type and focus of training varies across services.

Service providers typically advertise their helplines via websites (90%), posters (83%), stickers in strategic places (49%) and other means such as social media, advertising leaflets/cards placed in strategic locations or with specific services.



⁴ Unmet needs of Irish women abused by a non-partner were third highest in Europe.

88,754

helpline calls answered
in 2015



Helpline callers

Across the 52 organisations, 88,754 helpline calls were answered in 2015 – an average of 243 per day – with three organisations fielding over 25,000 calls.

Differing practices mean that services varied significantly in terms of the data they collected from helpline callers.

Data from 22 organisations suggests that 40% of callers in 2015 were first-time callers.

On the 10 helplines where ethnicity data was captured, Irish people made up 93% of helpline callers, with 4% born in Europe and 1% in Africa. The proportion of helpline callers

self-identifying as members of the Traveller community was half the proportion of face-to-face service users who self-identified as members of the Traveller community.

In line with research which suggests that women with children are at higher risk of gender based violence (Watson & Pearson, 2005), the number of helpline callers peaked in the 30 to 50 age group and over two-thirds of calls were made by people with dependent children.

Although women were amongst the helpline callers of all DSGBV organisations, 55% of helplines had male callers.



An online presence

In addition to helpline and phone facilities, most organisations (89%) had a website and/or a facebook page (77%).

Most organisations (73%) received some initial contacts via electronic means – email, text or social media. However organisations that provided data on electronic contacts (26) indicated that these contacts were small in number – 3,267 – relative to the number of overall new contacts – 23,962.



FACE-TO-FACE SUPPORTS AND SERVICE USERS

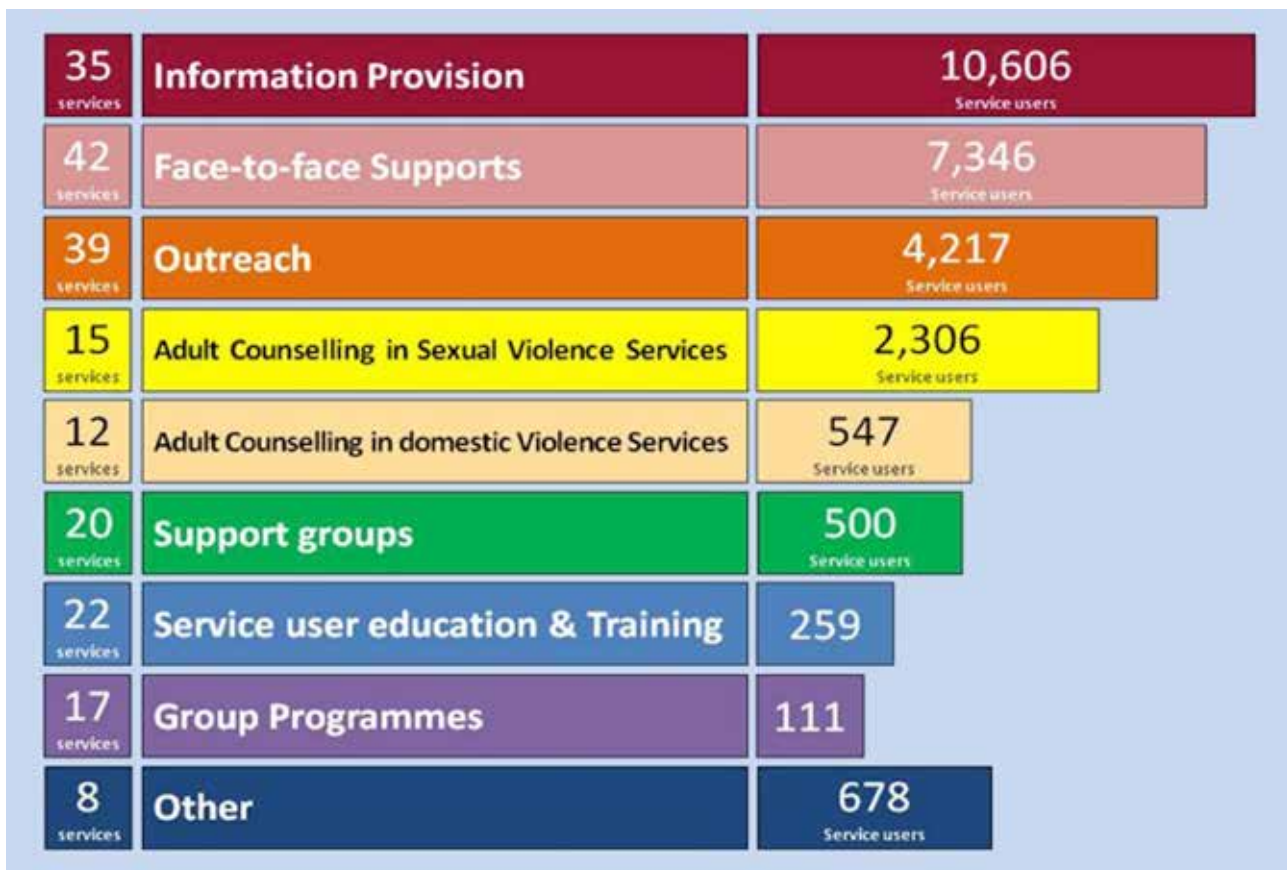
In addition to helpline and accommodation services, organisations offer a range of face-to-face supports to people affected by gender based violence. These include face-to-face information provision, support services – e.g. emotional and practical supports – outreach, educational and counselling services.

Thirty seven organisations provided data on the number of people who availed of these services in 2015.

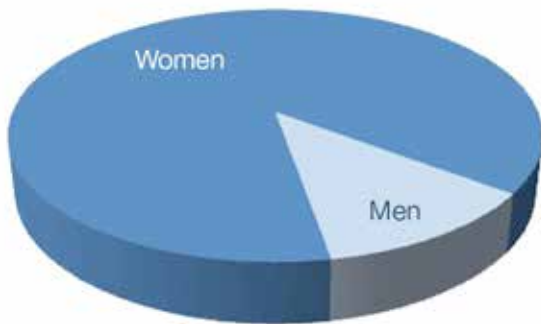
- Information provision, as a distinct service, was provided to over 10,000 people.
- Face-to-face support services were provided to over 7,000. This included support with safety needs; emotional,

practical, crisis management and tenancy/housing support; and supports dealing with substance abuse.

- Outreach supports, which involve a variety of activities, reached over 4,200 people in 2015.
- Adult counselling was provided to 2,306 people by sexual violence services and to a further 547 by domestic violence services.
- Support groups were provided to 500; group programmes to 111; and education and training to 259 service users.
- Other programmes, such as family and friends groups; drop-in sessions, and linking with other agencies, were availed of by 678 people.



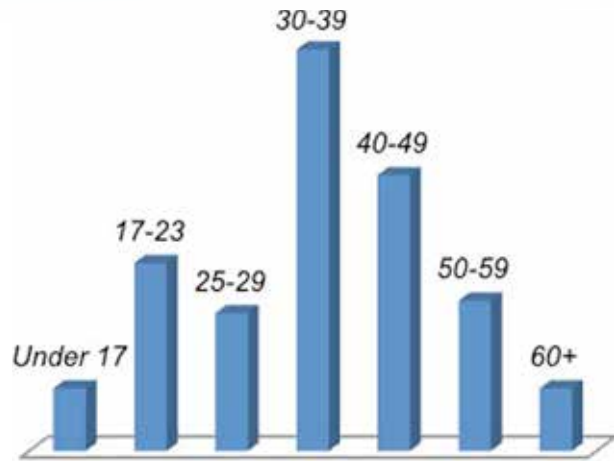
As with helpline services, face-to-face service users were predominantly female (88%). However, women accounted for up to 96% of face-to-face service users in domestic violence services and 73% of service users in sexual violence services.



