

CEP/EuroPris Expert Group meeting on Domestic Violence

7-8 September 2022, Bratislava, Slovakia

Participants

EuroPris		CEP	
Sarah Henfrey (chair)	England	Simona Svetin Jakopič	Slovenia
Tuija Muurinen	Finland	Fredrik Olausson	Sweden
Anna Maria Vella	Malta	Natalia Iglesias Mañe	Catalunya, Spain
Juraj Zajac	Slovakia	Carmel Donnelly	Ireland
		Sabrina Reggers	Belgium
Gustav Tallving	EuroPris	Willem van der Brugge	CEP
		Mirjam van der Kooij	CEP
		Mirka Jakesova	CEP

Apologies: Anne McQuaid (Ireland), Václav Jiříčka (Czech Republic), Geraldine O'Hare (Northern Ireland)

Background

The last CEP/EuroPris Expert Group meeting on Domestic Violence came together in Bratislava (Slovakia) for the 5th meeting on 7-8 September 2022.

In the afternoon of 7 September 2022, a study visit to the Bratislava took place. The aim of this visit was to introduce the work done at the various departments of the prison (strict regime and open regime). After this an Expert Group member Juraj Zajac gave a presentation on the Slovakian criminal justice system and the DV services offered by the Prison Service.

The next day group chair Sarah Henfrey started off with a presentation on domestic homicides based on literature and practice in the UK (for more information please see the presentation published on the website <https://www.cep-probation.org/recap-cep-europris-expert-group-on-domestic-violence-bratislava-slovakia/>). The EG members contributed to this session by giving information on the situation and number of cases in their jurisdictions (see below).

Ms. Fiona Wilks-Riley, Consultant and Forensic Psychologist gave a presentation on the impact of trauma and working in a trauma-informed way.

The group then focused on summarizing the achievements during the past three years and brainstorming on the future plans and activities as only CEP continues

with this group. In this regard, CEP informed that this year a Gender-Based Violence Workshop will take place on 13-14 December in Barcelona, Spain.

Discussion on current situation

Natalia Iglesias, Catalonia, Spain – there is a decrease in the number of cases but there is a need to wait for another years - in 99 days 9 women were murdered, and when we were gradually unlocked, in 47 days, 12 of them were killed by her partner/ former partner. However, it has to be said that in 2020 Spain recorded the lowest rate of DV homicides, and it also appears to be decreasing in 2021. Recent studies demonstrate that murders committed by sons against his mothers have doubled compared to previous years. In addition, children being killed by their fathers are increasing in numbers. Reviews also reveal a higher rate on victims under 21 years old.

Carmel Donnelly, Ireland – in between 1996-2022 249 women killed, 18 children died alongside their mothers, 63% of cases happens at home, 87% of women killed by men known to them, in every second femicide – the murderer is the current or former partner, 23 murder suicide cases and 22 of which the killer was women partner. No official homicide Domestic Violence Reviews. Victims organisations for women are very opposed about hearing trauma awareness in perpetrators.

Fredrik Olausson, Sweden – life could be saved if information are shared with better legislation (the situation with data sharing got better within years), honour-based cases - school is the institution where it is far more easier to identify violence, training of managers in prison and probation for identifying it. For Sweden DV was a priority back in 2018 – the special group has made progress despite pandemic, overall the work of the special group was found useful as it also took into account overlaps between prison and probation.

Simona Svetin Jakopic, Slovenia – nowadays dealing with cases when women make a fake report on domestic violence in divorce procedures, 5-7 femicides per year, 0-1 malicide, 90% of DV caused by men.

Juraj Zajac, Slovakia – 76 domestic homicides, 2020 – decline by 17%, femicides – 5-11 in a year.

Sabrina Reggers, Belgium – information sharing legislation set up 3 years ago (very difficult to set it up, only after the terrorist attacks), numbers of cases exist but the data is not registered and is not pure, further links are needed – cases that could be homicides or have elements of it (e.g. a car accident but strangulation marks visible on the victim).

Anna Maria Vella, Malta – gender-based violence in 2021 – 2 cases, a case when a woman was raped by a man with mental health issues.

The data of the Victims Support Europe says that only 2% of all the victims are brought to court.

Reflections on work of the Expert Group

Achievements

- Data collected – <https://www.cep-probation.org/knowledgebases/domestic-violence-good-practice/>
- Workshop took place in December 2021 <https://www.cep-probation.org/cep-europris-workshop-on-domestic-violence/>
- Topics and themes: Risk assessment and interventions, trauma-informed practices, good practices, research (<https://www.cep-probation.org/knowledgebases/domestic-violence-research/>) and policies (<https://www.cep-probation.org/knowledgebases/domestic-violence-policy/>), training (<https://www.cep-probation.org/knowledgebases/domestic-violence-training/>)
- Support for developing guidelines (e.g. in Finland)
- Special edition of newsletter
- Well-visited knowledgebase on both CEP and EuroPris websites
- Initiating cooperation with other organizations
- Good networking and sharing information within the Expert Group (from both prison, probation and treatment), sharing good practice, experience
- Promotion of what works and where are the obstacles – good balance between that
- Site visits – Slovakian Prison Service vs Family Justice Centre in Limburg – showing different perspectives, different approaches in a way of working with DV victims and offenders
- Introducing new technologies and its use in practice – virtual reality (e.g. Catalonia, Spain)
- Large coverage – especially from prison and probation
- Universities – some of the members have worked with universities so thanks to this group they had a chance to bring experience and valuable knowledge.

Information sharing by the EG members - <https://www.cep-probation.org/recommended-by-expert-group-members/>

- New research on development of neuropathways and the devastation it has
- The link to the short video that Sabrina mentioned is the following: [Timekeeper - Inner Eye Productions](#) .
- [Intimate Partner Violence: An application of attachment theory \(2016\), Christine J. Park.](#)
- [Early Childhood Predictors of Teen Dating Violence Involvement at Age 17 \(2022\), Noemi Pereda & others.](#)

- [Sexist attitudes, romantic myths, and offline dating violence as predictors of cyber dating violence perpetration in adolescents \(2020\), Maria Jesus Cava & others.](#)

Findings and conclusions:

- There are similarities and differences in a way of collecting data.
- Statistics regarding the cases are relatively stable.
- New term „familicide¹” started being used, however, in some countries the words homicides and femicides are often diminished and not used, especially by media.
- Multi-agency approach crucial, however, in many jurisdictions information sharing is problematic even though the legislation is quite on high level in some of them.
- Contact with victims is still not sufficient enough, often lack of knowledge and unsatisfactory support from the first-hand institutions (Police, Lawyers etc).
- There is a need for improved assessment, including mental health assessment.
- Practice not in line with the policy – no sufficient policies in place, policies are not followed etc.
- Less research – data and evidence-base missing.
- Language barrier – interpreters always have a very little understanding of domestic violence.
- Impact of the Covid-19 – put DV on the agenda of the EU and CoE.
- Prison is part of the DV community too (prison system used to be a blind spot to certain extent).

Topics to be discussed at the future (both for workshop and EG)

- Women trafficking
- Cyberstalking and stalking
- Sharing latest evaluation and practice and evidence to go forward
- Domestic violence and gender
- Domestic violence and kids (nowadays it is a blind spot)
- Programs offered and modalities in treatment

¹ Familicide - a type of murder or murder-suicide in which one kills multiple close family members in quick succession, most often children, spouses etc.



Link to the website: <https://www.cep-probation.org/recap-cep-europriis-expert-group-on-domestic-violence-bratislava-slovakia/>

https://www.euopriis.org/expert_groups/domestic-violence/



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