An emerging population who are not evident in helpline statistics are transgender service users. In 2015, 100 transgender people availed of support services. However, virtually all availed of sexual violence services.

In the services providing data on ethnicity, Irish citizens made up three-quarters of service users and members of the Traveller community accounted for five percent of face-to-face service users. African and Polish-born service users were also evident among face-to-face service users accounting for four percent and three percent of service users respectively. A further three percent of face-to-face services users indicated that they were asylum seekers or refugees.

The age profile of face-to-face service users was also slightly younger than that of helpline service users, peaking in the 30-39 age group.

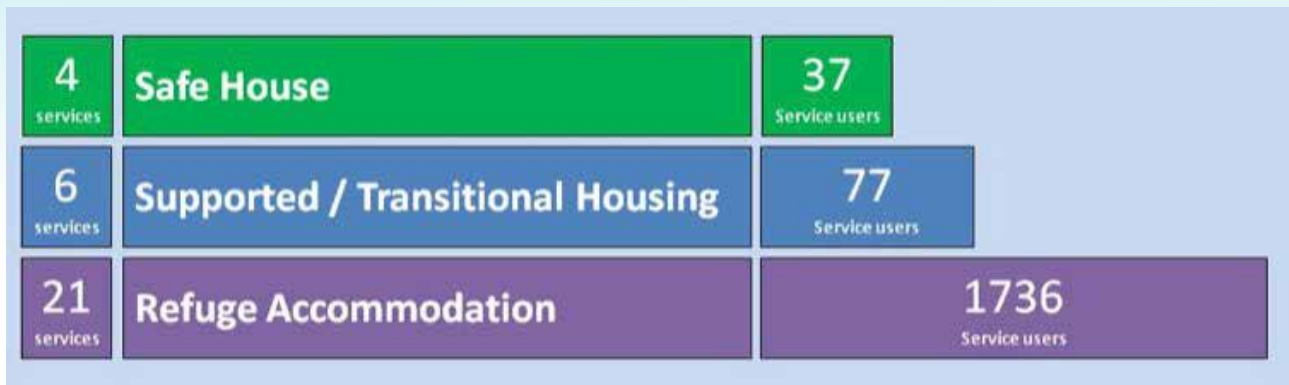


Age of face-to-face service users

Consistent with the younger age of service users, those who availed of face-to-face services were more likely to be parents with dependent children than helpline users – 78% in comparison to 68%.



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CRISIS ACCOMMODATION



Twenty two Irish organisations provide crisis accommodation to women and children who are forced to leave their homes due to domestic violence.

In 2015 nearly 2,000 women and over 2,500 children were accommodated in crisis accommodation units.

Accommodation is offered in refuges, supported / transitional housing and safe house accommodation, with some organisations providing a range of accommodation types.

Refuge accommodation

Refuges typically provide multi-unit, short-term crisis accommodation and 24-hour support to women and accompanying children who are experiencing domestic violence. On-site supports are provided in line with women and families' needs.

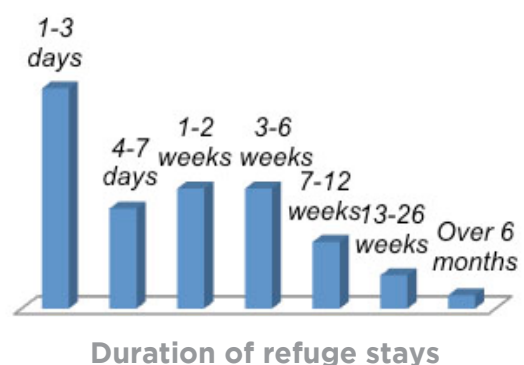
Twenty-one organisations, most (81%) of which provide 24-hour in-house staffing cover, offer refuge accommodation ranging in size from a 2-unit refuge to a 14-unit refuge. In 2015, 142 units were operational. The capacity of the individual units also varies from one bed units up to an eight bed unit.



In 2015 there were 556 beds available in Irish refuges, although some units exceeded capacity to accommodate larger family units.

Most families who were admitted to refuges were admitted once in the year (89%). However, at least 151 families were admitted to refuges on a number of occasions, some as many as six times in one year.

Data from 17 services indicated that the most typical refuge stay lasted one to three days, although in 23 cases people remained in the refuge for over six months.



Data was available on the destination of 1,158 residents after they left refuge accommodation. Just under half returned to the original residence from which they were admitted to the refuge; a fifth went to live with family and friends; and one in six lived independently in a new location. For 126 women, leaving refuge accommodation involved a move to further supported living, either in another refuge, a transitional housing scheme or a homeless shelter.

Safe house accommodation

Safe houses offer single-unit, short-term crisis accommodation within the community to women and their children who typically are at lower levels of risk than those in refuges. Units are usually self-contained apartments and the residents in these units are supported on an inreach basis.

Safe house accommodation is provided by four



services in Sligo, Dublin and Meath. The nine safe houses available across the four services, range in size from three bed to six bed houses. In all 32 beds were available in safe houses in 2015.

The duration of stay in safe houses ranged from less than a week up to a year, most typically 3-6 weeks.

Supported/Transitional housing

Supported, transitional or step-down housing units are provided to women and their children who have left refuges but have ongoing support and secure accommodation needs. Services are offered on a longer term than refuges or safe homes.



Six services offer supported/transitional housing, providing 58 units in 2015. One service managed 44 of the units. Unit size ranged from one bed units to a six bed unit, with 147 beds available in the sector in 2015.

Seventy seven women and their children were accommodated in supported/transitional housing in 2015. Over half of the women remained in the unit for over a year, some for up to two years.



Destination of refuge residents after they left refuge accommodation

CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCE AND EXPOSURE TO GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

1 in 4

experience childhood physical, sexual or psychological violence in Ireland

Children present in Irish support services both as victims and witnesses of gender based violence. Research suggests that as many as one in four Irish children experience physical, sexual or psychological violence (FRA, 2014).

Moreover, the co-occurrence of domestic violence and child abuse is estimated to be between 40-70% (Holt *et al*, 2008). As such childhood abuse represents both a risk factor and effect of domestic, sexual and gender based violence.

Unravelling the complexity of risks and effects involved in childhood experiences of, and exposure to, gender based violence involves consideration of a broad range of issues from the direct physical and psychological harm to the child, the risk for perpetuation of violence, and a range of other correlates of exposure to gender based violence (Watson & Parsons, 2005; SAVI, 2002; Holt *et al*, 2008).

Although the term ‘witnessing’ may suggest passive observation on the part of children, witnessing domestic violence is now widely recognised as a form of child abuse and neglect in its own right (Holt *et al*, 2008) and forms part of the statutory context of Irish child protection legislation – ‘Children First Act 2015’.

The prevalence rates reported above indicate the rate of direct harm caused to children by gender based violence but do not capture the impact and trauma of witnessing and living with violence in the home. The harm and long term impact on children from living with domestic violence (summarised below) is now widely recognised in research and literature (Holt & Devaney, 2016; McGavock & Spratt, 2016; Radford *et al*, 2011).

Greater risk of

- Homelessness
- Physical and sexual abuse
- Jeopardising development
- Child neglect
- Death
- Offending
- Cycle of adversity



Child service users

In 2015, 179 child survivors (currently aged under 18) of sexual abuse were provided with support. In addition, support was also provided to over 5,000 children or young people affected by domestic violence, either directly or indirectly.



Thirty nine organisations provided services for children in 2015: 21 services accommodated children in their domestic violence crisis accommodation and 36 services provided face-to-face services directly to children – 15 in the sexual violence sector and 21 in the domestic violence sector (18 of which were accommodation services).

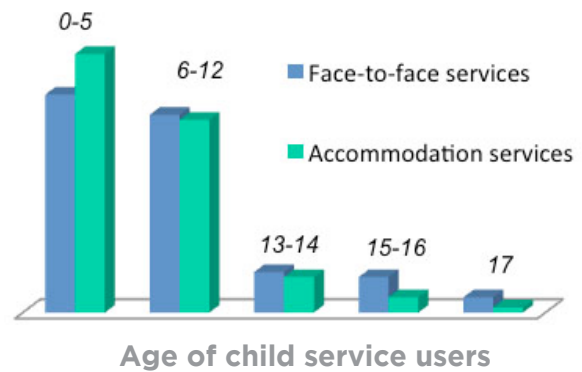
Face-to-face child services included childcare services; playroom facilities; support/therapeutic work, both on a one-to-one and group basis; counselling; playschool; play therapy; therapeutic play; homework support; afterschool; and teen space. Seventeen of the organisations providing numbers of face-to-face child-service users indicated that well over 2,000 availed of these services in 2015.

Data from 25 services indicated that nearly half of the children availing of face-to-face services were aged under five and a further third under 12 years. The age profile of children in crisis accommodation was similar, although slightly younger.

Over 2,500 children were accommodated in crisis accommodation in 2015, most in refuge accommodation, with smaller numbers in safe house accommodation or supported/transitional housing.

Most families who were admitted to crisis accommodation, were admitted once in the year (87%). However, at least 152 families were admitted to crisis accommodation on a number of occasions.

For many of these children child protection concerns were raised. 22 services who compiled this data reported making nearly 900 contacts with Tusla in relation to children.



36 services	Child-specific face-to-face Services	2,011 minimum Service users
21 services	Domestic Violence Crisis Accommodation	2,621 Service users

DISCLOSURE AND REPORTING

Although dated, national studies of gender based violence suggest that many victims never tell anyone about the abuse they experience. Forty eight per cent of those experiencing sexual abuse had never told anyone (SAVI, 2002) and 33% of those recounting severe domestic abuse had never told anyone (Watson & Parsons, 2005). Clearly therefore, any data on gender based violence can only represent the tip of the iceberg. Moreover, high levels of non-disclosure present a challenge in terms of service provision, particularly, as indicated above, for services targeted at men experiencing gender based violence.

33%-47%

never tell anyone about the abuse

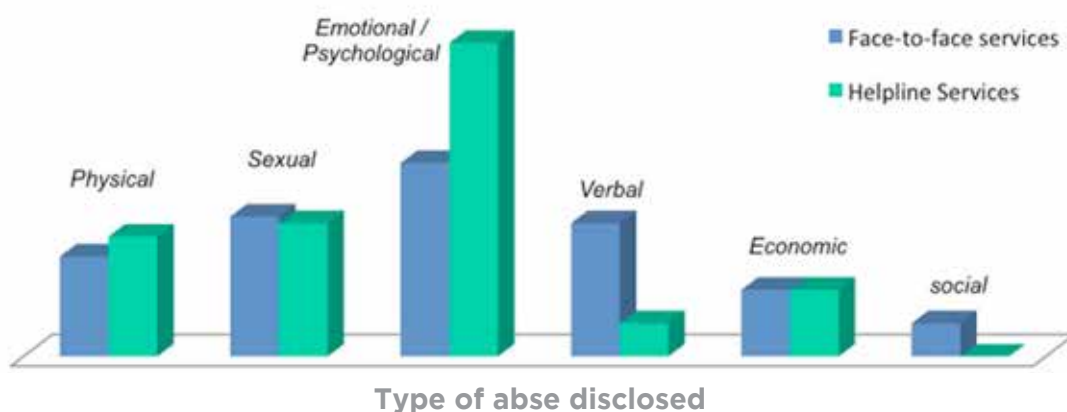
It is well reported that there is systematic underreporting of physical/sexual violence and domestic violence to authorities (FRA, 2014; An Garda Síochána, 2014). Indeed victims may suffer many incidents before contacting authorities, or applying for a protection order (An Garda Síochána, 2014). Only 16-21% of women reported the most serious incident

of violence to police (FRA, 2014). Thus both nationally and internationally, physical and sexual violence crime statistics can only reflect a fraction of violence occurring.

Services' data on disclosure of gender based violence remains limited as full disclosure of abuse can often involve a lengthy process of engagement. Thirteen helpline services reported types of abuse disclosed on helplines: of the near 24,000 incidents of abuse reported to these helplines about 47% disclosed emotional or psychological violence. Helpline callers were less likely to report physical or sexual abuse (18, and 20% respectively) and fewer callers disclosed verbal abuse (five per cent), economic abuse (ten per cent), or social abuse (less than one per cent).

While less data was available on disclosure during face-to-face services the near 9,000 incidents included comparable levels across the various categories of violence.

Differences were evident when comparing disclosure of historical and contemporary abuse on helplines and in face-to-face services. Helpline callers reported a more historic abuse and face-to-face service users were more likely to report contemporary abuse.



DURATION OF ENGAGEMENT

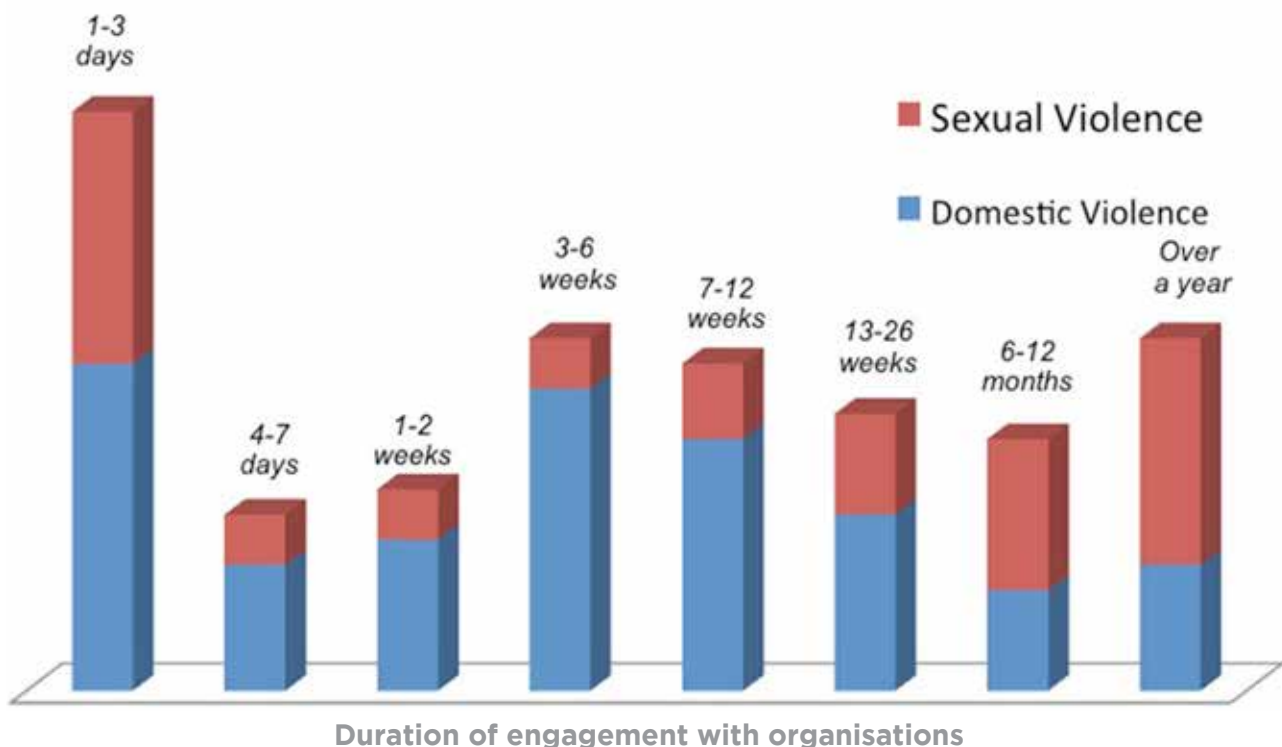
While terminology and practices around closing or inactivating cases varies and is therefore challenging to explore, information on such cases in a given year offers an opportunity to examine a typical programme of work. In 2015 2,808 cases were closed by 26 services.

Among these services inactivated cases were equivalent to about two-thirds of the existing caseload for many services.

Data on the duration of involvement of service users indicates that a cohort engaged with organisations for less than a week, another cohort for a handful of weeks and a further cohort for over a year.

Of those who remained with a service for over a year most were engaged with the sexual violence services and were engaged with the service for one to two years, although, as many as five per cent remained with the service beyond two years and in some cases up to ten years.

While there is insufficient data to comment conclusively on differences in service type, the available data seems to indicate that accommodation services typically involve a shorter duration of engagement, while face-to-face services, particularly face-to-face services in the sexual violence sector, involve longer engagement lasting over a period of years.



CALLERS REFERRED ELSEWHERE

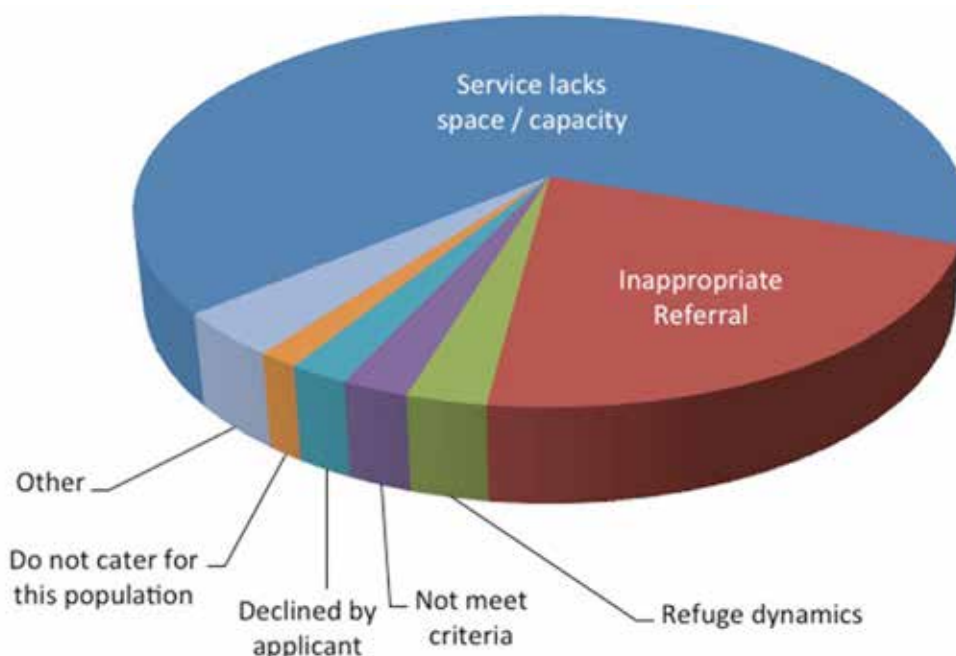
Up to half of domestic violence organisations and a quarter of sexual violence services reported that they had to refer callers – either drop-in or telephone callers – elsewhere for a variety of reasons.

The principal reason given by **domestic violence services** for referring callers elsewhere was a lack of capacity/space. Nearly three quarters of referrals were due to lack of space within the service. This percentage rose to 80% of referral of callers to refuges.

Nearly one in five callers to domestic violence services were referred onwards because the inward referral was inappropriate e.g. relating to a homeless issue rather than domestic violence issue.

Other reasons for referring callers elsewhere include referrals due to refuge dynamics – i.e. pre-existing conflict between service users and/or associates. Two per cent of domestic violence service users declined the service or failed to turn up.

Among sexual violence services, referral of callers was notably less common. Data provided by three sexual violence services suggested that the numbers who did not receive a service were equivalent to about one in ten of those services' caseloads. Although data was limited, principal reasons related to inappropriate referrals and the service not catering for a particular population.



Principal reasons for referring callers elsewhere (n=2,571 referrals)

WORKING WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

Domestic, sexual and gender based violence support services are part of a network of services which must work collaboratively to ensure that people who experience gender based violence are offered the best possible response to their needs.

Firstly, gender based violence services receive referrals from a range of organisations in the medical, legal, judicial, and social services spheres. Secondly, gender based violence services engage with a range of organisations in these spheres as they support, advocate for and accompany victims in their dealings with these organisations. Finally, gender based violence services refer service users onward to these organisations when a more appropriate service is available outside their own remit.

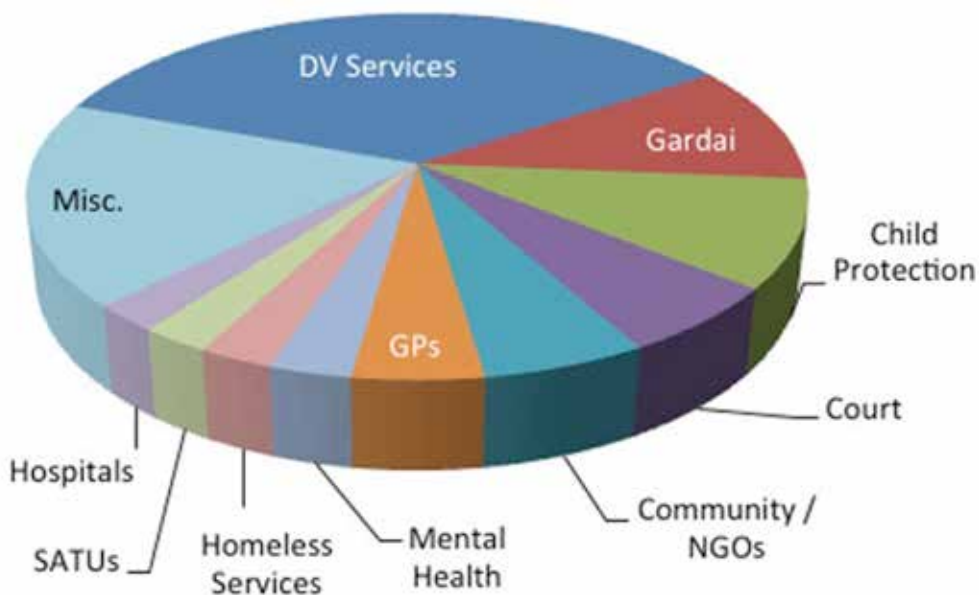
Referrals to gender based violence services

While the largest proportion of referrals to services were self-referrals, followed by referrals from family and friends, the most commonly cited organisational sources of

referral included GPs or their staff, An Garda Síochána, child protection social workers, and other gender based violence services who each act as referrers for around half of all services.

In terms of the numbers of people referred to gender based violence services by other organisations, other domestic violence services and/or crisis accommodation top the list accounting for over one in three organisational referrals to gender based violence services. Outside the sector, Gardaí and child protection social workers each accounted for one-in-ten organisational referrals to services. Court's staff, community or NGOs and GPs each accounted for one in 20 referrals. Mental health services, homeless services, sexual assault treatment units (SATUs) and hospitals each accounted for two to three in every 100 referrals.

Other referring organisations included Tusla (other than child protection services), local authorities, addiction services, legal aid/solicitors, schools, youth workers, sexual violence services, elected representatives, public health nurses, probation, clergy, disability



Sources of organisational referrals

services, Citizen’s Information services, counsellors, asylum/refugee/immigration services, community welfare services, elected representatives and mediation services.

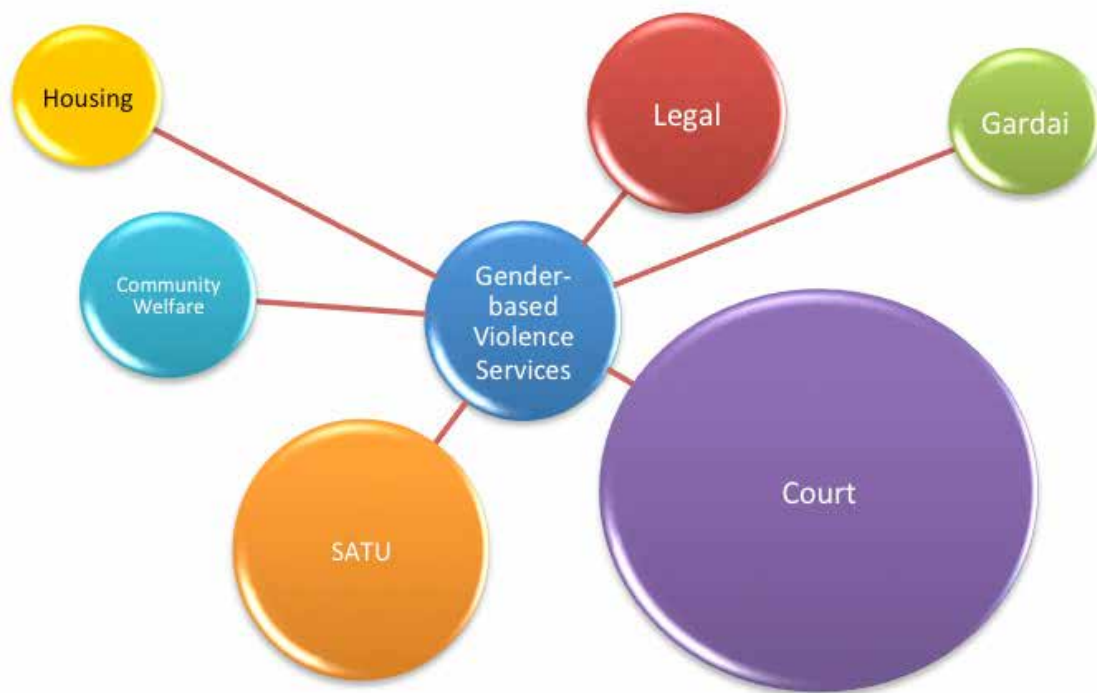
Accompaniment services

Most gender based violence organisations offer accompaniment services to their service users. Most common among these are court and Garda accompaniment services which are offered by 51 and 49 organisations respectively. Organisations also offer – in order of frequency – accompaniment to legal services, community welfare officers, housing services, child protection social work services, medical services and sexual assault treatment units.

In terms of the numbers of people availing of these accompaniment services, where data is available, accompaniment to court accounts for over half of all accompaniments. The next largest group of service users – one in ten – availed of SATU accompaniments.

Frequency of engagement with external organisations

Gender based violence services engage with a wide range of organisations as advocates, referrers and supporters. In 2015, services who provided data indicated that their most frequent contact was with community welfare officers and social welfare whom they contacted on average more than once a month. Services were also in contact with local authority housing, court clerks and other crisis accommodation services with a similar frequency. With respect to child service users, services almost all had regular contact with Tusla child protection services, typically involving monthly contact. The 22 services who provided this data indicated that they made a total of 888 contacts with Tusla throughout 2015 in relation to children.



Principal accompaniment services availed of

TRAINING AND AWARENESS RAISING

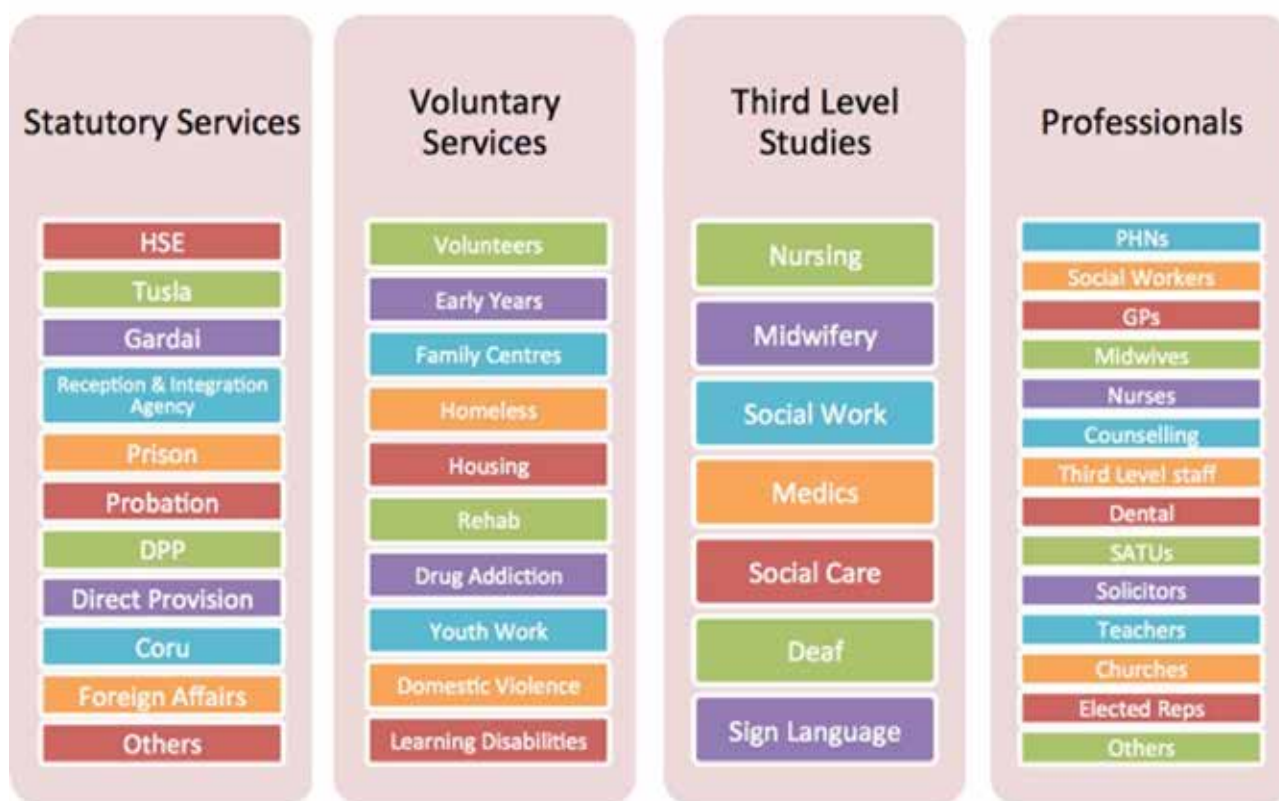
Practitioner training

Many gender based violence services (39) provide training to people who have a role in working with survivors of domestic, sexual and gender based violence (e.g. Gardaí, social workers and volunteers) with a view to enhancing their skills and effectiveness. This often includes, but is not exclusively, awareness raising.

Across the 23 services that provided data on training, 407 training sessions were delivered in 2015. The most common recipients of training were community groups who benefited from training by over half of the organisations. Training to statutory professionals such as HSE, Tusla and Garda staff was provided by just under half of the organisations.

These 407 training sessions involved over 2,700 hours of training delivery time. Nearly half of which was delivered by one organisation.

While missing data means there is a margin of error in calculations, comparison of the hours-of-delivery and number of training sessions suggests that HSE training involved notably more hours-of-delivery per session (average 14 hours per session) than other trainee groups. Community group sessions (average four hours per session) were typically shorter than others: Multi-agency sessions average seven hours; Tusla sessions average six hours; and Garda average five hours.



Recipients of training by gender based violence service providers in 2015

Awareness raising

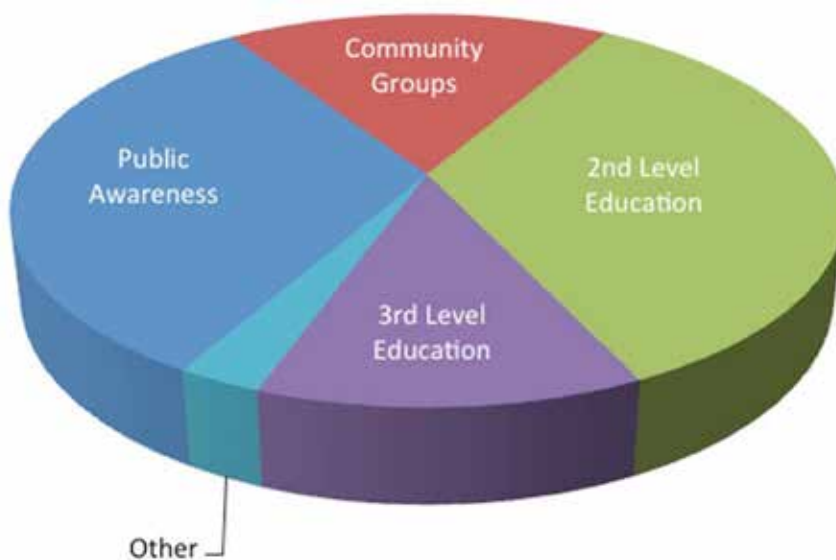
Awareness raising activities varied from countrywide awareness campaigns involving large-scale distribution of posters and leaflets to key medical, legal, judicial and social services, to similar campaigns at local level; media interviews; talks, and education sessions with key groups, through to smaller scale opportunistic participation in events.

Virtually all services engaged in awareness raising activities in 2015. Indeed, across the 31 services who provided data, 4,003 staff

hours were involved in delivery of these 862 awareness raising sessions. Four services accounted for half of these hours.

Over three-quarters of services engaged in public awareness raising, representing a third of awareness raising sessions.

A further third of awareness raising events were targeted at 2nd level students; and lesser proportions among community groups and 3rd level students.



Awareness Raising Sessions (n=862)

SERVICE USER DIVERSITY

As highlighted earlier much of the discourse, data and service provision around gender based violence has been framed with respect to white Irish women. While this group continue to be the dominant users of services in the sector, a greater diversity of service users is increasingly evident. Due to the relative size of these groups service-level data on this emerging diversity is limited. However, it can be supplemented by national data sources in order to establish a profile of these groups.

Male service users

It is now widely accepted that both men and women can be victims and perpetrators of gender based violence. The level of disclosure of sexual abuse by male victims (43%) seems to be notably lower than among female victims (58%) (SAVI, 2002).

Over half of the organisations in the sector reported men among their service users in 2015. However, only one organisation was dedicated to

provision of services for male victims, providing helpline, outreach, counselling and other face-to-face support services.

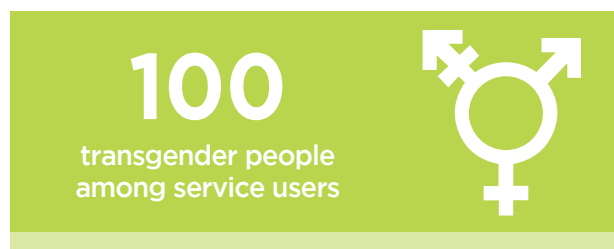
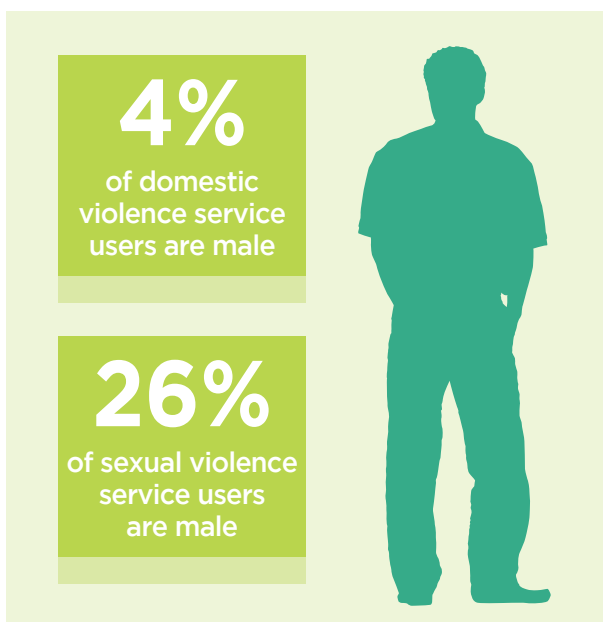
While men accounted for 12% of service users overall, they only accounted for 4% of domestic violence service users in comparison to 26% of sexual violence service users.

Male service users accessed a significantly narrower range of services with three-quarters of male service users in the domestic violence sector accessing one service and two-thirds of male service users in the sexual violence sector accessing one service.

Transgender

In September 2015 the Gender Recognition Act came into effect in Ireland affording legal recognition of a person's preferred gender. As an emerging population nationally, transgender women and men are increasingly accessing gender based violence support services.

This group is not strongly evident in helpline statistics, largely because it is not necessary to identify one's gender in helpline communications. In 2015, 100 transgender people availed of face-to-face support services. It is noteworthy that virtually all availed of sexual violence services with hardly any availing of domestic violence services.



Ethnic groups

A range of factors such as unequal gender relations in the culture of origin, cultural practices such as female genital mutilation, forced marriages, trafficking, and racism combine to place ethnic minority women as a group at a higher risk of gender based violence (Women's Health Council, 2009). However, to-date evidence regarding the prevalence of domestic violence among minority ethnic women had been contradictory (Women's Health Council, 2009), perhaps as a result of varying cultural perceptions of what constitutes domestic violence (Allen, 2012).

The 'National Domestic Abuse Survey' reported that the odds of having been severely abused are 76% higher for those born outside Ireland. Moreover, being married to a partner born outside Ireland is associated with an even greater risk of domestic abuse for women, nearly double the risk – although this is not the case for men (Watson & Parsons, 2005).

Odds of experiencing severe domestic abuse higher for those born outside Ireland

Writing about Irish Traveller women and intimate partner violence, studies have concluded that culturally mediated factors can deter disclosure of domestic abuse, sexual abuse or seeking of assistance and even inhibit recognition of domestic abuse as a social problem, or discussion of sexual matters for women within the Irish Traveller community (Allen, 2012; SAVI, 2002). Thus, while it is

sometimes believed that Traveller women are more likely to experience domestic violence the 'National Domestic Abuse Survey' concluded that there is no evidence to suggest that it is more or less prevalent than in the population in general (Allen, 2012; Pavee Point, 2013).

No evidence to suggest domestic abuse is more or less prevalent in the Travelling community

In surveys of Irish refuges, Traveller women, either alone or with children, have repeatedly been noted to be over-represented, accounting for a third to a half of admissions to refuges (National Network of Women's Refuges and Support Services, 2004; Watson & Parsons, 2005; Safe Ireland, 2009) at a time when Traveller women only accounted for less than one percent of the national female population (CSO, 2016). This over-representation may stem from a lack of available safe housing or finance options for traveller women who wish to leave an abusive relationship (Safe Ireland, 2009).

A recent study of sexual and gender based violence in the asylum and reception sector appears to reinforce the idea that sexual and gender based violence is a concealed problem among migrant populations: 11% of women in Irish Direct Provision services reported being personally victimised. However, 25% reported violence against a peer. Interestingly, of the seven European countries in the study, Ireland had among the lowest level of personal victimisation, but singularly the highest level of reported violence against peers (Keygnaert *et al*, 2014).

Gender based violence support organisations' data on ethnic minorities was limited as it is not always necessary or appropriate to record a service user's ethnicity. Data from a handful of helpline services suggests that Irish Travellers, Roma, asylum seekers and refugees each represent less than zero to three percent of helpline service users. Greater detail from face-to-face services suggests that Irish Travellers are over-represented, accounting for five percent of service users but less than one percent of the population; Similarly, asylum seekers (two percent); refugees (one percent) and Roma (less than one percent) appear to be over-represented among service users. African born people were notably over-represented among service users accounting for nearly four percent.

Ethnic minorities over-represented among service users

Homelessness

The link between gender based violence and homelessness is well recognised both nationally and internationally (Mayock *et al*, 2015). However, Irish data to illustrate this is limited. Data from Focus Ireland (2016) indicates that 23% (n=16) of families made homeless in March 2016 cited domestic violence as a cause or contributory factor in homelessness.

23%

families made homeless in March 2016 cited domestic violence

nearly
5,000 & **6,000**
in refuges
refuge callers referred elsewhere

As indicated earlier, in 2015, 1,736 women and 2,621 children were forced to leave their homes as a result of domestic violence and were accommodated in domestic violence specialist accommodation such as refuges, safe houses or supported/transitional accommodation. Moreover, a further 5,917 requests for refuge could not be met, largely due to lack of availability of spaces.

Over half of gender based violence services – 62% of domestic violence services and 31% of sexual violence services – indicated that they received referrals from homeless persons services and 61% of organisations reported accompanying service users in their dealing with housing associations. On average DSGBV services recounted being in contact with the homeless persons service and local authority housing services and other housing services at least monthly.

Experiences of homeless women who have been subjected to domestic violence are further compounded by the fact that homeless women are likely to face issues of challenging behaviour, addiction and/or mental health concerns. These challenges may preclude them from accessing refuge services. Indeed 12 of the 21 refuges indicated that they had to decline admission because of substance misuse, challenging behaviour and mental health issues. Mayock *et al* (2015) conclude that this disconnect between these features of homelessness and domestic violence services provision may result in women who experience these challenges falling between the two services.

CONCLUSION

This report reflects work in progress but is an important milestone on the road to achieving an annual dataset from across all services, taking account of the differentiating features of domestic violence and sexual violence service provision.

Data collection in 2015 has included a focus on establishing the extent of available data.

Identifying gaps and challenges to consistency and completeness has been a central aspect of the process. As the report presents initial analysis of data, feedback from organisations engaged with service users will be important to achieving a shared understanding between Tusla and service provider organisations, of messages emerging from the data.

The next steps to progress the Tusla Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence Services Information project include:

- Engaging with service provider organisations to get feedback about the current data so that we can all get the best information possible from the dataset;
- Undertaking detailed analysis of data to support commissioning of DSGBV Services ;
- Identifying aspects of data quality that can be enhanced for 2016/2017 so that the experiences and outcomes for victims and survivors are represented in ways that enable their experiences to be understood.

Over time, through the process of the Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence Services Information Project, the goal is to achieve a body of information that will underpin policy and responses to victims and survivors of domestic, sexual and gender based violence.

DOMESTIC, SEXUAL AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE ORGANISATION CONTACT LIST

ADAPT DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICE

Adapt House, Rosbrien, Co. Limerick

www.adaptservices.ie

Tel: 061 412354

ADAPT KERRY LIMITED

Women's Refuge and Support Services,
Killeen Road, Tralee, Co. Kerry

www.kerryrefuge.ie

Tel: 066 712911

AMBER REFUGE (KILKENNY)

Women's Refuge Project, Lacken,
Dublin Road, Kilkenny, Co. Kilkenny

www.kilkennywomensrefuge.ie

Tel: 1850 424244

AMEN SUPPORT SERVICES LIMITED

St. Anne's Resource Centre, Railway Street,
Navan, Co. Meath www.amen.ie

Tel: 046 902 3718

AOIBHNEAS WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S REFUGE

PO Box 5504, Coolock, Dublin 17

www.aoibhneas.ie

Tel: 01 860701

ASCEND DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICE

(North Tipp Partnership), NTLP, Newline,
Roscrea, Co. Tipperary www.ntlp.ie

Tel: 0505 23999 / 0505 23379

ATHLONE (MIDLANDS) RAPE CRISIS CENTRE

Suites 5 and 6 Townhouse, St. Mary's Square,
Athlone, Co. Westmeath

www.amrcc.ie

Tel: 1800 306600 / 090 6473862

BRAY WOMEN'S REFUGE

www.braywomensrefuge.com

Tel: 01 286 6163

CARLOW AND SOUTH LEINSTER

RAPE CRISIS CENTRE LTD.

72 Tullow Street, Carlow, Co. Carlow

www.carlowrapecrisis.ie

Tel: 1800 727737

CARLOWS WOMEN'S AID

Old Dublin Road, Carlow, Co. Carlow

www.carlowwomensaid.ie

Tel: 059 9173552 / 1800 444 944

CLAREHAVEN SERVICES

Munster House, Gort Road Business Park,
Ennis, Co. Clare www.clarehaven.ie

Tel: 065 682 2435

COPE GALWAY WATERSIDE HOUSE

5 Courthouse Square, Woodquay, Galway,
Co. Galway www.copegalway.ie

Tel: 091 565985

CORK SEXUAL VIOLENCE CENTRE

5 Camden Place, Cork www.sexualviolence.ie

Tel: 1800 496496

CUAN SAOR WOMEN'S REFUGE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

3 Jervis Place, Parnell Street, Clonmel,
Co. Tipperary www.cuansaor.org

1800 576757

CUANLEE REFUGE

Cuanlee Refuge, Kyrils Quay, Cork City,
Co. Cork www.cuanleerefuge.org

Tel: 021 427 7698

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESPONSE

The Courtyard, Main Street, Oughterard,
Co. Galway

www.domesticviolenceresponse.com

Tel: 091 866740

DONEGAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES

PO Box 55, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal
www.donegaldomesticviolenceservice.ie

Tel: 1800 262677

**DONEGAL SEXUAL ABUSE AND RAPE
 CRISIS CENTRE**

2A Canal Road, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal
www.donegalrapecrisis.ie

Tel: 1800 448844 / 074 9128211

**DROGHEDA WOMEN'S AND CHILDRENS
 REFUGE CENTRE LTD.**

Saint Anthony's, Priest's Lane, Drogheda,
 Co. Louth www.droghedarefuge.org

Tel: 041 984 4550

DUBLIN 12 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES

PO Box 11713, Crumlin, Dublin 12
www.d12dvs.ie

Tel: 01 400 2080

DUBLIN RAPE CRISIS CENTRE LTD.

70 Lower Leeson Street, Dublin 2
www.drcc.ie

Tel: 1800 778 888

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ADVOCACY SERVICE

Sligo, Leitrim and West Cavan [DVAS],
 1A Kempton Parade, Sligo
www.domesticviolence.ie

Tel: 071 914 1515

**ESKER HOUSE WOMEN'S REFUGE
 AND SUPPORT SERVICES**

www.eskerhouse.ie

Tel: 0906 474122

GALWAY RAPE CRISIS CENTRE LTD.

The Lodge, Forster Court, Galway,
 Co. Galway
www.galwayrcc.org

Tel: 1800 355355 / 091 564800

**INCHICORE OUTREACH DOMESTIC
 VIOLENCE SERVICE**

135B Emmet Road, Inchicore, Dublin 8
 Tel: 01 454 5239

KERRY RAPE AND SEXUAL ABUSE CENTRE

5 Greenview Terrace, Princes Quay, Tralee,
 Co. Kerry

www.krsac.com

Tel: 1800 633333

**KILKENNY RAPE CRISIS AND SEXUAL
 ABUSE COUNSELLING CENTRE**

1 Golf View Terrace, Granges Road,
 Kilkenny City, Co. Kilkenny

www.kilkennyrcc.com

Tel: 056 7751555 / 1800 478478

**LAOIS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ABUSE
 SERVICES**

3 Kellyville Court, Abbeyleix Road,
 Portlaoise, Co. Laois

www.laoisdomesticabuseservice.com

Tel: 057 867 1100

LETTERKENNY WOMEN'S CENTRE

Letterkenny, Co. Donegal

www.lwc.ie

Tel: 074 912 4985

LONGFORD WOMEN'S LINK

Willow House, Ardnacassa Ave, Longford

www.longfordwomenslink.org

Tel: 043 334 1511

MAYO RAPE CRISIS CENTRE

Newtown, Castlebar, Co. Mayo

www.mrcc.ie

Tel: 1800 234900 / 094 9025657

**MAYO WOMEN'S SUPPORT SERVICES
 REFUGE**

Breaffy Road, Castlebar, Co. Mayo

www.mwss.ie

Tel: 094 9025409/ 9027519

**MEATH WOMEN'S REFUGE AND SUPPORT
 SERVICES**

39 Flowerhill, Navan, Co. Meath

www.womensaidmeath.ie

Tel: 046 902 2393

MNA FEASA WOMEN'S DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROJECT

The Gate Lodge, Orthopaedic Hospital, Curranabraher, Co. Cork

www.mnafeasa.com

Tel: 021 421 1757 / 021 421 2955

MULLINGAR COMMUNITY COUNSELLING SERVICE

Mullingar Community Counselling Services, Parish Community Centre, Bishopsgate, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath

coordinator@wcpmullingar.ie

Tel: 044 933 4827 / 086 265 5066

OASIS HOUSE WOMEN'S REFUGE

Tel: 1890 264 364 / 051 370367

OFFALY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SUPPORT SERVICES

2 Cormac Street, Tullamore, Co. Offaly

www.odvss.ie Tel: 057 935 1886

OSS CORK

94 South Main Street, Cork

www.oss cork.ie Tel: 1800 497497

RAPE CRISIS AND SEXUAL ABUSE COUNSELLING CENTRE, SLIGO LEITRIM AND WEST CAVAN

Kempton House, Kempton Parade, Sligo, Co. Sligo

www.srcc.ie

Tel: 1800 750 780 / 071 917 1188

RAPE CRISIS MIDWEST

Phoenix House, Rosbrien Road, Limerick, Co. Limerick

www.rapecrisismidwest.ie

Tel: 1800 311511 / 061 311511

RAPE CRISIS NORTH EAST

The Great Northern Distillery Offices, Carrick Road, Dundalk, Co. Louth

www.rcne.ie

Tel: 1800 212122 / 042 933 9491

ROSCOMMON SAFE LINK

Elphin Street, Boyle, Co. Roscommon

www.roscommonsafelink.com

Tel: 071 966 4200

SAOIRSE WOMEN'S REFUGE

PO Box 10819, Tallaght, Dublin 24

www.saoirsewomensrefuge.ie

Tel: 01 463 0000 / 01 463 0400

SONAS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CHARITY

5 Aston Quay, Dublin 2

www.sonashousing.ie

Tel: 01 866 2015 / 087 9525217

TEACH TEARMANN REFUGE

www.teachtearmann.ie

Tel: 045 527584 / 045 535178

TEARMANN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICE

The Primary Care Building, Rooskey, Monaghan, Co. Monaghan

www.tearmann.net Tel: 047 72311

TIPPERARY RAPE CRISIS AND COUNSELLING CENTRE

20 Mary Street, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary

www.tipperaryrapecrisisandcounsellingcentre.com

Tel: 1800 340340

REGIONAL SEXUAL ABUSE AND RAPE CRISIS CENTRE

Tullamore, 4 Harbour View, Store Street, Tullamore, Co. Offaly

Tel: 1800 323 232 / 057 932 2500

WATERFORD RAPE AND SEXUAL ABUSE CENTRE

2A Waterside, Waterford, Co. Waterford,

www.waterfordrsac.ie

Tel: 1800 296296 / 051 873362

WEST CORK WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE PROJECT

Harbour View, Bantry, Co. Cork

www.westcorkwomensproject.ie

Tel: 1800 203136 / 027 53847

WESTMEATH SUPPORT SERVICES AGAINST
DOMESTIC ABUSE

1, Marlinstown Park, Mullingar,
Co. Westmeath
westmeathsupport@eircom.net
www.westmeathsupport.ie
Tel: 044 933 3868 / 087 133 6853

WEXFORD RAPE AND SEXUAL ABUSE
SUPPORT SERVICE

Clifford Street, Wexford
www.wexfordrapecrisis.com
Tel: 1800 330033/ 053 912 2722

WEXFORD WOMEN'S REFUGE

Distillery Road, Wexford
www.wexfordwomensrefuge.ie
Tel: 1800 220444 / 053 912 1876

WOMEN'S AID DUBLIN

5 Wilton Place, Dublin 2
www.womensaid.ie
Tel: 1800 341900 / 01 678 8858

WOMEN'S AID DUNDALK

PO Box 60, Dundalk, Co. Louth
www.womensaiddundalk.net
Tel: 042 933 3244

TUSLA WOMEN'S REFUGE RATHMINES

47 Lower Rathmines Road, Dublin 6
Tel: 01 496 1022 / 01 496 1322

Y.A.N.A (YOU ARE NOT ALONE) NORTH
CORK DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Parish Centre, 27/28 Bank Place, Mallow,
Co. Cork
Tel: 022 53915

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